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KEEPING THE CONVERSATION GOING

**A systemic-functional analysis of conversational
structure in casual sustained talk**

Volume 1: Dissertation

by

Suzanne Elizabeth Raine Eggins

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Department of Linguistics University of Sydney

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This thesis is accompanied by an audio cassette, entitled "Dinner at Stephen's, Side 2B", one side of which contains a recording of part of the dinner party conversation described in the thesis

ABSTRACT

One "seen but unnoticed" characteristic of casual conversation is that it is often sustained, essentially without a break, for many hours.

What is of interest to conversational analysts is not just that conversation keeps going, but that it keeps going AND it keeps making sense. This research focuses on the micro pattern of **interactional continuity** in conversation: on the maintenance of semantic continuity across the turn-by-turn organisation of talk.

Whilst acknowledging the origins of conversational analysis as a sociological discipline, I argue that describing interactional continuity in casual talk is best achieved through the investigation of **linguistic structure**.

The linguistic approach taken is a systemic-functional one, based on the model of "language as social semiotic" as outlined in the work of Halliday. It draws on and forms part of a systemic tradition of text/discourse analysis, which has its roots in the semantic theory of J.R. Firth, and owes much to the models of interactive discourse developed by the Birmingham School.

Systemic discourse analysis models conversational structure through a stratified account of interpersonal meaning. The systems and options of MOOD in the clause are taken as underlying (i.e. motivating and constraining) the assignment of SPEECH FUNCTIONS to moves in dialogue. The sequencing of moves is then accounted for by a multivariate exchange formula, which allows the realization of conversational exchanges of up to five moves.

In extending the stratified approach to describe the interactional continuity of multiparty sustained talk, my research involves three major developments. Firstly, by basing my analysis on a transcription which includes rhythm and intonation, I present explicit criteria for the identification of moves in casual talk. Secondly, by revising the speech function network to give greater priority to turn-taking, and by extending it to integrate modal and logico-semantic dimensions, I present a more delicate, exhaustive, and integrated description of speech functions in conversation. And thirdly, I suggest that a schematic representation of the simultaneously realised interpersonal and logical relations between moves in casual talk is more revealing of the dynamic, univariate patterns of conversational structure than the imposition of a multivariate exchange structure.

Principles motivating the developments are found in two sources: within systemic accounts of the grammar (patterns of MOOD, ELLIPSIS, CONJUNCTION and TAXIS), and in the ethnomethodological interpretation of conversation as an inherently generative and dynamic turn-taking system. The thesis thus offers a practical demonstration of the synthesis possible between sociological and functional linguistic perspectives on conversation, as well as an illustration of systemic methods of discourse analysis applied to casual conversation.

The data, "Dinner at Stephen's", is a transcription of part of a four-hour dinner party conversation, from which a continuous excerpt of some 300 moves becomes the focus of the description.

In demonstrating that the move-by-move analysis of speech function choices and the structural reticula they generate contribute significantly towards capturing the dynamic creation of interactional continuity, I offer the concluding explanation that the nature of conversational structure is a socio-semantic one, found in the motivation of casual conversation as an open-ended process of constructing, maintaining, and exploring social relations through interaction.

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Thanks also to Elizabeth Green for intonation analysis, to Carolyn Webb for editorial advice, and to P.S.E. for production assistance.

I also thank all the participants in "Dinner at Stephen's" for so willingly agreeing to the taping of a "private" dinner party, and to its subsequent transcription and analysis.

Finally, I will never be able to thank fully the long-suffering members of my family, whose many sacrifices made it possible for me to pursue, and finally complete, my studies.

to

P.S.E.

with thanks

The magical power of talk derives from the fact that it is, in every instance, the manifestation of a systematic resource, a resource which has been built up through acts of conversation in the first place, and which goes on being modified in each one of us as we talk our way through life. (Halliday 1984:32)

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NOTATIONAL CONVENTIONS

(adapted from Halliday & Martin 1981:10-12)

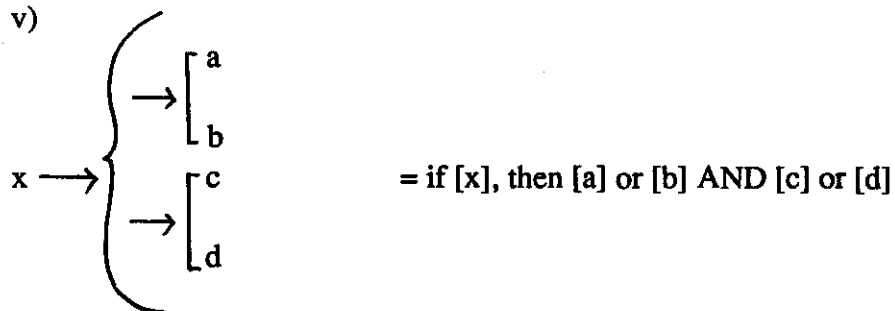
SYSTEMS:

- i) Names of systems are written in upper case;
e.g. MOOD
- ii) Names of features are written in lower case;
e.g. imperative.
- iii) Names of features are enclosed in square brackets in text though not in networks:
e.g. [opening]

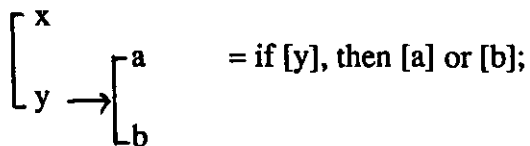
iv) :



v)



vi)



GENERAL:

- vii) Names of meta-functional components are written in lower case;
e.g. interpersonal, textual.
- viii) Names of ranks are written in lower case;
e.g. clause, move.
- ix) Names of levels (strata) are written in lower case;
e.g. semantics, lexico-grammar.

STRUCTURE:

- x) Elements of structure begin with a capital:
e.g. Actor, Initiation.
- xi) Sequenced elements of Structure are shown by ^:
e.g. Initiation ^ Response
- xii) Unsequenced elements of structure are shown by *:
e.g. Initiation * Response (apple)*
- xiii) Optional elements of structure are shown in parentheses:
e.g. (Follow-up)
- xiv) Obligatory elements of structure are shown without parentheses:
e.g. Initiation.

PHONOLOGICAL SYMBOLS (see also Appendix D)

//	tone group boundary
/	foot boundary
<u>word</u>	tonic syllable
^	silent beat

Tones:

1	falling tone
2	rising tone
3	level (low rising) tone
4	falling-rising tone
5	rising-falling tone
13	falling + low rising
53	rise-fall + low rise

REFERENCES to the TRANSCRIPTION

- xv) References to the continuous excerpt from "Dinner at Stephen's" are by PHASE NUMBER:UNIT NUMBER.
Thus:
P2:T4 = Phase 2, turn 4
P3:C18 = Phase 3, clause 18
P4:M99 = Phase 4, move 99
- xvi) Examples from the transcription are identified by the same convention, i.e. PHASE NUMBER:UNIT NUMBER. Where an example is drawn from a part of the conversation other than the continuous excerpt, it is identified only for the side of tape it comes from (i.e. 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A or 3B).
Thus:
2B = elsewhere in 2B (other than the continuous excerpt)
3A = Tape 3, Side A. etc.

**PART ONE: Theoretical Background
to the research**

1. Describing interactional continuity in casual conversation.

As a main focus of attention talk is unique...for talk creates for the participant a world and a reality that has other participants in it. Joint spontaneous involvement is a unio mystico, a socialized trance. (Goffman 1967:113)

The initial research question: how does conversation keep going?

As socialized individuals, we spend much of our lives talking with other people, or interacting. Very often we talk to others to achieve quite specific, pragmatic goals: we talk to buy and to sell, to find out information, to pass on knowledge, to make appointments, to get jobs, or to jointly accomplish practical tasks.

Such ritualized, or generic interactions, have two important structural characteristics. The first is that the interaction unfolds as a sequence of distinct and ordered "stages". This is seen in the relative ease and accuracy with which we can predict both the steps we will have to go through to achieve our goal, and many of the typical linguistic choices that we will make as we do so. The second is that the interaction is finite: it is difficult to loiter linguistically, to keep the interaction going, once our goal has been achieved.

But there is a class of everyday verbal interactions in which talk seems to be an end in itself. For example, getting together with friends over coffee or dinner and just "having a chat". It is to these casual interactions that the label **conversation** is usually applied.

Conversational interactions appear to differ structurally from generic interactions in two ways. The first is that the talk proceeds not as a sequence of discrete stages, but as a flow. This notion is captured in the many metaphors used to describe conversation as "process-like", a "stream", a "thread" or even a "chain, as well as in our everyday impression that in conversation "one thing seems to lead to another".

The second difference between generic and conversational interactions is that conversation appears to be open-ended: it has the potential to go on and on and on, constrained only by temporal or spatial demands. It is thus a characteristic of conversations that they can be sustained.

One example is the situation of a dinner party held amongst friends. What happens at a dinner party is this: as soon as people come into physical proximity with each other, they start talking. They keep talking, essentially without a break, until drinks, drugs, fatigue, or time constraints force them apart, maybe some three or four hours later. The ostensible purpose of their coming together may be to eat a meal, but what really goes on is a little eating and a lot of talking.

Now, three or four hours is a long time to fill with talk- a four-hour job interview, or a four-hour transactional encounter, would seem interminable to us. And yet a group of friends sitting round a dinner table show no signs of having to strain to find things to say, or of being worn out by the effort of concentrating and responding. In fact, we think of this kind of talk as being people at their most relaxed, having a good time and enjoying themselves.

The fact that the stream of talk in such informal, interactive settings can be sustained essentially without a break raises the intriguing question: **How does conversation keep going?**

The thesis explores that question within a systemic-functional approach to discourse analysis. This introductory chapter outlines how the initial question was interpreted as a research problem, the perspective adopted, and the data on which the thesis is based.

Preliminary observations: conversation keeps going in two ways

When used to refer to:

the study of the organization of conversational interaction, whatever the analysts' theoretical orientation. (Taylor & Cameron 1987:1)

the term conversation analysis covers a broad range of approaches to conversation, including the sociologically-oriented approaches of social-psychology (e.g. Duncan & Fiske 1977, 1985; Clarke 1983) and ethnomethodology (e.g. Garfinkel 1967, Sudnow 1972, Atkinson & Drew 1979, Psathas 1979, Atkinson & Heritage 1984, Button & Lee 1987) ethnography (Tannen 1979, 1981, 1983) and sociolinguistics (e.g. Schiffrin 1980, 1981, 1985a, 1985b, 1985c, 1986, 1987), the logico-philosophical approaches of speech act theory (e.g. Edmondson 1981, Ochs Keenan & Schieffelin 1983) and pragmatics (e.g. Grice 1967/75, Levinson 1983, Leech 1983), as well as a range of structuralist-functionalist approaches to discourse analysis (e.g. Coulthard & Brazil 1979; Burton 1978, 1980, 1981; Berry 1981a, 1981b 1981c; Ventola 1979, 1980, 1987; Martin 1979, 1981a, 1983, 1985a, 1986, [in press/1989]¹; Malcolm 1983, 1985a, 1985b; Hasan [in press], Halliday 1984, 1985b, 1986, [in press]; Halliday et al 1985).

Despite the often major differences in perspectives, the conversation analysis literature reinforces an intuitive distinction we can make between two ways in which conversation is sustained².

¹ As references to Martin [in press] will be frequent throughout the thesis, and are based on the 1989 draft mimeo version, in future this work will be referred to as Martin (i.p/1989).

² See for example Schegloff & Sacks (1973/4); Sacks et al (1974); Maynard (1980), Brown & Yule (1983), Levinson (1983); Coulthard (1977); Hasan (1985c, [in press]) for various formulations of this distinction.

Firstly, conversation is sustained as INTERACTION: conversation keeps going because people keep "having a go", "putting in their two cents worth". The practical evidence of this is that participants keep taking turns. Thus one aspect of conversational maintenance involves investigating how participants know when it is their "go" to talk, how they recognize when someone else has finished, or how they encourage each other to keep talking, and so on.

Secondly, conversation keeps going as CONTENT or IDEAS: conversation keeps going because people keep finding things to talk about. People don't conk out, suddenly running out of things to discuss. Instead, they keep finding "topics", so that at the end of an evening participants will often remark "We certainly talked about enough different things!"³

Conversational continuity

However, as the frequency with which the word "coherence" crops up in the literature attests⁴, there is further agreement that the problem posed by conversation is that it has CONTINUITY. What is of interest to conversation analysts, then, is not just that conversation keeps going, but that it keeps going AND it keeps making sense. This continuity of conversation can be recognized for both the interactional and the content dimensions mentioned above.

Thus, on the one hand, we can identify what we could call INTERACTIONAL CONTINUITY: not only do participants know when it is their "go" to talk, but what they do in their "go" relates to what previous participants did in theirs, and has implications for what the subsequent speakers may do when they next have a "go". Each participant's contribution sets up expectations and limitations on what can happen next, i.e. what can be said next and interpreted as making sense. This aspect of conversational continuity has been extensively explored by the ethnomethodologists as conversational organisation (e.g. Schegloff & Sacks 1973/74, Sacks et al 1974), by the pragmatics/speech act theorists as conversational implicature or logic (e.g. Grice 1967/75, Leech 1983), and within discourse analysis as conversational or exchange structure (e.g. Burton 1978, 1980; Coulthard & Brazil 1979; Berry 1981a, 1981b, 1981c; Martin 1986, i.p/1989; Ventola 1987).

³ For example, Maynard (1980:264) cites the following comment from his data:

Jane (to a co-conversationalist): Boy, this is really funny, when you think about our conversation we've hit about 12 different topics in the last seven minutes.

⁴ Some of the many examples that could be cited include: Schegloff & Sacks (1973/74), Levinson (1983), Coulthard (1977), Brown & Yule (1983), Schiffrin (1987), Labov (1970), Labov & Fanshel (1977), Ventola (1979), etc.

At the same time, conversation displays a TOPICAL or EXPERIENTIAL continuity. Again here we need to recognize the fact that participants not only keep finding things to talk about, but that talking about one thing often seems to flow on, or lead "naturally" into talking about the next. What we talk about now tends to "grow out of" what we were talking about a moment ago, even if that "moment" is actually an hour or two ago. The succession of topics in conversation gives an impression of flow, such that when interactants look back and say "How on earth did we end up talking about that?" they can often trace a long chain of direct or sideways links. This aspect of conversational continuity has been explored under various labels, such as topic management (e.g. Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4, Maynard 1980), topic development (e.g. Button & Casey 1984, Ochs & Schieffelin 1976), field, cohesion, coherence, and texture (e.g. Halliday & Hasan 1976, 1985; Martin 1984a, i.p/1989; Hasan [in press]; Halliday [in press]).

There are of course in any conversation occasional moments of discontinuity: both interactional discontinuities, such as lapses into silence, interruptions, or overlap leading to mishearings, or topical discontinuities, referred to by interactants themselves as "quantum leaps"⁵

Despite these, or rather against the background of these occasional hiccups in the system, the impression of this dual continuity of conversation is overwhelming, not only for the interactants, but also for an outsider reading a transcript at a later time.

The focus on interactional continuity

The distinction between interactional and experiential continuity provides a useful starting point in the investigation of how conversation is sustained, and invites a practical decision as to where to start, and why.

There are a number of reasons for suggesting that it is the description of the interactional continuity of conversation that must have priority. Firstly, the empirical fact is that it is the open-ended turn-taking organisation of conversation that differentiates it from other linguistic activities (Sacks et al 1974).

-
- 5 This exchange from "Dinner at Stephen's", Side 1A):
- Di I get into terrible trouble for doing quantum leaps in conversation you know.
- Si There you go. See there's a word like "quantum leap". What does "quantum leap" mean?
- G Everyone knows what "quantum leap" means, Simon. It's a sharp jump, like it's a discrete jump. It's not a continuous jump.
- Si Yes
- G That's pretty obvious.

Secondly, the relative transferability of analyses of experiential patterns (for example, of topic, field, conjunction etc.) from monologic to interactive data, as opposed to the essential inapplicability of generalising notions of discourse structure from monologic to interactive text (cf Martin i.p/1989). And thirdly, the suggestions that conversation is interpersonally, rather than experientially driven, and the associated implications this has for interactional structure (cf Ventola 1977, 1979; Plum 1986; Halliday et al 1985, Halliday 1984, 1985b; Martin i.p/1989, Hasan [in press]).

These reasons lie behind the initial focus of this thesis on the description of interactional continuity: on how conversation is sustained as a meaningful turn-taking activity.

However, in common with many of the conversation analysts already mentioned, I soon discovered that the neat distinction between interactional and experiential continuity breaks down very rapidly under closer scrutiny. Problems of definition (what is "interaction"? and what is "topic"?), and practical problems (just how do we distinguish linguistic behaviours that sustain the interaction from those that sustain the topic?) lead to the inevitable acknowledgement of the interrelatedness of the two dimensions (e.g. Maynard 1980:284; Sacks 1987:61; Levinson 1983:316)

Thus, at issue is merely which of these two complementary aspects of conversational organisation provides the point of departure. Although in this research the initial focus is on interactional continuity, the development of the description will illustrate that in order to understand how conversation keeps going as interaction, we need to understand something of how it keeps going as experiential development. One of the tasks of the research reported in this thesis, and of conversation analysis in general, then becomes to offer an interpretation of this interrelatedness.

A Sociological or Linguistic Investigation?

Asking "how conversation keeps going" is a question which at first glance could be explored equally well from either a sociological or a linguistic perspective. In fact, the initial research question seems very much like the kind of question that social interactionalists, or ethnomethodologists, might ask,

The original claimants to the title conversation analysts, sociologists such as Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson and their successors, combined a concern with following a rigorously empirical methodology with the ethnomethodological aim of finding methods for making the commonsense world visible (Garfinkel 1967, 1974; Cicourel 1972, Benson & Hughes 1983, Heritage 1984; Livingston 1987). In the study of talk, this meant:

an insistence on the use of materials collected from NATURALLY OCCURRING occasions of everyday interaction. (Atkinson & Heritage 1984:2)

In trying to explain how it is that in conversation speakers keep taking turns, the ethnomethodologists proposed a model of conversation as a generative turn-taking mechanism, a machine whose operation is describable in terms of sequenced rules, activated on a "local" i.e. turn-by-turn, basis, whose single aim is to ensure that when the current speaker stops talking someone else will take a turn (Sacks et al 1974).

At the same time, the ethnomethodologists recognised topic management as a distinct, though interrelated, aspect of conversational organisation. Through the notions of topic placement, and topic fitting, they attempted to account for the interaction of local and overall conversational structure with topic; and through notions such as step-wise topic progression, topic shift, and topic change, they tried to categorize the apparently "natural" or smooth procedures speakers use to progress from one topic to another (e.g. Sacks et al 1974, Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4, Jefferson 1984, Maynard 1980).

At a more general level, the ethnomethodologists offered a new way of thinking about casual talk, emphasizing that it was a dynamic creation of interacting and co-operating participants:

The discourse should be treated as an achievement; that involves treating the discourse as something 'produced' over time, incrementally accomplished, rather than born naturally whole out of the speaker's forehead....The accomplishment or achievement is an interactional one...it is an ongoing accomplishment, rather than a pact signed at the beginning (Schegloff 1981:73)

But there are a number of problems with investigating interactional continuity within an ethnomethodological framework.

Firstly, because the turn-taking mechanism which organises conversation is an infinitely generative one, there is a sense in which the ethnomethodological account can already be considered to have answered the question of how conversation keeps going. Their mechanical explanation of talk means that what is problematic for their model is, instead, the question of how talk could end (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/74).

Investigating this aspect of conversation led to the extremely significant "discovery" of adjacency pairs, and the identification of various types of more extended turn sequences (e.g. Schegloff 1968, 1972, 1980; Schegloff & Sacks 1973/74, Schegloff et al 1977, Jefferson 1972, 1973, 1978). From this came recognition of the fundamental feature of conversational organisation: that of the SEQUENTIAL RELEVANCE or sequential implicativeness of talk (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4, Schegloff 1981). By these terms the ethnomethodologists emphasized that it is the placement of an utterance in the dynamically emerging talk that is in large part responsible for understanding what an utterance is "doing" in talk, and therefore how it can make sense (Atkinson & Heritage 1984:5-6).

Criticisms as to the "fragmentary" and "anecdotal" nature of the ethnomethodologist's description of conversational organisation (e.g. Edmondson 1981:50) are familiar, and largely misplaced. For the problem with the ethnomethodologists' account is not so much that it is an incomplete description, concentrating on instances of particularly "visible" sequence types, but that it is not clear how their description could be extended. Whilst it is not difficult to accept that conversation is not exclusively structured into adjacency pair sequences, it is difficult to find in ethnomethodology an indication of how an exhaustive list of adjacency pairs might be motivated, and then how other types of structural units will be identified (see the discussion in Martin i.p/1989:46-48)⁶. In other words, despite the use of empirical data, ethnomethodology relies heavily on the analyst's own interpretation of what is actually going on to identify and classify structural relations (Taylor & Cameron 1987:117-123).

A more general problem with ethnomethodology is its essentially mechanistic interpretation of conversation. Whilst on the one hand the ethnomethodologists offer us a powerful interpretation of conversation as dynamic interactive achievement, on the other, they are unable to say just WHAT KIND of achievement it is. Their own work on turn sequences and topic development clearly demonstrates that the maintenance of conversation is not just an achievement of mechanical continuation, but instead the achievement of semantic continuity. Yet their methodology provides no framework for semantic analysis.

The underlying difficulty is that the methodology is not centred on investigating linguistic patterns in conversational organisation. The ethnomethodologists' account of conversation does not integrate the description of language as system with how the system "works" in conversation.

In this thesis, however, it is the language system that will be central to the investigation. Here, describing interactional continuity in casual talk is seen as a question that will best be answered through the investigation of linguistic structure.

A systemic-functional perspective

The particular linguistic approach taken in this thesis is a systemic-functional one, based on the model of "language as social semiotic" as outlined in the work of Halliday (e.g.1970a, 1973, 1975, 1978, 1985a; Halliday & Hasan 1985). It draws on, and forms part of, a systemic tradition of text/discourse analysis, which has its roots in the semantic theory of J.R. Firth (1935, 1950, 1951). Sharing a common functionalist perspective with analysts of the Birmingham School (e.g. Sinclair & Coulthard 1975, Burton 1978, 1980, Coulthard & Brazil 1979, Berry 1981a, 1981b, 1981c, Stubbs 1983), although now pursuing differing perspectives, the contemporary systemic exponents most relevant to the research reported here include Halliday (1978, 1979, 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1986, [in press]), Hasan (e.g. 1978, 1979, 1983, 1984a, 1985a, 1985b, [in press]), Halliday & Hasan (1976, 1985), Martin (1981a, 1983, 1984a, 1984b, 1985, 1986, i.p/1989), and Ventola (1979, 1984a, 1987, 1988).

⁶ Unless otherwise specified, page references are to chapter 2 of Martin 1989: "Conversational structure:negotiating meaning in dialogue".

Given the marginality of systemic-functional linguistics, and the variety of alternative approaches currently applied in the linguistic analysis of conversation, it is legitimate to ask: "Why adopt a systemic approach?" The reason is the relevance of systemic linguistics to the analysis of conversation.

The relevance of systemic linguistic to conversation analysis lies in both the type of questions it asks about language, and the type of explanations, or model of language, it proposes.

The type of questions systemic linguists ask are concerned with the relationship between language and the social semiotic, with talking as a process of constructing and sustaining the social reality. But language, both as system and as process, is at the centre of the systemic perspective. We ask not, as the ethnomethodologists do, "How do we do conversation?" but instead, "How is language structured to enable us to do conversation?"

The systemic-functional model of language is particularly relevant to the analysis of conversation because it is a functional-semantic theory of language. A systemic model establishes a non-arbitrary relation between context and lexico-grammar, through the semantic unit, the text. The major lexico-grammatical systems of MOOD, TRANSITIVITY, and THEME are related through realization in text to the three semantic systems of interpersonal meaning ('meaning about the interaction'), ideational meaning ('meaning about the world'), and textual meaning ('meaning about the message'). These semantic systems are in turn the realization of the contextual parameters of Tenor (relationships between the interactants), Field (institutional focus of the interaction), and Mode (role of language in the interaction). (See Halliday 1978, especially 108-151, Halliday & Hasan 1985)

Because it is a functional theory, systemics models conversation as purposeful behaviour, both realized in and instantiating social and cultural context. Because it is a semantic theory, it interprets conversation as a process of making meanings, rather than a mechanism for taking turns.

The practical implications of this as an approach to conversation analysis are two-fold. Firstly, that models of conversational organisation are uncovered, motivated, and constrained by their realisations in lexico-grammatical systems and patterns; secondly, that it proposes a framework for developing a multi-functional semantic perspective on the complex structuring of conversation.

Extension & Synthesis

Systemic theory currently models conversational structure through a stratified account of interpersonal meaning. The systems and options of MOOD in the clause are taken as underlying (i.e. motivating and constraining) the assignment of SPEECH FUNCTIONS to moves in dialogue (Halliday 1984, 1985a; Martin 1981a, i.p/1989). The sequencing of moves is then accounted for by a multivariate exchange formula, which allows the realization of conversational exchanges of up to 5 moves, with the possibility of certain "dynamic" exit or re-cycling points (Berry 1981a, 1981b, 1981c; Ventola 1984a, 1987; Martin 1986, i.p/1989)

Derived from the analysis of dialogic, consensus-oriented, pragmatically-motivated interactions, the current model has proved useful in describing the structure of generic interactions (e.g. Ventola 1984a, 1984b, 1987). However, it proves problematic both to apply and to interpret when translated to describe casual talk.

This thesis identifies problems at each stage of description: identifying and interpreting the units of analysis, assigning speech functions, and applying a multivariate exchange structure to capture interactional continuity.

The principal contribution of the thesis is to work through each of these steps, presenting a revised description of conversational structure that goes some way towards capturing the open-ended, structure of casual conversation. Principles motivating the revisions will be found in two sources: within systemic accounts of the grammar, and in the ethnomethodological interpretation of conversational organisation.

The ethnomethodological insight that conversation is inherently open-ended and dynamic through its turn-taking organisation will be used to redefine the move as a dynamically signalled discourse unit, to motivate basic options in the speech function network, and to integrate "dynamic" moves.

In relating ethnomethodological and systemic-functional perspectives to conversation analysis, the thesis addresses in a practical way the current controversy over the extent to which sociological and linguistic perspectives on conversation can be complementary (Levinson 1983, Sharrock & Anderson 1987, Martin i.p/1989).

In the elaboration of an extended model of conversational structure, it presents the application of systemic methods of discourse analysis.

The work finds motivation for extending the system of meaning in conversation in the analysis of lexico-grammatical analyses of MOOD, ELLIPSIS and SUBSTITUTION, CONJUNCTION and the CLAUSE COMPLEX. Through the integration of logico-semantic relations within the speech function system, it addresses the question of what kind of structure we find in conversation by investigating the simultaneous interpersonal and logical structuring of conversation.

The research data: "Dinner at Stephen's"

Appendix A in Volume 2 contains a transcript of approximately forty minutes of a continuous conversation amongst a group of friends, from which comes the conversational excerpt discussed in detail in the thesis.

The dinner party was recorded on a Saturday night in April 1986 at the home of Stephen and his friend Margaret, and both the participants and the researcher have subsequently come to refer to the event as "Dinner at Stephen's".

The continuous conversation recorded during "Dinner at Stephen's" lasted approximately four hours, filling six sides of C45 audio-cassettes. For reasons of space, the transcription of the entire dinner party cannot be presented here⁷. Instead, only one side of one tape is reproduced. The side chosen (Tape 2, Side B) is that part of the on-going conversation occurring approximately two hours into the dinner party. Note that this part of the conversation, known as "Dinner at Stephen's 2B", can be heard on the cassette accompanying this thesis.

"Dinner at Stephen's 2B" involves 6 participants, 2 of them New Zealanders, the rest Australians. The participants (3 female, 3 male) were all friends, ranging in age from 27 to 38, and all sharing a common passion for the game of bridge. Although at least two of the participants came from working-class socio-economic backgrounds, the participants themselves could be considered representatives of New Zealand and Australian middle-class society (5 of the 6 hold tertiary qualifications).

The transcription of "Dinner at Stephen's 2B" in Appendix A is preceded by brief biographical details of the participants, and a summary of transcription conventions. A full discussion of data collection methodology and transcription is given in Chapter Four.

The continuous excerpt

Although "Dinner at Stephen's 2B" represents only one short segment of the entire conversation (which runs to 130 pages), its length raised a major practical problem in the preparation of this thesis: how much data to analyse?

There are currently two common, and competing, approaches to analysing conversational data: the "illustrative fragments" approach, favoured by the ethnomethodologists, and the "limited comprehensive" approach, favoured by linguists.

⁷ A transcript of the complete conversation (a continuous recording from the moment permission to tape had been given, until inebriation and fatigue resulted in general incoherence), and copies of all the cassettes are available on request.

The former approach has two main advantages over the "comprehensive" approach. Firstly, it means that a variety of different conversational material can be shown to be related as sharing general features of conversational organisation (e.g types of turn sequences); secondly, problems for the theory or analysis can be avoided by carefully selecting the excerpts used. However, the criticisms levelled against this approach (e.g. by Edmondson 1981:50) are that it does not lead to general principles by which any (other) conversational excerpt might be analysed.

The "limited comprehensive" approach is that generally favoured by linguistic models, but criticised by those sympathetic to ethnomethodology, for example Levinson:

There is also a tendency to take one (or a few) texts (often constructed by the analyst) and to attempt to give an analysis in depth of all the interesting features of this limited domain (Levinson 1983:286)

Although the empirical version of this approach has the advantages of offering the possibility of exhaustive analysis, it has the disadvantage that the excerpts chosen are generally brief and discrete, and as such do not expose the very issue that this thesis set out to explore: sustained interactional continuity.

In an attempt to find an alternative to both these approaches, I have framed the thesis around the analysis of a reasonably long, continuous, unabridged, excerpt which occurs during "Dinner at Stephen's 2B".

This is the segment printed in bold type in the transcript, beginning "this has been a long conversation", and extending for approximately 5 pages, to the line "yea, take her to the movies" (pages 13-18 of Appendix A). This excerpt will be presented and discussed in detail in each different chapter of the thesis, and will be used to exemplify the different stages and dimensions in the analysis of conversational structure proposed in the thesis.

This particular excerpt was chosen as, being mid-way through the evening, participants had not yet become intoxicated, but any possible apprehension about being tape-recorded had worn off. However, I would suggest that the excerpt is not only a good example of the kind of talk that was going on in this conversation in particular, but that it is also fairly representative of the type of casual talk that current models of conversation are so inadequate to describe⁸.

⁸ However, it is not claimed that "Dinner at Stephen's" is representative of casual conversation in all cultures or amongst all social groups. Thus, the model of conversational structure developed in this thesis is limited by the data, and without further research it is not possible to be certain of its relevance to other subsets or other speech communities.

The challenge of the data

Based on the definition proposed by Halliday et al (1985), "Dinner at Stephen's" can be classified as an example of "casual conversation", a variety of talk where, overall:

- 1) there are topics - but no topic control
 - 2) there are interactants - but no status relations
 - 3) there are turns - but no turn assignment.
- (Halliday et al 1985:23)

This definition situates casual conversation within the interpersonal dimension of interactive situations, modelled in systemic theory through the register variable of personal tenor. Extending on Halliday's initial interpretation of personal tenor as describing the "role relationships" in interactive situations (Halliday 1987:144), Poynton suggests that personal tenor in fact involves clines along three dimensions:

- 1) the POWER relationships between interactants;
 - 2) the FREQUENCY of CONTACT between interactants; and
 - 3) the AFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT between interactants.
- (Poynton 1984:24-16)

Halliday et al's definition of casual conversation relates it to the POWER dimension, through the principle of reciprocity (Poynton 1984:26). Casual conversation is thus characterized as free from control; interactants share equally (if they wish) in the process of creating and exchanging experiential, textual, and interpersonal meanings.

However, "Dinner at Stephen's" in general, and the continuous excerpt in particular, combines three characteristics which set it apart from many casual conversation corpora studied to date⁹, and which (not coincidentally) pose a considerable challenge to current approaches to conversation analysis:

- a) the conversation is MULTIPARTY, rather than DIALOGIC
- b) the conversation is SUSTAINED, rather than COMPLETED
- c) the type of talk is CONFLICTUAL rather than CONSENSUS-ORIENTED¹⁰

The potential implications of each of these aspects on the description of conversational structure will be briefly outlined here, and then taken up in more detail at relevant points throughout the thesis.

⁹ For example: Ventola's (1979) data is dialogic, brief, and consensual; Malcolm's (1985b) data is also dialogic and consensus-targeted (although Malcolm's description of her data as "casual" is somewhat questionable in light of Halliday et al's definition); Burton's (1980) data is confrontational but dialogic.

¹⁰ These characteristics link "Dinner at Stephen's" most closely to the conversational corpora of Horvath's long conversations (see Horvath & Eggin in press), Tannen's (1983) dinner party conversation, and Slade's (1989) workplace talk, but none of these analysts has focused explicitly on the relation between these characteristics and the description of conversational structure.

Multilogue

The discourse analysis literature reveals an assumption that dialogue and multilogue are essentially the same: multilogue is only dialogue with more people, such that any differences occasioned by the presence of more than two participants only marginally affect interactive structure. For example, Burton agrees with Schegloff & Sacks (1973/74) that:

conversations with two interactants have a subtly different structure from conversations with three or more interactants. (Burton 1978:135)

In addition, there is an overwhelming tendency for conversation analysis to focus on dialogic data, with the obvious consequence that models of interaction are also overwhelmingly dialogic.

Within the ethnomethodological model, the explanation of interaction is fundamentally dialogic, based on the two participant roles of current speaker and potential next speaker. Thus:

P1 = current speaker
P2 = potential next speaker

In discussing how their turn-taking system deals with multiparty talk, Sacks et al (1974:712-714) consider that three-party talk is reduced to dialogue by the simple fact that the system is binomial, dealing only with current and next turn. Thus, from the point of view of the turn-taking system, there are always only these two interactant roles: current speaker, and next speaker. What changes is merely the number of potential next speakers.

However, they point out that with four or more interactants the situation is more complicated. They indicate two possibilities:

1) that there is one conversation with 3 or more potential next speakers. Thus:

P1 = current speaker
P2 } = potential
P3 } = next speakers

2) that there are two or more concurrent conversations: the possibility thus arises of there being more than one turn-taking system in operation. Thus:

P1 = current speaker
P2 = potential next speaker

P3 = current speaker
P4 = potential next speaker

Given the complexity of having two turn-taking systems operating concurrently, Sacks et al suggest that there is a general effort to avoid competing systems by keeping everyone in the same conversation:

If there is an interest in retaining, in a single conversation, some current complement of parties..., then the turn-taking system's means for realizing that effort involve 'spreading turns around' since any pair of parties not getting or taking a turn over some sequence of turns can find their mutual accessibility for getting into a second conversation. (Sacks et al 1974:713)

Beyond suggesting the general strategy of "giving everyone a go", Sacks et al (1974) establish the general ethnomethodological position that interaction is reducible to an abab alternation (Schegloff 1968/72:375).

Linguistic models of interaction have retained, indeed reinforced, this reductionism of multiparty talk to dialogue. The positing of only two interactive roles, those of "speaker" and "listener", goes back to Saussure's "boucle de communication" (de Saussure 1966:11-12), and has been reinforced by models such as Labov's, where the interactive world involves just two perspectives:

Given two parties in a conversation, A and B, we can distinguish as "A-events" the things that A knows about but B does not; as "B-events" the things which B knows but A does not; and as "AB-events" knowledge which is shared equally by A and B. (Labov 1970:80)

Such dialogic bias forms the basis of systemic models of interaction, such as Berry and Martin's models of exchange/conversational structure. Berry's (1981a) re-labelling of Labov's distinction into the two discourse roles of primary vs secondary knower/actor maintains the simple binomial split, and makes no attempt to recognize or analyse roles that may exist in situations of more than two potential participants.

Thus, although there has often been tacit recognition of the difference between interactions involving only two participants, and those involving three or more, there has generally been little attention given to just how extra participants change the interactive demands and dynamics, i.e. the impact on conversational structure.

However, as the work reported later in this thesis will show, the multiparty nature of the data has at least five important implications for describing conversational structure:

1) **concurrent conversations:** the most immediately obvious implication of multilogue is the occurrence of concurrent conversations. The issues this raises, quite apart from the practical problems of transcription, are:

- how one unit (a conversation) can successfully contain numerous distinct and co-occurring other units of a similar type.
- the achievement of separation and re-unification;
- competition and survival: why some conversations are "swamped" by others.

2) **multiple reactions to a single move**: in a conversation involving six participants, if we assume that there is only one initiating speaker, it is possible for there to be up to five reactions to a single initiation, and it is indeed common for there to be at least two reactions.

3) **cumulative relations between moves**: in addition, given the essentially linear production of conversation, some of those reactions will occur AFTER others, and the possibility then arises of cumulative reactions: that a given move is a reaction NOT JUST to the non-adjacent initiating move, but also to (some of) the intervening moves produced by other speakers.

4) **"audience configuration"**: the presence of three or more interactants forces us to recognise that the role of "potential next speaker" in the dyadic situation is actually a fusion of two different roles accorded by the opening speaker: the role of addressee, and the role of potential next speaker. In the triadic situation these roles may be separated, and distributed around the group. Thus, with only three interactants, at least 2 different "audience configurations" are possible:

a) S = speaker
 A1 = addressee + potential next speaker
 A2 = observer + potential next speaker.
 or

b) S = speaker
 A1 and A2 = both addressees and potential next speakers.

The main implication of this separation of roles is to introduce the possibility of "performance" into the conversation, where 2 or more interactants converse for the benefit of the attending "audience".

5) **"knowledge" roles**: as well as affecting the interactional roles we need to recognise, multilogue considerably complicates the possibilities of shared and unshared knowledge in negotiation. Thus, given only three parties to a conversation, we will need to distinguish not only:

A-events
 B-events
 C-events

But also:

A-B events
 B-C events
 A-C events
 A-B-C events

And the possibilities become increasingly complex as the number of interactants increases.

It is obvious that each of these knowledge configurations presents different possibilities for responses to initiations according to the access to shared knowledge of the different interactants. It therefore offers a powerful motivation for generating further talk, as those "in the know" share relevant information with others, or those excluded demand access to the negotiation by requesting further information.

Thus the analysis of multiparty talk forces the recognition that interaction is not simply reciprocal exchange, and raises a number of specific issues for the description of conversational structure.

Continuation

The majority of linguistic analyses of interaction have tended to focus not only on dialogic interactions, but also on "task-oriented", or pragmatically-motivated interactions, such as buying & selling encounters. One often taken-for-granted aspect of such interactions is that their successful achievement depends on the successful COMPLETION of the interaction. For example, when you go to buy something, the success of the interaction is that AFTER the interaction (as a result of it) you have the goods you wanted.

However, the kind of talk going on in "Dinner at Stephen's" is very different. Its classification as an example of casual conversation, based on the definition given earlier, related it to the interpersonal dimensions of interactive situations. The popular interpretation of casual conversation as "talk for talk's sake" is generally rephrased by linguists, who describe it as a kind of talk motivated not by the achievement of a specific pragmatic goal, but motivated by, driven by, interpersonal goals which can be broadly glossed as those of "creating/maintaining rapport" (see Ventola 1979, Hasan 1983, Halliday et al 1985, Plum 1986, Hasan [in press]).

These interpersonal goals are such that they can only be achieved as long as the talk goes on. To put it simply, you never reach a point where you can say, "Good. Well I've maintained my social relations, so now I can go". The only "achievement" of conversation is in the actual doing of it, and hence the motivation is NOT to COMPLETE the interaction, but to keep the conversation going.

The implications of this difference in motivation for a model of conversational structure are two-fold: on the one hand for the PERSPECTIVE we adopt, and on the other for the TYPE OF STRUCTURE we will have to describe:

1) PERSPECTIVE: The motivation to keep conversation going imposes on the analyst a dynamic perspective. There has been, particularly within systemic linguistics, much debate about the dynamic/synoptic distinction (cf. Martin 1985, O'Donnell 1986, Ventola 1984b, 1987, Ravelli 1990). However, the difference between them is often obscured in technical and very theoretical discussions. In brief, we can make a distinction between a perspective which focuses on the overall analysis of a static discourse as the product of an interaction, versus a perspective which focuses on the close-up analysis of the discourse as an unfolding process.

Given that until recently discourse analysis was dominated by the synoptic perspective, the implications of "completion" in the modelling of interactive structure were not appreciated. Synoptic analysis reinforced notions of the "naturalness" of complete texts, just as the existence of "complete" interactions reinforced models of synoptic structure such that the fact of COMPLETION is typically essential to the identification and success of a discourse-(type). (e.g. Hasan 1985c).

But the analysis of casual conversation makes a dynamic perspective the only possible one. Because we do not have a "complete" text, nor any prospect of predicting such a text, we are forced to work with a process, developing a blow-by-blow, or rather a move-by-move analysis.

2) STRUCTURE. The structural implications of open-ended interactions are that we will be describing not a structure of completion but a structure of generation. This seems to mean that whilst we can model pragmatic interactions multivariately, as a sequence of functionally distinct generic stages, we will need to model conversational structure univariately¹¹, as a potentially infinite sequence of the re-occurrences of the same functional element. Although suggestions that the structure of dialogue is better approached as a logical structure have been made on a number of occasions (e.g. Halliday et al 1985:22, Halliday 1985b:87), they have not yet been implemented to describe the structure of sustained conversation.

Conflict

The third challenge the data offers is its essentially conflictual nature.

Much of the data on which models of interaction have been based has either dealt with very specific registers (e.g. Sinclair & Coulthard 1975), or, if everyday interactions, has focused on transactional interactions (e.g. Ventola's 1987 service encounter texts, and Martin's i.p/1989 exemplifications from the "Talking Shop" discourse¹², or Hasan's 1985a), or on highly limited exchanges of factual information (e.g. Berry's 1981a analysis of quiz shows). These types of interactions are characterizable as AIMING AT CONSENSUS; that is, the interaction is generally NON-CONTROVERSIAL.

But as Burton, in her analysis of dramatic dialogue, pointed out, a key characteristic of much casual conversation is not consensus but indeed the presence of CONFLICT:

Crudely, my interactants, fictitious as they are, "argue", "try to assert themselves", "insult each other, "refuse to do what they're told", "don't bother to be polite" and so on. (Burton 1978:134)

¹¹ The terms multivariate and univariate will be explained in Chapter Three. However, see Halliday (1981b) and (1985a:ch7;) and Martin (1985) for discussions.

¹² "Talking Shop: Demands on Language": a video (largely involving semi-scripted job interviews and shop scenes), prepared by Film Australia, with accompanying notes prepared by M.A.K. Halliday and Millicent E. Poole, and published by Film Australia 1978.

As a result of these features, Burton rejects the "collaborative-consensus model" of interaction, underlying the Sinclair & Coulthard (1975) system, in favour of a model of conversational structure where the basic move options following an initiating move are either to SUPPORT or to CHALLENGE (Burton 1978, 1980.)

Although Burton's data was fictitious, authentic casual conversation does reveal the type of conflict she identified. "Dinner at Stephen's" is an excellent example of conversation that would be difficult to describe as consensus-oriented, with the continuous excerpt illustrating that interactants frequently disagree, argue, contradict, refuse, and otherwise adopt generally "confrontational" behaviours.

However, although such conversation is characterized by interpersonal conflict, as Halliday points out, the conflict is based on an essential textual consensus:

- A text is a process of sharing: the shared creation of meaning....It should be made clear that this sharing is a purely textual consensus. You and me agree to share in the semiotic process; without that, there can be no text. There is no implication of consensus of any other kind; we may be creating text in order to quarrel. (Halliday in press:1)

There are two major structural issues raised by the degree of conflict in conversation:

1) it brings into question our notion of expected or acceptable or appropriate interactive behaviours. In particular, it may force us to acknowledge the register limitations of our speech function categorizations. Thus, the ethnomethodological notion of "preferred and dispreferred seconds" (see Levinson 1983:307-308), or systemic models of "expected" vs "discretionary" responses (Halliday 1985:69), or Martin's "synoptic vs dynamic moves" (i.p/1989:32-46) are all based on discourse types where CONFLICT is atypical, and therefore theorized as the MARKED option. Yet, if casual conversation reveals the MARKED options as the TYPICAL ones (thus, after a statement of opinion, it is disagreement, not agreement that is predicted), then we will be forced not only to be more specific in our descriptions of these so-called "marked" categories (generally the poor cousins in accounts of speech function), but also to qualify our notions of "markedness" to be contextually sensitive.

2) it raises the question of the association between a motivation of CONFLICT and a structure of CONTINUATION, as opposed to a motivation of CONSENSUS and a structure of COMPLETION, and in particular it challenges the modelling of conversational structure through consensus-dependent formulations. The underlying association between consensus, completion, and conversational structure is implicit in most linguistic models of conversational structure, and is at the basis of, for example, Martin's formulation of the exchange:

The exchange cannot proceed towards closure until some consensus is reached.
(Martin i.p/1989:43)

There is a double inappropriacy to such a formulation when applied to conversation, where not only is the aim for the exchange NOT to reach completion, but where it is disagreement, unshared knowledge, the ABSENCE of consensus that appears to provide the main impetus to keep the conversation going.

Horvath & Eggins' (in press) study of Opinion Texts in conversation explored this connection between CONFRONTATION (or, rather, the absence of consensus) and the potential MAINTENANCE of talk, arguing that disagreement is text-generating, whereas where there is agreement, the potential for further text diminishes. That disagreement is what gives impetus to elaborated structure makes it less surprising to observe that disagreement is the usual, not the exceptional, reaction to one of the most frequent conversational openings: an expression of opinion. It would seem that competent conversationalists try to put forward opinions that can be disagreed within the interests of generating lively (i.e. sustainable) talk.

Horvath & Eggins' analysis of the structure of the Opinion Text suggests one reason why we find "polite" conversations so difficult to sustain: their forced uncontroversiality, that is their forced "agreement", limits the options for further talk on a particular topic. Thus interactants are forced to move through a wide variety of topics, continual agreement resulting in a necessarily "superficial" discussion of any one of them. And there is a constant mismatch between the underlying structure of conversation (to keep the interaction going) and the means that must be used (avoiding disagreement).

The three features of the data discussed above are not the only aspects which make "Dinner at Stephen's" an interesting and distinctive conversation. However, the suggestion is that it is these three features that will have particular implications for the description of conversational structure that the research will develop. Whilst not the focus of the research reported here, it will also be suggested that these aspects shed light on two more general questions of conversation analysis: criteria for defining conversation as a linguistic unit, and evidence for differentiating types of casual conversations.

Organization of the thesis.

The thesis is presented in two volumes. Volume 1 contains the dissertation and list of references. Volume 2 contains the Appendices, consisting of the data and analyses. An index to the appendices is provided in Volume 2.

The dissertation consists of eight chapters, divided into two parts. Part ONE aims to situate the thesis in its theoretical context, whilst part TWO concentrates on the analysis and discussion of the continuous excerpt from "Dinner at Stephen's".

Chapter Two establishes five central aspects for the description of conversational structure (identifying conversational units, developing a taxonomy of speech functions, establishing criteria for relatedness between units, integrating monologue, and describing unit sequences). The review then considers how these aspects have been described within various alternative approaches to conversation analysis, concentrating on the ethnomethodologists and the Birmingham School as those approaches most relevant to the description of interactional continuity.

Chapter Three concentrates on the systemic-functional approach to conversational structure. After briefly outlining principles of the systemic-functional model of language, the chapter traces the systemic description of interaction from the initial interpretation of interactional organisation as textual, to the structural description of the "macro" level of interaction through genre theory. I then focus on Halliday's re-interpretation of dialogic structure within the interpersonal component of the semantic system, leading to what has become known as the "stratified approach" to conversational structure. The chapter then examines Martin's elaboration of the MOOD/SPEECH FUNCTION link, and the incorporation of Berry's EXCHANGE STRUCTURE formula, as well as Ventola's extensions to the move complex, illustrating and summarizing the problems of the stratified approach when applied to casual conversational data such as "Dinner at Stephen's".

Part TWO of the thesis then deals with the procedures I followed in extending the stratified approach to describe conversational structure in "Dinner at Stephen's".

Chapter Four describes the data collection methodology used to record "Dinner at Stephen's", and reviews the issues that motivated the preparation of both a "broad" and a "narrow" transcription of the continuous excerpt.

Chapter Five develops identification criteria relevant to casual talk for the systemic UNIT of conversational analysis, the move. In basing criteria on the co-occurrence of prosodic features of rhythm and intonation with grammatical constituent boundaries, I relate the move to the dynamically signalled "turn constructional unit" of the ethnomethodologists, arguing that its semantic interpretation involves both an interactional dimension (as the unit after which turn-transfer is possible), as well as an interpersonal dimension (as the unit to which speech functions are assigned).

Chapter Six develops the description of the SYSTEM of interpersonal meaning in conversation, through the presentation of a revised and extended speech function network, arguing that extending in delicacy to capture interactional continuity involves the integration of a logical component of ideational meaning within the speech function system for describing moves in conversation.

Chapter Seven develops the description of conversational STRUCTURE, suggesting structural reticula offer an appropriate representation of the dependency relations between sequent moves, and exploring the implications of the separate schemas of both interpersonal and logical structure in the continuous excerpt.

Finally, chapter Eight briefly assesses the contribution of the thesis, both as an illustration of the possible synthesis between sociological and linguistic perspectives on conversation, and as an extension to the systemic description of conversational structure. The chapter concludes by looking again at the question "how conversation keeps going", suggesting that ultimately the explanation is a functional one, to be found in the motivation of casual conversation as an open-ended process of constructing, maintaining, and exploring social relations through interaction.

2. Relevant approaches to the analysis of conversational structure.

Neither linguists nor psychologists have begun the study of conversation; but it is here we shall find the key to a better understanding of what language really is and how it works. (Firth 1935/57:32)

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review alternative approaches to the analysis of conversational structure. The discussion focuses on the the ethnomethodological and Birmingham School approaches as those most relevant to the description of interactional continuity, although brief reference will be made to the contribution of sociolinguistic and logico-philosophic approaches to conversation analysis.

Using examples from the continuous excerpt from "Dinner at Stephen's", I begin by briefly outlining the major aspects implicated in the description of interactional continuity: the identification of units of analysis, the statement of replicable criteria for classifying them and determining their relatedness, the incorporation of monologic relations, and the description of sequential relations between units.

In assessing the extent to which the ethnomethodological approach to conversation offers a possible account of these aspects, I will review the roles of adjacency pairs, turn sequences, and the principle of sequential relevance in conversational organisation. However, I will illustrate both theoretical and practical problems by extending the ethnomethodological model to deal comprehensively with continuous conversation.

The review of the Birmingham School examines extensions to Sinclair & Coulthard's (1975) analysis of classroom interaction to describe conversation by Burton (1978, 1980, 1981), Coulthard & Brazil (1979, 1981) and Berry (1981a, 1981b, 1981c) and assesses the development of exchange structure theory. A brief comparison of similarities and differences between the Birmingham School and systemic functional linguistics provides the link to the following chapter, in which I focus on the systemic-functional approach to conversational structure.

Aspects of interactional continuity in multiparty sustained talk.

I began Chapter One by suggesting that when we ask how conversation keeps going and keeps making sense, we can make a useful distinction between two aspects of conversational continuity: topical and interactional continuity.

These can be exemplified by reference to the version of the continuous excerpt presented in Appendix B. Note that to keep turn numbers manageable, the excerpt has been divided into 4 "phases"¹, and the abbreviated references used below give PHASE NUMBER:TURN NUMBER.

On the one hand, conversation has **topical**, or **experiential**, continuity. For example, using the term "topic" to mean simply "things that get talked about", the list of topics covered in the continuous excerpt includes:

- conversation
- idiomatic expressions in French & English
- smoking
- the bridge player, Courtney
- Courtney's sister, Jill
- Marek
- wine
- Stephanie, the cleaning lady
- mess and cleanliness
- garbage collection
- social equality

Although in these eight pages we get from idioms to social equality, there is a sense in which we see the talk as a continuous flow: one topic leads to another. Talking about conversation leads to talking about idioms, and to talking about Courtney, the conversationalist; talking about Courtney leads to talking about his sister, Jill, and his friend, Marek; talking about Marek's cleanliness leads to talking about mess, and mess leads to garbage collection; and garbage collection (eventually) leads to social equality.

In fact the only real moments of topical discontinuity are those where cigarettes or wine become the topics of talk, yet even these have a certain continuity when considered within both the contexts of the whole conversation and the immediate physical context of the dinner party.

¹ This term is taken from Gregory & Malcolm's model of "communication linguistics" (see Gregory 1985a, Gregory & Malcolm 1981, Malcolm 1985a). However, the delineation of phases here is based on textual patterns, as discussed in Chapter Three.

On the other hand, the excerpt reveals an **interactional** continuity. Using the term **move²** to mean simply "what people are doing in talking", the excerpt includes such interactional moves as:

- stating information
- acknowledging
- challenging
- supporting
- questioning
- demanding
- refusing
- stating an opinion
- contradicting
- etc

Although in these eight pages we move through a broad range of interactional behaviours, there is again a continuity to that process. We find in Phase 1 that presenting information leads to its being queried by those unfamiliar with it, which leads to its being justified by those who do; which leads to its being contradicted by other information, which leads to that information being accepted or rejected. Requesting something leads to its being refused, which leads to a justification, which leads to a rejection of the excuse, which leads to conditional agreement. Similarly, in Phase 2, putting forward an opinion leads to its being agreed with or disagreed with, explained for those who don't share the information... and so on.

Even this informal account establishes that at least initially the two aspects of continuity are separable, and that whilst topical continuity appears as a "macro" pattern, carried by sequences which may span a number of turns, interactional continuity appears to be a "micro" pattern, carried by units sometimes smaller than a single turn.

Focusing explicitly on interactional continuity, as this thesis does, we can begin to list aspects of the conversational interaction that contribute to this perception of interactional continuity:

- that some moves initiate sequences of talk (P2:T1), whilst others respond (P2:T2, T3);
- that some initiations state facts (P1:T2), whilst others state opinions (P2:T1);
- that some initiations build on prior talk (P2:T6, T26) whilst others head off in a new direction (P2:T45)
- that some moves both respond and call for a response, or reinitiate (P1:T4)
- that types of responses vary in terms of their degree of support for prior moves (P2:T2 vs T3), and, simultaneously, in terms of the amount of new information they contribute; (e.g. P2:25, P2:T28, P2:T29)
- that speakers sometimes make more than one move in a single turn (P1:T8; Tb11),
- and that these moves can sometimes be related (P1:T8) and sometimes unrelated (P1:Tb11)

² The term move is used (rather than "speech act", for example) since it is the unit of conversation analysis that will be adopted in the description of "Dinner at Stephen's" (Part Two of the thesis). Its definition and identification within the systemic functional approach will be explored in Chapters Three and Five.

- that some moves relate to more than one previous turn (P1:T3)
- that some moves occur in response to a prior turn but are addressed to a different interactant (P2:T4);
- that some moves set up strong expectations for the types of moves that will follow (P1:b12) whilst others don't (P1:T1)
- that some moves close or terminate sequences (P1:Tb15, P2:T15) whereas other moves prolong or sustain the sequence (P2:T18,P2:T35)
- etc

Although this list could be considerably extended, the various aspects identified cluster around five general issues:

1) **identifying units in talk:** We need to be able to distinguish the physical organisation of interaction (its division into turns) from its functional organisation (division into units such as "moves" that are sometimes but not always equivalent to turns).

2) **classifying those units in terms of their function in the talk:** We need to establish a taxonomy of moves so that we can begin to differentiate and classify the types of initiations and the types of responses that occur in casual conversation. Unless this is to be an ad hoc classification, the task also involves making explicit the criteria which motivate and constrain the taxonomy, i.e. by which oppositions are recognized, and the description extended.

3) **establishing "relatedness" between units:** We also need replicable criteria for determining what constitutes a "relation" between the unit classes in our taxonomy. That is, criteria for determining what ties an initiation to a response, an answer to a question, or a challenge to a statement, etc.

4) **describing monologic sequences:** Given that speakers can and often do produce more than one "move" when they make a turn, we need a description of the function and relations between "monologic" moves. This description of monologue-in-interaction will have to provide not only for the possibility of multiple-unit turns at talk and their integration into the interaction, but also for the possibility that a single conversation can contain within it extended sequences at talk which reveal their own "macro" (rather than "micro") structuring, such as for example, Di's recount/narrative in Phase 3.

5) **establishing types of relations between sequent units:** We need an account of move sequences that can capture extended relatedness between moves, formalizing the structural basis for distinguishing, for example, independent from dependent sequences, terminating from re-opening sequences, strongly predicting from weakly predicting sequences, probable or acceptable sequences from improbable or unacceptable ones, etc.

This involves both a description of potential structural relations between moves, and an underlying position with respect to the determinism or otherwise of sequences in conversation.

These five issues (**units, taxonomy, relatedness, monologue, and structure**) are taken as the major tasks which this thesis needs to address in order to develop a description of conversational structure.

Approaches in conversation analysis

The field of conversation analysis is now sufficiently developed for there to exist numerous reviews of alternate approaches to conversation, including for example: Coulthard (1977), Brown & Yule (1983), Malcolm (1987), Taylor & Cameron (1987), and Levinson (1983).

In the description of conversational organisation, these reviews generally acknowledge contributions from a range of traditions, including ethnomethodology (e.g. Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4, Sacks et al 1974), ethnography of speaking (e.g. Tannen 1979, 1983), sociolinguistics (e.g. Schiffrin 1980, 1985a, 1985b, 1987); Speech Act Theory (e.g. Labov 1970, Labov & Fanshel 1977, Edmondson 1981); Pragmatics (e.g. Grice 1967/75, Leech 1983); the Birmingham School (e.g. Burton 1979, 1980, 1981; Coulthard & Brazil 1979; Berry 1981a, 1981b, 1981c); and systemic functional linguistics (Halliday & Hasan 1976, 1985; Ventola 1979, 1987).

Given the five aspects identified above as the focus of my research, it is principally the ethnomethodological, and "structuralist-functionalist" models of the Birmingham and systemic approaches that are most relevant since, as the subsequent review will suggest, they have explicitly explored these dimensions of interactional continuity. However, both the socio-linguistic perspectives of ethnography and sociolinguistics, and the logico-philosophic approaches of Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics, offer insights and points of contact with the research undertaken here.

For example, Tannen's work on sociolinguistic styles (1980, 1979, 1983) suggests the potential extension of the description of interactional continuity to the analysis of interactional styles across different social groupings.

Asking questions about overall characteristics of conversational discourse, rather than about its sequential organisation, Tannen's approach to conversation can most closely be related to ethnography of speaking cross-cultural perspective on discourse (Hymes 1962/74, 1964/72; Gumperz & Hymes 1964, 1972), and results in a description in terms of cultural preferences or conventions.

Despite the similarity in data sources between this thesis and Tannen's, Tannen's study is very different in both aims and approach. Although Tannen describes her underlying investigation as asking:

How do people communicate and interpret meaning in conversation? (Tannen 1983:7)

her study involves the identification and characterization of different conversational styles in terms of the kind of "rapport" they convey. She suggests that this description of conversational styles is:

- a step toward the goal of understanding conversational interaction: what accounts for the impressions made when speakers use specific linguistic devices? What accounts for the mutual understanding or lack of it in conversation? (Tannen 1983:7)

Tannen identifies a number of stylistic devices as an indication of alternative strategies in creating rapport, and relates the stylistic variation to Lakoff's "Rules of Rapport":

1. Don't impose (Distance)
 2. Give options (Deference)
 3. Be friendly (Camaraderie)
- (Lakoff, in Tannen 1983:11)

The features Tannen identifies include: topic choice, pacing, narrative strategies, and "expressive paralinguistics" such as pitch and voice quality. Tannen's analysis results in statements of "preferences" and conventions. For example, preferences under the "narrative strategies" category include:

- a. Tell more stories
 - b. Tell stories in rounds
 - c. Prefer internal evaluation (i.e. point of a story is dramatized rather than lexicalized)
- (Tannen 1983:30-31)

Tannen suggests that use of these features characterizes "a high involvement style" (1983:31), and she compares two groups of interactants at her dinner party in terms of whether they used and expected this "high involvement style" or, instead, "a high-considerateness style" (1983:31)

Unfortunately for those wishing to extend her analysis, linguistic description constitutes a relatively minor part of her work, which consists of a largely anecdotal commentary on "what the speakers are doing" in the particular conversation she is looking at.

Whilst the identification of speaker styles is not the explicit focus of this research, the description of interactional continuity developed in Chapters Five to Seven should provide explicit and replicable procedures for the future comparison of interactional styles, perhaps with the broader objective of interpreting preferences for semantic options in terms of interactional "codes", by analogy with the work of Bernstein (1971/75).

A different type of sociolinguistic perspective which also has indirect relevance to the approach taken in this thesis is seen in the work of Schiffrin (1980, 1981, 1982, 1985a, 1985b, 1985c), especially Schiffrin's (1987) study of **discourse markers**.

Unlike Tannen's study, which provides an overall characterisation of features of conversational talk, Schiffrin's work is **localistic** in focus, centred on the turn as a basic unit. Her perspective also involves her in issues of sequential organisation, since she states her basic concern to be with:

the accomplishment of conversational coherence. How can what one speaker says be heard as following sensibly from what another has said? (Schiffrin 1985a:640)

Drawing on ethnomethodological insights, Schiffrin focuses on the "recipient design" of utterances:

One indication of the importance of this task is that responsibility for it is divided among both speakers and hearers: a speaker is expected to formulate an utterance so that its message is accessible to the hearer, who is then expected to demonstrate, through a next utterance, proper attention to that message. (Schiffrin 1985a:640)

As an explicit example of this recipient design, she looks at a number of "discourse markers", defined as:

sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk. (Schiffrin 1987:31)

Into this category Schiffrin groups a range of conjunctive³ elements, including: oh, well, and, but, or, so, because, now, then, y'know, and I mean.

Using a corpus collected via Labov-style sociolinguistic interviews, Schiffrin argues for the importance of doing both qualitative and quantitative/distributional analysis in order to determine the function of the different discourse markers in conversation.

Although Schiffrin's work is feature-oriented rather than structure-oriented, focusing on the function and distribution of a limited number of linguistic devices in conversation, her discussion of the functions of different markers offers useful insights in determining the status of move relations in talk.

For example, her discussion of "oh" finds a common function in its various distributional contexts, as a marker of **information management**, which "initiates an information state transition (Schiffrin 1987:99). That is, the use of OH

indicates shifts in speaker orientation...to information which occur as speakers and hearers manage the flow of information produced and received during discourse. (Schiffrin 1987:100-101).

³ See Martin (i.p/1989:ch4) for the location of these discourse markers within a systemic description of CONJUNCTIVE RELATIONS.

This description provides both a dynamic and interactional perspective on the function of the discourse marker, complementing the generally static interpretation of their semantic function as conjunctive elements.

Further complementary insights can be drawn from both Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics, which offer a logico-philosophic perspective on conversational organisation by focusing on the interpretation of utterances in discourse.

All linguistic descriptions of conversational structure owe much to Searle (1969, 1976) and Austin's (1962) notion of the illocutionary force of speech acts: that every utterance can be analysed as the realisation of the speaker's intent to "achieve" a particular purpose.

Neither Austin nor Searle were concerned with the analysis of continuous discourse, (let alone sustained casual conversation!). However, analysts such as Labov & Fanshel (1977) and Edmondson (1981) have, in different ways, taken up the implication of their work (i.e. that the speech act, or the illocutionary act, is the basic unit of discourse analysis), and have sought to develop models to describe the sequencing of speech acts in talk.

Speech act approaches to analysing continuous discourse have generally encountered a number of serious problems. Firstly, there is the problem of establishing a taxonomy of speech acts. Given Austin's suggestion that there are up to 10,000 different illocutionary acts, compiling an exhaustive taxonomy presents a daunting task, particularly as the theory is not explicit as to the criteria for identifying speech acts in talk. The motivating factors for those it does recognize (e.g. Austin's five major classes) are generally lexical, not grammatical. This makes it difficult to replicate or constrain classes in the taxonomy⁴.

Secondly, attempts to describe discourse as the sequencing of speech acts raises the problems of handling the mismatch between grammatical form and discourse function in a non-stratified language model⁵, and determining whether utterances can realise more than one speech act at a time⁶.

One study drawing on a speech act model which has had general significance within conversation analysis is that of Labov & Fanshel (1977). Although their data, a psycho-analytic interview, was somewhat remote from casual conversation, they made interactional continuity the basic issue:

⁴ This lexical basis to Speech Act Theory's taxonomizing can be contrasted with the grammatical basis of SPEECH FUNCTION description of the systemic functional approach, discussed in Chapter Four.

⁵ For a discussion of stratification within a linguistic model, and the notion of congruence as a means of handling this "mismatch", see the discussion of Halliday's (1984) and Martin's (i.p/1989) analysis of dialogue in Chapter Three.

⁶ See Taylor & Cameron (1987:51ff) for a discussion of these problems and alternative positions taken within Speech Act analyses.

The fundamental problem of discourse analysis is to show how one utterance follows another in a rational, rule-governed manner - in other words, how we understand coherent discourse. (Labov 1970:79)

Given the variety of syntactic forms that can realise a particular illocutionary force, Labov & Fanshel asked how the listener could interpret which was meant on any particular occasion.

In order to account for this, Labov & Fanshel drawn on a distinction suggested by Labov (1970, 1972a) between the world as A sees it ('A-events'), and the world as B sees it ('B-events'). They then come up with rules for interpreting utterances as the intended speech act, for example:

- * If A makes a statement about a B-event, it is heard as a request for confirmation. (Labov 1970:80)

Or, a more complex set of procedures for recognising directives:

There is a general rule for interpreting any utterance as a request for action (or command) which reads as follows:

If A requests B to perform an action X at a time T, A's utterance will be heard as a valid command only if the following pre-conditions hold: B believes that A believes (=it is an AB-event that)

1. X would be done for a purpose Y
 2. B has the ability to do X
 3. B has the obligation to do X
 4. A has the right to tell B to do X
- (Labov 1970:82)

Although this representation of discourse coherence in terms of rules of interpretation raises the problems of verification (cf. Taylor & Cameron 1987:51), in suggesting that interaction involves (in part) the distribution of knowledge, with the consequence that roles in discourse are (in part) determined by differential access to knowledge, their observations are of particular relevance to research into conversational structure. In particular, discussion later in this chapter will illustrate how the Birmingham model of the exchange developed around the definition of the exchange as the unit of information transmission in interaction (Coulthard & Brazil 1979, Berry 1981a).

Unfortunately, the various problems with the speech act model mentioned above have meant that attempts to apply speech act analysis specifically to conversational data (e.g. Edmondson 1981) have not been particularly successful or revealing⁷.

Finally, another perspective on conversation of indirect relevance to this research is that of Gricean Pragmatics, which formulates conversational behaviour in terms of general "principles" rather than deterministic rules.

⁷ In fact, see Taylor & Cameron (1987:52 ff.) for a damning critique of Edmondson's model.

At the base of the pragmatic approach to conversation analysis is Grice's **co-operative principle**. This principle seeks to account for not only how participants decide what to DO next in conversation, but also how interlocutors go about interpreting what the previous speaker has just done:

at each stage, SOME possible conversational moves would be excluded as conversationally unsuitable. We might then formulate a rough general principle which participants will be expected (*ceteris paribus*) to observe, namely: Make your conversational contributions such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. (Grice 1967/75:45)

This basic principle is then broken down into specific maxims and sub-maxims which are implicated in the CP, including maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relevance, and Manner (see Grice 1967/75:46).

Beyond the problem of verifying the analysts claims⁸ raised by pragmatic maxims, there is a further difficulty in both the generality and register-specificity of many of the maxims so far proposed for conversation. Formulated on the basis of very limited, and not necessarily authentic, data the relevance of the maxims in explaining or predicting move sequences in casual conversation such as in "Dinner at Stephen's" appears extremely doubtful.

Although the pragmatics approach to sequential relations does not lead to a comprehensive description of conversational continuity, maxims and principles provide a useful heuristic technique. If, for example, the description of interactional continuity developed in this thesis can lead to statements in the form of maxims such as "conversation keeps going with continuity", "in casual conversation interactants try to be provocative" etc., then such maxims could provide a useful means of characterising different varieties of conversation.

However, it is important to stress that maxims should be regarded as merely a shorthand summary of the results of the research. The goal of conversation analysis is to offer explicit and detailed linguistic descriptions to justify and explain any conversational maxims proposed.

Having briefly outlined the points of contact between this research and the descriptions of conversation offered by some alternate approaches to conversation analysis, I will now concentrate on those approaches most directly relevant to the description of interactional continuity. In reviewing the ethnomethodological and the Birmingham approaches to conversational structure, I will try to assess to what extent they offer the means of describing the five aspects of interactional continuity identified as central to accounting for how conversation keeps going and keeps making sense.

⁸ See Taylor & Cameron (1987:87 ff.) for a discussion of this issue in relation to Leech's (1983) work, "Pragmatics".

The Ethnomethodological approach to Conversation Analysis (ECA)

Although some might consider Levinson's judgment of the ethnomethodological approach to conversation (ECA) somewhat excessive when he states that:

the procedures employed have already proved themselves capable of yielding by far the most substantial insights that have yet been gained into the organization of conversation. (Levinson 1983:287)

few would dispute the significant role ECA has played in founding and developing conversation analysis. This is the more surprising, given that the ECA has never regarded conversation as the primary object of its inquiries. ECA analysts have always emphasized that ECA focuses on conversation because it offers a particularly appropriate and accessible resource for ethnomethodological enquiry:

Seeing the sense of ordinary activities means being able to see what people are doing and saying, and therefore one place in which one might begin to see how making sense is done is in terms of the understanding of everyday talk (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:299)

and that the approach taken to the talk is anchored within this underlying concern to uncover participants methods for behaving in social interactions:

One focuses on how people make sense of talk as a way of getting access to the examination of the way people make sense of each other's activities, and one sees that making sense of each other's talk is integral to, and often identical with, making sense of each other's doings. (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:299)

The turn-taking machine

In applying their empirical focus to conversation, the ethnomethodologists saw their task as being to account for two "grossly apparent facts" of spoken interactive data:

- 1) that only one person speaks at a time; and
 - 2) that speaker change recurs
- (Sacks et al 1974:700)

In trying to explain how it is that in conversation speakers keep taking turns, the ethnomethodologists modelled conversation as a generative mechanism, designed to fulfil two distinct functions: the determination of points of possible speaker transfer, and the selection of a next speaker:

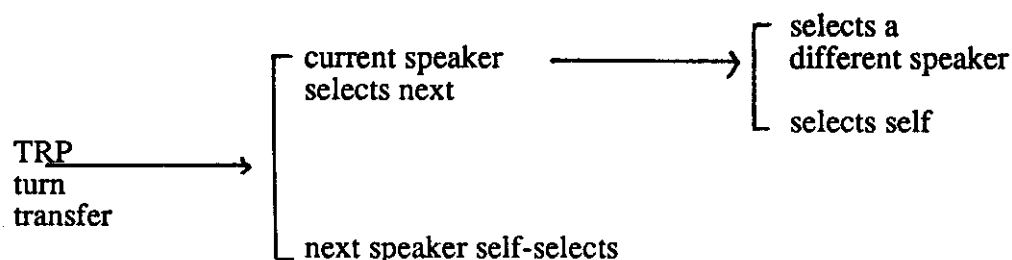
The turn-taking machinery includes as one component a set of procedures for organizing the selection of 'next speakers', and, as another, a set of procedures for locating the occasions on which transition to a next speaker may or should occur. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/74:236)

The component of the system which deals with locating points of potential speaker transfer is the **TURN CONSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENT (TCC)**. This deals with the organisation of turns into units known as **TCUs**: turn constructional units, associated with grammatical units:

There are various unit-types with which a speaker may set out to construct a turn. Unit-types for English include sentential, clausal, phrasal, and lexical constructions. (Sacks et al 1974:702)

Thus, each speaking turn is made up of one or more of these TCUs. The end of each TCU represents a point of possible speaker transfer, known as a transition relevance place, or TRP.

At each TRP the rule system for turn-allocation operates, providing for two possible turn-allocation rules: 1) that the current speaker selects the next speaker, and this includes the possibility of the current speaker self-selecting and therefore continuing to talk, i.e. having an extended turn at talk; or, 2) the next speaker self-selects. This system can be summarised as:



System 1: System of turn-allocation
(implied in Sacks et al 1974)

As constructed by Sacks et al 1974, the system, operating on a 'local' i.e. turn-by-turn basis, has one aim: to ensure that when the current speaker finishes his turn at talk, some other speaker will start talking:

In other words, the ethnomethodological account of conversation is based on the recognition of the essentially generative and iterative nature of the conversational process:

A machinery which includes the transition relevance of possible utterance completion recurrently for any utterance in the conversation generates an indefinitely extendible string of turns to talk. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/1974:237)

Through the turn-taking system, the ethnomethodological model offers one mechanistic interpretation of how conversation keeps going. The design of the conversation system reflects the major concern of conversationalists, to avoid LAPSE. In fact, given that conversation is driven by a turn-taking machinery expressly designed to keep going, what appears more problematic is how conversation could ever stop, i.e. how "closure" could be achieved.

The ethnomethodologists suggest that part of the answer lies outside the turn-taking system:

Length or closing of conversation is governed by other kinds of organization than the turn-taking system. (Sacks et al 1974:710)

The ethnomethodologists suggested that these "other kinds of organization" included the organisation of topics in conversation:

One aspect of conversation's flexibility is a direct and important consequence of this feature of its turn-taking organization: its turn-taking organization (and thus conversational activity per se) operates independently of various characterizations of what occupies its turns, the 'topic(s)' in them. (Sacks et al 1974:710)

Topical organisation in conversation

The ethnomethodologists formulated topic management as a distinct, though interrelated, aspect of conversational organisation. Sacks et al specified that one aspect the turn-taking system did NOT deal with was the TOPICS of conversation. In particular, they noted that:

What parties say is not specified in advance. (Sacks et al 1974:710)

This they note is a distinctive feature of turn-taking in conversation. They compare conversation to:

other speech exchange systems (eg ceremonies, debates, interviews etc) where the turn-taking organization employs, as part of its resources, the grosser or finer pre-specification of what shall be done in the turns it organizes. (Sacks et al 1974:710)

Unlike those generically structured interactions, they suggest that:

the turn-taking organization for conversation makes no provision for the content of any turn, nor does it constrain what is (to be) done in any turn (Sacks et al 1974:710)

However, they stressed that this does not mean there are no topical constraints, but that the constraints which operate in conversation:

are organized by systems external to the turn-taking system. (Sacks et al 1974:710)

Schegloff and Sacks interpret this distinction between interactional and topical organisation as a distinction between "local" (utterance-to-utterance) and "overall" (or topical) organisation (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4:251).

The ethnomethodologists noted the interaction of topic with generic staging. For example, their identification of "first topic slot" in telephone conversations illustrates the interaction of topic with elements of generic structure. Similarly, in the closing sections of the genre, pre-closing sequences expressly exist to enable topic work to be done if necessary.

In their description of topic management, the ethnomethodologists remarked on the general continuity of topics in talk:

A general feature for topical organization in conversation is movement from topic to topic, not by a topic-close followed by a topic-beginning, but by a stepwise move, which involves linking up whatever is being introduced to what has just been talked about, such that, as far as anybody knows, a new topic has not been started, though we're far from wherever we began. (Harvey Sacks, lecture 5, spring 1972, pp15-16, in Jefferson 1984:198)

One suggested means of achieving this continuity of "mentionables", or topics, was through the technique they called topic fitting:

it appears that a preferred way of getting mentionables mentioned is to employ the resources of the local organization of utterances in the course of the conversation. That involves holding off the mention of a mentionable until it can 'occur naturally', that is, until it can be fitted to another conversationalist's prior utterance, allowing his utterance to serve as a sufficient source for the mentioning of the mentionable (thereby achieving a solution to the placement question, the 'why that now' (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4:243)

This notion of topic fitting raised the question of the interaction of 'local' and topical organisation. Sacks demonstrated the complexities of this interaction in his notion of stepwise topic transition. In asking how conversationalists can keep alternating turns whilst maintaining topical continuity, he notes that:

in the 'answer + question' turn type, there appears to be a constraint on the kind of question that can go there, to be a question that is 'on topic' with the answer that it follows. This answer, of course, is, in turn, on topic with the question that IT follows, which then makes what further follows also connected - not just in terms of these unit-by-unit sequence connectors but within some single bit of [topical-Ed] business. (Sacks 1987:61)

As Maynard points out, observations like Sacks' mean that:

studies of topicality in conversation must not merely pay attention to 'content' but must address matters of 'structure' as well. This is nothing new, for Garfinkel (1967:28) recommended some time ago that WHAT conversationalists are talking about cannot be distinguished from HOW they are speaking. (Maynard 1980:284)

However, in their own work the ethnomethodologists did largely maintain this distinction between topic analysis and structural analysis, developing an account of HOW interactants are speaking through the concept of the adjacency pair.

Conversational structure: the adjacency pair

The identification of adjacency pairs as structurally-related turn sequences in conversation is generally assessed as the most significant contribution of the ECA:

The concept of the adjacency pair is, arguably, the linchpin of the ethnomethodological model of conversational structure.....Without the concept of the adjacency pair, there would be no ethnomethodological model of conversation (Taylor & Cameron 1987:109)

Adjacency pairs were conversational sequences identified as typically having three characteristics:

- (1) two utterance length,
- (2) adjacent positioning of component utterances,
- (3) different speakers producing each utterances. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4:238)

But what gave the adjacency pair its special status as a structural unit was that:

The component utterances of such sequences have an achieved relatedness beyond that which may otherwise obtain between adjacent utterances. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/1974:238)

To explain this special "relatedness", Schegloff & Sacks posit the existence of a typology, which both sub-classifies and matches pairs of category members. Thus:

The typology operates in two ways: it partitions utterance types into 'first pair parts' (i.e. first parts of pairs) and second pair parts; and it affiliates a first pair part and a second pair part to form a 'pair type'. 'Question-answer', 'greeting-greeting', 'offer-acceptance/refusal' are instances of pair types. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/1974:238)

An essential component of the typology of pair types is the notion of "preferred" and "dispreferred" seconds. That is, for any given first pair part, there is a preferred, or more likely, related second pair part. The concept of PREFERENCE is generally related to the notion of MARKEDNESS in linguistic theory, realised through differing degrees of structural complexity:

In essence, preferred seconds are **unmarked** - they occur as structurally simpler turns; in contrast dispreferred seconds are **marked** by various kinds of structural complexity. (Levinson 1983:307)

The structural complexity of preference status covers a variety of criteria, including the immediacy of the response, and "additional complex components", such as particles and explanations:

Thus dispreferred seconds are typically delivered: (a) after some significant delay; (b) with some preface marking their dispreferred status, often the particle well; (c) with some account of why the preferred second cannot be performed. (Levinson 1983:307)

The adjacency pair notion is a statement about structural relations between adjacent utterances, in terms of a theory of expectations:

by ordering seconds as preferreds and dispreferreds, the organization allows the notion of an adjacency pair to continue to describe a set of strict expectations despite the existence of many alternative seconds to most kinds of first parts. (Levinson 1983:308)

The structural basis of the categorization means that preferred/dispreferred status is a register-neutral description: options obtain their status as either category regardless of the frequency of association between pair parts.

The structural criteria also means that the sub-classification of second pair parts depends on the prior identification of first pair parts, and the establishment of relatedness to a preferred second pair part. However, a feature of the ECA is that both the identification of adjacency pairs, and the criteria for relating pair parts, remain informal and anecdotal.

While pairs identified include complaint/denial; compliment/rejection; challenge/rejection; request/grant; offer/accept; offer/reject; question/answer; instruct/receipt; (Sacks et al 1974:717), there is no suggestion that this list is exhaustive, nor how an exhaustive list could be compiled.

In addition, the ECA remains as vague as to what counts as evidence of a relation between pair parts: i.e. the criteria underlying the association of first and second pair parts are never made explicit. "Relatedness" is usually exemplified with the archetypical adjacency pair, the question/answer sequence. Even though the ECA work on topic led them to recognize the potential complexity of establishing relatedness:

What makes some utterance after a question constitute an answer is not only the nature of the utterance itself but also the fact that it occurs after a question with a particular content - 'answerhood' is a complex property composed of sequential location and topical coherence across two utterances, amongst other things. (Levinson 1983:293)

these "other things" were never clearly specified.

The ECA is more explicit as to the role of adjacency pairs. Schegloff & Sacks suggest two main "strategic" uses of pairs in conversation. Firstly, a frequent use of adjacency pairs is to establish a particular relatedness between a current and subsequent turn at talk. Schegloff & Sacks suggest, for example, that where interactants are:

concerned to have another talk directly to some matter they are about to talk to, they may form their own utterance up as a question, a next speaker being thereby induced to employ the chance to talk to produce what is appreciable as an answer. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/74:239)

Secondly, adjacency pairs can be used to achieve "the close ordering of sequent turns" (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/74:239). They suggest that:

wherever, for the operation of some type of organization, close ordering of utterances is useful or required, we find the adjacency pairs are employed to achieve such close ordering. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4:239)

In describing the overall (topical, or generic) organisation of conversations Schegloff & Sacks note that "at least initial sequences (e.g. greeting exchanges), and ending sequences (i.e. terminal exchanges) employ adjacency pair formats". And they suggest that:

It is the recurrent, institutionalized use of adjacency pairs for such types of organization problems that suggest that these problems have, in part, a common character, and that adjacency pair organization is specially fitted to the solution of problems of that character. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4:239)

It is this use of adjacency pairs that provides one way of ending a conversation, through "lifting the transition relevance of possible utterance completion" (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4:239).

Underlying these two different uses of adjacency pairs is their basic function as a turn-transfer technique, i.e. they function both to allocate next turn, and to exit from current turn. The use of a first pair part could be seen as:

the basic component for selecting next speaker, since it is primarily by affiliation to a first pair-part that the apparently most effective device for selecting next speaker- addressing someone- in fact works. (Sacks et al 1974:717)

Sacks et al 1974 interpret adjacency pairs as a general strategy for achieving turn-allocation. Other turn-allocation techniques they list include the use of address terms, tag questions and repair requests, all of which achieve turn-allocation by creating first pair parts of an adjacency pair (Sacks et al 1974:717-718). In functioning as both an "exit technique" for the current speaker, and a turn-allocation technique for the next speaker, adjacency pairs are related to the basic model of conversation through the turn-taking mechanism.

Given the significance of the discovery of the adjacency pair, the ECA account has received concentrated attention, and their description has been frequently criticised as an incomplete account of conversational structure, which attributes an unjustifiable determinism to conversational behaviour.

However, the ethnomethodologists respond that critics misinterpret the role suggested for the adjacency pair in conversational organisation. Apologists point out that the ECA limits the role of the adjacency pair in two ways:

a) not all talk is structured into adjacency pairs: the ECA maintains that the adjacency pair notion is only a partial, although significant, aspect of conversational organisation:

Adjacency pairs provide part of the answer to CA's main problem, which is 'how is it that parties to conversation are able to co-ordinate turns at talk in such ways that they provide appropriate steps in conversational sequence?' It just is not to be supposed that such problems are always solved in the same way, that something which provides a solution provides the only solution. Adjacency pairs are singled out because they provide one elementary and frequent solution to the problem of what to do next in conversation. (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:307)

b) that adjacency pairs are not a theory about conversational determinism, but about conversational orientation:

The point about the notion of adjacency pairs is not that it predicts, given a first, there will be a next. It explains, rather, what we might call an 'orientational fact', namely that given a first, parties will be looking for a next and hence may find that such an appropriate next did not occur. (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:308)

The adjacency pair, then, plays a central role for ECA in explaining how conversation might continue, whilst recognizing the possibility of alternatives:

(E)CA is concerned with the nature and structure of conversation, and as such one thing it is concerned to do is to capture and preserve what conversation is likely to do and it takes it that, for those involved in conversation, it does not have a definitely predictable character. Conversation is a risky business, such that one can seek to predict and control what will happen next, but one is not assured that what one projects will happen. The adjacency pair allows for just that fact, for the production of a first part of such a pair makes relevant, but does not ensure, the occurrence of a next. (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:309)

The initial identification of these 2-part structural units was the basis for two further developments in the ECA account: the recognition of sequences longer than two units; and formulation of the theoretical concept of **sequential implicativeness**.

The identification of sequences is based on recognizing that "particular relatedness" could link more than two utterances. Thus the ethnomethodologists came to recognise the existence of sequences, of which the adjacency pair was merely the minimal version:

A sequence is then not merely the name of a series of utterances that happen to occur one after another, but a type of organization that is possibly analogous to the sentence, and that may provide for predictive monitoring by a recipient. (Jefferson 1973:55)

In their description of sequences, the ethnomethodologists concentrated on those which are particularly "visible" in that they interrupt, suspend, or prepare for the on-going interaction. e.g. insertion sequences (Schegloff 1972), pre-sequences (Schegloff 1980), side-sequences (Jefferson 1972), closing sequences (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4), and repair sequences (Schegloff et al 1977). There is no suggestion that the sequence types they identified amounts to an exhaustive list, and the implicit assumption is that, like adjacency pairs, sequences fulfil only a limited role in structuring conversation.

The ECA analysis of the "sentence like" structure of sequences is generally regarded as problematic. As Coulthard & Brazil (1979:6) point out, there is a confusion of structural and semantic labelling of sequence parts, and no general statements as to how to identify structural elements.

Out of the analysis of adjacency pairs and turn sequences, however, came recognition of the more general principle underlying conversational organisation: that of the **sequential relevance** or **sequential implicativeness** of talk (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/74:296). This is the notion that a first part "projects" a relevant next action, or that:

no empirically occurring utterance ever occurs outside, or external to, some specific sequence. Whatever is said will be said in some sequential context. (Atkinson & Heritage 1984:6)

In its strongest form, sequential implicativeness is a statement that meaning is entirely the result of position-in-context:

some utterances may derive their character as actions entirely from placement considerations. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/1974:241)

The most significant placement consideration, or positional context, in conversation is, they suggest, that of ADJACENCY. Thus, wherever possible the speaker's current turn will be interpreted as implicating some action by the responder in the immediate "next turn". Similarly, the respondent's subsequent talk will, where possible, be interpreted as related to the immediately "prior turn":

generally, a turn's talk will be heard as directed to a prior turn's talk, unless special techniques are used to locate some other talk to which it is directed. (Sacks et al 1974:728)

Thus, adjacency pairs can be seen as merely the prototypical variety of this general conversational principle of sequential relevance.

This orientational perspective of talk is what gives conversation its essential nature as a dynamic process of recipient design:

My behaviour is designed in light of what I expect your reaction to it will be: i.e. you will react to it as conforming to the relevant rule or as in violation of it, thereby leading you to draw certain conclusions as to why I violated the rule.... Thus, by the inexorable fact that interactions progress, any component action inevitably is temporally situated in a sequential context, a context to which it is an addition and within which it will be interpreted, held accountable and responded to in turn. (Taylor & Cameron 1987:103)

It is because conversation is organised in this way that the ethnomethodologists suggest it is possible to develop an empirical method of doing conversational analysis.

"Empirical" Argumentation of ECA

ECA has been described as "a rigorously empirical approach which avoids premature theory construction" (Levinson 1983:286), and which, by using naturally occurring data, and inductive methods of analysis, aims to avoid intuition:

there is as little appeal as possible to intuitive judgments - they may, willy-nilly, guide research, but they are not explanations and they certainly do not circumscribe the data; the emphasis is on what can actually be found to occur, not on what one would guess would be odd (or acceptable) if it were to do so. Intuition, it is claimed, is simply an unreliable guide in this area (Levinson 1983:287)

Rejecting analyst intuition means that the ethnomethodologists reject attempts to base analyses on the presumed intentions of the speaker, since they argue these are impossible to determine. Instead, ECA focuses on what they suggest is empirically available: evidence of how the listener interprets an utterance in its emerging context.

This evidence of listener interpretation is discovered by looking at how it is "displayed" in subsequent turns:

because the interactant's own understanding of events is displayed in their subsequent responses to those events, and because those responses are either silently ratified or corrected by the producers of the original events, the professional analyst can obtain a clear grasp of the ways in which the participants themselves are analysing the interaction. The reflexive accountability of actions and the related public display of understanding thus allows the analyst a view of the 'emic' categorization of events and sequences with which the participants themselves are operating. In this way, the ethnomethodological conversation analyst employs analytical methods which are both 'emic' and empirical." (Taylor & Cameron 1987:107)

Numerous analysts have pointed to the problems this method raises for how to JUSTIFY, and therefore replicate, analyses:

what we lack here is some sort of analytical criterion for justifying the analyst's reading of the replies as displaying some particular understanding of the first turn. (Taylor & Cameron 1987:118)

A more theoretical problem raised is the "infinite regress" involved in taking this position to its logical extreme, where participants:

would have to wait until the final closing sequence of, for example,,

A; See you later

B: See you later

to discover what they had been talking about! (Taylor & Cameron 1987:122)

The implication is that despite the empiricism of their data, ethnomethodology in fact involves considerable reliance on intuition to determine just what listeners are displaying, and therefore to identify what is going on in turns at talk.

Empirical methodology of the ECA

A further aspect of the empiricism of the ECA is seen in their approach to data and data collection.

The ethnomethodologists interpreted "empirical" to mean "empirically occurring", thus ruling out data from experimentally constructed situations such as the sociolinguistic interview (cf. Labov 1970, 1981). Instead, their methodology was characterised by:

an insistence on the use of materials collected from NATURALLY OCCURRING occasions of everyday interaction. (Atkinson & Heritage 1984:2)

The emphasis on the use of "empirically occurring interaction" as the basis for research was motivated by not only their recognition of the richness and diversity of natural data (see Sacks 1972), but also by the express possibility of experimental methods influencing the data⁹.

The tape-recording of naturally occurring data was the only means of avoiding the additional pitfalls of analyst bias or error:

nothing that occurs in interaction can be ruled out, a priori, as random, insignificant or irrelevant. The pursuit of systematic analysis thus requires that recorded data be available, not only for repeated observation, analysis, and reanalysis, but also for the public evaluation of observations and findings that is an essential precondition for analytic advance. (Atkinson & Heritage 1984:4)

The use of natural talk, and the detailed transcription conventions developed by Jefferson to represent it¹⁰, did a great deal to elevate the status of everyday talk within linguistic research.

However, faced with the quantity of data that natural methods inevitably generate, the ECA made their corpora manageable by adopting a microscopic focus in their analysis, concentrating on:

the detailed study of small phenomena (Sacks 1984:24)

Hence, for example, ethnomethodological studies of such conversational behaviours as the use of Uh huh (Schegloff 1981), the telling of dirty jokes (Sacks 1975), and timing in the use of address terms (Jefferson 1973).

Despite their close-up focus on natural conversational data, the ethnomethodologists made it clear that neither language, nor the linguistic variety of conversation, were the object of study:

the kind of phenomena I deal with are always transcriptions of actual occurrences in their actual sequence. But my research is about conversation only in this incidental way: that conversation is something that we can get the actual happenings of on tape and that we can get more or less transcribed; that is, conversation is simply something to begin with. (Sacks 1984:26)

⁹ For Labov's discussion of the observer's paradox and alternatives to the sociolinguistic interview, see Labov (1970:47-52)

¹⁰ See Chapter Four for an example and discussion of these transcription conventions.

Their relation of data to theory was an explicitly **inductive** one, where:

We will be using observation as a basis for theorizing (Sacks 1984:25)

resulting in practice in what could be described as a "brainstorming" approach to data:

When we start out with a piece of data, the question of what we are going to end up with, what kind of findings it will give, should not be a consideration. We sit down with a piece of data, make a bunch of observations, and see where they will go. (Sacks 1984:27)

Thus, the ethnomethodologists' method involved recording data from various situations that fell into their areas of general interest ("human interaction"). However, not only was there no established theory to be "verified" by the data, but also there was no prior determination of the questions which would be asked, once the data was gathered.

This underlying sociological perspective accounts for one of the major idiosyncracies of the ECA: their failure to define technical terms. As Coulthard & Brazil 1979 point out specifically in relation to their analysis of sequences:

they do not attempt to define their descriptive categories but instead use 'transparent' labels like misapprehension sequence, clarification, complaint, continuation, pre-closing. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:2)

Both Coulthard & Brazil (1979) and Eggins (1986) exemplify some of the problems this creates for providing replicable methods of analysis.

The ECA and aspects of interactional continuity in "Dinner at Stephen's".

The above overview now allows us to situate the specific thesis question ("how conversation keeps going and keeps making sense") within an ECA. Here we can see that one possible re-phrasing of it might be to ask:

- how speakers keep the turn-taking system going (i.e. how they achieve both turn-transfer and turn-allocation)?

Formulated in these terms, it would seem to involve examining how speakers create a particular relatedness between turns that avoids either lapse or closure.

One way of assessing how fruitful such an approach to interactional continuity might be is to now consider whether, and to what extent, an ECA addresses the five major issues discussed in the first section of this chapter.

1) UNITS of analysis: The first problem in perusing an ECA is determining what unit, or units, the analysis recognizes. The basic structural unit the ethnomethodologists identify, i.e. the units which enter into adjacency pairs or other sequences, are generally referred to as "utterances", but the identification of utterances is not made explicit. By inference, utterances are generally equivalent to sentences, or parts thereof wherever a turn consists of less than a "whole" sentence.

However, there are two problems with working with the utterance as basic unit. Firstly, identifying sentences in interactive talk is not straightforward (for example, how many sentences are there in P1:Ta12, or P1:Tb12?).

Secondly, there is some doubt as to whether the TCU is not in fact the basic analytic unit. TCUs, generated by the turn-constructural component of the system, realise the 'possible completion points' of speaker turns, and therefore appropriate moments for the turn-transfer to occur. The 'possible completion points' of TCUs were equated with the :

'possible completion points' of sentences, clauses, phrases, and one-word constructions, and multiples thereof. (Sacks et al 1974:721)

By relating the function of pair parts to the turn-taking systems of turn-transfer and turn-allocation, the ethnomethodologists imply that the basic units involved are dynamically created TCUs. But the problem with TCUs is that it is not clear WHICH grammatical constituent should be taken as realising a TCU on any given occasion. For example, how does the analyst know that a TCU has been reached but the speaker merely self-selected and continued, as opposed to no TCU boundary having yet been reached? For example, where are the TCU boundaries in P1:T8, Ta12, Tb12 etc? Suggestions that prosodic phenomena signal boundaries have not been systematized by the ECA!

So we have both competing analytical units and inexplicit identification criteria for either alternative.

Whilst it would seem that the TCU is a more theoretically consistent analytic unit for the ECA, capturing the dynamic creation of a conversational unit as opposed to the synoptic sentence, it is currently not yet reliably identifiable.

2) CLASSIFYING units: The informal nature of the ECA taxonomy of adjacency pairs raises problems as soon as we try to analyse specific turns in even the first phase of the continuous excerpt. Firstly, there is no way of reliably determining which turns/utterances are parts of adjacency pairs. For example, is P1:T2 the first pair part of an adjacency pair? And what of T5 & 6?, T9, Tb13? The only really obvious candidates for pair status in Phase 1 are T4 & 5, Ta12 & Ta13, and Tb11 & Tb12, and some of these raise problems of classification. While the last is an offer/refusal pair, the first two are question/answer sequences, but of obviously different types: T4 queries or even challenges, whereas Ta12 merely seeks confirmation, but neither of these sub-categories is well-established in the taxonomy, nor how these pairs relate to other "standard" question/answer pairs.

Similar problems of subclassification arise in Phase 2 if we consider T1 to be an assessment (Levinson 1983:336), then Ts 2 & 3 look like two quite different kinds of disagreements.

3) DETERMINING "relatedness": The classification of pairs is closely tied up with the criteria used to establish that pair parts are in fact related. So the problems here are largely subsumed by those already noted above, for example in Phase 1 whether and on what criteria T6 & 7 are related to T8, or in Phase 2 whether both T2 and T3 are related to T1 or not. Less obvious problems are whether P2:T5 can be said to be related to T4, and just what and how T8 relates to prior talk etc

4) MONOLOGUE: although the ethnomethodologists explicitly recognise that the same speaker continuing to talk is merely the operation of one of the turn-taking systems options to avoid "lapse", they do not address the general question of how separate TCUs might relate to each other, i.e. how many TCUs can fill a pair part? There is no suggestion of how to treat what appear to be different types of relations between the components that make up extended turns, such as P1:T1, T8, Ta12, Tb12 etc. In particular, it is not clear how "much" of a turn fills a pair part: for example, does all of Tb12 count as the second pair part "refusal", or are there other elements (eg excuse, justification) that need to be separated out?

5) SEQUENCE: The focus by ethnomethodologists on a very restricted number of sequences limits its application to the continuous excerpt, since a very large percentage of the turns are not elements in any structurally described sequences. Jefferson's work does provide a possible interpretation of Ts 4-5 as some kind of misapprehension sequence, but like the example Coulthard & Brazil (1979:4) discuss, this does not actually have the insertion sequence structure that Jefferson (1972) attributes to such sequences: T3 is not a first-pair part, and there is no pair to be completed or resumed. Nor does Jefferson's description deal with the apparent continuation of the sequence into T9, 10, & a11. Similarly, although P2:T4 also seems as though it should be some kind of "side-sequence", there is no structural description in ECA work that could describe this sequence, either as consisting of only one turn (T4), or as an extended sequence including T5.

Applying an ECA to the continuous excerpt suggests that, at least in its current form, the ECA structural model is both difficult to apply and to interpret. The most serious reservation is it appears unable to capture two very significant aspects contributing to the interactional continuity of the continuous excerpt: (*Phase 2*)

- a) it cannot capture the dual functioning of turns. For example, it cannot capture that T6 is both a reaction (i.e. second pair part) to T5 and possibly an initiation (i.e. first-pair part) to T8.
- b) it cannot capture the "chaining" of reactions: by limiting adjacency relations to pairs, it cannot capture that Tb13 is both a reaction to Tb12 and is itself reacted to in Tb14.

In general, then, there are two problems with the ECA as a perspective within which to analyse interactional continuity:

1) it is **NON-EXPLICIT**: it is not clear what the units are, what the taxonomy is, how to recognize structural relations, or how to assign structural positions.

2) it is **NON-COMPREHENSIVE**: the ECA produces a significant category of **UNANALYSED UNITS**: i.e. turns or utterances which do not form either pairs or sequence parts. Whilst acknowledging that the ECA never claimed that either adjacency pairs or sequence types constituted an exhaustive description of conversational organisation, the problem still remains: What to do with all the bits left out. In particular, how is the analyst to decide whether it is a question of having to discover other kinds of structural organisation, or whether the structural categories of adjacency pairs and sequences have to be extended to deal with the specific data?

There are strong reasons for suggesting that in order to answer such questions, description will need to be based on a close-up focus on the linguistic patterns in the data. Reliance on listener display to analyse interactive sequences raises not only the problems of validity and replicability raised above, but is also inherently biased towards exposing patterns only where there are problems, or discontinuities in the talk. It is no accident that so many ethnomethodological studies have been of such "trouble talk"¹¹. Such a methodology would seem inherently unsuited to perusing the description needed here, where the focus is on how continuity is successfully achieved, and how conversation is successfully maintained.

Despite the practical problems that have been illustrated with the ECA, developments in the analysis of conversational structure should not lose sight of two major insights of the ECA. Firstly, through the description of the infinitely generative turn-taking mechanism, with its turn-transfer and turn-allocation systems, comes recognition of the inherently open-ended structure of conversational interactions.

Secondly, through accounts of adjacency pairs, sequences, and sequential implicativeness, the ECA has demonstrated that the achievement of meaning in interaction occurs, and must be analysed, dynamically, by determining the relationships established sequentially in the (unfolding) process of talk.

¹¹ For example Jefferson's (1972, 1984,) work on "trouble talk"; Schegloff et al's (1977) description of repair strategies; Maynard's (1980) approach to topic shifts and changes; as well as Schegloff & Sacks (1973/4) on the "problem" of achieving openings and closings in conversation, etc.

Structuralist-functionalist approaches

The label "structuralist/functionalist" is used here to include two major approaches to conversation analysis. Firstly, the Birmingham School, established through the work of Sinclair & Coulthard (1975), whose approach to discourse analysis has been extended beyond classroom discourse to conversation by Burton (1978, 1980), Coulthard & Brazil (1979, 1981), and Berry (1981a, 1981b, 1981c)¹²; secondly, the systemic-functional approach, whose early analysis of cohesion in discourse in Halliday & Hasan (1976), has subsequently been developed to describe structure in interactive discourse, through the work of Halliday (1984, 1985a, 1985b, in press), Hasan (1983, 1985a, 1985b, in press), Martin (1979, 1981a, 1983, 1984b, 1985a, i.p/1989), and Ventola (1979, 1983, 1984a, 1984b, 1987, 1988).

These two schools share a common approach to conversation in that they both seek to describe conversation as a distinctive, highly organized level of language." (Taylor & Cameron 1987:5)

Structural-functional approaches interpret questions about interactional continuity as asking:

"What precisely is 'conversational structure'?" (Taylor & Cameron 1987:5):

and attempt to relate the description of conversational structure to that of the other units, levels, and structures of language.

Beyond these general aims, the two approaches also share a common origin, in the socio-semantic linguistic theory of J.R. Firth (see Firth 1935, 1951, 1950, 1957, 1964; and Palmer 1968), particularly as developed by Halliday in the early description of scale-and-category grammar (Halliday 1961, Halliday & McIntosh 1966). As a result, there are a number of shared premises underlying their their general theoretical positions:

- 1) Both approaches interpret language in terms of a functional grammar: an explicit, multilayered representation of grammatical meaning as function in context;
- 2) Both therefore adopt key notions from Halliday's early grammatical description, in particular the notions of:

rank: constituent organisation as a basic organising feature of linguistic stratum;
realisation: as the relationship between strata, i.e. between grammar and phonology, and between discourse and grammar.
delicacy: a scale of degree of detail, or logical priority, in description.

- 3) Both approaches set up a separate stratum for the description of discourse, distinct from the grammatical stratum, recognizing distinct discourse units.

¹² See also Stubbs (1983), McTear (1985), and Wells et al (1979) for extensions of the Birmingham School approach to other discourse varieties.

There are also convergences in how the two approaches specifically analyse conversational structure:

- 4) Both approaches currently model conversational structure in terms of at least two discourse strata (move, and exchange).
- 5) There is an association of the discourse unit move with functional units of interactive talk, i.e. speech functions.
- 6) The sequencing of moves into larger interactive units is described through "exchange structure", i.e. a multivariate structural formula applying at the rank immediately above the move.

However, there are a number of important respects in which the two approaches diverge, both in their general description of language, and in their specific description of conversational structure:

- 1) **priority to system or to structure:** Although both approaches depart from Firth's initial system/structure theory, the evolution of the two approaches has differed. While the Birmingham School has maintained the "Edinburgh" position, giving priority to the category of **structure**, Halliday's developments of systemic-functional linguistics both in London, and later Sydney, has seen priority given to the system (Halliday 1966, 1985a). Thus, while Birmingham School descriptions concentrate on the description of structure, systemic descriptions see structure as the realisation of "deeper" systemic choice.
- 2) **how many ranks in discourse:** while Birmingham work takes a "many-ranks" approach to discourse (five ranks in Sinclair & Coulthard 1975), systemic linguistics adopts a conservative approach, so far recognizing only a maximum of two (Martin i.p/1989).
- 3) **register and genre:** the systemic representation of context of situation and of culture are explicitly and systematically integrated into discourse description in systemic linguistics (see for example Halliday 1978, Martin 1984a), rather than appealed to as informal contextual categories as in Birmingham School accounts (eg Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:28-29).
- 4) **the number of slots in the exchange:** Sinclair & Coulthard (1975) and Burton proposed three; Coulthard & Brazil (1979) proposed six or seven; Berry (1981a) proposes four; whilst Martin (i.p/1989) and Ventola (1984, 1987) currently work with five.

5) **the nature of the discourse stratum:** the Birmingham School sees only one system operating, to handle all structural and cohesive relations in discourse, whereas systemic linguistics adopts a "modular" approach, with conversational structure just one of a number of different discourse systems, others being reference, lexical relations, and conjunction.¹³

6) **the realisational link between discourse and grammatical systems:** the systemic model interprets conversational structure as a system of interpersonal meaning, thereby establishing an explicit link between the grammatical system of mood and the discourse system of speech function (Halliday 1984, Martin i.p/1989). The Birmingham School stratify all grammatical systems with reference to their single description of discourse structure, and therefore posit no specific systematic realisation relationship.

Only the major developments in the Birmingham School approach will be discussed in this chapter.

Sinclair & Coulthard

Although Sinclair & Coulthard were not concerned with the description of conversation, but rather the very specific (and some would say peculiar) variety of spoken English (that of classroom interaction), their attempt at an explicit model of discourse has not only had very wide application within discourse analysis in general, but forms the basis of more recent extensions to the analysis of casual conversation, through the work of Burton, Coulthard & Brazil, and Berry.

The major theoretical position taken in Sinclair & Coulthard 1975 was to set up "discourse" as a separate level of analysis, distinct from grammar. They argued for this stratification on the basis that:

grammatical structure is not sufficient to determine which discourse act a particular grammatical unit realizes - one needs to take account of both relevant situational information and position in the discourse. (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:23)

The distinction between discourse and grammar was represented as a form/function opposition:

Grammar is concerned with the FORMAL properties of an item, discourse with the FUNCTIONAL properties, with what the speaker is using the item for. (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:27)

¹³ Note that this is Martin's (i.p/1989) position. Differences between Halliday, Hasan and Martin will be discussed in Chapter Three.

By analogy with the grammar, Sinclair & Coulthard modelled the organisation of the discourse stratum in terms of rank, setting up a five-rank model of act, move, exchange, transaction, lesson. These labels not only name the ranks but of course are the labels of the discourse units recognized.

The model thus established a scale of units of discourse analysis, with the smallest unit in the model, the act, associated with the clause and sentence:

The lowest rank of the discourse scale overlaps with the top of the grammar scale. Discourse acts are typically one free clause, plus any subordinate clauses, but there are certain closed classes where we can specify almost all the possible realizations which consist of single words or groups. (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:23)

Whilst the identification of acts was by implication based on grammatical criteria, their classification was based on functional criteria:

The category act is very different in kind from Austin's illocutionary acts and Searle's speech acts. Acts are defined principally by their function in the discourse, by the way they serve to initiate succeeding discourse activity or respond to earlier discourse activity. (Coulthard 1977:104)

Sinclair & Coulthard proposed an taxonomy of twenty-one acts to describe their corpus. Although their definitions of acts are very general, Sinclair & Coulthard argued that the concept of delicacy made it possible for the taxonomy to be both exhaustive and extendible.

In dealing with the problem of the realisation of acts, i.e. their identification, Sinclair & Coulthard set up a systematic relationship between major categories of discourse acts (elicitations, informatives, directives.) and their grammatical selections of interrogative, declarative, and imperative mood (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:27).

In order to deal with the problem of incongruence between form and function (that grammatical classes do not always realise those discourse functions), Sinclair & Coulthard made reference to two further categories, situation and tactics, as a way of formulating rules to predict when particular grammatical classes (e.g. declarative or interrogatives) will be used to realise particular marked discourse functions (eg directive).

The sequencing of acts is captured through their structural organisation in units of the rank immediately above, i.e. that of moves.

Sinclair & Coulthard's model recognized three major classes of move: [opening], [answering], and [following-up], identified in terms of their function in the exchange:

The function of an opening move is to cause others to participate in an exchange. Opening and answering are complementary moves. The purpose of a given opening may be passing on information or directing an action or eliciting a fact. The type of answering move is predetermined because its function is to be an appropriate response in the terms laid down by the opening move. (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:45)

By definition, moves are made up of ordered sequences of acts. For example, Opening moves have a complex structure:

(signal) (pre-head) head (post-head) (select)

whereas Answering moves have a simpler structure:

(pre-head) head (post-head)

Sequent relations between moves are handled by the next rank, the EXCHANGE. Sinclair & Coulthard recognise two different types of exchanges: Boundary Exchanges, and Teaching Exchanges. It is the description of this second type which has formed the basis for the development of exchange structure theory.

Sinclair & Coulthard suggest that the Teaching Exchange consists of three elements of structure, occurring in an ordered sequence, in which only the first element is obligatory. Thus:

Initiation ^ (Response)^ (Feedback)

Each exchange element is realised by a particular class of moves, so that:

Initiations are realised by [opening] moves
 Responses " " by [answering] moves
 Feedback " " by [follow-up] moves.

Classes of Teaching Exchanges are determined on the basis of the type of act which realizes the head of the initiating move: i.e.

The four main functions of exchanges are informing, directing, eliciting and checking, and they are distinguished by the type of act which realizes the head of the initiating move, informative, directive, elicitation, and check respectively. (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:49-50)

The ranks above the exchange (lesson, transaction) are much less precisely described, and are generally considered applicable only to classroom data.

Although designed to describe data of a quite different variety, the Sinclair & Coulthard model addresses most of the major issues relevant to the description of interactional continuity: the model posits a range of discourse units, presents an exhaustive taxonomy, and offers a description of sequencing.

Unfortunately, Sinclair & Coulthard's description does not transfer unproblematically to other types of data. The imprecise criteria for identifying discourse acts (typically a sentence) is not a problem in their data where single turns generally equated with single clauses, but becomes considerably more complex with spontaneous talk, raising all the same confusions and reservations mentioned above as to the identification of clauses/sentences in talk, and the relevance of a grammatically determined unit.

As they themselves admit of their exhaustive taxonomy of acts:

many of them (are) specialized, and some quite probably classroom-specific.
(Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:27)

and critics such as Burton (see below) have demonstrated the inapplicability of many to conversation, as well as the need to recognize additional categories.

The representation of exchange structure has also been shown to be problematic in three respects: the number of structural elements in other data may be both more and less; the classroom specificity of the "feedback" element; and the pre-determination of move classes by exchange structure elements, making redundant one level of description.

In addition to these problems, the transference of the Sinclair & Coulthard model to conversation involves addressing two further aspects: establishing relatedness between acts/moves, and describing monologue. The reason neither of these aspects were raised by Sinclair & Coulthard can be found in the nature of their data, where single turns generally corresponded to single sentences, and adjacent turns explicitly and obviously related.

Beyond these practical criticisms, more theoretical criticisms have been levelled at the Sinclair & Coulthard model, principally concerning the extent to which their organisation of discourse parallels the organisation of grammar.

It is certainly true that Sinclair & Coulthard use analogies from the grammar at several points, for example:

1) the discourse units they identify may have different names from the grammatical units, but they are defined in terms of grammatical units: e.g. the correspondence of the discourse act with the clause.

2) the relationships between these units are modelled multivariately, thus imitating a common type of grammatical structure. e.g. Initiation[^]Response[^]Follow-up is a multivariate structure of the same type as a grammatical structure Subject[^]Finite[^]Complement.

3) units display properties observed for grammatical units: e.g. the distinction between bound and free acts:

Acts and moves in discourse are very similar to morphemes and words in grammar....Just as there are bound morphemes which cannot alone realize words, so there are bound acts which cannot alone realize moves. (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:23)

Similarly, bound and free exchanges.

4) the levels in the model make up a rank-scale: i.e. Transactions are made up of Exchanges which are made up of Moves which are made up of Acts; just as clauses are made up of groups which are made up of words which are made up of morphemes.

Critics such as Taylor & Cameron (1987) often misread these analogies as naive attempts to force parallels:

It remains theoretically unclear why, if discourse is not just 'more of the same', it should necessarily be handled in the same way as grammar, that is by means of a rank scale. ..Throughout the work of the Birmingham school, we discern an A PRIORISTIC determination to pursue analogies between discourse and grammar, however slim the evidence that parallels exist. (Taylor & Cameron 1987:69)

However, comments such as Taylor & Cameron's seem to miss the point of the functional model underlying Sinclair & Coulthard's work, that of the non-arbitrary relationship between discourse and grammar. Halliday's position (for example in Halliday 1985a:xvii-xviii) is that the organisation of the grammar is a "natural" consequence, or realisation, of the organisation of the semantics, and the organisation of the semantics is in turn a "natural" consequence, or realisation, of the organisation of the semiotic environment (situation, culture). This theory of a "natural grammar" and a "natural semantics" is what is meant by Halliday's suggestion that:

language is as it is because of what it has to do (Halliday 1973:34).

What should be at issue is NOT whether discourse is like grammar, since in a functional perspective such a question is redundant; but rather whether analysts such as Sinclair & Coulthard went looking for only some types of grammatical patterns in discourse, and not others. One possible example here is that of univariate and multivariate structure. While both types of structure are found in the organisation of the lexico-grammar, Birmingham models of discourse structure have concentrated only on identifying multivariate structure in the discourse stratum.

Birmingham School analysis of casual conversation: Burton

In Chapter One I referred to Burton's critique of the "collaborative/consensus" basis of Sinclair & Coulthard's discourse model as an inappropriate description of what goes on in casual conversation. Her work is explicitly concerned with extending the Sinclair & Coulthard model to describe the more conflictual nature of casual talk, although it is important to recall that her major source of data is fictional (dramatic playscripts).

Burton (1978, 1980, 1981) makes three main adaptations to the Sinclair & Coulthard model:

- a) reclassifying moves: In order to handle the wider range of moves she finds in casual conversation, Burton draws on Halliday's metafunctions to justify the notion of a "discourse framework" by which to recognize five major move classes;
- b) conversational exchanges: Burton's exchange structure introduces a Re-Initiation slot to account for the open-ended nature of conversational exchanges.
- c) monologic segments: Burton uses a classification of conjunctive relations to code monologic act sequences.

Reclassifying moves

Although Burton suggests that the Sinclair & Coulthard model needs extensions at each rank to be applicable to conversation, she focuses on the ranks of move and exchange as "the really interesting interactive ranks", with the move receiving logical priority:

since the description of Exchange structure hinges on what Moves are used in what orders and relationships, and since Move is also the minimal interactive unit, it seems that most analytical problems centre on this rank first and foremost. (Burton 1978:139)

Burton's first observation at this rank is that the essential interactive structure of conversation is bipartite, rather than tripartite. That is:

the notion of "Feedback" or "Follow-up" hardly ever occurs (Burton 1978:139)¹⁴

¹⁴ But see Berry's criticism of this position, based on intuition (Berry 1981a:5-6).

Burton thus proposes a basically two-part structure, involving the two classes of [opening] and [answering] moves. Taking [answering] moves first, Burton points out that:

The biggest difference between classroom data and everyday talk is of course the wide range of verbal activities available to anyone answering an Opening. The polite consensus-collaborative model just has no room for the number of possibilities, where, for example, the "answer" can refuse to answer, can demand a reason for the question being asked, can provide an answer that simultaneously answers a preceding Move, but opens up the next exchange etc. (Burton 1978:140)

Burton's solution to such problems involves her in a "common sense" reconceptualisation of the process:

it seemed to me to be true that given an Opening Move by speaker A, B has the choice of politely agreeing, complying, supporting the discourse presuppositions in that Move, and behaving in a tidy, appropriate way in his choice of Move and Acts, or he has the choice of not agreeing, not supporting, not complying with those presuppositions, possibly counter-proposing, ignoring, telling A that his Opening was misguided, badly designed, etc. (Burton 1978:14)

These observations form the basis for a distinction between [supporting] and [challenging] moves, a distinction which has since received wide currency in the work of Birmingham and systemic functional analyses (e.g. Berry 1981a, Martin i.p/1989).

Burton relates this distinction to topic development, suggesting the distinction has an experiential basis:

As Supporting Moves function to facilitate the topic presented in a previous utterance, or to facilitate the contribution of a topic implied in a previous utterance, Challenging Moves function to hold up the progress of that topic or topic-introduction in some way. (Burton 1978:148)

To develop the notion of topic, Burton defines a Discourse Framework, ostensibly drawing on Halliday's metafunctions:

The Discourse Framework set up by an initiating Move has two aspects...1. Ideational + Textual; 2. Interpersonal. (Burton 1978:147)

However, the description of the first aspect as both ideational and textual is confusing, given that Burton in fact makes no reference to Halliday's major ideational systems of TRANSITIVITY (Halliday 1967b) or LOGICAL RELATIONS (Halliday 1985a). In fact, her definition of this aspect is purely in textual terms, i.e. as cohesive relations:

The potential Discourse Framework dependant on that Move then includes all items that can be categorised as cohesive with that Move, using the notions covered in Halliday and Hasan 1976: substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. (Burton 1978:147)

The interpersonal aspect of the discourse framework is associated with expectancy:

The second aspect, the interpersonal, concerns interdependent or reciprocal Acts, where certain initiating Acts set up the expectations for certain responding Acts. (Burton 1978:147)

The Discourse Framework is used as a means of clarifying the distinction between [supporting] and [challenging] moves. A [supporting] move is defined as:

any Move that maintains the framework set up by a preceding Initiatory Move. (Burton 1978:148)

Thus, [supporting] moves are defined purely by reference to their textual relations to preceding moves.

[Challenges], on the other hand, are defined interpersonally, that is, in terms of matching up to response expectations, as moves either:

- withholding an expected or appropriate reciprocal Act;
- supplying an unexpected and inappropriate Act where the expectation of another has been set up (Burton 1978:148)

Whilst Halliday & Hasan (1976) provide a fairly exhaustive guide to possible textual relations, no such reference can be made to a similarly detailed account of "expected" responses (I have already mentioned the incomplete nature of the ECA account of dispreferred responses). Thus, identifying [challenges] depends on a description of expected and discretionary responses that does not appear in Burton's own work.

However, Burton also classifies as [challenging] moves a wide range of discourse behaviours, including:

- refusal to give attention
- requests for repetition
- requests for clarification
- requests for elaboration of the information given

as well as a series of violations of pre-conditions for valid informatives based on Labov (1970), thus making the [challenge] category hold just about everything that does not explicitly "concur" with Initiatory moves, as [supporting] moves do.

In addition to [supporting] and [challenging] moves, Burton also uses the Discourse Framework to define her three other main move classes: [opening], [re-Opening], and [bound-opening] moves.

[Opening] moves are essentially defined in terms of the absence of referential ties to preceding discourse:

Opening Moves....are Informatives, Elicitations or Directives which have no anaphoric reference to the immediately preceding utterance....Opening Moves then are essentially topic-carrying items which are recognisably "new" in terms of the immediately preceding talk. (Burton 1978:146)

[Bound-opening] and [re-opening] moves are defined not only in topic terms, but are also dependent on preceding move sequence. [Bound-openings], for example, occur only after a [supporting] move, and function to:

enlarge the Discourse Framework by extending the ideational-textual aspect of the original Opening Move. (Burton 1978:150)

[Re-opening] moves, on the other hand, occur after [challenges]:

They re-instate the topic that the Challenge either diverted or delayed. (Burton 1978:150)

Conversational exchanges

Having thus established a taxonomy of conversational moves ([supporting], [challenging], [opening], [re-opening], [bound-opening]), Burton considers the immediately higher rank, that of the Exchange.

As in the Sinclair & Coulthard model, Exchange rank is used to handle the potential sequencing of move classes through a multivariate structural formula.

Also like Sinclair & Coulthard, Burton recognises two types of exchanges: optional Explicit Boundary Exchanges (similar to Sinclair & Coulthard's Boundary exchanges), and Conversational Exchanges, which are presumably the stuff of which casual talk is made. Burton describes the structure of these Exchanges as:

These Exchanges begin with an Initiation which may be either an Opening, or a Re-Opening or a Challenging Move. They may be followed by one or several Supporting Moves, and may then be followed by a Bound-Opening, which may itself be Supported one or several times, after which Bound-Openings may recur together with recursive Supports. (Burton 1978:150)

Thus the structural description provides for the basic slots of Initiation and Response (as in Sinclair & Coulthard but with Response apparently now obligatory), but adds the optional slot of Re-Initiation. The structural formula, with the corresponding move class realisations, is:

Initiation [^]	Responses [^]	(Re-Initiation) ^{^(R) n) n) n)}
[opening] [re-opening] [challenging]	[supporting]	[bound-opening]

Figure 1: Burton's Exchange Structure formula for Conversational Exchanges (Burton 1978:152)

Stated as a move sequence, this formula reads:

Initiation[^]Support[^]Bound-Opening[^]Support[^]B-O[^]Supports

This structural description is related back to the Discourse Framework as a further statement of the boundaries of the Exchange:

Discourse Framework concerns the pre-suppositions set up in the Initiating Move of an Exchange....and the interactional expectations dependant on that Move. I want to argue that, for casual conversation, Exchanges can be seen to last as long as this Framework holds.(Burton 1978:147)

Burton handles the problem of relations between subsequent exchanges through positing a higher rank, that of Transactions, whose structural formula accounts for the sequencing of classes of exchanges, as follows:

(Explicit Boundary Exchange)[^] Conv. Ex.1.[^] (Conv. Ex.2-n)

Where Conv. Ex. 1 must have an Opening Move as Initiator, whilst Conv. Ex. 2-n have Bound-Openings, Re-openings and Challenges as Initiators. (see Burton 1978:151)

As with the rank of Transactions in Sinclair & Coulthard's account, the value of this level of description is dubious, since it is essentially a statement of infinite recursion of an identical structural element.¹⁵

¹⁵ See the discussion of Ventola's (1979) generic structure description of casual conversation in Chapter Three.

Monologic sequences

Burton's data raises the problem of what to do with monologic informing segments i.e. sequences of inform acts, which are described as

statements whose sole function is to provide information...((to which)).The appropriate response is the giving of attention and indication of understanding. (Burton 1978:155)

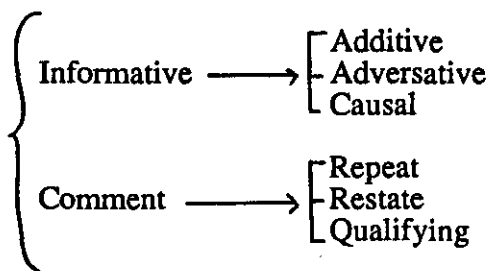
Sequences like these did not occur in Sinclair & Coulthard's data, where the teacher generally parcelled information between demands for more active responses from the students.

Burton points out that:

Where there are long passages of Informatives offered in the text it seems inadequate to give one label of "Informative" to the whole passage, or even to label the first clause "Inform" and all subsequent units "Comment" (Burton 1978:143)

Burton does not make explicit just why this approach seems inadequate, but she is presumably objecting to the failure of the analysis to capture the way in which subsequent acts in fact perform functions related to, but distinct from, that of the first act.

Burton's solution is to use a categorization of conjunctive relations (based on Winter 1977), to provide a more delicate subclassification of informative and comment acts: i.e.



System 2: Burton's classification of [informing] moves
(Burton 1978:143-4)

where:

the first three are sub-categories of Informative as the head of an Opening Move...All these types of Informative can then be "expanded" by the use of the other three Comment items. (Burton 1978:143-4)

Applying Burton's analysis to the continuous excerpt

Burton's analysis is an attempt to deal with exactly those aspects of Sinclair & Coulthard's model which are most troublesome for conversational structure: the different types of responses, more open-ended exchange structure, and the greater frequency of monologic sequences in casual conversation.

However, in assessing how her analysis handles the five aspects of interactional continuity we are concerned with, a number of serious problems become obvious, some inherited from the Sinclair & Coulthard model, others created by Burton's own notion of a "discourse framework".

1. Units: Burton maintains Sinclair & Coulthard's rank scale, and thus the unclear association of the act with the clause, and the move with the sentence. Although she does not mention any problems with identifying units in her data, the status of two frequently arising situations is not clear to me, i.e.:

- clause fragments produced with separate intonational contours (e.g. P1:Ta12 "like that");
- the role of conjunctions: Burton does not make clear whether paratactic (independent) clauses constitute separate acts or not. The more general problem here is how to differentiate between conjunctions used structurally (to link clauses into sentences, and therefore just one single act), as opposed to conjunctions used cohesively (to link sentences, and therefore two or more acts).

For example, P1:Ta12 could contain 7, 8, or 9 acts, depending on what criteria are used to determine clause boundaries.

The consequent problem is to determine how many MOVES there are in a turn. For example, is P1:Ta12 all one single ([opening]) move? Is P1:Tb12 all one single ([challenging?]) move? The criteria to be used are not made clear. If such long sequences are only one move, Burton's analysis of monologic act sequences becomes extremely important, which raises other problems (see below).

2) TAXONOMY: As problems with act classes are considered in the discussion of monologue below, the issue here is how applicable and useful are Burton's five categories of moves.

There are three main problems in applying Burton's analysis to the continuous excerpt:

- 1) the criteria for distinguishing categories of moves are too broad, resulting in uncertainties and sometimes a conflict of criteria;
- 2) the categories are not sufficiently delicate, resulting in the grouping together of very different behaviours.
- 3) some moves do not seem to be codable in her schema i.e. there are not sufficient categories to handle the range of moves that occur

For example:

i) conflict of criteria: The criteria Burton uses to classify challenges are so broad that they can at times conflict. For example, moves can both maintain the discourse framework, thus suggesting they are [supporting], but not be the expected response to an [opening], and therefore be by definition a [challenge], e.g. P2:T2.

A further example of conflict is T29: this could be seen as a [challenge], in that it is not the expected response to T26; or it could be a [bound-opening] (continues the discourse framework). Neither category in fact captures its function as a qualification or continuation of T27.

ii) indelicacy: At the same time, the broad criteria mean that the [challenge] category ends up containing an enormous range of moves that in fact look very different: contradictions, such as P2:T3, queries for misheard or misunderstood information, et P2:T18, and "avoidance" type responses, such as P2:T7.

Similarly, the [supporting] category does not distinguish between minimal responses such as positive feedback (P1:a13), acknowledgements (P2:T10, T11), positive polarity responses (P2:T27), and the provision of supporting information (P2:T5)

iii) insufficient categories: Burton's analysis does not provide a category for coding a variety of "follow-up" moves: e.g. P2:T14, P2:T28. Nor is it obvious what category responses to challenges fall into: e.g. P1:T8; P2:T19.

3. RELATEDNESS: Through the Discourse Framework, Burton uses broad textual criteria to determine relatedness between moves and therefore also to determine exchange boundaries. She takes the presence of any textual link between moves as indication of relatedness. However, it soon becomes obvious that such criteria are impossibly broad. Coherent casual conversation is characterized by continuous cohesive links - adjacent moves can nearly always be related to previous talk through one form of cohesion or another¹⁶. It could be argued that the whole continuous excerpt should therefore appear as one exchange. Indeed, the same could be said for the entire four hour conversation!

4. MONOLOGUE: There are three main problems with Burton's handling of monologue through conjunctively classified act sequences:

- 1) It is limited to describing inform sequences in [opening] moves only. Thus, whilst it deals with sequences such as P2:T21, it offers no description where the sequence occurs as part of a [challenge] (eg P1:Tb12, P2:T3, or [support] (P1:Ta11).
- 2) It is not clear how it relates to conjunction (implicit/explicit) or structural markers: e.g. are the two acts in P1:T1 an [inform^qualifying] sequence, or are they two separate [opening] moves.
- 3) As a result a conflict arises between grammatical and discourse representation, in that paratactic grammatical structures may possibly be represented as multivariate discourse sequences.

¹⁶ See the discussion of texture in the continuous excerpt in Chapter Three.

5. SEQUENCE: Whilst Burton's exchange structure ostensibly captures the open-ended, recycling structure of conversation, there is a major problem with her exchange formula, in that the only kind of Response recognised is [supporting]. This means that that every time a non-supporting response occurs we have to set up a new exchange, and since Burton codes both [challenges] and [re-openings] as Initiations, they must constitute new exchanges. Thus, if we assume P2:T3 is a [challenge], we cannot capture it as a Response to the Initiation in T1. The "interrupting" sequence, T18-19 is still shown as ending one exchange and preceding another new exchange, thus obscuring the fact that Simon just keeps on going. And the sequence T26-29 is not only not clearly related to a particular Initiation, but the fact that both Simon and George react to Di's remark is not captured by the analysis.

Similarly, because her sequencing does not allow for [openings] or [bound-openings] to be followed by [challenges] within the same exchange, the dependency of [challenges] on their preceding openings is lost. Thus, for example, P2:T2 & T3 cannot appear as Responses to T1; nor P4:T2, 3 & 4 cannot be shown to be related to T1.

This seems a major descriptive error, since it does not allow exchange structure to capture many of the most frequent types of insertion or side sequences, nor the "chaining" or prolonging types of sequences.

Thus, Burton's extensions of Sinclair & Coulthard's model suffer from serious practical problems when applied to authentic multiparty casual conversation. Her categories are not extensive enough, nor are they reliably recognized.

The underlying problem can be traced to the fact that the description Burton develops is not multilayered. Despite the fact that, through her Discourse framework, she appears to be suggesting that each move has both a textual/ideational and an interpersonal aspect, Burton's account makes it obvious that she splits the two, and associates the textual/ideational meanings with [supporting] moves, and the interpersonal meanings with [challenging] moves. There is no real attempt to offer a multi-layered analysis, which would instead involve a description of the interpersonal meanings of [supporting] moves at the same time as a description of the the ideational meanings of [challenges]. Moves are "split" into one or other function, rather than handled as realising simultaneously both types of meanings.

This explains the broadness of her categories. There are not sufficient distinctions between the different ideational meanings realised by moves which interpersonally [challenge], nor are there sufficient distinctions between the range of interpersonal options in moves which experientially [support].

Since Burton's study, Birmingham attempts to extend Sinclair & Coulthard's model have concentrated on 2 aspects:

- a) the number of slots or structural elements in an exchange
- b) the notion of multilayered function in the exchange.

Birmingham School analysis of Exchange Structure: Coulthard & Brazil

Coulthard & Brazil's (1979, 1981) analysis of exchange structure extends the Sinclair & Coulthard model in three respects:

- 1) it increases the number of exchange slots to six or seven
- 2) it relabels moves so that exchange slots and move classes are no longer bi-uniquely related
- 3) it clarifies the nature and boundaries of the exchange, as the unit of information transmission.

Slots in the Exchange

Coulthard & Brazil begin with the three-part exchange structure suggested in Sinclair & Coulthard, of Initiation (Response) (Feedback). Arguing that the label "feedback" is too restricted to classroom data, they replace it with the label follow-up for the third element, and imply that Response is an obligatory, not an optional, element.

Suggesting that the description of exchange structure depends on establishing criteria for recognizing structural elements, they argue that:

Two criteria can be used to define an element of structure:

- (1) does the given element generate constraints which amount to a prediction that a particular element will follow; and
- (2) has a preceding element predicted its occurrence? (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:39)

And they use these criteria to define the three basic exchange slots already posited:

An initiation begins anew and sets up an expectation of a response; a response is predicted but itself sets up no expectations; a follow-up is neither predicted nor predicting in this particular sense. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:39)

In doing this, Coulthard & Brazil notice that it is also possible to ask:

whether there is not also an element of exchange structure which is at the same time predicted and predicting. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:40)

This leads them to recognise a fourth element which they double-code as "R/I", since:

it functions as a response with respect to the preceding element and as an initiation with respect to the following element. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:40)

So, exchanges now consist of minimally two elements, and maximally four, i.e.:

Initiation[^] (Re-Initiation)[^] Response[^] (Feedback)

Then they add two more elements of structure:

Open, which serves to mark the beginning of an exchange but places no constraints on the next element, and Close which is not predicted but serves to mark the end of an exchange. Most exchanges have neither, few have both. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:46)

Their final exchange structure formula is, then:

(Open) ^Initiation^ (Re-I) ^Response^ (Feedback) ^ (F) ^ (Close)

Figure 2: Coulthard & Brazil's Exchange Structure Formula
(Coulthard & Brazil 1979:40)

allowing for a minimum of two, and a maximum of seven elements of structure in a single exchange.

Reclassifying moves

Coulthard & Brazil acknowledge that there was a problem with Sinclair & Coulthard's analysis of moves in that:

each class of move was appropriate for only one place in structure, a phenomenon for which grammatical parallels are rare. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:38)

In order to avoid this bi-unique relationship, which suggests the apparent redundancy of one level of description, they re-classify moves in terms of function, rather than structural position:

We therefore propose to drop the opening, answering, follow-up labels, and talk instead in terms of eliciting, informing, acknowledging moves. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:41)

Defining the Exchange

This functional reclassification of moves allows Coulthard & Brazil to formulate a definition of the exchange as an information unit:

exchanges are basically concerned with the transmission of information and thus must contain one informing move, which can occur either in the Initiating or in the Responding slot. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:41)

Coulthard & Brazil also suggest that criteria for determining exchange boundaries may lie in the negotiation of the polarity attached to the information being transmitted:

the exchange only carries one (potentially complex) piece of information and its polarity, and that the information and the polarity can only be questioned and asserted once. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:43)

This reference to polarity marks the beginning of Birmingham attempts to find explicit lexico-grammatical correlates (i.e. realisations) of exchange boundaries. Taken up by both Berry (see below) and later Martin (see Chapter Three), this issue becomes a major concern of exchange structure theorists, with the criteria of polarity gradually broadened to include patterns of actual (Berry) and potential (Martin) ellipsis.

Coulthard & Brazil's extensions and the analysis of interactional continuity

Coulthard & Brazil make no contribution to the Birmingham position on the issues of either UNITS or MONOLOGUE, nor do they extend the move taxonomy. However, in reclassifying moves so that their function is separated from their position in structure, their exchange structure formula is made considerably more powerful than Burton's.

For example, we can now capture sequences such as P4:T's1-4 as one exchange, as:

P4:T1:	[informing]	I
P4:T2:	[eliciting]	R/I
P4:T3:	[eliciting]	R/I

However, their definition of the exchange as containing only one piece of information introduces other problems: how do we code P4:T6? This [informing] move appears to be a Response to the two [eliciting] moves in T2 & 3, but it contains new information. Since an exchange can contain only one [informing] move, we must show this as the Initiating slot of a new exchange, a counter-intuitive analysis.

There are also problems with just what counts as an [acknowledgement], and with the sequence of the exchange slots in the Coulthard & Brazil description. For example, if we try to analyse the first eight turns in Phase 1:

T1	[informing]	Initiating
T2	[informing]	Initiating
T3	[acknowledging???	Following-up
T4	[eliciting]	Re-Initiating
T5	[acknowledging?]	Responding
T6	[informing???	Initiating
T7	[informing???	Initiating
T8	[??]	Responding

Describing T2 as an [informing] move fails to capture its intuitive status as a reaction (of some kind) to T1. Describing T3 as an [acknowledgement] does not capture its contribution to add extra information, but if we call it an [informing] move we cannot capture its exchange function to RESPOND. But then T4, a fairly clear R/I, is not actually supposed to occur AFTER a Follow-up, but only before both Follow-up and Response. T5 must presumably be an [acknowledging] move, but it looks very different from T3. Since T6 and T7 introduce new information they must be [informing], and therefore Initiating,. But this fails to capture their dependence (of some kind) on the preceding sequence. Finally, T8 is clearly Responding to T6&7, but just what kind of move it is is not clear: it hardly looks like an [acknowledging] move, but if we call it [informing], we are forced to begin a new exchange.

So, despite the increased length of possible exchanges, and the significant separation between move function and structural position, Coulthard & Brazil's description still raises problems of application and interpretation when applied to casual talk.

However, as well as attempting descriptive extensions to the Sinclair & Coulthard model, Coulthard & Brazil make a theoretical statement as to the direction and implications of exchange structure theory as a model of interaction. Arguing that discourse competence cannot be equated with grammatical competence, since:

There is no way in which one speaker can place absolute constraints upon another speaker in any sense comparable with the way his apprehension of grammatical rules will block the production of certain sequences of elements within his own utterances. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:15)

they suggest that:

The most promising theoretical assumption seems to be that a speaker can do anything he likes at any time, but that what he does will be classified as a contribution to the discourse in the light of whatever structural predictions the previous contribution (his own or another's) may have set up. (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:16)

Thus, they make it clear the exchange is not a deterministic unit, any more than is the adjacency pair. However, attempts to model discourse structure explicitly can be related to the "orientational" perspective of talk identified by the ethnomethodologists: the exchange is the unit which provides a structural interpretation of the sequential relevance of moves in talk.

A Multilayered Model of Exchange Structure: Berry

Berry (1981a, 1981b, 1981c) sees herself as trying to bring together the work both of Burton and Coulthard & Brazil by developing a model of exchange structure within Halliday's metafunctional model.

In proposing a "multi-layered model of exchange structure" Berry extended the model in three main respects:

- 1) proposing four slots in the exchange
- 2) introducing the distinction between primary/secondary knowers/actors
- 3) describing the exchange as three simultaneous layers of structure
- 4) explicitly associating grammatical ellipsis with move boundaries.

Berry situates the description of exchange structure within discourse analysis, thereby giving it two distinct aims:

I assume that the aims of discourse analysis are twofold: to describe texts in such a way as to be able to say something worthwhile about the individual texts and groups of texts; to work towards a theory of discourse. (Berry 1981a:2)

Suggesting that insufficient descriptive power is associated with a single layer of structure, Berry therefore proposes a "multi-layered" account. Using Halliday's tri-functional model of the lexico-grammar to both distinguish and integrate the different types of meaning being negotiated in the exchange with, Berry proposes that the exchange consists of a number of ordered functional slots, whose arrangement in sequence can be stated in terms of three simultaneous exchange formulae: textual, interpersonal, & ideational.

The textual layer

Expanding on Coulthard & Brazil's position that:

the exchange is the unit concerned with negotiating the transmission of information (Coulthard & Brazil 1979:43)

Berry identifies two roles associated with this process of information transfer: the k1 role, or primary knower, and the k2, secondary knower.

The primary knower she defines as

someone who already knows the information (Berry 1981a:9)

whilst the secondary knower is

someone to whom the information is imparted (Berry 1981a:10)

She then constructs a structural formula for exchanges in terms of this knowledge distinction:

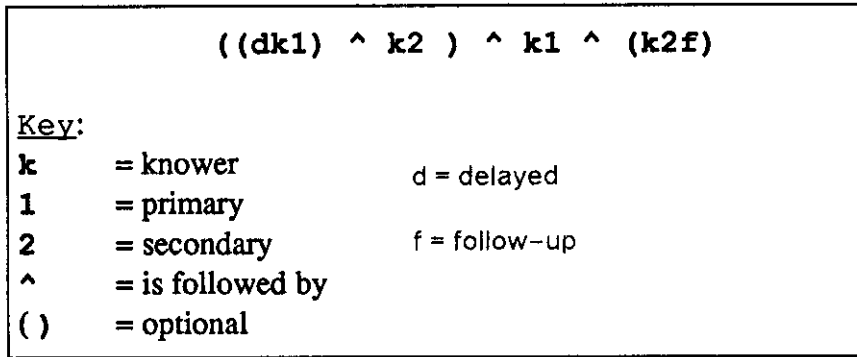


Figure 3: Berry's Structural Formula for the textual layer of the exchange (Berry 1981a:13)

The following exchange is one in which all functional slots are filled:

dk1	Quizmaster:	In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire?
k2	Contestant:	Salisbury?
k1	Quizmaster:	Yes.
k1f	Contestant:	Oh.

(example from Berry 1981a:12)

Compared to:

(1)		
k1f	Quizmaster:	In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire?
k2	Contestant:	Salisbury.
k1	Quizmaster:	Yes

(2)

k2	Son:	Which English cathedral has the tallest spire?
k1	Father:	Salisbury.
k2f	Son:	Oh. (Good. Now I can finish my crossword)

(examples from Berry 1981a:4)

As these examples demonstrate, the k1/k2 roles are not grammatical roles, but "real world" roles. That is, the discourse role of primary knower is not associated with the production of grammatical choice [declarative], nor secondary knower with that of [interrogative]. Instead, the roles are determined in light of the outcome of the exchange.

Thus, in examples a) & b) above, the Quizmaster may look initially like a secondary knower (since he asks for information), but in fact he turns out to be the primary knower; whereas in example c) the same grammatical structure (interrogative) is this time produced by the secondary knower.

Although Berry suggests that both participants are necessary to an information exchange, the structural formula she proposes is a statement that only ONE participant, the primary knower, need contribute:

The k1 ((slot)), obligatory itself, marks the point in the Exchange after which all further contributions to the Exchange become optional. (Berry 1981a:12)

Thus the exchange is defined in terms of the k1 slot only:

The primary knower must make a contribution to the discourse if an Inform or an Elicit Exchange is to exist at all. There must be a slot in the Exchange where the primary knower indicates that he knows the information and where he consequently confers upon the information a kind of stamp of authority. (Berry 1981a:10)

Berry thus reverts to Sinclair & Coulthard's position, of the notion of an Exchange in which only one speaker speaks. There is of course an implicit contradiction involved in defining an interactive unit without reference to interaction.

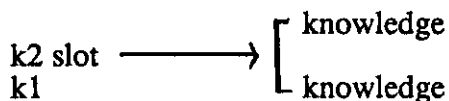
Berry's later work on exchanges of goods-&-services (Berry 1981c) leads her to generalize her primary/secondary knower distinction to apply also to participants carrying out actions. The primary actor is recognized as the person who is actually going to carry out the action, and the secondary actor as the person who is going to get the other person to do it (1981c:23).

Since Berry goes on to find that her description of directive exchanges parallels her description of the textual structure of knowledge exchanges, she proposes a generalized structure for all exchanges:

$$((dx1) \wedge x2) \wedge x1 \wedge (x2f)$$

where x= either actor or knower, depending on the type of exchange (i.e. the commodity exchanged).

Berry offers a polysystemic formulation of the exchange, suggesting that at each point of textual structure (i.e. at each slot) there is a system:



System 3: Options in the textual layer of knowledge exchanges (from Berry 1981a:14)

This system is used to give possible realisations of the moves at each slot in the structure. For example, at the k2 slot if the - knowledge option is chosen, Berry suggested the k2 move will be realised by either interrogative syntax or high termination pitch (Berry 1981a:16).

In incorporating differential functional roles into the alternation between speakers (i.e. into the turn transfer system), Berry's textual layer is significantly more powerful than Coulthard & Brazil's approach: it can both block "ungrammatical" sequences, and distinguish between sequences where follow-ups are optional or obligatory.

Although it is this textual exchange formula that has been most closely associated with the description of conversational structure, Berry's original suggestion is that this TEXTUAL layer of the exchange is only one of its three simultaneous structural layers.

The interpersonal layer

In addition to being a unit of information negotiation, Berry claims the exchange functions simultaneously as an INTERPERSONAL unit, the layer which she associates with the turn-taking organisation of conversation:

the Exchange is also the unit within which turn-taking is predictable. ...It is only at an Exchange boundary that a speaker can take two turns following or can miss a turn without disrupting the normal course of the conversation. (Berry 1981a:22)

This layer of structure is captured through the structural formula:

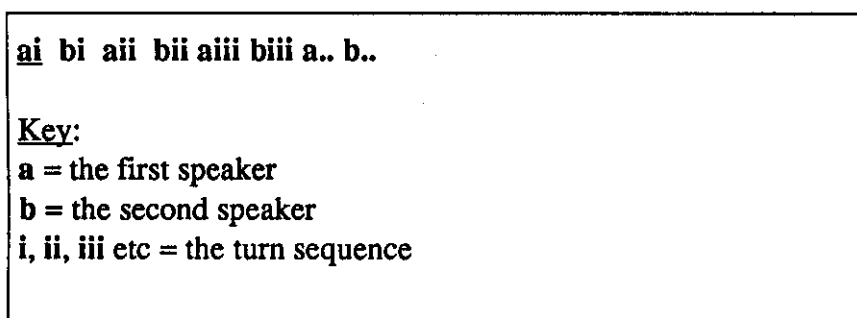
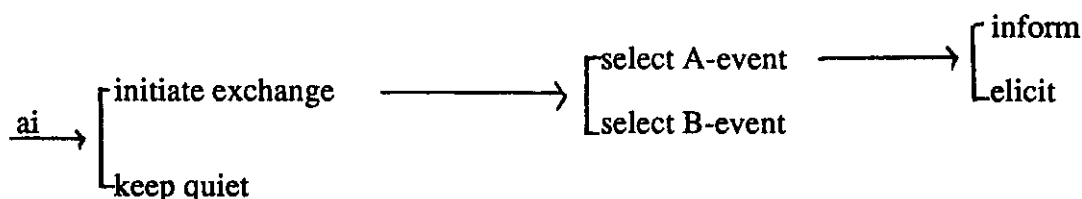


Figure 4: Berry's Structural Formula for the interpersonal layer of the exchange (Berry 1981a:25)

The significance of this interpersonal layer is that the ai slot is the entry to a system which integrates the turn-taking choice (initiate or keep quiet) with the knowledge dimensions (Berry uses Labov's 1970 distinction between A-events and B-events):



System 4: Options in the interpersonal layer of exchange structure (Berry 1981a:28)

Realisation statements then map the interpersonal options onto the textual structure:

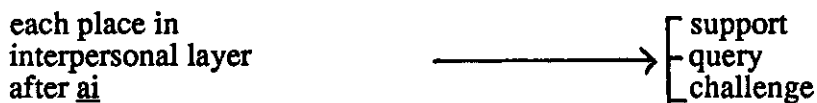
Realisation statements:

initiate exchange:	include k1 and ai
select B event:	include k2 and bi; conflate k2 and ai; conflate k1 and bi.
inform:	conflate k1 and ai
elicit:	include dk1 and k2, bi and aii; conflate dk1 and ai; conflate k2 and bii; conflate k1 and aii.

Figure 5: Realisation statements for the Exchange
(Berry 1981a:28)

Berry argues that this mapping further increases the power of her formulae to generate and block exchange types. However, apart from allowing her to subclassify exchanges in terms of their initiating move, this is not clearly demonstrated in her account, and it seems that the real role of this interpersonal layer is in fact to handle the taxonomizing of moves.

For options after the ai slot, Berry sets up a system which sub-classifies moves in the exchange. Whilst she accepts Burton's distinction between supporting and challenging moves, she adds a third category of "query" to deal with moves which constitute "less serious challenges" (Berry 1981a:30):



System 5: Options in the interpersonal layer of the Exchange
after the ai slot (Berry 1981a:30)

Thus, whilst ai systems lead to the classification of types of exchanges (as eliciting, informing etc), slots after ai classify moves in the exchange.

The ideational layer

Finally, Berry proposes a structure for the IDEATIONAL layer of the exchange, which states the function of the exchange to argue propositions.

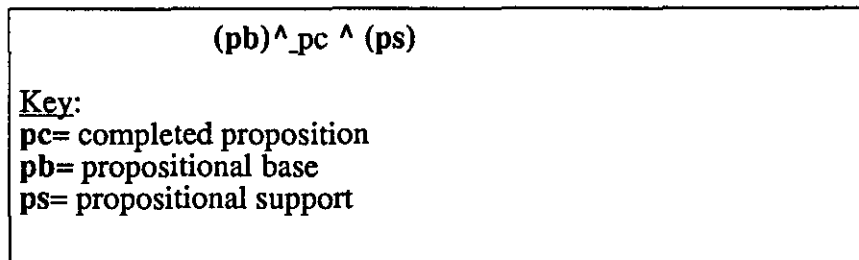


Figure 6: Berry's Structural Formula for the ideational layer of the exchange. (Berry 1981:37)

Berry uses this layer of the exchange to investigate the notion of exchange boundaries, by asking how much information needs to be transmitted within an exchange.

As her ideational formula states, there must be (at least) one completed proposition, i.e. one piece of information. She then recognises a second element, propositional base, where another speaker provides the framework from which the completed proposition will be constructed. The final slot, propositional support is the ideational function Berry ascribes to following moves produced "by the speaker who did not actually complete the proposition".

For example:

pb	Which English cathedral has the tallest spire?
pc	Salisbury
ps	Yes

The analysis of this layer of structure leads Berry to clarify the criteria that establish exchange boundaries.

Rejecting Coulthard & Brazil's criteria of polarity, Berry cites Stubbs position of the role of ellipsis:

This definition of +/- initial suggests a way of defining the exchange as an information unit, in which major information is introduced and then supported by elliptical syntax in the rest of the exchange. (Stubbs, in press:19-20, cited in Berry 1981b:10, her emphasis)

In subsequent work, Berry (1981c:10 cc) goes on to distinguish degrees of ellipticity to establish classes of moves. Her basic position is that non-elliptical syntax indicates initiating status, and that only elliptical clauses should be recognized as responses. (Berry 1981c:10). Therefore, each move in the exchange after the initiating move must be elliptically related to that initiating move.

Berry's extensions and the analysis of interactional continuity

Berry's exchange structure represents a marked advance on previous Sinclair & Coulthard work, in that it attempts not just to describe patterns in data, but also to block patterns that do not occur.

However, the fact that Berry based her description on very limited data leads to numerous problems in transferring it to conversation:

1) **UNITS:** Berry is not specific about what the units are that fill slots in the exchange, although by implication she considers the **CLAUSE** the unit. Given the limited examples she works with, this poses few problems. However, it raises all the same problems that have been demonstrated in earlier discussion, as well as implying that the two ranks (act and move) used by Sinclair & Coulthard, Burton, and Coulthard & Brazil may be reducible to only one.

2) **TAXONOMY of moves:** Berry makes only one contribution to the move taxonomy, but it is a significant one, as her category of **query** is extremely useful. It allows us to distinguish moves such as P1:T4, P4:T2,3,4 from moves like P1:T6 or perhaps T9. Berry suggests that not only can queries be identified, but they can be examined and compared for the places they occur in the exchange. But classifying queries for their structural positions depends on Berry's structural analysis, which raises difficulties, as will also be discussed below.

For example, in order to classify the query in P1:T4, we have to decide what slot is filled by P1:T3. The problem is, if we call it a k1 we lose its elliptical relationship to T2, but if we call it a k2f we lose the fact that the speaker in T3 is a primary knower of the information she is providing.

3) **RELATEDNESS:** Berry's ellipsis criteria represent an attempt to constrain the very broad textual criteria suggested by Burton, and to refine the criteria of Coulthard & Brazil. However, various analysts (Ventola, Martin..) have argued that Berry's criteria (actual ellipsis being necessary to relate moves within an exchange) are in fact too restrictive. For example, the criteria would mean that P1:T2 cannot be related to T1; T6 & 7 cannot be related; and P2:T2 cannot be considered a response, nor could T3. In fact, we end up with the obviously counter-intuitive position that T1 does not get reacted to at all.

4) MONOLOGUE: Because of the data she works with Berry does not specifically face the issue of coding monologic sequences. However, the interpretation of her ellipsis criteria, and her definition of the exchange as consisting of one and only one k1 slot, have generally led to monologic segments being coded as series of k1 moves. As Ventola has pointed out, this leads to the counter-intuitive position of representing a single speaker's contribution as consisting of several independent exchanges. For example, we would have to code P1:Ta12 as perhaps 7 k1s (depending on what constitutes a move), followed by what must be a k2, thus producing an analysis which fails to capture not only the relatedness between the declarative sequence, but also the dependence of the final elicitation on all that preceding talk.

5) SEQUENCE: Although each of Berry's formulae capture sequential relations, it is the textual formula that does most of the work. Here there are very many problems with transferring this formula, based on dialogic and very limited data, to casual conversation. These can be brought out by trying to code the first few turns of Phase 1:

P1:T1	k1.. k1
T2	k1 ?
T3	k2f?
T4	k2
T5	k1
T6	k1
T7	k1
T8	k1...k1...k1...k1
T9	k1

The analysis forces us to describe T2 as a K1 (it is non-elliptical), thus losing the role of this move as a reaction to Simon's initiation. The problems with coding T3 have already been mentioned: it fits neither the k2f nor the k1 categories. T4, the query, is a k2 to which T5 is the k1. However, Ts 6-9 are all shown as separate exchanges: an unrelated sequence of k1s, thus failing to capture the very strong impression we have that these moves form a reaction sequence.

Further problems are illustrated in coding Phase 2:

T1	k1
T2	k2?
T3	k2?
T4	k1
T5	k1
T6	k2
T7	k1
T8	k1

This section raise the problem of how to interpret the primary/secondary knower distinction in coding information that is evaluative rather than factual. Calling T2 a k2 seems counter-intuitive: the speaker does "know" the necessary information (who Courtney is), even if she remains uncommitted on the need for his presence. Similarly, T3 also "knows" but this time explicitly disagrees. Analysis as either either a k1 or a k2 seems unsatisfactory. T4 must be shown as a separate exchange, and T5 cannot be shown to be related to T4 at all. T7 is the same problem: it makes little sense to call this a k2, but if we call it a k1 it is a new exchange. And T8 cannot be linked to any of the moves to which it sounds as though it is related (e.g. T7 and T5).

Finally, a range of problems emerge in analysing the goods-&-services exchange in Phase 1:

Tb11	k2/a2
b12	a1..k1..k1...k1
b13	k1?/a2
b14	a2/k1?
b15	a1/k1?

Although Tb11 is dressed up as a request for information, it is actually an a2: a request for goods. Tb12, the refusal, is therefore coded as a1, and the remaining clauses in the turn must be k1s. The coding for Tb13-b15 is difficult: whether b13 is an information exchange or not, and how to capture its obvious link to b12. Is Tb14 a demand for services, or a statement of information, and is Tb15 a refusal, or a new exchange?

Thus, there are many problems with fitting conversational move sequences into the structural formula proposed by Berry. The particular sequence of functional slots that she suggests appears at some times too restricted to capture the links between moves, and at other times quite inaccurate, producing counter-intuitive analyses.

In addition, the criteria for determining what slot a move is occupying sometimes conflict. In particular, the above analysis raises questions about the usefulness or applicability of the primary/secondary knower categorization in multi-party casual talk, which is dominated by the exchange of opinions based on shared knowledge.

It is no coincidence that Berry's analysis reveals most difficulties describing those moves that in some way prolong, suspend, or interrupt the predicted exchange structure formula. Inherent in Berry's model is the notion of the exchange as a unit designed to reach COMPLETION:

The opening of an Exchange sets up an expectation that turns will be taken until the information has been successfully transmitted. (Berry 1981a:22)

It is not surprising that a model based on seeing interaction from the point of view of "the most direct route to termination" should have relatively little to say about how conversation is sustained.

Finally, the description of her account as "multilayered" is also open to discussion. Not only is the relationship between Halliday's metafunctions and Berry's labelling of her layers questionable, but also the representation of them as LAYERS OF STRUCTURE at all seems dubious. Rather than describing three simultaneous structural layers, Berry seems to have described three systems somehow integrated into the description of interaction: the interpersonal aspect of move specification, the ideational aspect of move relatedness, and the textual aspect of move sequencing. It appears to be only this textual layer that in fact makes structural predictions.

Summary and Conclusions

The Birmingham School's approach to conversational structure is an attempt to apply a functional linguistic methodology to the analysis of discourse. The search for explicit units, criteria, and structural formulae offers the possibility of making the major insights of the ethnomethodologists testable, their classifications replicable. However, despite the major advances that have come through the notions of discourse units such as acts and moves, criteria such as polarity and ellipsis, and the formulation of exchange structure theory, many problems hinder the application of the Birmingham model to the analysis of interactional continuity:

- 1) **UNITS:** Firstly, it is not clear exactly how many units are necessary (Berry makes no mention of the act, and even in Coulthard & Brazil's work the act has been downgraded to handle only monologic relations). Secondly, it is not clear how to identify those units which are suggested: i.e. is the move to be equated with the clause or the sentence, and how are those syntactic units to be identified?
- 2) **TAXONOMY:** Firstly, the move classes recognized remain very indelicate, and appear too limited to capture many of the differences amongst moves in casual conversation. Secondly, the realisation of the move classes is not clear: the relationship between mood choice and move class is not systematic, making identification difficult.
- 3) **RELATEDNESS:** From a position of impossibly broad textual criteria the Birmingham model has moved to an equally impossible narrow position, requiring actually elliptical syntax to establish relatedness.
- 4) **MONOLOGUE:** Act sequences are not treated exhaustively, and there are problems with conflicts between grammatical and discourse criteria, and with determining how many slots monologic sequences fill in the structure of the exchange.

5) SEQUENCE: The current model of exchange structure is relatively unrevealing when applied to casual conversation. It produces a large category of unclassifiable moves, it forces segmentation at inappropriate points, and it fails to capture the high degree of continuity that is obviously critical in understanding how the talk keeps going and keeps making sense.

Finally, the development of the multilayered approach reflects growing recognition of the complexity of the semantics of interaction. However, the different attempts to relate Halliday's metafunctional model to conversational structure have either not resulted in great descriptive advantages (in Burton's case), or have raised doubts as to the connection between the aspects they were describing (in Berry's case).

In the following chapter I will examine the systemic functional approach to conversational structure, which essentially represents a further development, through theoretical reinterpretation, of many of the ideas of the Birmingham School presented above.

3.

The Systemic-Functional Analysis of Conversational Structure

It is natural to conceive of text first and foremost as conversation: as the spontaneous interchange of meaning in ordinary, everyday interaction. It is in such contexts that reality is constructed, in the microsemiotic encounters of daily life. (Halliday 1978:40)

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the systemic-functional analysis of conversational structure. This principally involves assessing how the stratified account of conversational structure outlined by Halliday (1984, 1985a), and developed by Martin (1986, i.p/1989), Ventola (1984, 1987, 1988) describes the major aspects of interactional continuity identified in the previous chapter.

However, the chapter also provides relevant background to the systemic model of language, by briefly reviewing the description of conversation within the systemic theory of text.

Note that references in this chapter to the data are to the version of the continuous excerpt that appears in Appendix C, where the excerpt is re-analysed into clauses.

The Systemic model¹

In the previous chapter I noted that the systemic-functional approach falls into the "structuralist-functional" tradition of discourse analysis, having common origins with the Birmingham School but having established different concerns and emphases.

The common origin is the sociosemantic theory of Halliday, which, developed from Firth, maintains his assessment that "the main concern of descriptive linguistics is to make statements of meaning" (Firth 1951:190).

However, one of the major differences between the approaches is the priority systemic-functional linguistics gives to paradigmatic relations. Whilst the basic emphasis of the Birmingham School is on the organisation of meanings in sequence, or language structure, the emphasis in systemic linguistics is with language as a semantic system. The theoretical category of SYSTEM captures the basic organizing principle of systemic linguistics: that of language as CHOICE (Halliday 1985a:xiv)

¹ Since excellent discussions of the origin, development, and principles of systemic-functional linguistics can be found in numerous sources (e.g. Berry 1975, 1977; Ventola 1987, Butler 1985a), discussion here is limited to a brief outline of those aspects of the model that have particular relevance to the analysis of conversational structure.

In Halliday's description, the 'system' is used essentially in Firth's (1935) sense of a functional paradigm but developed into the formal construct of a 'system network', which is the basic formalism of systemic linguistics:

A system network is a theory of language as choice. It represents a language, or any part of a language, as a resource for making meaning by choosing. (Halliday 1985a:xxvii)

Language

In common with the Birmingham School, systemic linguistics represents language as a tri-stratal system, consisting of a phonology, a lexico-grammar, and a highest stratum alternatively referred to as **semantics** by Halliday (eg Halliday 1978:39), or **discourse-semantics** by Martin (eg Martin i.p/1989). Both the phonological and grammatical strata in English are organised into rank-scales. The entry point to systems at each stratum is the unit of analysis at that stratum:

	STRATUM	UNIT
CONTENT	(Discourse-) Semantics	text
PLANE	Lexico-grammar	clause group word morpheme
EXPRESSION PLANE	Phonology	tone-group foot syllable phoneme

Figure 7: Organisation of CONTENT and EXPRESSION PLANES in the systemic-functional model

The major focus of systemic attention until recently has been on the stratum of lexico-grammar, for which Halliday has outlined a functional grammar of English (Halliday 1985a).

Halliday suggests (1985a:xiii-iv) that his grammar can be described as functional in several senses. Firstly, it is functional in that each element in the language is explained by its position, which, through the notion of SYSTEM, is interpreted as function in context. Thus, the meaning of any item is its meaning in the context of the other choices within that system, and within the linguistic system overall.

The description of grammatical systems in terms of the logical (but not temporal) priority of choice gives rise to the scale of *delicacy*, thus providing for analysis or description to be exhaustive but indefinitely extendible (see Halliday 1961, 1981a).

A second sense in which a systemic grammar is functional is that the fundamental components of meaning in language are interpreted as functional components, or metafunctions. Halliday suggests that:

All languages are organized around two main kinds of meaning, the 'ideational' or reflective, and the 'interpersonal', or active. These components, called 'metafunctions'...are the manifestations in the linguistic system of the two very general purposes which underlie all uses of language: (i) to understand the environment (ideational), and (ii) to act on the others in it (interpersonal). Combined with these is a third metafunctional component, the 'textual', which breathes relevance into the other two. (Halliday 1985a:xiii)

The functional grammar describes the major grammatical systems which realise each of these fundamental semantic groupings. Thus, ideational meaning is realised through the systems of TRANSITIVITY (the realisation of participants, processes, and circumstantial roles in the clause) and TAXIS (the realisation of logical relations in grammatical structures). Interpersonal meaning is realised through the systems of MOOD, MODALITY, and MODULATION (the realisation of speaker roles, degrees of certainty/usuality and obligation/inclination in the clause). Finally, textual meaning is realised through the systems of THEME/RHEME, GIVEN/NEW, and COHESION (the organisation of information in the clause) (Halliday 1978, 1985a).

The relationship between strata, as between terms in systems and their structural outputs, is one of realisation. Inter-stratal realisation involves semantic choices at a higher strata pre-selecting options from a system at a lower strata; whilst in intra-stratal realisation, to each term in a system is attached a realisation statement. Realisation statements may specify a range of realisation information; e.g. the presence of a structural function, the ordering of functions, relative position, conflation of functions, or pre-selection from another system, all of which are centrally concerned with specifying structural relations between elements (Halliday 1981b:14-15).

Types of structure

Systemic linguistics uses the term 'structure' to refer to:

the relations among the parts of a linguistic unit (of a sentence, a clause, and so on); that is, it refers to abstract grammatical relations on the syntagmatic axis. (Halliday 1981b:31)

In his description of the lexico-grammar, Halliday recognizes two types of structure: multivariate and univariate.

The essential difference between them is that whilst a multivariate structure involves a specific set of functionally distinct variables each occurring only once, a univariate structure involves the repetition of only one single variable.

Multivariate structures

Examples of MULTIVARIATE structures are the structure of the group or clause, where structural relations such as Modifier*Head or Subject*Predicator*Complement are MULTIVARIATE relations, each element representing a distinct functional element relative to the whole. (Halliday 1981b:31)

Whilst multivariate structures can exhibit rankshift they are not recursive. That is, each element can occur only once in the structure, but an element from a higher rank can realize a constituent at a lower rank (e.g. a Qualifier realised by a clause) thus achieving a type of recursive expansion (Halliday 1981b:39-40).

Univariate structures

Halliday subclassifies univariate structures into two types: the PARATACTIC and the HYPOTACTIC.

Paratactic relations, typified by the "and" conjunction are traditionally interpreted as relations of co-ordination or independence. Since the only difference between the elements in a paratactic structure is the sequence in which they occur, paratactic relations involve PROGRESSIVE linear sequence.

Hypotactic structures are traditionally labelled sub-ordinating or dependent relations. Sequence, which may be PROGRESSIVE or NON-PROGRESSIVE, is only one aspect of hypotactic structural relations.

Unlike multivariate structures, univariate structures are recursive, allowing iteration of the structural element. Whilst rankshift is not possible, univariate structures can display layering, i.e.

the bracketing of one recursive series within another (Halliday 1981b:31)

Since, as Halliday points out, "progressive realization leaves the string open-ended" (Halliday 1981b:38), only univariate structures allow the possibility of infinite structural recursion.

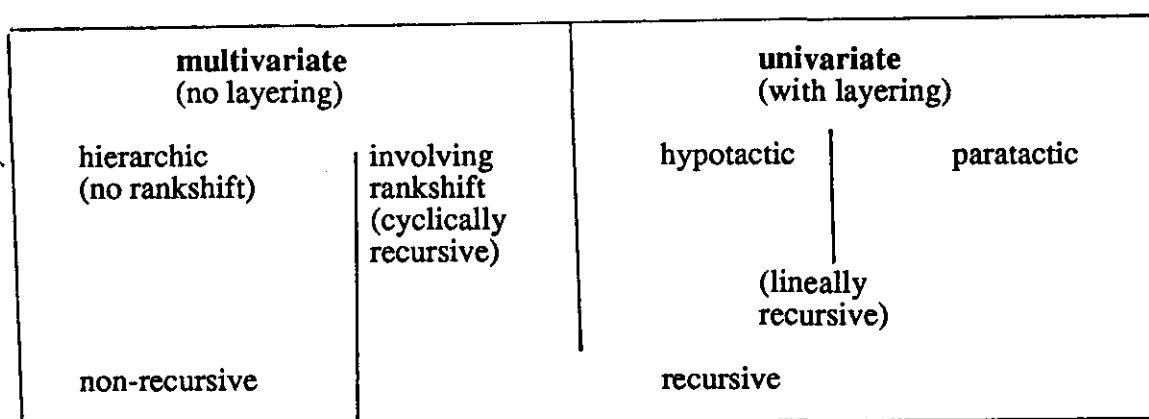


Figure 8: Summary of types of structure in a systemic-functional model (from Halliday 1981b:41)

The clause complex

The highest unit in lexico-grammatical analysis in a systemic-functional grammar is the univariate structural unit, the clause complex, which roughly equates with the (written) sentence in traditional grammatical models:

The clause complex will be the only grammatical unit which we shall recognize above the clause...a sentence is a constituent of writing, while a clause complex is a constituent of grammar. (Halliday 1985a:193)

Halliday's description of the clause complex involves two systems: firstly, the system of taxis outlined above, which divides clause complexes into paratactic (independent or co-ordinating clauses) and hypotactic (dependent, or sub-ordinating clauses).

The second system involved is the system of LOGICAL RELATIONS. Halliday suggests that the logical component, as part of the ideational metafunction, realises:

the functional-semantic relations that make up the logic of natural language. (Halliday 1985a:193)

Logico-semantic relations are subclassified into those of expansion or projection, the difference between them being best appreciated by looking at their subcategories:

Expansion involves three main types of semantic relation:

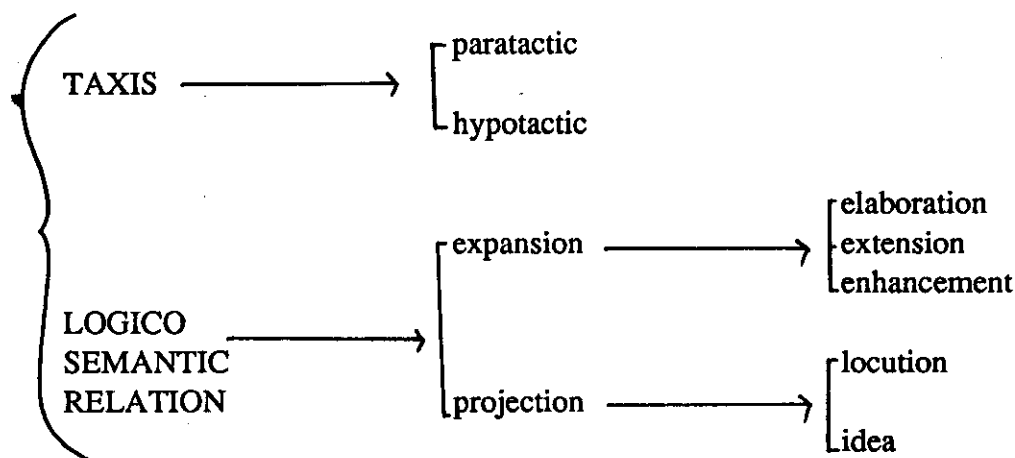
- 1) elaboration: the "i.e." relationship. Where the relation between clauses is one of restatement, specification in further detail, exemplification etc. (see Halliday 1985a:203-207)
- 2) extension: the "and" relationship. Where the relation between clauses is one of "adding some new element, giving an exception to it, or offering an alternative" (Halliday 1985a:197)

3) enhancement: the "so, yet, then" relationship. Where the relation between clauses is one of "embellishment", or circumstantial qualification. (Halliday 1985a:197).

Through the category of projection, systemics handles relations of quoting and reporting. These are subclassified into:

a) locution: "says". Where the relation between clauses involves direct quoting, i.e. the projection of "wording". (Halliday 1985a:229)

b) idea: "thinks". Where the relation between clauses involves indirect reporting, i.e. the projection of "meaning" (Halliday 1985a:197)



System 6: The CLAUSE COMPLEX (as per Halliday 1985a)

Although Halliday suggests that these logico-semantic relations are usually expressed through the clause complex, since logical relations are more generally "a relation between processes" (1985a:193), they can be realised throughout the grammar: e.g.. through cohesive relations, within embedded elements in the nominal group, within the clause (as process), through PHASE and CONATION within the verbal group, or through attribution or identification in relational processes (Halliday 1985a:306-7). He has also suggested on several occasions their possible realisation in dialogic structure:

what happens in dialogue is that the speakers share in the production of the discourse; so that although the grammar does not show the paratactic and hypotactic patterns of the clause complex in the way that these appear when the same speaker holds the floor, some of the same semantic relations may be present across turns. (Halliday 1985b:87)

However, this position has not been developed in any detail.

The following table summarizes the model so far:

semantics (METAFUNCTIONS)	lexico-grammar (SYSTEMS)
experiential i)ideational ii)logical	TRANSITIVITY TAXIS
interpersonal	MOOD
textual i)structural ii)non-structural	THEME, INFORMATION COHESION
Gloss:	
EXPERIENTIAL	- 'language as representation of experience'
LOGICAL	- 'language as natural logic'
INTERPERSONAL	- 'language as interaction'
TEXTUAL	- 'language as message'

Figure 9: Summary of the CONTENT PLANE of language, as per Halliday 1985a (after Plum 1988:24)

Context

The final and perhaps the most significant sense in which a systemic grammar is functional is that it is a natural grammar. As a grammar of how language is used, it is also a reflection of how language has evolved to serve social-semiotic needs. Thus, it is natural in the sense that the grammatical and semantic systems are interpreted as the realisation in turn of higher level semiotic organisation (Halliday 1985a:xvii-xviii).

It is this non-arbitrary relationship between language and extra-linguistic context that is theorized in systemic linguistics through the concept of register¹, an abstraction developed from Malinowski's "context of situation" (Malinowski 1935).

Although there have been some historical differences (see Ventola 1984 for details), the consensus model represents context of situation in terms of the three register variables of Field, Mode and Tenor. The variable of FIELD, defined in terms of the "social or institutional activity" participants are involved in, subsumes informal notions of both "topic" or "subject matter". (Benson & Greaves 1981, Halliday 1978:143; Martin 1984b)

¹ Space does not permit discussion of Martin's formalisation of context of culture through the notion of genre, and its position with respect to register, but for this alternative model, see Martin (1984a, 1984b, 1985, i.p/1989).

The variable of **MODE** captures contextual variation due to two simultaneous vectors of semiotic distance: the physical distance between interactants, seen in terms of the possibility of immediate feedback (thus contrasting a book with a conversation), and the experiential distance between language and the event. This dimension of the role of language in the interaction contrasts language as reflection (e.g. exposition, argument) with language accompanying action (e.g. commentary) (Martin 1984c).

Finally, the interpersonal dimensions of context are captured through the **TENOR** variable, which describes interpersonal relationships between interactants in terms of the frequency of contact, degree of affect, and their power and status in the situation (Poynton 1984).

Register theory captures the non-arbitrary relationship between language and situation, by associating each of the register variables with one of the metafunctions through a relationship of probabilistic realisation (Plum 1988:3; Martin i.p/1989). Thus, the register variable of **FIELD** is associated with ideational meanings, that of **TENOR** with interpersonal meanings, and that of **MODE** with textual meanings:

SITUATION Feature of the context	(realized by)	TEXT Functional component of semantic system
Field of discourse (what is going on)	↘	Experiential meanings (transitivity, naming, etc)
Tenor of discourse (who are taking part)		Interpersonal meanings (mood, modality, person etc)
Mode of discourse (role assigned to language)		Textual meanings (theme, information, cohesive, relations)

Figure 10: Relation of the text to the context of situation
(from Halliday & Hasan 1985:26)

Register theory is a theory of functional diatypological variation: of purposeful semantic variation according to use (Gregory 1967, Ellis & Ure 1969, Ure & Ellis 1977, Halliday 1978:31-35). It is also an empirically verifiable statement of predictability. It says that given a particular configuration of register variables, particular language systems are "at risk" in predictable ways, and there is a high probability that particular choices from those systems will be made. The predictability process also works in the other direction: given a text, the actualised record of linguistic choice, it is possible to infer the particular configuration of register variables that gave rise to it (Halliday 1978:62).

Text

The semantic-functional theory outlined above is brought together through the systemic notion of *text*. The basic unit at the semantic stratum in the systemic model, *text* refers to:

any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole. (Halliday & Hasan 1976:1)

The realisation relationship between *text* and the lexico-grammar provides systemic linguistics with a methodology of text analysis that is anchored in the grammar, whilst the purpose of describing *text*, a major pre-occupation of systemic linguistics since its earliest development, underlies and reinforces the justification for a grammar that is both functional and semantic:

In order to provide insights into the meaning and effectiveness of a *text*, a discourse grammar needs to be functional and semantic in its orientation, with the grammatical categories explained as the realization of semantic patterns. Otherwise it will face inwards rather than outwards, characterizing the *text* in explicit formal terms but providing no basis on which to relate it to the non-linguistic universe of its situational and cultural environment. (Halliday 1985a:xvii)

Thus, systemic text analysis begins from the lexico-grammatical analysis of *text*, using explicit linguistic patterns to explain how language can make meanings in social and cultural contexts.

Conversation as Text

Although systemic text analysis has tended to focus on either written texts, or pragmatically-motivated spoken interactions so that explicit descriptions of conversation are rare (but see Ventola 1979, discussed below), systemicists going back to Firth (e.g. 1935:32)² have always acknowledged the importance of conversation as a type of *text*, and its role in changing the linguistic system. In Halliday's assessment, the significance of conversation lies in the fact that:

in the last resort, every kind of *text* in every language is meaningful because it can be related to interaction among speakers, and ultimately to ordinary everyday spontaneous conversation. That is the kind of *text* where people exploit to the full the resources of language that they have; the kind of situation in which they improvise, in which they innovate, in which changes in the system take place. (Halliday 1985b:11)

² This quotation is presented above, under the title for Chapter Two.

Because the systemic definition of text includes both spoken and written, monologic and interactive linguistic products, the evolution of conversational analysis within systemic linguistics differs from that within many other approaches. Whereas they start from the position of "how conversation is different from other linguistic acts", systemic linguistics begins instead from the position of "how conversation is similar", and it is only fairly recently that the theory has worked towards focussing on the differences between conversation and other types of text.

Thus, whereas in many linguistic approaches a sharp line is drawn between accounts of (written) text (described through accounts of "text grammar", e.g. de Beaugrande & Dressler 1981, van Dijk 1972) and accounts of discourse (spoken interaction), the systemic model has always argued that any text shares certain fundamental properties that makes it describable as one kind of linguistic unit: a unit of meaning.

The semantic unity which defines text is described as being of two major types:

- * unity of structure
- * unity of texture. (Halliday & Hasan 1985:52)

The structural unity of text is described in systemic linguistics by **genre theory** (Martin 1984a, 1984b, i.p/1989; Hasan 1984b, 1985c, Ventola 1979, 1987) whilst textual unity is described through analyses of cohesion (Halliday & Hasan 1976) and **cohesive harmony** (Hasan 1984a, 1985c), and other **textual patterns**, such as Method of Development (Fries 1983), Modal Responsibility, and Point (Martin i.p/1989:ch6).

The model of text unity developed by Halliday & Hasan (1976, 1985) gives priority to text structure. There, the "macro" or generic structure of text is represented as implicating (being realized through) lexico-grammatical patterns. Since genre is initially associated with the mode variable (Halliday 1978:145), these patterns are particularly reflected in textual patterns of cohesion (Halliday & Hasan 1976:326-327).

Conversation, like other text types, is interpreted within this approach:

It is safe to say that every genre has its own discourse structure. It might seem as if informal, spontaneous conversation had no structure of its own over and above the internal organization of each sentence and the cohesion between the sentences. But the work of Harvey Sacks and Emanuel Schegloff has shown beyond question that conversation is very highly structured. There are definite principles regulating the taking of turns in conversation....The discourse structure of a conversation is in turn reinforced by the cohesion, which explicitly ties together the related parts, bonding them more closely to each other than to the others that are not so related. (Halliday & Hasan 1976:327)

As applied to casual conversation, then, this early systemic approach involves attempts to describe the generic structure both of and within casual conversation, with the macro-structure realised through the organisation of interaction into adjacency pairs, tied together through textual patterns of ellipsis and substitution.

The Generic Structure Analysis of casual conversation.

Genre theory models the staged, ordered unfolding of goal-oriented linguistic interactions. Generic structure is described multivariately, through schematic structure formula, which assign functional labels to the Beginning ^ Middle ^ End organisation of generic interactions (Mitchell 1957/75, Martin 1984b, Hasan 1985c, Ventola 1978).

Generic analysis of conversation has taken two directions:

- a) the description of the overall generic structure of casual conversation. e.g. Ventola 1977, 1979
- b) the description of genres-within-conversation: the description of text types within an on-going conversation. e.g. Horvath & Eggins (in press), Slade (1989).

In her attempt to describe a multivariate structure of casual conversation, Ventola identifies seven structural elements: Greeting, Address, Identification, Approach, Centering, Leave taking, and Good-bye (see Ventola 1979:274)

However, whilst both the identification and realisations of the more formulaic stages (e.g. Greetings) are straightforward, Approaches and Centering are less transparent. Ventola suggests that whilst the Approach stage functions as "a means of getting conversation going" (1979:273) through varieties of "small talk", the Centering element occurs when participants "get fully involved" in the conversation (Ventola 1979:273).

These two elements are obviously critical in the generic description, not only because, through essentially open-ended recursion, they account for the major sections of casual conversation, but also because their status as obligatory or optional elements correlates with variations in the type and tenor of the casual conversations. Ventola suggests that whilst Centering is obligatory in non-minimal (i.e. experientially-oriented) conversations, it is optional in minimal", or phatic communion type conversations. Ventola also suggests that the presence, type, and number of Approach elements varies according to the degree of social distance between interactants: both Indirect and Direct Approaches, occur frequently in conversations amongst strangers, but both types are rare amongst friends.

Although Ventola's definitions and realisation statements for these elements are very dependent on notions of topic, she presents no clear criteria for identifying (boundaries between) topics in continuous conversation, nor for motivating her informal taxonomy of topics (e.g. "cognitive" and "informative" topics). The principal value of her structural formulae seems to be to identify those elements of conversation which should be the focus of more detailed description.

Genres-in-conversation

One approach to more detailed generic description of casual conversation is seen in attempts to identify conversational genres: i.e. generically structured texts within the larger generic unit of conversation.

Genres which have been described as occurring within conversation include variants of the story genres (e.g. narratives, recounts, anecdotes etc.), based on descriptions developed by Labov & Waletzky (1966), Martin & Rothery (1980, 1981), Plum (1988) amongst others; and those genres more specific to the informality of casual conversations (e.g. gossip texts (Slade 1989), informing texts (Horvath 1986), and opinion texts (Horvath & Eggins 1986 & [in press])).

The success of generic description can be shown to correlate with two factors:

- a) the degree of "interactivity" of the genre described: thus, essentially monologic text types are more easily described than highly interactive ones;
- b) whether experiential or interpersonal meanings are foregrounded: thus, genres with the focus on temporally ordered activity sequences are more easily modelled generically than are exchanges of attitudes and evaluations.

Thus, a possible generic analysis of Phase 3 slightly modifying the schematic structure suggested by Martin & Rothery (1981) for the RECOUNT genre is:

ORIENTATION	clauses 1-2
EVENT 1	clauses 2-6
EVENT 2	clauses 7-8
EVENT 3	clauses 9-11
EVENT 4	clauses 12-16
PROBE	clauses 17-18
RESOLUTION	clause 19
CODA	clauses 20-25?
EVALUATION ?	clauses 27-28
CODA?	clauses 29-33

Note that Sue's interaction can be incorporated in the generic description as a PROBE, a strategy Hasan defines as designed to elicit an obligatory element of generic structure (Hasan 1985c:66). However, generic analysis begins to falter once the obligatory stages are recognized, and it becomes difficult to assign structural elements to Simon's confrontational evaluation of Di's story, and her attempts to side-step an argument.

Three factors make interpersonal genres of conversation even more problematic for generic analysis:

i) interpersonal meanings tend to be realised prosodically, rather than discretely, thus making the distinction between generic stages difficult (see Slade 1989:16).

ii) whilst generic stages implicate adjacency pairs, it is options chosen by one interactant within a stage that can affect the subsequent unfolding of the generic structure (e.g. Horvath & Eggins' (in press) analysis of the Opinion Text, where it is the choice of a TYPE OF REACTION that determines the obligatory status of the subsequent elements, Evidence and Resolution). This requires extending dynamic models of genre, such as that developed by Ventola (1984a, 1984b, 1987), to describe conversational genres.

iii) generic "drift": boundaries between genres are less determinate, with interactants using final stages of one genre as an initiating stage for another: e.g. Phase 3 illustrates this "drift" towards opinion texts in casual conversations, where Simons' "evaluation" element appended to the recount serves as a possible Initiating Opinion, to which Di's response constitutes a Reaction.

However, the major problem with generic approaches to casual conversation is that very large sections of casual talk do not reveal any obvious generic structure (Plum 1986). Rather than a macro organisation of goal-oriented stages, "chat" reveals only a micro organization of adjacency pairs. In the Halliday & Hasan (1976) and (1985) model, this adjacency pair organisation is seen as part of the realisation of texture in conversation, explained through the analysis of cohesion.

Texture in conversation

Halliday & Hasan (1976:2) identify the principal component of texture as cohesion, and the analysis of the major cohesive devices they identify (reference, lexical relations, conjunction, ellipsis & substitution) can be used to explore three aspects of texture in conversation.

Firstly, cohesion analysis explains in part the continuity of the excerpt, despite the absence of observable generic structure.

Thus, for example, in Phase 2 we find five or six major reference chains, some spanning almost the entire phase: Courtney, Jill, Marek, Stephanie, garbage, etc.

The Courtney chain begins in C1 and continues **he** (C2) **him** (C5) **he** (C6, 7,8,9), then bridging reference links these mentions of Courtney to his christian name, **Michael** (C10), **he** (C12). Bridging reference now creates a new link to **his sister** (C13) **Jill**, who then becomes **she** (C21,22,23), before the return of **Michael** (C23,24), **he** (29), **him** (C31), (C32, 33, 34, 35,38). It is during one of these references to Courtney that **Marek** is first mentioned (C35), then referred to as **him** (44). **The cleaner lady** is introduced through definite reference in (C45), then referred back to as **she** (C46), **her name** (52), **Stephanie** (53,54), **she** (60,61), which leads us back to **Marek**(61) as **he** (64, 65, 66) etc.

Reinforcing these referential ties is lexical cohesion. A very large percentage of the lexical items in Phase 2 fall into just five or six major lexical strings, which run through the phase. For example:

i) **conversation** (C1): **conversation** (4), **raving on** (5), **yap yap yaps** (8), then re-surfacing in **discussion** (C109)

ii) **naughty** (C6): **banned** (7), **antisocial, drunken behaviour** (7), **alcohol** (12), **mandies** (26), **tolerance/alcohol** (30), **fight** (31);

iii) **bright** (C20): **good** (21), **bright** (22) **brighter** (23), **precocious** (24), **superstar** (25), **good boy** (29), **doing well** (32), **cleaning up** (i.e. succeeding) (33);

iv) **messy** (C44): This is the longest and densest string, carried through the last two-thirds of the phase. It includes: **cleaner lady, cleaned** (45), **bad** (48), **cleaning lady** (56,57,58,60), **cleanest** (63), **cleaning up** (b70), **dinner parties** (b71), **cooks** (b72) **makes mess** (b73), **cleaning up** (78), **put out the garbage** (79, 81, 82, 83) **garbage goes** (90) **garbage day** (95), **garbage tins** (103) **garbage discussion** (109)

Secondly, cohesion analysis can be used to determine boundaries in the excerpt, despite the absence of text structure. Relevant here is Halliday & Hasan's distinction between

tight	and	loose	texture:
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In some instances there will in fact be dense clusters of cohesive ties, giving a very close texture which serves to signal that the meanings of the parts are strongly interdependent and that the whole forms a single unity. In other instances, however, the texture will be much looser. (Halliday & Hasan 1976:296)

The difference between tight and loose cohesion explains the intuitive support for the division of the continuous excerpt into 4 phases³: within phases we find relatively "dense" texture, whereas between phases we find relatively "loose" texture. For example, Phases 1 & 2 are linked lexically through the reference to **conversation** the first clauses of each phase; Phases 2 & 3 are linked again through lexical cohesion to the strings of **time** and **garbage**; Phases 3 & 4 are linked lexically through the string **get over** and **egalitarian society**.

³ Note that this is not how Gregory & Malcolm delineate phases. Their analysis involves lexico-grammatical as well as cohesive patterns (see Gregory & Malcolm 1981, Malcolm 1985b).

At the same time, the single lexical links are offset against the occurrence of new reference chains, new lexical strings, and boundary marking conjunctions. For example: Phase 1 lexis develops **conversation** in terms of its hyponyms (**idioms**), whereas in Phase 2 the same superordinate leads to pejorative activity sequences (**yaps**); Phase 2 the discussion of **garbage going** is marked off from the personal recount in Phase 3 by the framing conjunction **actually**; the lexical strings in Phase 4 shift from activities to do with driving **garbage trucks** to **equality** for men and women.

Within each phase clauses are linked far more "tightly", through a variety of different cohesive devices, often overlapping or interacting. For example, in Phase 1 reference chains and lexical strings interact frequently: (**our mutual cleaning lady, brighter than Michael, the cleanest guy in the flat**)⁴

The third application of cohesive analysis to conversation is the specific analysis of ellipsis and substitution, to describe the interactive organisation of conversation into adjacency pairs.

Ellipsis and Substitution and Halliday & Hasan's (1976) REJOINER classification

Defining ellipsis as "substitution by zero" (Halliday & Hasan 1976:142), and substitution as the replacement of one item of wording with another (Halliday & Hasan 1976:88-89), Halliday & Hasan identify three main types of ellipsis and substitution: nominal, verbal and clausal. The first is described through the structure of the nominal group, typically involving ellipsis or substitution of the Thing element (see Halliday 1985a:ch6). The two other categories relate to Halliday & Hasan's (1976), and later Halliday's (1985a), description of MOOD (or modal) structure in the English clause.

Using Halliday's (1985a) terminology, the clause is realised by two elements of interpersonal structure. Firstly, the Mood element, which consists of the Subject, Finite, and certain Mood Adjuncts (such as vocatives); secondly, the Residue, which is everything else: Predicator, Complement, and Adjuncts of Circumstance, etc. (Halliday 1985a:71-92). For example, the Mood Structure of clause 1 in phase 1:

P1/C1	This	has	been	a long conversation.
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement
	Mood		Residue	

⁴ Whilst Hasan's analysis of cohesive harmony (Hasan 1984a, Hasan 1985c) would reinforce these interactions, there are numerous practical problems applying it to lengthy conversational text (see Martin i.p/1989:ch 7 for discussion)

The critical status of the Mood element as the component which "carries the argument forward" (Halliday 1985a:71) lies in its realisation of the "arguable" content of the proposition: the Subject, polarity, tense, mood, modality, and modulation. It is the patterns of Mood^Residue ellipsis in interaction (i.e. which elements of the Mood^Residue structure are presumed or exchanged across turns) which realise the development of dialogue. For example:

- A: This has been a long conversation.
- Bi: Yes.
- ii: It has.
- iii: Sure has.
- iv: Has it?
- v: A what?
- vi: Really?
- vii: Do you think so?
- etc.

Halliday & Hasan (1976) use the type of clausal ellipsis to establish a dialogue category of rejoinder:

A rejoinder is any utterance which immediately follows an utterance by a different speaker and is cohesively related to it. (Halliday & Hasan 1976:206)

Martin rightly points out that interpreted literally Halliday & Hasan's criteria mean that sequences such as the following would constitute an [initiation]/[rejoinder] pair, on the grounds of lexical cohesion, even though there is no "structural" link:

- Who is that playing tennis?
- Tennis balls are yellow. (Martin 1981:60-61)

However, read in context it seems possible that Halliday & Hasan in fact mean to define rejoinders as:

any elliptically cohesive sequel by a different speaker.

Rejoinders are then subclassified according to where they occur in a sequence, i.e. in terms of what type of pair-part precedes them. Thus they make a broad distinction between [responses] (rejoinders after questions) and [other rejoinders]. These [others] are in turn subclassified according to polarity as well as preceding pair part: thus [assent] and [contradiction] follow statements, [consent] and [refusal] follow commands. "Recycling" rejoinders are recognized through the category [question rejoinder], following either statements or commands. (Halliday & Hasan 1976:206-7)

[responses] are subclassified as either [direct] (those which do answer the question they follow), and [indirect] responses, which don't. [Indirect responses] can be of three types:

An indirect response is either one which comments on the question (COMMENTARY), or one which denies its relevance (DISCLAIMER), or one which gives supplementary information implying but not actually expressing an answer (SUPPLEMENTARY RESPONSE) (Halliday & Hasan 1976:206)

However, applied to Phase 1 of the continuous excerpt, this rejoinder categorization reveals a number of problems. Firstly, what to do with the large unanalysed" category of non-elliptically related clauses which display strong ties with prior pair parts (e.g. P1:C8 & 9, C15-16). Secondly, what about related units that are not actually (but are potentially) elliptical (e.g. P1:C3-4). Thirdly, the indelicacy of the description means that sometimes quite different reactions are grouped together (e.g. P1:C3-4 and C5 and C10-13 are all [assents]). Fourthly, what to do with incongruent realisations of categories (e.g. P1:b19). And finally, how to handle the frequent occurrence of pairs not predicted or allowed by the network (e.g. P1:b27: aa supplementary response] rather than a [consent]).

The rejoinder network in Halliday & Hasan 1976 represents the location of dialogic organisation within the textual metafunction.

In Halliday & Hasan 1985, the location of adjacency pair organisation within cohesion is maintained, although Hasan introduces a distinction between componential and organic relations.

Componential relations, those between component parts of messages (here Hasan groups reference, lexical relations, and substitution and ellipsis) are contrasted with organic relations, cohesive relations which link whole message units (Hasan 1985:81). In classifying adjacency pairs and conjunctive relations as organic, Hasan introduces a further element into an already difficult distinction between structural and non-structural relations. The troublesome classification which places the mechanism for structuring conversational interaction within the non-structural component of the lexico-grammar is resolved by Halliday (1984) who, in developing the stratified approach to conversational structure, takes adjacency pairs out of the textual metafunction altogether.

The Stratified Approach to Conversational Structure: MOOD, SPEECH FUNCTION, and EXCHANGE STRUCTURE THEORY⁵

In coming to focus specifically on the "micro" level of conversational organisation, Halliday's repositioning of adjacency pair structure within the interpersonal metafunction underlies what has become known as "the stratified approach" to conversation analysis. The major tenet of this approach is the stratification of the clause systems of mood with respect to the discourse systems of speech function. This realisational link establishes the grammatical systems that underlie and constrain speech function classes, and offers a semantic interpretation of mood as the grammatical resource for structuring the exchange of interactional roles in dialogue.

The stratified approach owes much to the work of the Birmingham School reviewed in Chapter Three. In fact, for each of the five main aspects of conversational continuity, the systemic approach developed in the work of Halliday, Martin and Ventola represents both an extension as well as a reinterpretation of Birmingham School models of move and exchange structure:

- 1) **UNITS:** Martin gives the Birmingham unit the move precise definition as a unit selecting independently for MOOD (Martin i.p/1989:10), thereby establishing an explicit relationship between the clause systems of mood, modality, modulation etc and the discourse unit realising speech function. Ventola's (1987, 1988) definition of the move complex builds on Martin's move to suggest an alternative to Birmingham act.
- 2) **TAXONOMY:** Following Halliday (1984, 1985a), Martin (i.p/1989) stratifies SPEECH FUNCTION with respect to MOOD, thus providing explicit criteria for exhaustively motivating move classes and adjacency pairs, a goal not clearly established in Birmingham work.
- 3) **RELATEDNESS:** Martin relaxes Berry's (1981b) ellipsis criteria to suggest the criteria of potential ellipsis, further explored by Ventola (1987). Arguing for the incorporation of ellipsis and substitution as grammatical systems within mood, Martin (i.p/1989) also integrates the ellipsis criteria within the stratified approach.
- 4) **MONOLOGUE:** Both Ventola (1987) and Martin (i.p/1989) reject the need for the Birmingham rank of act structure to handle monologic sequences. Ventola proposes that monologue be incorporated univariately, with the the move complex filling an exchange slot (Ventola 1987:111/0, whilst Martin argues for monologic relations to be handled by cohesive relations distinct from the systems of conversational structure (Martin i.p/1989:28).

⁵ The following discussion is not meant to imply that there are not other systemic approaches to move and exchange structure. In particular, two recent accounts are found in Fawcett et al (1988) and Butler's (1985b, 1987) work. However, since both descriptions concentrate on goods-&-service exchanges, their relevance to the description of casual conversation is limited, and they will not be considered here. However, see Martin (i.p/1989) for discussion of these approaches in relation to the stratified approach outlined in this chapter.

5) SEQUENCE: Martin systematizes Berry's textual exchange formula at the rank of exchange, adding a fifth slot to the possible exchange structure (Martin i.p/1989:20). The development of a category of "dynamic moves" allows Martin to account for moves which depart from the multivariate structural formula, and thus to capture conversational organisation as involving both dependency and constituency relations (Martin i.p/1989:40).

However, in the following review I will suggest that whilst stratification has greatly increased the theoretical consistency and explanatory potential of the systemic approach, the type of data on which the approach has been based (limited, fragmentary and typically pragmatic interactions), means that much of the descriptive work remains to be done in applying the approach to the description of conversational structure in casual sustained talk.

Halliday's (1984) development of the Stratified Approach: the nature of dialogue

The origin of the stratified approach to conversational structure lies in Halliday's (1984) interpretation of the nature of dialogue. In a departure from his 1976 position, where dialogic organisation was seen as determined by conversational "macro-structure", realized through patterns of ellipsis and substitution, he suggests that interaction is motivated by the interpersonal function of language:

In systemic theory the process of dialogue is treated as a shared potential and described as a 'system', or network of choices, in terms of the role relationships set up by the speaker for himself and the hearer and the encoding of these in the semantics of language. (Halliday 1984:6)

In brief, Halliday's position involves two dimensions: firstly, he explicitly associates the interaction roles participants take on in dialogic situations with the semantic system of SPEECH FUNCTION; and secondly, he establishes an explicit realisational link between the speech function options at the semantic stratum and the grammatical realisation of interpersonal meaning, through the clause systems of mood:

At the social-contextual level, the dynamic of dialogue consists in assigning, taking on, and carrying out a variety of interaction roles. These roles are themselves defined by a small number of very general semiotic processes, and it is these that we shall take as our point of departure. The choices that are open to a speaker within this range of interpersonal options are then coded in the semantic system, as 'speech functions' of statement, question and the like; and these in turn are recoded in the grammatical system, as categories of mood. (Halliday 1984:11)

Halliday suggests that the notion of congruence is important in the realisation relationship:

A 'congruent' realization is that one which can be regarded as typical - which will be selected in the absence of any good reason for selecting another one (Halliday 1984:14).

Thus, although there is not a strict one-to-one recoding between stratum, incongruence can be explained as systematic, i.e. functional in that it serves:

to build flexibility into the system, and allow speakers to introduce infinite variety into the tenor of their microsemiotic encounters. (Halliday 1984:11)

In his 1984 article Halliday then reviews each step in his model in more detail, suggesting that three levels of interpretation, and thus three different systems, are necessary:

- 1) SOCIAL CONTEXT
- 2) SPEECH FUNCTION
- 3) MOOD

Systems at the level of social context capture the nature of dialogue as:

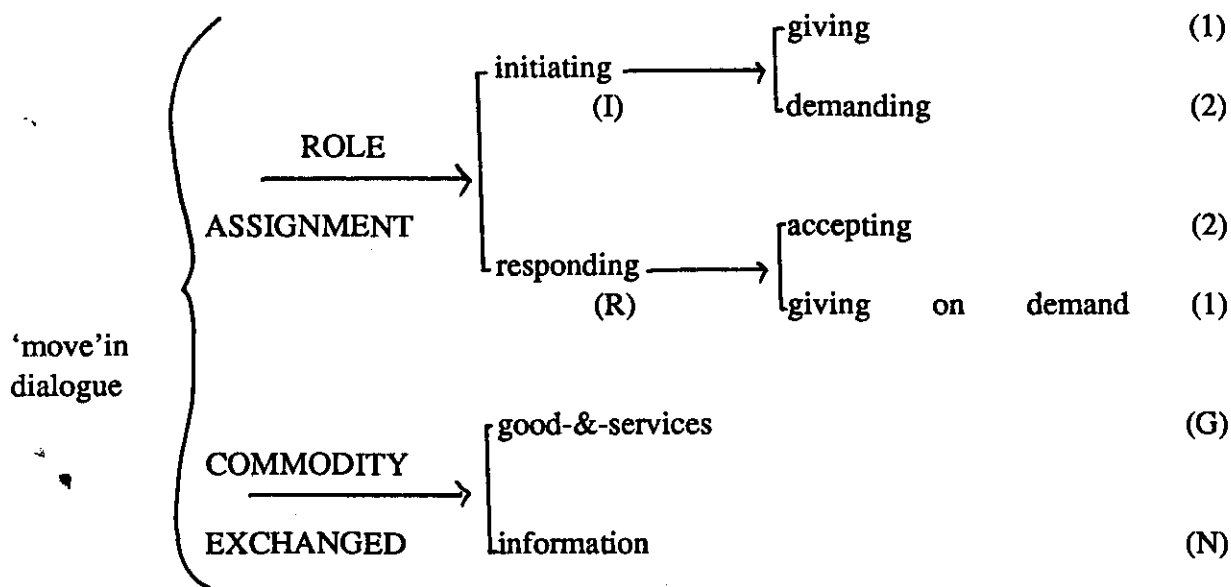
a process of exchange. It is an exchange involving two variables: (1) the nature of the commodity that is being exchanged, and (2) the roles that are defined by the exchange process. (1984:11)

Halliday suggests that the commodity to be exchanged through dialogue may be either [information] or [goods & services]; and that the exchange roles available to the participants are only two: either [giving] or [demanding]. But he stresses that these roles are inherently interactive:

When the speaker takes on a role of giving or demanding, by the same token he assigns a complementary role to the person he is addressing. If I am giving, you are called on to accept; if I am demanding, you are called on to give. (Halliday 1984:12)

It is this built-in interactivity that lies behind the two categories of roles: exchange-initiating roles, "those taken on by the speaker himself", and responding roles as "those assigned by the speaker to the addressee and taken on by the addressee when he becomes the speaker in his turn." (Halliday 1984:12)

With the undefined unit "move" as point of entry, Halliday presents the system for this first level as follows:



**System 7: The system of dialogue (1): level of social context
- the 'move' (from Halliday 1984:12)**

Halliday states that in this diagram:

dialogue is being represented at a level that is 'above' the linguistic code: we are interpreting it as a system of the social context. The system network expresses the potential that inheres in one move in the dynamics of personal interaction. (Halliday 1984:12)

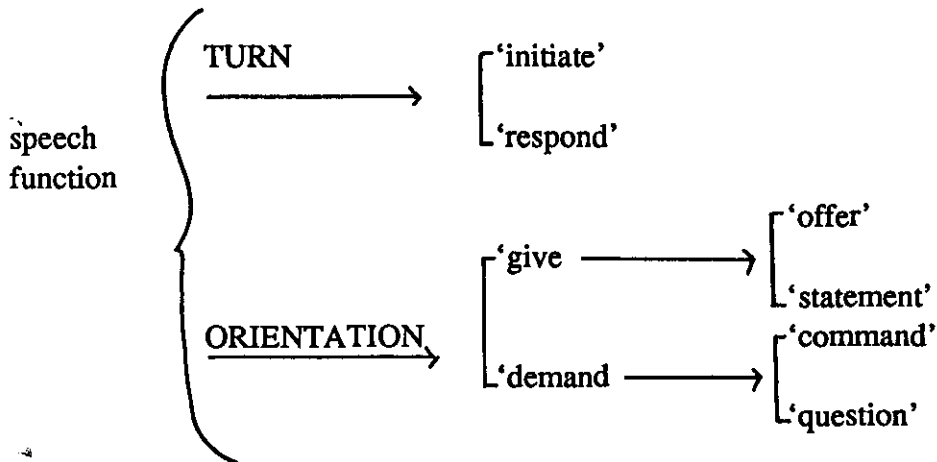
Halliday's interpretation involves two further levels of analysis, both of which are part of the linguistic system. Beginning with the highest level of semantics, Halliday tries to show:

the network of semantic options by which the options in the exchange process are encoded as meanings in language (Halliday 1984:13)

Halliday's semantic network of SPEECH FUNCTIONS interprets and motivates speech function options as an intermediate level of coding, realisationally related both "downwards" to the grammar, and "upwards" to the socio-contextual system already described:

the categories of speech function are both (a) realizing the social-contextual options of role assignment and commodity exchanged and (b) realized by the grammatical options of mood - as well as (c) forming a coherent system in their own right. (Halliday 1984:13)

With the unit of entry this time the speech function, the semantic system is given as:



System 8: The system of dialogue (2): level of semantics
 - the 'speech function'. (from Halliday 1984:13)

Halliday then lists the congruent realisations for each of the socio-contextual categories in speech function options:

Move in dialogue:	Speech function by which typically encoded
(I 1 G)	'initiate:offer'
(I 1 N)	'initiate:statement'
(I 2 G)	'initiate: command'
(I 2 N)	'initiate: question'
(R 2 G)	'respond (to offer): accept (command in response)'
(R 2 N)	'respond (to statement): acknowledge (question in response)'
(R 1 G)	'respond (to command): comply (offer in response)'
(R 1 N)	'respond (to question): answer (state in response)'

Table 1: Semantic realization of categories of the social context (congruent pattern) (from Halliday 1984:14)

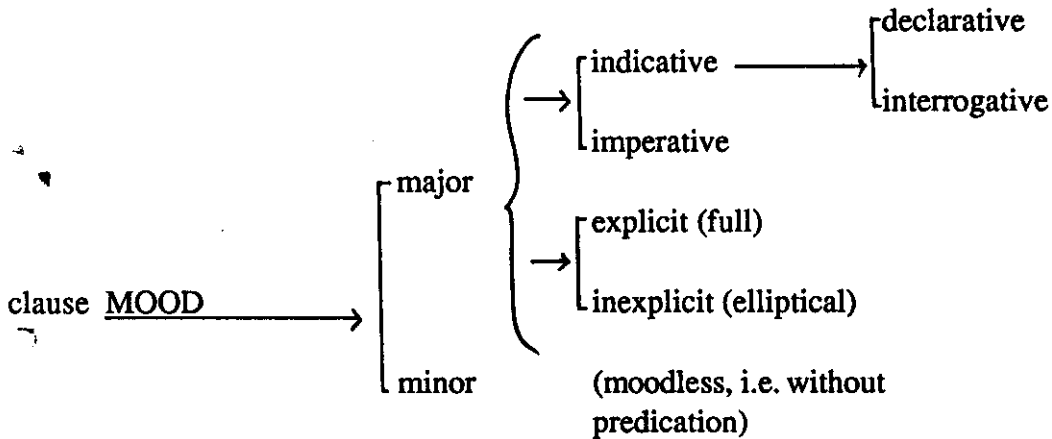
Whilst suggesting this pattern is the typical one, Halliday points out that:

In real life, we rarely confine ourselves to congruent realizations for very long; not only because the resulting discourse easily becomes boring but also, and more significantly, because many of the more delicate distinctions within any system depend for their expression on what in the first instance appear as non-congruent forms. (Halliday 1984:14, his emphasis)

The final level of interpretation Halliday proposes is that of the lexico-grammatical one, where:

The meanings are, in turn, coded as 'wordings': that is as selections of options in the lexicogrammatical system. (Halliday 1984:15)

This system is the basic system of mood in the clause, with the inclusion of ellipsis to distinguish initiating from responding options:



System 9: The system of dialogue (3): level of lexicogrammar - the 'mood'. (Halliday 1984:15)

The congruent realisation of speech functions options Halliday suggests is:

Speech function	Mood by which typically encoded
initiate	full
respond	elliptical (or minor)
offer	(various: no congruent form)
statement	declarative
command	imperative
question	interrogative

Table 2: Lexicogrammatical realization of semantic categories (congruent pattern). (Halliday 1984:15)

The account presented in Halliday 1985a is largely consistent with his 1984 reinterpretation. Halliday again presents the semantic organization of dialogue in terms of the assignment or selection of speech roles, and again this distinction between [giving] and [demanding] is cut across by that concerning the nature of the commodity exchanged, contrasting [goods-&-services] vs [information]. The simultaneous cross-classification of these variables define the four basic speech function categories of [offer], [command], [statement] and [question] (see Halliday 1985a:68-9):

	Goods-&-Services	Information
Give	OFFER	STATEMENT
Demand	COMMAND	QUESTION

Figure 11: Basic speech function pairs, as in Halliday (1985a:69)

Again, the inherent interactivity of the process is stressed, with Halliday's reference to the interact:

Even these elementary categories already involve complex notions: giving means 'inviting to receive', and demanding means 'inviting to give'. The speaker is not only doing something himself; he is also requiring something of the listener. Typically, therefore, an 'act' of speaking is something that might more appropriately be called an 'interact': it is an exchange in which giving implies receiving and demanding implies giving in response. (Halliday 1985a:68)

However, the account in Halliday 1985a extends the 1984 version in four main areas.

Firstly, the acknowledgement of discretionary responses is more explicit. Thus, Halliday proposes that each of the four basic initiating speech functions is "matched" or paired with a "desired" or expected response, which may or may not be verbalized. Since there is always the possibility of an interactant producing a response other than the expected one, Halliday also recognizes "discretionary alternatives". His position is summarised in the following table:

initiation		expected	discretionary response	alternative
give	G&S	offer	acceptance	rejection
demand	G&S	command	undertaking	refusal
give	information	statement	acknowledgment	contradiction
demand	information	question	answer	disclaimer

Figure 12: Speech functions and responses
(from Halliday 1985a:69)

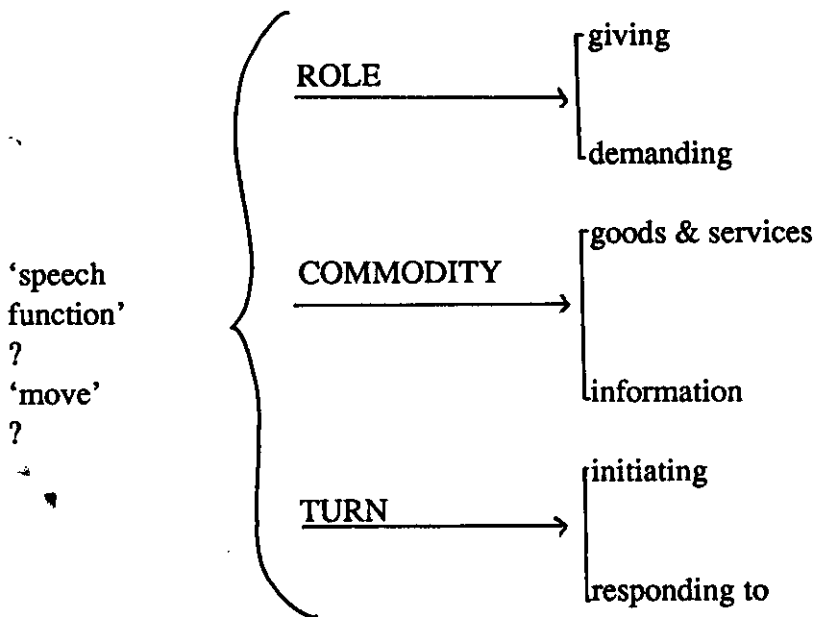
Although these discretionary responses are strongly reminiscent of the ethnomethodologists' categories of "dispreferred responses", Halliday does not discuss the structural implications of the dispreferred status. Thus, the grammatical criteria underlying their categorization as discretionary is not made explicit.

Secondly, Halliday clarifies the grammatical basis for the distinction between [information] and [goods & services] through the description of the **proposition** and the **proposal**, with the proposition as the unit for choices in modality, and the proposal the unit for choices in modulation.

Thirdly, the discussion of incongruence is considerably extended, with the description of interpersonal metaphors of modality, modulation, and mood (Halliday 1985a:332-345).

Fourthly, significantly absent from the 1985a account is any mention of the "social-contextual level" that formed the starting point for the 1984 description. The duplication of categories apparent in the 1984 version, where the only apparent difference between speech function and social-contextual choices was the addition of inverted commas to the speech function options, has been abandoned. Instead there is a single systemic organisation, with the speech function categories of [offer], [statement], [command], [question], represented as the realisation of bundles of simultaneous selections.

Whilst the focus of the description in Halliday's 1984 account was largely to demonstrate the link between levels of analysis, and their interrelatedness in the interpretation of dialogue, the focus of Halliday 1985a is of course to develop the grammatical description of the structures of mood in the clause. Thus the speech function network presented remains at primary delicacy, i.e.:



**System 10: Speech function network implied
in Halliday (1985a:69)**

However, it is not made clear whether the unit of entry to this network is the "move" or the "speech function".

Halliday's stratified interpretation of dialogue clarifies three areas of ambiguity for the systemic approach to conversation analysis:

- 1) By providing an interpretation for the nature of dialogue as a social process: Halliday's reinterpretation of dialogue within the interpersonal metafunction provides an explicit association between the register variable of Tenor, the semantics of speech function, and the grammatical organisation of MOOD. The speech function network represents a systemic interpretation of what speakers are "doing" when they make a move in conversation, and the process of linguistic exchange can be related both upwards to the interpersonal contextual variables of power, affect, contact etc, and downwards to the interpersonal grammatical systems of mood, modality, modulation etc.
- 2) By establishing a realisational relationship between speech function and mood, the number of speech acts we could recognize in English is no longer infinite: The link provides criteria for constraining and motivating speech function classes, so that a register-neutral, exhaustive, and progressively more delicate categorization can be achieved.
- 3) By giving a semantic interpretation to systems in the mood network: Of the many possible ways of describing the mood systems of English, Halliday suggests semantically-motivated criteria for extending description, by interpreting mood options as systematic resources for enabling interaction.

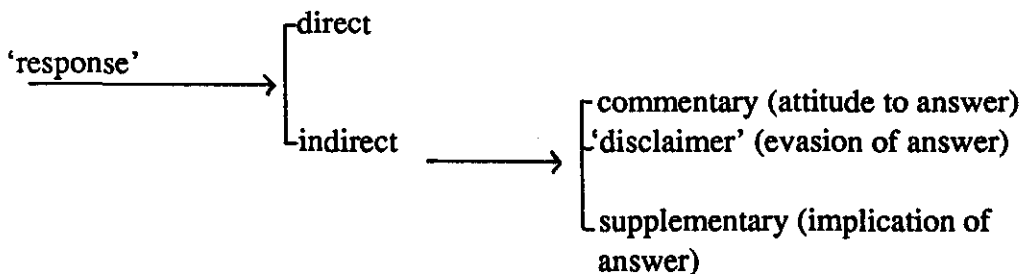
However, despite these major theoretical advances, there remain a number of problems with Halliday's account when related to describing the principal aspects of interactional continuity:

1) Units: Halliday's 1984 account posits three units; the move, the speech function, and the clause, but it is not clear what Halliday means by the term "move", nor which unit is relevant in the 1985a description. As Ventola has pointed out (Ventola 1987:92) Halliday's examples appear to associate the turn with the move. Yet his grammatical analysis would clearly require distinguishing clauses within turns. Thus, we are no closer to a practical solution to this question than we were with the Birmingham units of act and move.

2) Taxonomy: Although the stratification of mood and speech function provides an explanation of where speech function categories are to come from, and how the taxonomy can be extended, the development is largely theoretical.

Halliday's network is extremely indelicate, providing no sub-classification of initiating moves, so that we are still unable to deal with examples such as P2:C40.

He includes in his response system the rejoinder categories established in Halliday & Hasan 1976, thus distinguishing:



System 11: Types of indirect response
(from Halliday 1984:18)

But not only are no realisation statements offered for these categories, but there are no categories for the "two-faced" responses, e.g. P1:C6. The network still provides no way of capturing challenging responses such as P1:C8,9, or P1:C15.

3) Relatedness: the inclusion of a distinction between elliptical and non-elliptical clause types within the MOOD network is an indication that Halliday is moving away from the position of ellipsis as a textual/cohesive system towards that of ellipsis as an interpersonal system. However, this is not made explicit, and he still treats ellipsis/substitution as part of cohesion in Halliday 1985a.

The indelicacy of the systems presented means that it is difficult to apply the ellipsis criteria, with the same problems occurring as with Berry's use of ellipsis: if [responses] must be actually elliptical, we are unable to capture the reactive nature of examples such as P1:C3, P1:C8, P2:C2, etc. There is also no exploration of the ellipsis implications of the "discretionary alternatives" Halliday recognizes: for example, to what extent, if any, ellipsis differentiates [expected] from [discretionary responses].

4) Monologue: Halliday's reinterpretation of dialogue makes no statements about the description or role of monologue within dialogic interactions. Although the implication is that other grammatical systems of cohesion and taxis deal with monologic relations, there is a tension created by his unit, the move. It is not entirely clear whether speech functions are in fact assigned to clauses or clause complexes.

5) Sequence: Halliday uses the term "exchange" to describe adjacency pair relations, and his description does not deal with longer move/speech function/clause sequences. In fact, Halliday's position appears to be that sequential relations in dialogue above the adjacency pair are captured either through generic structure, or in conversation are better modelled univariately rather than through multivariate exchange formula (e.g. Halliday et al 1985:22, Halliday 1985b:87).

Thus, although Halliday's 1984 article represents a major theoretical development in the systemic description of conversation, it leaves many of the descriptive issues still to be addressed. It has been largely through the work of Martin and Ventola that Halliday's initial position has been further elaborated as the stratified analysis of conversational structure.

Conversational structure (NEGOTIATION⁶) within Martin's model of language

The development of the stratified approach to conversational structure is closely associated with Martin's (1984b, 1985, i.p/1989) more general extensions to the systemic model of language.

One major difference between Martin's approach to language and to discourse analysis and that represented in Halliday & Hasan (1976) and (1985), has already been mentioned: Martin sets up genre as separate semiotic system underlying both register and language. In asking:

what it is about language that makes it usable. (Martin 1986:1)

⁶ Although Martin has recently suggested [personal communication] modifying these criteria to specify that a response can be identified where the congruent version of a sequent clause is potentially elliptical. Given the implications of this position (e.g. interpreting all internal conjunctive relations as incongruent), and the low level of incongruence in "Dinner at Stephen's", this position has not been explored in this research.

Martin argues for a tri-stratal model of language, but he differs from Halliday in the role of the third stratum. For Halliday the third stratum is labelled "semantics", although very few semantic systems have been described. Indeed, with a semantically rich functional grammar it is not clear just what meanings semantic systems capture, and Halliday has frequently been reproached for leaving the line between lexico-grammar and semantics very "fluid" (Halliday 1978:43).

Martin, however, argues that the third stratum, which he labels **discourse-semantics**, is concerned with:

the semantics of cohesion in language (Martin i.p/1989/6:1)

Thus, whilst his point of departure is Halliday & Hasan 1976, he argues that:

their perspective was essentially a lexicogrammatical one. No attempt was made to systematically describe the system of meanings realised through cohesive items (Martin i.p/1989/6:2)

Whereas Martin's aim is that:

cohesion will be approached from the point of view of discourse, not lexicogrammar. The meanings realised by cohesive items in text will be treated as a semiotic potential underlying, though realised through, lexicogrammar. And the discourse structures realising this potential will be described as distinct from, though again realised through, lexicogrammatical ones. (Martin i.p/1989/6:2)

Martin presents the following outline of his model:

NEGOTIATION CONJUNCTION IDENTIFICATION IDEATION	MOOD THEME TRANSITIVITY group LEXIS & word systems	TONE TONICITY TONALITY foot&syllable prosodies phonemesystems
discourse	lexicogrammar	phonology

Figure 13: Outline of a tri-stratal systemic functional grammar with central systems on each stratum noted (adapted from Martin 1985a:249 & Martin i.p/1989)

As this schema indicates, Martin has "exported" cohesive relations to the discourse stratum, thus departing from Halliday & Hasan's 1976 position of seeing cohesion as lexico-grammatical (the non-structural part of the textual metafunction).

Martin's argument for recognizing cohesive systems on a separate stratum is that what is distinctive about cohesive systems is that they generate dependency structures, rather than constituency relations found at the phonological and grammatical strata:

what all the systems have in common is the fact that the structures they generate are dependency ones, consisting of two items, one of whose meaning can be resolved only with respect to the other. (Martin i.p/1989/6:10)

In Martin's "modular" approach to discourse, the point of entry to each discourse system is a different unit. Thus, whilst text remains the "macro" unit created by the interaction of discourse choices, Martin recognizes a range of different discourse units:

DISCOURSE SYSTEM	UNIT
NEGOTIATION	exchange move
IDENTIFICATION	participant
CONJUNCTION & CONTINUITY	message
IDEATION	message part

Figure 14: Systems & Units in Martin's model
(based on Martin i.p/1989 & personal communication)⁷

Beyond setting up cohesive relations as discourse systems, with distinct units of analysis, there are two other major differences between Martin's model and Halliday & Hasan (1976) & (1985), both central to the description of interactional continuity.

Firstly, the systems of ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION which were part of cohesion for Halliday & Hasan do not appear at the discourse stratum. In fact, Martin treats ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION as lexico-grammatical systems, part of the interpersonal systems of mood in the clause.

Secondly, to the cohesive devices recognised in Halliday & Hasan (1976) (lexical cohesion, reference, and conjunction), Martin adds a system referred to explicitly as NEGOTIATION (formerly, CONVERSATIONAL STRUCTURE in Martin 1986, i.p/1989), whilst there is no mention of Hasan's (1985c) organic cohesion category of "adjacency pairs".

⁷ This table incorporates Martin's (1990, personal communication) revised labels, with CONVERSATIONAL STRUCTURE relabelled as NEGOTIATION, REFERENCE relabelled as IDENTIFICATION, and LEXICAL RELATIONS relabelled as IDEATION.

ELLIPSIS and SUBSTITUTION as grammatical systems

Although Martin agrees with Halliday & Hasan that ellipsis and substitution are similarly cohesive to reference and conjunction, in that they create ties between items that are grammatically unrelated, he argues that there are two reasons for treating ellipsis and substitution as grammatical and not as discourse semantic systems. Firstly, unlike the other cohesive system, ellipsis and substitution cannot be stratified, i.e. there is no such thing as the metaphorical, or "incongruent", realisation of ellipsis or substitution (Martin i.p/1989/6/8).

Secondly, he argues that ellipsis and substitution, unlike other cohesive system, presume "wordings" not "meanings", a point in fact discussed and exemplified in by Halliday & Hasan (1976:89).

The grammatical location Martin assigns ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION, within the network of MOOD choices, is related to their specific function to create cohesive ties between adjacency pairs, an issue already well-established by Halliday & Hasan (1976), Berry (1981b), and implied in Halliday (1984) and (1985a).

Martin's analysis of NEGOTIATION as a discourse system

The second major difference in Martin's model is setting up NEGOTIATION as a discourse system. Picking up on Halliday & Hasan's (1985) categorization of both conjunction and adjacency pairs as "organic" cohesive relations, Martin argues that it is the possibility of stratification (and therefore incongruence) that underlies their similarity:

The relationships of SPEECH FUNCTION to MOOD mediated by interpersonal metaphor is precisely parallel to that between CONJUNCTION and the clause complex as mediated by ideational metaphor. (Martin i.p/1989/6:9-10)

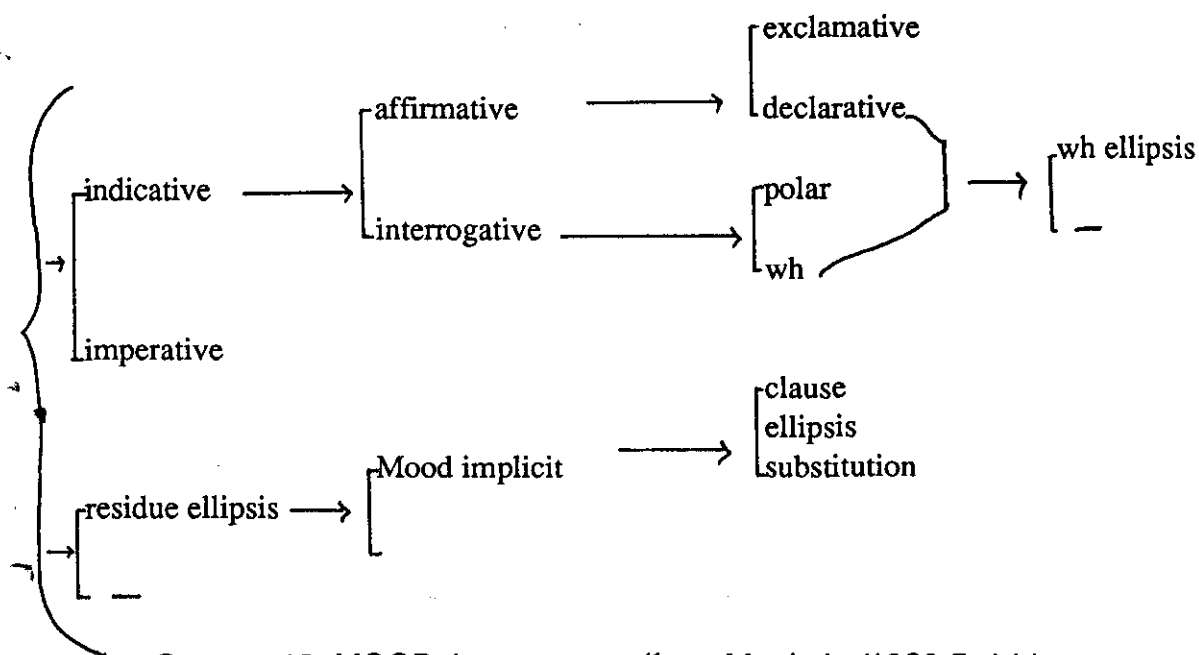
Martin argues that since stratification makes it possible to present register neutral descriptions of the semantics of both CONJUNCTION and NEGOTIATION, both types of organic relations need to be set up as discourse systems, rather than interpreted as "register specific features of context" (Martin i.p/1989/6:10)

SPEECH FUNCTIONS and adjacency pairs in Martin (i.p/1989)

Having argued for stratification as a means of developing a "register-neutral description of the semantics of dialogue", Martin points to the two main advantages of the stratified approach outlined by Halliday. Firstly, that it offers a means of motivating and constraining the number of speech functions recognized; secondly, that it offers a discourse perspective on the grammatical systems of MOOD:

as a resource for negotiating meaning in dialogue. (Martin i.p/1989:1)

Martin's points of departure for extending the description of conversational structure is the basic MOOD network derived from Halliday (1985a):

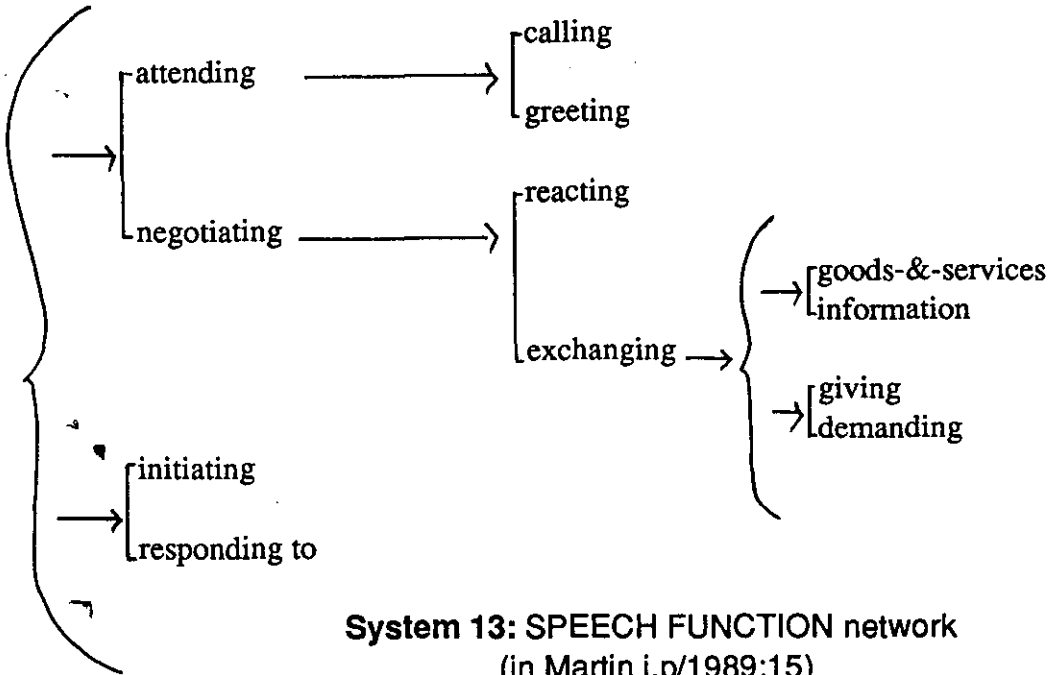


System 12: MOOD: key systems (from Martin i.p/1989:5, 14,)

Martin then adds the category of [minor clauses] (i.e. clauses which select [non-mood]). This mood class was mentioned in Halliday's description, but not related to the speech function system. In then going on to interpret these MOOD options semantically, from the point of view of their speech function in the creation of dialogue, Martin recognizes [greetings], [calls] and [exclamations]. He thus extend Halliday's speech function network to come up with seven basic adjacency pairs:

Offer	Acknowledge Offer
Command	Response Offer to Command
Statement	Acknowledge Statement
Question	Response Statement to Question
Greeting	Response to Greeting
Call	Response to Call
Exclamation	Response to Exclamation

These pairs are represented systemically as:



Thus Martin demonstrates how the stratified approach can be applied, both to constrain speech function classes and to explain mood options. The distinction between [minor] and [major] clauses is interpreted semantically as an opposition between actually entering into negotiation and merely preparing, foreshadowing, or closing that negotiation. The reason these seven adjacency pairs (and not others) are recognised at primary delicacy is in turn explained by reference to the MOOD system: because at primary delicacy it is these MOOD options that the grammar recognises, and which are then interpreted semantically as speech functions.

Realisation statements for SPEECH FUNCTION classes

At the nub of the stratified approach to conversational structure is the realisational relationship between speech function classes and lexico-grammatical choices in the MOOD network. However, even given Martin's extensions to Halliday's description, the SPEECH FUNCTION network and the MOOD networks underlying it remain very indelicately described.

As extending the speech function network in delicacy is the obvious priority, Martin outlines alternative strategies. One is to focus on the SPEECH FUNCTION network, and to try to subclassify existing SPEECH FUNCTION classes with relation to observable differences in MOOD structure. This is the strategy Hasan uses in her analysis of [offers] in mother/child interaction (Hasan 1985b). By subclassifying goods & service exchanges as [conclusive]/[non-conclusive] (i.e. by extending the SPEECH FUNCTION network just one further step in delicacy) Hasan is able to make fairly specific realisation statements for the SPEECH FUNCTION classes of [proffer] and [pre-offers] in terms of their MOOD structure.

The second strategy is to focus on the MOOD network and develop semantic interpretation of the many other MOOD systems as yet not included: modality, modulation, vocation, polarity, intensification etc. Martin's work on gradable negotiations is an example of this strategy (Martin i.p/1989:8-10, and [in press]).

In addition, it is obvious that context is relevant to determining SPEECH FUNCTION categories. Not only in that some realisations will be indexical, but also, as Martin points out:

Field, mode, tenor, genre and ideology are all relevant as participating levels of semiosis; it is not possible simply to map speech function directly from 'words on the page'. (Martin i.p/1989:10)

Underlying these approaches to extending the SPEECH FUNCTION network in delicacy are two principles central to the systemic model of language: that distinctions in meaning (i.e. at the semantic stratum) are only recognised where they can be related to systematic distinctions in form (i.e. at the grammatical stratum); and that grammatical categories are the "natural" realisation of semantic patterns whose origin is in the social and cultural context of interaction.

Relating pair parts through the SPEECH FUNCTION network

Through the inclusion of an [initiating]/[response] system, the SPEECH FUNCTION network establishes a taxonomy of moves according to their pair part. Through the ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION system, the network matches moves from each part into pairs. The network can be read as stating that the basic unit of interpersonal meaning is an "interact" consisting of two functionally differentiated constituents, an Initiation and a Response.

Martin's justification for treating ellipsis and substitution as grammatical rather than discourse systems has already been discussed. Their specific location as interpersonal systems within the MOOD network is justified by their role in establishing that pair parts are related.

However, the MOOD system presented in Martin (i.p/1989) does not in fact capture his interpretation of how ellipsis subclassifies and relates pair parts. The MOOD network implies that [initiating] moves must be non-elliptical, whilst [responding] moves will be elliptical of some part of their MOOD structure, thus suggesting his position is equivalent to both Halliday's and Berry's.

However, in earlier work Martin proposes a modification to those positions, by suggesting the recognition of Potential Ellipsis Criteria (PEC). PEC are used to indicate that:

a response will be defined as a potentially elliptical sequent clause. (Martin 1981:60)

And this still appears to be his position in practice⁷. Thus, in Martin's account [initiating] moves are necessarily realised by non-elliptical major clauses. Structurally related [responses] are recognized only if they are related to the [initiation] as potentially elliptical clauses.

This position overcomes some of the obvious difficulties that have been pointed out with either Berry's or Halliday's actual ellipsis criterion. For example, Martin's analysis is able to show that Phase 2:C3 is a [response] to C1.

However, as Ventola notes in her analysis of transactional encounters, the PEC still leave at least two types of sequences problematic. The first situation is where the [response] involves a structurally re-organised version of the [initiation] (involving grammatical metaphor), for example:

- S: how long were you thinking of going for
 C: I am hoping at the moment it'd be at least four or five weeks
 (Ventola 1984:236)

Ventola points out that both Berry's position of actual ellipsis, and also Martin's positions of potential ellipsis, are too restricted to capture what we intuitively consider related [initiation]/[response] pairs. The only possible answers to S's request would be:

- I'm thinking of going for at least four or five weeks
 or - for four or five weeks

yet it is obvious that S's question receives an answer (Ventola 1984:236).

The second situation Ventola notes concerns the [rejoinder] category Halliday & Hasan referred to as "supplementary responses". For example:

- Are you coming back today?
 - This evening
 (from Halliday & Hasan 1976:213)

Ventola points out that Martin's PEC cannot show this example as an adjacency pair. In order to handle such sequences she suggests that Martin's criteria need to be relaxed somewhat:

Martin's potentially elliptical-criterion may well be used to determine what can be considered to be starting a response (i.e. a clause complex, if there is more than one clause). (Ventola 1984:235)

But she suggests that by filling out what is "implied" or ellipsed so that the response is expanded into a clause complex, the justification for relating the two becomes apparent. Thus, Ventola "writes out" the full version as a three-move sequence:

- 1) are you coming back today?
- 2) [yes I am]
- 3) [I'm coming back] this evening

She then assigns speech functions and mood classes to each move:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) question | polar interrogative |
| 2) response statement to q | elliptical declarative |
| 3) statement | elliptical declarative |

By then collapsing moves 2 and 3 into a single exchange slot (see the discussion of the move complex below), the sequence can be given an exchange structure analysis of a $k2^k1$:

- 1) k2
 - 2-3) k1
- (Ventola 1984:236)

Thus she suggests that the procedure of filling in the missing bits not only allows the third move to be coded as a k1 in response to a k2 move, but the speech function analysis still codes it as a [statement], thus capturing the incongruence of the realisation of a k1. (Ventola 1984:237)

Ventola uses this example to argue for the specific strategy, that:

if there is more than one k1-move the first k1-move of the clause complex must comply to the potential ellipsis criterion (although sometimes even it is totally elided...) (Ventola 1984:235)

The move

As well as proposing additional adjacency pairs, Martin clarifies the issue as to the UNIT of analysis for conversational structure. The diagrams presented above indicated that Martin in fact recognizes two units for NEGOTIATION, the move and the exchange.

Superseding Martin's earlier speech function unit, the message (Martin 1981), the move is specifically defined as:

a clause selecting independently for MOOD (Martin i.p/1989:10)

This definition ties the analysis of conversational structure to the grammatical unit, the clause. The theoretical strength of this position is that the unit of analysis is explicitly related to its interpersonal identity within the clause. The practical advantages are that the clause is more easily identified than either the "sentence" or the "clause complex".

Given the grammaticalisation of the move, most early arguments about its status centred around determining what it means to select independently for MOOD. Specific problems concerned grammatical units BIGGER and SMALLER than a major clause, in particular : minor clauses, embedded clauses, and clause complexes.

The issue of minor clauses was one of terminology rather than theory, with the confusion largely caused by the difference between MOOD (the network of related modal systems, including polarity, modality, modulation and mood), and mood (one of the MOOD systems), involving the choice of declarative, interrogative etc mood within the clause). Whilst minor clauses do not select for mood, they do of course select for MOOD: i.e. they make choices within the MOOD network, one of which is [non-mood] in the mood system. Clearing this terminological problem away allows us to include minor clauses within the definition of a move, thus leading to recognition of the role of minor clauses in interaction, and to the assignment of speech functions to minor clauses (as in Martin's (i.p/1989) analysis of [calls] and [greetings]).

Since both rankshifted clauses, and clauses in a clause complex have selected for MOOD, the issue here concerns the degree to which that MOOD choice can be considered independent. Martin takes the fact that both embedded clauses and hypotactically dependent clauses do not select independently for MOOD to be illustrated by the fact that they cannot select a different speech function from the clause into which they have been rankshifted or subordinated. Thus, the following constitute a single move each:

They loved the team that won (defining relative)
 They defeated whoever they met (nominalised wh clause)
 They watched Manly winning (act, i.e. embedded)
 It pleased them that Balmain lost (fact, i.e. embedded)
 They wondered if they'd win (hypotactic projection)
 They won, which surprised them (hypotactic expansion)
 (examples from Martin i.p/1989:11)

By contrast, examples such as the following illustrate that paratactically dependent clauses (here all introduced by but) can choose a new speech function, and therefore do select independently for MOOD:

Yes I would, thank-you, but make it a small one.
 Yes I would, thank-you, but I'd like a small one.
 Yes I would, thank-you, but could you make it a small one?
 (examples from Martin i.p/1989:11)

Thus Martin initially argues that both embedded clauses and hypotactic dependents do not constitute separate moves, whilst clauses in paratactic clause complexes do. His slight revision of this position in light of Ventola's discussion of the move complex will be discussed below.

Exchange Structure

Whilst the SPEECH FUNCTION network establishes adjacency pairs as the basic structural unit of dialogue, Martin argues that a separate rank of Exchange is made necessary by the fact that adjacency pairs are not always pairs: i.e. conversational sequences often consist of more than two moves.

Thus Martin's discourse system of NEGOTIATION in fact involves two ranks: that of the move, with the system of SPEECH FUNCTION, and that of the exchange. The relationship of these discourse systems to each other and to the lexico-grammar is summarized by his diagram:

exchange move	EXCHANGE STRUCTURE SPEECH FUNCTION	clause MOOD
discourse semantics		lexico-grammar

Figure 15: Systems of NEGOTIATION
(Martin i.p/1989:22)

The source of Martin's system network at Exchange rank is a the textual exchange formula taken from Berry's multilayered account, i.e.:

$$((dx1)^{x2})^{x1} (x2f)$$

However, whereas for Berry this formula was interpreted polysystemically (i.e. with a system of choices operating at each structural slot), Martin's monosystemic representation of the formula overcomes some of the problems with Berry's analysis, noted in the previous chapter.

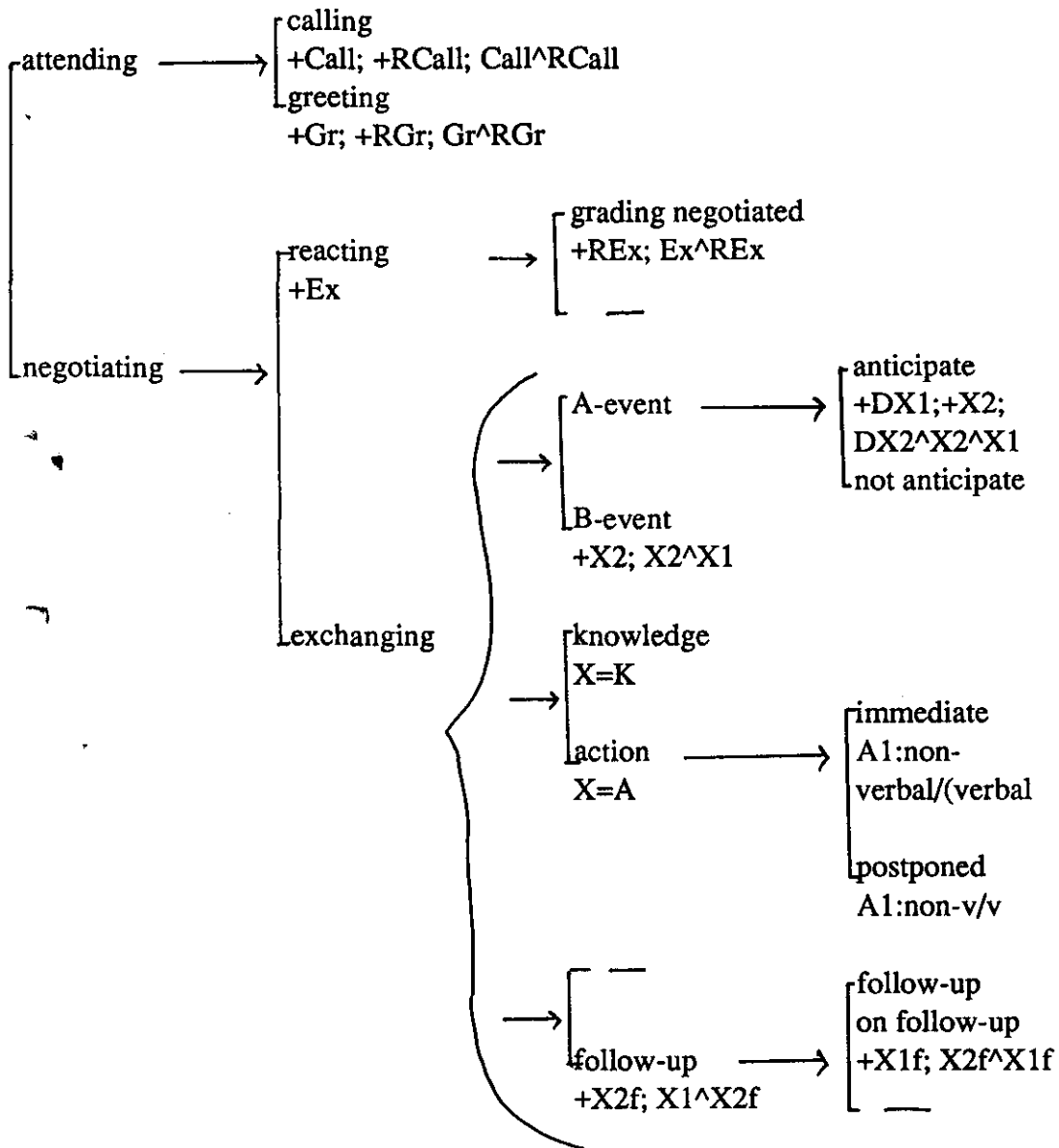
Firstly, in integrating exchange structure within the stratified model Martin overcomes the lack of motivation or underpinning for Berry's textual formula (where did her systems come from? how were they realised in grammar? etc). Martin's model establishes the relationship between EXCHANGE STRUCTURE and SPEECH FUNCTION: each slot in the exchange (pre-)selects a particular class of moves, or SPEECH FUNCTIONS, which are in turn realised by MOOD classes.

Secondly, Berry's justification for describing her formulae as three separate "layers" of a single discourse unit was not clear, nor were their relationships to the metafunctions obvious. Martin's description incorporates only the textual formula, on the basis that Berry's interpersonal formula is captured systemically through the SPEECH FUNCTION network, and her ideational formula through the inclusion of ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION as MOOD systems.

Thirdly, it was not clear in Berry's account what unit (clause? sentence?) filled each slot in the exchange. Martin's model establishes the move as the unit relevant to EXCHANGE STRUCTURE, a position Ventola suggests revising in favour of the move complex (see below).

Fourthly, the stratification at the basis of Martin's model gives a grammatical foundation to Berry's distinction between knowledge and action exchanges, with goods & services (=action) exchanges initiated by proposals, and information (=knowledge) exchanges initiated by propositions.

Martin's revised system for exchange rank, including realisation statements is:



System 14: Martin's Exchange Structure network, extending Berry
(Martin i.p/1989:20-21 & personal communication)

This exchange system extends Berry's formula in two respects:

- 1) it incorporates the [attending] options Martin assigns to [minor clauses], thereby building in optional "pre-sequences" which are not realised by structural slots, but directly by adjacency pair sequences.

2) it recognizes a fifth slot in the exchange: Ventola argued that the fifth slot Martin had recognized for goods & service exchanges (Martin 1986) also occurred in information exchanges. Ventola describes the Primary Knower Follow-up function as a type of "feedback on feedback", and suggests that (1980:133) that in casual conversation the k1f slot appears to function to bring about change of speaker. However, Ventola's example is problematic:

k1 A: Oh, so that sounds good [getting three afternoons off for study]
 k2f B: yeah
 k1f A: yeah
 k1 B: a bit rushed...sort of etc.

(Ventola 1979:288, reproduced in Ventola 1984:208)

Ventola suggests that in this example:

Primary Knower A, 'forces' B to become the next Primary Knower by her yeah. There is no way that this yeah could be interpreted as the beginning of a new exchange. (Ventola 1984:208)

However, whilst agreeing that A's move does not constitute a new exchange, one is tempted to suggest that it is just as difficult to see B's move as a k1 initiating a new exchange. Related to this is the possibility of interpreting the k1f move as a kind of backchannelling, leading to the analysis of the excerpt as constituting only one exchange.

However, the final structural formula generated by the exchange system, then, is:

$$((dx1)^{x2})^{x1} (x2f)^{x1f}$$

These two extensions to the exchange network appear to represent two different solutions to a related problem: what to do with those move sequences which come "before" and "after" the core of the exchange.

Dynamic moves

Martin adopts a different approach to handling move sequences which somehow intervene between core exchange structure, through the category of "dynamic moves".

Martin's category of dynamic moves results from observing that not only are adjacency pairs not always pairs, but that adjacency pairs are not always adjacent. Thus, recognisable sequences can be interrupted, suspended, or delayed in various ways. (Martin i.p/1989:17,-18, 36)

Martin's arguments for dynamic moves relates to his more general concern with the synoptic/dynamic opposition in describing discourse systems (e.g. Martin 1985). In comparing the problems with representing generic structure dynamically with the representation of conversational structure, he notes that:

Berry's proposals for exchange structure have not attempted to synoptically control the recursion and interruptions. (Martin 1985:265)

In particular, he notes three problem areas for the synoptic exchange formula:

1) recursive elements: where an element of exchange structure is repeated until the exchange is "resolved". For example:

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 1) | Who is the most boring person in Canada? | dk1 |
| 2) | - Joe Clark? | k2 |
| 3) | - No | - |
| 4) | - Pierre Trudeau? | k2 |
| 5) | - No | - |
| 6) | - Um, Margaret Trudeau? | k2 |
| 7) | - Right | k1 |
| 8) | - Oh. | k2f |

(example from Martin 1985:262-3)

2) unlabelled slots: for example, in the extract above, moves 3 and 5 are neither k1s nor k2s.

3) interruptions: what Martin refers to as "the problem of exit options"

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1 | Can I get you a drink? | da1 |
| 2 | Why? | - |
| 3 | I'm trying to get you drunk | - |
| 4 | Okay | a2 |
| 5 | Here we go then | a1 |
| 6 | Thanks. | a2f |

(Martin 1985:264)

Part of Martin's solution is to propose a flow-chart (based on Ventola's 1984, 1987 dynamic description of genre) representation of exchange structure as more appropriate than a synoptic formula. However, beyond the problems of the status of the flow-chart as a formalism (see Martin 1985:265), Martin's example demonstrates how complex it quickly becomes with dialogue, and it remains difficult to see how it could be adapted for multiparty talk.

A second aspect to Martin's solution is to propose a category of "dynamic moves". Into this category Martin puts those classes of adjacency pairs which in one way or another interrupt, postpone, prolong, or prevent the completion of an exchange (Martin i.p/1989:36).

Thus the SPEECH FUNCTION network in Martin i.p/1989 is supplemented by two additional systems of these "dynamic moves: [tracking] moves and [challenging] moves⁸. The two classes of dynamic moves are distinguished on metafunctional grounds. [Tracking] moves are associated with:

the experiential focus of interrupting sequences. (Martin i.p/1989:39)

Martin's system of TRACKING moves (Martin i.p/1989:39) generates the following speech function pairs:

backchannel	bch
check	check
response to check	rcheck
clarification	cl
response to clarification	rcl
confirmation	cf
response to confirmation	rcf
replay	rp
response to replay	rrp

The second category of dynamic moves, [challenging] moves, are interpersonally-oriented, described as having:

not only ... the potential to suspend, but in fact to abort the exchange. (Martin i.p/1989:41)

Martin notes that the roles of modality, modulation and attitude make the identification of [challenges] complex, in particular deciding at what point a [challenge] becomes "an independently negotiable move" (i.e. an initiation in its own right.) (Martin i.p/1989:45)

Although Martin (i.p/1989) presents no system for [challenging] moves, his discussion refers to five new speech functions of:

challenge	ch
justification	just
conflation of challenge with justification	ch/just
response to challenge	rch

⁸ These categories supersede Martin's earlier (1986) distinction between SUSPENDING and ABORTING moves, and subsume Ventola's (1987) category of ELUCIDATING moves.

Martin points out that since both [tracking] and [challenging] moves can occur at apparently any point in the exchange structure, they are:

a feature of the dynamic as opposed to the synoptic structure of the exchange.
(Martin i.p/1989:40)

The class of dynamic move which is realised on any particular occasion is determined by the structure of the move it tracks or challenges. Thus, dynamic moves are not sensitive to (synoptically defined) exchange classes, but to (dynamically realised) dependency, typically on an immediately prior move (Martin i.p/1989:39, 40).

Martin therefore rejects Berry's (1981a) inclusion of moves such as [queries] within the synoptic formula, arguing that these "dynamic" moves must be seen as "outside" the network, since they can operate at many different points in the synoptic structure. He suggests they are more appropriately interpreted in terms of DEPENDENCY rather than CONSTITUENCY. Therefore although both [tracking] and [challenging] moves are types of responses, they are not assigned exchange structure slots.

Thus the category of dynamic moves leads Martin to suggest that the structure of the exchange involves both constituency relations (as captured in the exchange formula), and also dependency relations (captured through dynamic move sequences).

Exchanges can be represented as consisting of both synoptically and dynamically generated moves. Constituent relations are shown to the left, whilst dynamic moves are represented with a dependency notation to the right of the exchange structure. For example:

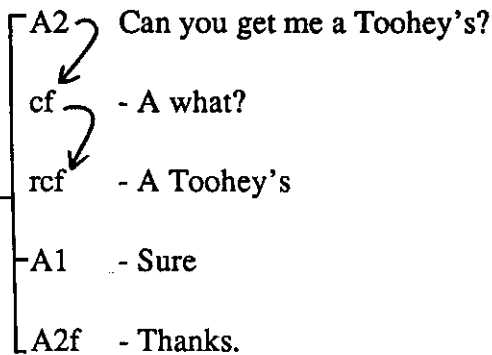


Figure 16: Constituency and dependency relations in the exchange (Martin i.p/1989:40)

However, underlying the recognition of both constituency and dependency relations between moves is Martin's interpretation of dynamics as to do with where the system "breaks down":

dynamic systems are invisible, disappearing as text is formed, they may in fact appear to repair a process which is breaking down. (Martin 1985:265)

His representation of dynamic moves maintains the assumption that dynamic moves somehow get in the way of the real business at hand, rather than perhaps being the real business at hand in conversation. He does not consider the extent to which this may be feature of the generically structured data he analysed, where dynamic moves can be interpreted as "intervening" in multivariately organised interaction. Had he commenced his description with casual conversation, where there is no end-oriented macro-structure, dynamic sequences might not have seemed so difficult to integrate, and perhaps dependency relations would have been taken as the basic model, with constituency relations the exception.

The need to at least supplement the multivariate (constituency) model of the exchange with a dependency one recalls Halliday (1985b:87) and Halliday et al's (1985:22) observations that the structure of conversation may be more appropriately modelled univariately.

However, univariate interpretations of the exchange developed so far are generally of limited relevance to conversational data. For example, O'Donnell's (1986) exploration of exchange dynamics remains at a very theoretical level. Related developments of part/part dependency models, such as those of Rhetorical Structure Theory (e.g. Mann & Thompson 1983, 1985, 1986) offer interesting alternatives, but having been developed to describe written data prove problematic to extend to casual conversation⁹. Of the most immediate relevance is Ventola's (1984, 1987, 1988) description of the move complex as the basic exchange unit.

The move complex

A second problem Martin's exchange structure inherits from Berry is of determining what unit fills an exchange slot. Since Martin continued Berry's tradition of working with examples where one move typically corresponds to one speaking turn (see all the above examples cited from Martin 1985, 1989), the question of how to code multiple move turns does not arise.

It has already been noted that Martin's definition of the move as a clause selecting independently for MOOD means that hypotactic clause complexes produced by a single speaker constitute only a single move. However, Ventola's data raised the question of how to treat paratactic clause complexes with examples such as the following:

⁹ For a discussion of the relation between systemic functional and a Rhetorical Structure Theory representation of dependency relations through CONJUNCTIVE analysis, see Martin (i.p/1989:ch4).

K2		C:	are there buses that go to Sydney uh about midday
K1	1	S:	no
K1	=2		there's only Ansett 'n Pioneer
K1	=3		they have the uh main control
K1	=4		they are the only ones that operate...
K1	+5		and that section they leave at 7.30 in the morning and at 5.30 in the afternoon
K2f		C:	uhuh
K1f		S:	yeah

(Ventola 1987:112)

Ventola points out that Martin's model forces us to call each k1 a separate exchange (thus giving five exchanges), despite the fact that some at least of these k1-sequences appear to constitute semantically related continuations, and would more appropriately be described as constituting the same exchange.

Ventola's suggestion was to set up a univariate discourse unit, the move Complex, which she defined as a discourse unit at the same rank as the move, but which is:

realized on the lexico-grammatical stratum by a paratactic clause complex
(Ventola 1987:111)

Ventola argued that either a move or a move complex should be considered to be the unit that fills the functional slot in an exchange (Ventola 1987:111). Note that this does not challenge Martin's definition of a move, but is designed to provide a way round the problem of having endless K1, by assigning only one exchange slot to all the k1s that can be shown to be sequentially related in a paratactic clause complex. Thus, the example above can be considered only ONE exchange, with a structure $k2^k1^k2f^k1f$, where the k1 slot is filled by a 5-move paratactic clause complex.

Whilst describing Ventola's analysis as "attractive" (Martin i.p/1989:29), Martin notes that it hinges on being able to reliably identify paratactic clause complexes. This is a problem that Ventola herself admits (Ventola 1984:235), but does not explore.

Although Halliday's description of the clause complex argues that the grammatical criteria can be used both to "define and delimit" clause complexes, Ventola is not alone in experiencing difficulties in practice (see for example Martinec 1986, Plum 1988:323ff).

Apart from Halliday's suggestions as to the importance of rhythm and intonation in determining clause complex boundaries (Halliday 1985:204), the most specific attempt to clarify criteria are found in Martinec's (1986) procedures for identifying clause complexes in monologue. These procedures make reference to a range of criteria, including:

- pauses and breaks in rhythm;
- the presence of conjunctions and structure markers;
- prosodic considerations of salience, rhythm and intonation;
- continuity of grammatical roles of Theme and Subject;

However, Ventola's analysis suggests that her definition of the clause complex is considerably broader. For example:

		(Move no.)		
K2	C:	1		are there any of those that you'd recommend yourself [tone 2]
K1	1	S:	2	well all three of them
K1	x2		3	we never give out any companies that we don't recommend
bch		C:	4	uhm
K1	x3	S:	5	but Newmans're very good...
K1	+4		6	the Maori Trek've apparently excellent trips
bch		C:	7	uhum
cf			8	Maori Trek
rcf		S:	9	uhum
K1	+5		10	and Centralian it was-
K1	=6		11	well I hear those are quite good
K1		C:	12	so that'd be sort of the first preference.

(Ventola 1987:112)

This example demonstrates that not only can a move complex be sustained across a pause or lapse, but that prosodic features such as rhythm, intonation and salience do not appear to be considered in distinguishing structural from textual relations. In addition, Ventola's analysis allows for a move complex to span a move from another speaker. Indeed, Ventola suggests that:

dynamic moves frequently intervene (sic.) the construction of a move complex. In spite of these 'interrupting' dynamic moves, the logical relations between the moves can be traced....Usually such an intervention takes place at boundaries of units selecting independently for MOOD. But this is not always necessarily the case. (Ventola 1987:112-113)

As this quotation indicates, whilst Ventola defines the move complex as a clause complex, she is in fact working with much broader criteria: i.e. **a move complex is any logically related sequence of clauses**. Ventola repeats this point in discussing the relation between the move and the move complex:

The extension of a move complex as a unit which may also fill a function slot does not make a move obsolete. It is still a basic unit in the analyses. The criterion of a unit selecting independently for MOOD still functions as a recognition criterion for the discourse units between which logical relations exist or do not exist, i.e. moves. **If the logical relations can be established, then what fills the functional slot of an exchange is a move complex.** (Ventola 1987:113-114, my emphasis)

In defining the move complex so broadly, Ventola blurs the theoretical distinction between tactic (structural) and cohesive (textual, i.e. non-structural) relations. As Martin points out, Ventola would represent as a move complex sequences of clauses which would not appear as clause complexes. For example:

↙	k2	M1)	Have you ever heard of Baron Munchhausen?
		1	M2) No, I've never heard about them.
	k1 =2	M3)	It's the first time I've heard of them.

Ventola would show moves 2 and 3 as an elaborating move complex, yet the transcription shows them not as a clause complex, but as two separate sentences (see Martin i.p/1989:29-30)

Part of the problem here is that Halliday does suggest the logical relation of [elaboration] need not be realised by an explicit structure marker¹⁰. However, Ventola also recognizes [enhancing] move complexes where there is no structural marker, for example:

=2	there's no problem there
x3	we can put you on
(excerpt from Ventola 1984:235)	

Martin suggests that Ventola's decision to "ignore" the structural/textual distinction might be warranted:

From the point of view of conversational structure one might want to argue that whether realised cohesively or not, the interacts are functioning in the same way to negotiate an exchange (Martin i.p/1989:30)

¹⁰ But note that he refers to the role of intonation and rhythm in deciding (Halliday 1985a:204).

However, he points out the limitation of Ventola's definition of the move complex with the following example:

A2 Can you get me a beer?
(K1?) I'm dying of thirst.

Here, Ventola would presumably analyse this as a move complex, even though the logical relation is realised by an implicit conjunction (because).

But the problem here is, as Martin points out, when the relation of enhancement is realised cohesively within the second clause. For example:

Can you get me a beer?
The reason I ask is that I'm dying of thirst.

Ventola's definition of the move complex cannot code incongruent cohesive examples such as this as move complexes (Martin i.p/1989:30-31).

There are two further concerns with Ventola's description of the move complex. Firstly, in confining move complex relations to those of expansion, Ventola does not discuss why the logical relation of [projection] is not recognized. Secondly, she does not make the relationship between conjunctive analysis and move complex explicit. As a result, the advantage she gains in the representation of exchange structure is off-set by problems with the replicability of her analysis.

Martin's response to the problems Ventola raises is two-fold. Firstly, he revises his definition of the move:

a move will be defined as a discourse unit whose unmarked realisation is as a clause selecting independently for MOOD. (Martin i.p/1989:31)

with the status of paratactic clauses determined for specific instances, according to whether they in fact get negotiated or not (Martin i.p/1989:31-32)

Secondly, he relegates the description of monologic move relations to other discourse systems. Whilst Ventola's concern is to describe the exchange status of moves where the same speech function has been chosen, Martin considers the more general issue of assigning speech functions to monologic move sequences. Reviewing the Birmingham approach of multivariate act sequences, Martin points out that the categories they use are based on cohesive relations of reference, conjunction, and lexical relations. In rejecting the need for a rank of acts, he argues that:

these (i.e. cohesive) relations are better dealt with comprehensively when non-dialogic aspects of text structure are reviewed instead of trying to push them into a dialogic mould. (Martin i.p/1989:29)

However, his own analysis of challenges seems to contradict such a position, since he is forced to recognize a speech function ["justification"] which is typically realized by a sequent clause linked by causal conjunction (see Martin i.p/1989:42).

Extending and developing the stratified approach in the description of interactional continuity

The above outline has suggested that the theoretical advantage of the stratified approach to conversational structure over those reviewed in the previous chapter is that it offers a means both of motivating and constraining the description of dialogic interaction (through the SPEECH FUNCTION network), as well as interpreting the lexico-grammatical systems of MOOD from a socio-semiotic perspective on discourse. It is for these reasons that the stratified approach is taken as the point of departure for the research in this thesis.

However, in order to describe conversational structure in the excerpt from "Dinner at Stephen's", the stratified approach requires development and extension in each of the five main aspects previously identified:

1) **Units:** By defining the move as a unit selecting independently for MOOD, and simultaneously setting it up as the unit filling slots in exchange structure, Martin establish the link between the discourse unit which selects speech function, and the clause.

However, one drawback of the "grammaticalisation" of the discourse unit is that intonation and rhythm play no part in the identification of either moves or move complexes. Thus, examples such as P2:C13 would be analysed as one move, despite the occurrence of an interactionally significant pause between the clause constituents. This fails to capture the fact that turn transfer could have successfully occurred after the initial segment, and that the second segment is produced only when the addressee does not take up the invitation implicit in the pause. Without reference to intonation it is also not possible to determine the status of continuity markers and polarity elements (eg how many moves does P2:C15 contain?), or to determine clause complex boundaries (eg whether P2:C2-3, and C4-5 are clause complexes or not).

Whilst taking Martin's definition of the move as a point of departure, in Chapter Five I will argue for incorporating rhythm and intonation into the identification criteria for the move.

2) **Taxonomy:** It is obvious that in order to describe how interactional continuity is sustained in casual conversation, the SPEECH FUNCTION network needs to be extended in delicacy. Currently the speech function [initiation], for example, is not sub-classified so that we cannot make a distinction between initiations that are largely independent of prior context (eg P2:C1) and those that only make sense in relation to preceding talk (eg P2:C9); or initiations that state factual information (P1:C1,2) and those that initiate opinion exchanges (eg P2:C1).

Halliday's subclassification of the response options does allow more delicate distinctions than other descriptions. For example, we can label P2:C2-3 as a [commentary]; P1:C14 as a [disclaimer]; and P2:C43 as a [supplementary] response.

However, Halliday's analysis can be seen to fuse two distinct options in conversational responses: on the one hand, the contrast between responses which support and responses which confront, and on the other hand, the contrast between responses which (interpersonally) argue and those which (experientially) extend the initiating move.

In extending the SPEECH FUNCTION taxonomy in Chapter Six to incorporate these distinctions I will in fact be suggesting that the increase in delicacy entails reference outside the interpersonal metafunction. In order to explain what counts as an indirect response, or a "probing" as opposed to a "new start" initiation, it is necessary to make reference to some aspects of experiential meaning, specifically, those of logical relations. Thus, whilst the systems of MOOD provide the motivation for recognizing basic oppositions, further subclassification will involve interpreting logico-semantic relations as SPEECH FUNCTION classes.

3) **Relatedness:** Whilst both Martin's and Ventola's use of PEC overcome major problems in this area, it is necessary to extend them to deal with examples such as P1:C3, and P2:C2-3, which are not modally elliptical, but rather represent logico-semantic extensions.

The inclusion of a logico-semantic component in the SPEECH FUNCTION network developed in Chapter Six will provide the motivation for complementing ellipsis criteria with criteria for relating moves through logico-semantic continuation.

4) **Monologue:** Martin suggests that monologic move relations are best described through other cohesive systems. However, in Chapter Six I will argue that the turn-transfer system provides the option for speaker continuation, which must be built into the SPEECH FUNCTION network through recognizing a class of [continuing] moves.

5) **Sequence:** It is in describing sequential relations that the stratified model is most problematic when applied to casual conversation. Firstly, as noted in the discussion of Berry's formula in the previous chapter, the exchange formula proves both difficult to apply to casual conversation, and is generally unrevealing, typically resulting in long sequences of k1 slots, with the work of capturing the apparent continuity between exchanges carried by cohesion.

Whilst Martin's treatment of dynamic moves as separate from the multivariate exchange structure avoids the problems Berry's analysis had in describing [queries] and [challenges] within the exchange formula, it is problematic in several respects.

Firstly, the category of [challenge] is still very broad. It currently appears to subsume a range of different moves, including: elliptical question challenges, such as P1:C6, as well as Halliday's "indirect" response categories, such as P2:C2, C10; as well as non-elliptical declaratives of :C6, C8 &9, and C15-16.

Secondly, intentionally or not, Martin's analysis perpetuates the interpretation of certain moves as constituting merely an "aside" to what is going on in interaction, rather than seeing that they are perhaps the essential part of what is being achieved in casual conversation.

The EXCHANGE STRUCTURE system is also largely responsible for Ventola's difficulties with the move complex. In fact, difficulties applying the exchange structure, the role of dependency relations in dynamic moves, and the recognition of logical relations in the move complex can all be read as indications that the representation of conversational relations in terms of a mono-functional multivariate structure is not necessarily appropriate.

In Chapter Seven I will suggest that describing conversational structure through reticula which capture the simultaneous interpersonal and logical dimensions of dependency relations between moves provides a more motivated and interpretable representation of the continuity and open-endedness of conversational interaction.

Thus, the developments to be presented in the following chapters involve both a stratified and a multi-layered approach to conversation. The approach is stratified, in that it takes as basic the stratification of MOOD with respect to SPEECH FUNCTION. However, it is also multilayered in two senses: firstly, it incorporates logico-semantic categories within the description of the interpersonal structure of conversation; and secondly, it proposes that the sequencing of moves in casual conversation is better as a dependency, rather than a constituency, structure.

Part Two
"DINNER at STEPHEN'S"

4. Methodology: Collecting and transcribing "Dinner at Stephen's"¹

Introduction

This chapter explains the procedures involved in collecting and transcribing the conversational data used in this research, "Dinner at Stephen's".

In addition to detailing the practicalities of the natural data collection methodology employed to record "Dinner at Stephen's", the chapter discusses the choice of a transcription system for spontaneous conversation. I justify the preparation of both a "broad" (Appendix B) and a "narrow" (Appendix D) transcription of different sections of "Dinner at Stephens's" as a means of resolving the tensions between the length of the corpus, and the specific focus of the research.

Background to the research.

The research reported in this thesis arises from a simple fascination with:

the spontaneous interchange of meanings in ordinary, everyday interaction.
(Halliday 1978:140).

In particular, the work undertaken here began from the apparently mundane empirical observation that in some social situations people seem to be able to keep talking with ease and fluency *ad infinitum*.

The potential implications of this observation first occurred to me as a result of involvement in a research project directed by Dr B.M. Horvath within the Linguistics Department at Sydney University during 1986.

¹ Although the methodological procedures outlined here were obviously applied to the collection and transcription of the entire dinner party conversation, this chapter deals only with those aspects relevant to the part used in the thesis (Tape 2, Side B). Future references to "Dinner at Stephen's" therefore refer to side 2B.

Horvath's research aim was to examine sociolinguistic variation in text types produced in conversation (Horvath 1986, Horvath & Eggins [in press]). Explored within a Labovian Variationist paradigm (e.g. Labov 1966, 1970, 1972b, 1972c), Horvath's research attempted to develop Variationist forays into discourse, such as Labov & Waletzky (1966). This aim entailed the description and quantification of grammatical and discourse patterns in texts (as distinct from phonological patterns), in order to uncover the possible correlation of these linguistic patterns across different social groups.

The systemic-functional contribution to the research was to provide a model for identifying texts in talk (based on Halliday & Hasan 1986 and 1985), and to provide analytic procedures for describing grammatical and discourse patterns in the text for (eventual) quantitative analysis (based on Halliday 1985a, Hasan 1985c, Martin 1979, 1980, 1981a, 1981b, 1983, 1984a). In the collaboration between systemic and variationist approaches to discourse analysis, the resulting research (e.g. Horvath & Eggins [in press]) formed part of an approach first trialled by Horvath in her earlier study of monologic text types (see Horvath 1985, Eggins 1982), and that has since been considerably extended in the work of Plum (1988).

Horvath's corpus consisted of about a dozen very long, continuous, multiparty conversations. The social variation in the corpora involved both differences in AGE (some of the conversations involved elderly participants, others were amongst middle-aged participants); SOCIAL CLASS (some of the conversations involved working class participants, others involved middle class); and of course SEX (all conversations involved both male and female participants).

The conversations had been collected by Horvath's research assistant who used her own social network to set up opportunities for conversations. For example, she took the tape recorder with her when visiting her elderly relatives, and had a tape recorder running whilst hosting dinner parties in her own home. Beyond collecting the corpus, the research assistant was not otherwise involved in the research.

The resulting corpora consists of two main types of conversations; one group involving family get-togethers, where the talk concentrated on reminiscences and narratives of shared experience being imparted to the research assistant, and a second group involving the research assistant having dinner party conversations with her own middle-aged middle-class peers, characterised by opinion and argument exchanges on themes of "current affairs" (see Horvath & Eggins [in press]). Most of the conversations consisted of between two and three hours of continuous talk.

In participating in the transcription and analysis of Horvath's data, I became simultaneously fascinated by the sustained continuity of the talk, and frustrated by the inadequacy of current systemic descriptions of text structure or texture to capture the open-ended continuity of such casual conversations.

As a result I developed my own research question, in which (as discussed in Chapter One), the focus on interactional continuity put the "seen but unnoticed" feature of casual conversation (it's length) at the centre of the investigation, with the consequent implications for the research as outlined in Chapters Two and Three.

Collecting a conversational corpus: "Dinner at Stephen's".

In setting out to collect my own conversational corpus, my concern was to adopt an appropriate empirical method of data collection. Numerous corpora illustrate that experimental techniques of data elicitation, such as the sociolinguistic interview (Labov 1966, 1981), can result in the production of casual (i.e. unmonitored) talk, particularly when the standard interview format is modified (Labov 1970:47). For example, when the interview is a group one, and the interviewer shares ethnicity with the interviewees (e.g. Schiffrin 1987:42-44), or when the interviewer (ostensibly) shares an enthusiasm (e.g. Plum 1988).

However, the focus of my research is on the structure of sustained casual conversation, where casual conversation is used as a technical term to describe a specific variety of talk. This is quite a different focus from that of describing features of casual (spontaneous) talk (as is the case in, for example, Schiffrin 1987.). Given the definition of casual conversation presented in Chapter One as a type of interaction free from control, either of topics, roles, or turns, the use of experimental techniques would appear inherently inappropriate as a method of data collection.¹

I decided therefore to adopt Horvath's technique of recording conversations that occurred within an existing social network. Such an approach, anchored in empiricist traditions of ethnographic (e.g. Heath 1983) and sociolinguistic (e.g. Labov 1970, Milroy 1980,) methodologies, seemed the approach most consistent with ethnomethodological insistence on the use of "naturally occurring" situations. It was also the most practical method available, since it gave me a wide range of possible "natural" sites for taping.

I chose the dinner party as it seemed to have three very practical advantages as a site for the collection of casual conversation:

1) Accessibility : Amongst my own social network, dinner parties are fairly frequent events, very much a part of ordinary social life. It required no "engineering" to be invited to a dinner party.

¹ Malcolm's use of controlled interview techniques in collecting her data (Malcolm 1985b) raises doubts as to her description of her corpus as "casual conversation"

2) Situationally-constant : a dinner party takes place within the confined area or a dining room. Participants tend to remain seated, in reasonably close contact with each other, around a dining table for the duration of the evening. This makes it a "natural data" situation which is easy for practical reasons to record - unlike, for example, coffee breaks at work where people are constantly coming and going. In addition, the number of participants is usually limited to 6 or less, and is fixed for the evening, thus facilitating not only recording and transcription, but also the development of sustained interaction.

3) Given that the focus of the research was on the maintenance of casual conversation, it was necessary to select a naturally occurring situation that was likely to produce lengthy conversation. Both Horvath's data, and that of Tannen (1979, 1983) suggested that dinner parties were a likely place.

Authenticity and participant monitoring in "Dinner at Stephen's".

Collecting data in situations which are naturally occurring for the participants involved, but with the unnatural presence of a tape recorder, inevitably raises questions about the observer's paradox (Labov 1970:47). This is particularly the case for casual conversation, where a feature of the situation is its "everydayness". One is forced to consider how everyday it is for people to be taped when talking.

The situation is further complicated in my own data, where, unlike Horvath's situation, I was both researcher AND participant, playing the same dual roles as did Tannen (1979, 1983), who recorded, and later analysed, a Thanksgiving dinner amongst her friends.

Schiffrin (1987) faced a similar complication in her use of sociolinguistic interview data for which she had been the interviewer. As Schiffrin points out, there are two main ways in which the observer's paradox is complicated by having been a participant to interactions which one then subsequently analyses:

although the goal is to observe everyday language without distorting it through the process of observation, two added risks of distortion develop because of the analyst's participatory status. The first risk develops at the time of the discourse, when the analyst's role in the discourse influences its development. The second risk develops at the time of analysis: what is the analytic role of interpretations and knowledge gained from participatory experience in the discourse? (Schiffrin 1987:41-42)

The first problem Schiffrin raises, that of the analyst's presence in the interaction, is part of the more general issue of monitoring, both by other participants and the analyst's self-monitoring.

Participants' monitoring in "Dinner at Stephen's"

Assessing the impact of taping on participants' verbal behaviour is obviously difficult, given that we have no control data for comparison.

Whilst it would be foolish to maintain that taping had no impact at all, the risk of monitoring must be offset against the advantage, in researcher-as-participant data collection, of the "naturalness" of the interaction. Theoretically, the fact that in such data situations one is exclusively "among friends" should make the fact of being taped less inhibiting, and therefore less distorting, for participants.

An attempt to minimize monitoring problems was also partly responsible for the choice of the dinner party as a site for data collection in this research. The demands of the social occasion, accompanied by a normal rate of alcohol consumption, seemed likely to limit any inhibitory effects the taping may have had on participants. The participants were after all amongst close friends, in familiar surroundings, brought together to enjoy each other's company. The patterns of verbal behaviour they had established with each other, and their natural desire to talk, could not be repressed for any length of time. Monitored behaviour requires conscious effort and attention, both inconsistent with the relaxed and spontaneous atmosphere of a dinner party.

To claim that participants were not inhibited by the tape recorder is not to claim that they forgot it was there. On the contrary, it seems that "at the back of everyone's mind" was the awareness that they were being taped, as the following excerpt from a later section of Dinner at Stephen's exemplifies:

- St When Suzanne brought it up I actually said that um I'd always be aware of it happening. And I have been all the time.
- G Have you?
- St I have been. Throughout. We were about to say like Marg's such a shithouse bridge player, right? And all the time I said, "Now check, you know this is going out to all sorts of"

(from "Dinner at Stephens", Tape 3, Side B)

Stephen's comments exemplify not only the awareness of the taping, but also the way in which the taping became "absorbed" into the social event. As frequent references demonstrate, the tape recorder became, like any other item of the physical environment, a source of potential conversation; at times becoming the topic of conversation (see, for example, the opening remarks in Tape 2, Side B), at times an "addressee" (as in Phase 2 of the continuous excerpt), and at times a means of transition between topics. The cumulative effect of these references is to provide a recurrent cohesive device within the conversation.

The researcher's self-monitoring in "Dinner at Stephen's"

More potentially problematic to the "naturalness" of the data were my own dual roles in the conversation: I was present both as a participant in the social event, and as a researcher. Theoretically it could have been possible for me to control or direct the conversation in ways to suit myself, and/or to modify my own behaviour in some way (e.g. not to contribute as fully as usual etc.).

However, my experience in recording "Dinner at Stephen's" was that the same pressure that acts on the other participants to overcome inhibitions also operated on me. I too was necessarily caught up "in the swing of things", and although like Stephen I remained constantly aware of the tape-recorder (since I had to remember to change tapes every 45 minutes), I did not find myself consciously monitoring my own linguistic output. Also, being amongst close friends, with established ways of behaving towards each other, little tolerance would have been shown for any attempts I might have made to manipulate the situation.

Therefore I would suggest that in situations where the researcher has strong interpersonal (i.e. affective), reasons for fulfilling her role as participant-like-the-others, the problematic nature of the researcher-participant role becomes relatively insignificant.

Avoiding bias in interpretation of "Dinner at Stephen's"

Schiffrin's second warning about researcher-as-participant data was the risk of bias in interpretation. Whilst it is not entirely clear what she meant by this, there are two main points to make.

Firstly, we need to distinguish between interpretive bias, and the entirely legitimate use of "inside knowledge". One of the major advantages of having been present during an interaction is that one can provide a more accurate and complete transcription than an outsider listening to the tapes.

Secondly, analyst bias is always a problem in any piece of research. However, the principal motivation for the emergence of "empirical" discourse methodologies was the control they offered over the various types of potential bias, as Atkinson & Heritage emphasize:

In sum, the use of recorded data serves as a control on the limitations and fallibilities of intuition and recollection; it exposes the observer to a wide range of interactional materials and circumstances and also provides some guarantee that analytic conclusions will not arise as artifacts of intuitive idiosyncrasy, selective attention or recollection, or experimental design. The availability of a taped record enables REPEATED and DETAILED examination of particular events in interaction....providing hearers....with DIRECT access to the data about which analytic claims are being made....because the data are available in raw form, they are cumulatively reusable. (Atkinson & Heritage 1984:4)

A simple expedient to protect one from the risk of bias is to provide the tapes along with the transcription and analyses, as has been done in this thesis.

Surreptitious or disclosed recording

Given the issues raised by monitoring, it must be asked whether the surreptitious collection of data is not the way to go. Indeed, it could be argued that the only way to collect naturally occurring data without distorting it is surreptitiously. Obviously surreptitious collection, if one could overcome the considerable technical problems, would avoid many of the issues raised above. However, this is basically a question of ethics, and collecting data surreptitiously amongst friends is not a practice I could engage in. I therefore decided to disclose the fact that I was taping the conversation, and ask permission.

Although permission to tape was obtained from all participants BEFORE the tape recorder was switched on, I only sought permission when I, or subsequent guests, arrived. Thus, participants did not know in advance that they would be taped. This was done for 2 reasons. Firstly, surprise was more likely to ensure their agreement to being taped. Secondly, to eliminate as much as possible any performance anxiety or preparation.

Permission to record was never refused and in fact participants were often quite enthusiastic to be on tape. Some treated the taping much as if it were like taking photos: people like to have some record of a successful social event, and the idea of having a transcript of their own conversation amused and satisfied the participants. Copies of the transcripts were given to several participants on their request.

Disclosing the purpose of taping

Once you ask for permission to tape an encounter, however, participants are obviously curious as to WHY. The question of how to represent the purpose of the taping is in general a difficult one, but it is made particularly so with researcher-as-participant data collection, where the participants generally know a lot about who you are and what your motives could be.

In my case, all the participants at "Dinner at Stephen's" knew that I was studying linguistics, whether they actually knew what that meant or not. So I could not misrepresent my field of research. Since the participants are people I knew I would be in close touch with for many years, and since some at least would follow my thesis with interest, I decided to be as honest as necessary. Whilst I tried to avoid having to specify, as the following excerpts illustrate, I could not avoid very direct inquiries, such as this one from Diana, early in the evening:.

- Di But can you explain what you'll be using it for? Is it for accent?
 ==
 Di or word usage or what?
 S No . Have to have a really long conversation.
 Di Umm
 S I just want to look at how that develops across time, how we get from one subject to another, and
 Di Oh I see. So you're looking at the content, are you? Cause I should think people are very different.
 S Mmm
 Di I'm always accused of quantum leaps. In fact one night we went to um, some restaurant and Paul really went bananas because he was talking about something and I- Instead of going you know "Oh yes, dear", you know I sort of changed the subject

(from "Dinner at Stephen's", Tape 1, Side B)

Even this vague description of my research as studying "how the subject changes" did of course generate some focus on topic changes, and put me on the spot at times, as illustrated by Stephen's persistence in this excerpt from late in the evening:

- St Have you have you usually found that people change from subject to subject?
 Di Do they ever. Do they what!
 St No but what's your findings, like?
 G You just done it now, Stephen.
 M Well we can't talk about the same subject all night!
 St Yea I know. But what
 G All of a sudden he changed the subject.
 M What did he do?
 G He just changed the subject!
 S Well it's just interesting the different ways you can do it. Like you can do it quite suddenly as you did then
 G By asking would people change the subject
 S OK. Or you can just- one subject runs into another because you just associate, you know.
 Di Free association
 St So what are you actually what are you actually trying to do? You're trying to
 St I want to look at ways that that can happen in conversation, different
 St Quite suddenly or just run into one another?
 S Well there you are. Are they the only possibilities?
 Di Surely it is a bit
 St Are they the only possibilities, or not?
 S I don't think so. It wouldn't be a very interesting piece of research if

- Di And it's a question of who's being dominant. Whether they manage to keep their subject going or bring you back to what they were interested in talking about or whether the person is changed the subject randomly ==wins
- St ==Do we do we have- Do we have any dominant people here?
(from "Dinner at Stephen's", Tape 3, Side B)

However, since neither those moments of talk, nor the aspect of topic shift, formed the focus of my analysis, this was not considered problematic.

Practical Problems of collecting "Dinner at Stephen's":Noise

There are a number of practical problems associated with the recording of spontaneous data in a natural setting. On the whole these problems simply have to be lived with, as they cannot be eliminated without seriously risking the social success of the evening.

One major problem in transcribing the complete conversation was that of the progressive incoherence of the participants under the rising influence of drugs and alcohol. As the evening progressed participants became either less articulate or more verbose.

Although this made some of the concluding parts of "Dinner at Stephen's" impossible to transcribe, it does not affect the excerpt presented with this thesis. Here (i.e. with 2B), the most significant problem with was that of noise.

It is almost obligatory that during a dinner party background music be played. It was found not feasible to turn the music off, as it was an essential part of the evening for the participants. This meant that it was sometimes difficult to transcribe parts of the tape. The other major source of disruptive noise was that associated with the preparing and serving of food. But in both cases the noise intrusion was fairly short lived and presented only a minor problem.

Having detailed how "Dinner at Stephen's" was collected, I will now discuss the process of transcribing the conversation.

Transcription: introduction

Transcription is often seen as merely a necessary preliminary to the real work of analysis. This is reflected in the frequent presentation of transcription conventions as a brief "forward" to the "real study".

However, the process of transcribing involves making two types of decisions which can have important theoretical consequences for subsequent analysis. These are, firstly, what to transcribe, and secondly, in how much detail.

These two decisions involve the transcriber in a tension between the competing criteria of:

- a) needing to adopt a transcription system that does not record unnecessary details and yet is sufficiently "narrow" for the analytical purposes so far as they are known in advance; but
- b) not wanting to exclude from the transcript a priori aspects of talk that could have significance for later analysis.

What to transcribe

Deciding what to capture in a transcription presumes an inventory of potential transcription features. In the transcription of casual conversation, there are five main aspects to consider:

- 1) the relationship between the orthographic and phonological representation of speech: i.e. deciding whether to represent the talk in normal English orthography, thereby missing out on dialect and idiolect features, or whether to do a more phonemic transcription.
- 2) prosodic features: i.e. whether and how to capture aspects such as rhythm, intonation, stress.
- 3) interactional phenomena: whether to show pauses and overlap
- 4) spontaneity phenomena: whether to show "performance errors" such as repetitions, hesitations, false starts, stumblings, fillers, stallings etc.
- 5) paralinguistic information: what aspects of non-linguistic behaviour to include, e.g. applause, laughter, voice quality etc.

Alternative transcription systems.

For each of these aspects of spontaneous talk the analyst is forced to decide what degree of delicacy is necessary given his analytic purpose. Obviously it is possible for a transcription to be "narrow" in the way it represents some aspects (e.g. showing exact points of overlap, or length of all pauses), and "broad" in others (e.g. using normal orthography, or not capturing rhythm/intonation unless contrastive).

Current transcription conventions reveal the enormous variation possible between a "broad" and a "narrow" transcription of spontaneous talk. At the "narrow" end of the spectrum is the system such as that developed by Jefferson, and exemplified in Sacks et al (1974), and Atkinson & Heritage (1984).

Jefferson's system is sufficiently detailed to capture interactional features, such as exact moments of overlap and pause lengths, as well as characteristics of individual speech delivery, such as pronunciation, stress, basic intonation, emphasis, voice quality etc.

The detailed transcription system results in a transcript with the following appearance:

- R: Wuhjeh do:.=
 V: = I said did, he, get, hurt.
 V: My wife//caught d'ki:d, =
 R: Yeh.
 V: =lightin' a fiyuh in Perry's celluh.
 V: Well my son did it=I'm gladjer son didn' get hu:rt, *hh I said but...

(example from Sacks et al 1974:731)

Whilst such a "narrow" system does go close to capturing how the talk sounded, to produce an extended transcript using Jefferson's system is not only extremely time-consuming, but the resulting transcript is so loaded with information that it becomes difficult to read and understand.

A more theoretical criticism made by Taylor & Cameron is the role such transcription systems may have in perpetuating the "problem/puzzle" reaction to spontaneous speech:

the scriptist bias causes us to perceive a puzzle in spoken language and therefore also to seek explanations for how that puzzle never really poses a problem to conversationalists. " (Taylor & Cameron 1987:150)

In a similar vein, Halliday warns of the dangers of "exoticizing" spoken language. He suggests over-transcription as one of the reasons for the tendency to "regard the spoken language as disjointed and shapeless" (Halliday 1985b:90):

when people begin to transcribe spoken texts, in the age of tape recorders, they are so taken up with the hesitations and 'false starts' (the 'crossing out' phenomenon in speech), the cough and splutters and clearings of the throat, that they put them all in as a great novelty, and then judge the text on the basis of their transcription of it. (Halliday 1985b:90)

The point Halliday is making is that some at least of the information may not be relevant, or not relevant all the time. Transcription, he argues, should be purpose-based:

There is no way of incorporating every last detail; and certainly no point in trying, since the transcription becomes so cluttered as to be unreadable. **What one has to do is decide which features are important for the purpose in hand, and leave the others out.** (Halliday 1985b:48, my emphasis)

For Halliday, the purpose at hand is usually lexico-grammatical, not interactional. He thus gives priority to capturing the words and structures of speech, including rhythm and intonation, which is part of the grammar in a systemic model (see footnote 3 below, and Chapter Five). His transcription system uses normal orthography, but marks rhythmic boundaries, tone groups and tone choices.

The system is developed in Halliday (1967a), summarized in Halliday (1985a:271-286, and 1985b:48-60), and exemplified in El Menoufy (1969, 1987, 1988), & Gurney (1985). The following extract is from Halliday (1985b:89)

- N: //1 what is there /in the/ water that /makes you /sink //2 ^ in a /marsh //
 F: //1 nothing it's //4 just /ordinary /water//1^ you /always/sink in /water//
 N: //1 but /why can't you /swim in the /water//
 F: //1 oh I //1 see// 1 be/cause it /isn't deep e/nough//1 it's /all mixed/ up with/mud and /weeds//

Halliday explains the purpose of his system:

if one wants to understand what spoken language is like...one looks for a form of transcription that is informative, in that it incorporates the systematic and meaningful properties of speech that ordinary writing leaves out, but that does not put in all the tacking and the bits of material that were left over in the cutting process. (Halliday 1985b:91)

The resulting transcription could be glossed as a semantic transcription:

If you read written language aloud, you do your best to make it sound meaningful. The same guiding principle applies when you write spoken language down. (Halliday 1985b:91)

Halliday's system does represent a systematic attempt to incorporate the intonation and rhythm of talk, two aspects not systematically captured even in all the detail of ethnomethodological transcriptions. However, in omitting both spontaneity and interactional phenomena his system gives the false impression of speech proceeding as a neat and tidy, orderly flow. Halliday argues that:

transcribing these features into writing is rather like printing a written text with all the author's crossings out and slips of the pen, all the preliminary drafting mixed up with the final version- and then saying 'Wow! what a mess'. (Halliday 1985b:90)

But his assumption that all the "messy" bits of spontaneous talk are nothing but expendable "tacking" leads to a very much tidied up version of talk. The end result is to make speech look very much like writing, but with rhythm and intonation put in: rehearsed, pre-planned, corrected. The approach can be criticised as having omitted a number of the "systematic and meaningful properties of speech" that Halliday was so concerned to capture.

Transcription systems in many recent studies represent a compromise approach, using normal orthography, capturing some interactional features, but capturing intonation only informally or very selectively. (See for example Edmondson 1981).

Dealing with very large corpora, and focussing on comprehensive grammatical and discourse analyses complicates the decisions about what kind of transcription system to adopt in two ways. Firstly, the simple length of the conversation mitigates against adopting a very narrow transcription system, since by the time the data is transcribed the research period might well have expired. However, to use only a broad transcription throughout could mean not capturing features that are relevant to later analysis.

One obvious way out of this dilemma is to prepare different transcription versions. This involves transcribing parts of the data broadly, whilst transcribing others more narrowly. The following section details why and how this procedure was applied to the transcription of "Dinner at Stephen's".

The Process of transcribing "Dinner at Stephen's"

There were two stages in the transcription of "Dinner at Stephen's". Firstly, the entire dinner party conversation was transcribed using a "broad" (i.e. standard orthography) transcription system. Side 2B from this version of the transcription is presented in Appendix A, from which the continuous excerpt is then extracted and numbered for phases and turns in Appendix B. Secondly, the continuous excerpt was then re-transcribed, incorporating the analysis of rhythm and intonation. This "narrowly" transcribed version appears in Appendix D.

I will briefly describe the major decisions involved in preparing the two different transcriptions.

Transcription conventions for the "broad" transcription of Dinner at Stephen's.

Given the length of the conversation, and the fact that the research was generally concerned with grammatical and discourse patterns (rather than phonological or prosodic ones), the major decision taken was to prepare a broad transcription using standard orthography.

However, given the particular research focus on the interactional structure of conversation, it seemed essential to transcribe in full both spontaneity and interactional phenomena, as previous ethnomethodological research indicated these played important role in turn-taking in conversation (e.g. Jefferson 1973, Jefferson et al 1984, Schegloff 1981).

The analogy I had in mind was for the transcript to resemble a playscript: accessible to general readership, whilst obviously representing a record of an actual performance, rather than a blueprint for a future one.

The practical decisions made were:

1) **Orthography:** Although the decision made was to use STANDARD ENGLISH ORTHOGRAPHY in order to make the transcript easily readable, this did not preclude capturing idiolectal or dialectal features where they arose. For example, such common non-standard lexico-grammatical forms as Jeez

P4/T29 Di Jeezus... Alright. You know, it's some people just don't ever-
The only way they're ever going to get to own their own house
is by winning the lottery.

Since the use of such non-standard forms is a distinguishing feature of some of the participants' language, and since it was also commented upon by the participants themselves, these forms are captured in the transcription.

However, phonetic differences between the New Zealand accent of Stephen and Margaret, and the Australian accents of the other speakers was not considered relevant.

2) **Use of punctuation:** As Halliday points out, the use of punctuation is critical if using standard orthography:

For very many purposes, however, there is nothing wrong with transcribing into ordinary orthography. This is easy to read and avoids making the text look exotic. The important requirement if one does use straightforward orthography is to punctuate the text intelligently. (Halliday 1985b:91)

In ethnomethodological transcription, punctuation was used:

to mark not conventional grammatical units but, rather, to capture characteristics of speech delivery (Atkinson & Heritage 1984:xi)

apparently involving a combination of stress and intonation.

However, maintaining a systematic relationship between punctuation symbols and rhythm and intonational patterns is difficult and results in a transcription that is not easy to read. Prosodic systems typically function to realise a range of different meanings, for example tone choice may realise both polarity (certain/uncertain) and staging (continuation/termination). In addition, prosodic meanings are generally realised by a combination of rhythmic and intonational factors, and not only by the choice of, for example, either tone or stress. Furthermore, the range of punctuation conventions in English is relatively limited, and it would be necessary to associate each symbol with only one prosodic feature. The result is a system difficult to either apply or interpret.

It became obvious that the use of punctuation would have to be less systematic, but more semantic. In the transcription of "Dinner at Stephen's", the guiding principle behind the use of punctuation is to make the flow of talk interpretable to outsiders. This involves using punctuation symbols to represent fusions of semantic choices (which is, after all, how they are used in writing). There is thus no strict correlation with tone patterns or rhythmic beats, though there are obviously unmarked correlations, as explained below.

a) **full-stops**: to mark termination (whether grammatically complete or not), or certainty. Usually realized by falling intonation.

P2/T1 Si This conversation needs Courtney.

By implication, the absence of any turn-final punctuation indicates speaker incompleteness: either through interruption or trailing off.

P2/T7 G Oh I like Michael a lot. Still but

P2/T51 Si No, you don't understand, George- you. Guys that do the cleaning up do all of the unseen things that you never thought of, like putting out the garbage and

b) **commas**: signal speaker parcellings of non-final talk. Thus, commas are used to make long utterances readable; usually corresponding to silent beats in the rhythm (but not breaks or pauses, which were marked with ...)

P2/T9 Di You met his sister, that night we were doing the cutting and pasting up. D'you remember?

c) **question marks**: to mark uncertainty (typically corresponding to rising intonation or WH-questions.)

P2/T18G Straight into the what?

d) **exclamation marks**: to mark the expression of counter-expectation (e.g. surprise, shock, amazement etc.). Typically corresponding to tone 5 in Halliday's system (see below).

P2/T37Di Stephanie! Who's Stephanie?

P2/T57G So stick that!

- e) **capital letters:** are used conservatively to show emphatic syllables. Thus:
- i) where a speaker gives it more than usual stress; and
 - ii) where the emphasis is a necessary part of understanding what someone means

P2/Tb46 G The trouble with Marek, though, is that- you know he does still like cleaning up. But he but he y'know like, he has dinner parties all the time, he- and he cooks all the time, he **MAKES** all the mess all the time as well, you know () sort of. You know?

- f) **Quotation marks:** are used to capture the marked change in voice quality that occurs when speakers directly quote (or repeat) another's speech, whether words or longer stretches.

P3/T1 Di ... And they're saying "Who owns this truck?" [shouted] you know, really at the top of their voices.

Other transcription conventions used

- 3) **Non-verbal information:** Information about RELEVANT non-verbal behaviour is given within [square brackets]. That is, where such information is judged important in making sense of the interaction. For example:

[M takes bottle of wine off table]
P2/T44M My recipe says red wine.

When the information applies to a specific person's behaviour, it is shown as part of their turn:

P2/T66St [into microphone of tape-recorder]
I hope this is a new one for the recorder.

P2/Ta49 Di Oh yea.
[tasting wine]
Now this is magic, this is magic.

Inferred non-verbal behaviour (i.e. "clues" which the transcriber assumes happened in order for the situation to make sense) are shown with the addition of a question mark:

P2/T25([Si nod?])

b) **repetitions:** All attempts are shown in full:

P4/T53 S If you're born- if you're born in the Eastern Suburbs you've got- you're off to a good start. Whereas if you're born in

c) **Fillers:** I kept to established usage, representing the most commonly used "fillers" orthographically as follows:

i) umm : doubt

P1/5 Di Umm.

ii) ah: staller (prolonged emphasis was shown as Ahh):

2B Di Ah, about twenty dollars, or twenty five dollars.

iii) mmm : agreement

P1/Ta13 S Mmm

iv) eh : query

P4/T34 G ==Eh?

v) oh : reaction (what Schiffrin (1987) describes as an "information management" marker):

P1/T6 S ==Oh I've never heard that before.

Also an exclamative particle (with prolonged emphasis, represented as Ohh):

P2/T28 Di Oh.

vi) Other quasi-linguistic particles are represented phonemically: e.g. aah! (exclamation of pain).

6) Interactional Phenomena

The term "interactional phenomena" refers to overlap phenomena, pauses and hesitations.

The downgrading of these phenomena in many recent transcriptions reflects the downgraded status that linguistic approaches to conversation assign to the "mechanics" of interaction, and is in marked contrast to the importance such phenomena played in ethnomethodological research. Yet it seems unlikely that we will be able to understand how language is structured to enable interaction without taking note of major aspects of overlap and pauses. Whilst the fine degree of timing details shown in ethnomethodological transcription may be of limited relevance in linguistic analysis, the transcription should provide some means to record at least the points of occurrence of these phenomena.

a) Intervals within and between utterances: i.e. hesitation phenomena.

Hesitations: defined as pauses within turns, as opposed to those between turns. Transcribed by ..., but their specific length was not noted.

P2/T17 Si == Academ- academically she's probably brighter than Michael...Michael's always precocious with his...The only sixteen year old superstar () arrives in Sydney to() and straight into the mandies.

b) Intervals between turns: i.e. Pauses

Significant pauses or "lulls" in the conversation are marked [between square brackets], with a rough estimate of length of pause, although the specific length of pauses was only recorded when they equalled or exceeded 3 seconds in length.

P1/Tb15 G Oh give me a break, Simon!
 ==
 [pause 7 secs]
P2/T1 Si This conversation needs Courtney.

c) Overlap phenomena: There are 4 types of overlap to deal with in the transcription:

- a) simultaneous/concurrent utterances
- b) overlapping utterances
- c) contiguous utterances
- d) concurrent conversations

a) Simultaneous/concurrent utterances

When 2 entire turns occur simultaneously, the symbol == is placed before each of the simultaneous turns/utterances

P2/T38 G The cleaning lady.
P2/T39 Si == That's our cleaning lady. She
P2/T40 Di == Oh, the cleaning lady. Well I'm sorry.

(shows that Simon's and Di's utterances occurred simultaneously)

In the transcription of the complete conversation (Appendix A), both double equals (==) and paragraph indentation were used to show the start and finish of these concurrent segments in the following ways:

M My recipe says red wine.

St Yea?

==(marks the beginning of 2 conversations)

St Least you could use the one that everyone doesn't like.

Di Who?

St Marg should use the red wine that no-one likes ().

Di Oh yea.

[tasting wine]

Now this is magic, this is magic. But the other one you know, it's just an average red wine.

==(marks end of first conversation)

G The trouble with Marek, though, is that- you know he does still like cleaning up. But he but he y'know like, he has dinner parties all the time, he- and he cooks all the time, he MAKES all the mess all the time as well, you know () sort of. You know?

====(marks limits of second conversation)

Si No, you don't understand, George- you.

(return to only one conversation shown by absence of indenting)

However, for reasons of space, in representing the continuous excerpt in Appendix B (and subsequent appendices), the indentation has been replaced by NUMBERING, with concurrent turns indicated by the addition of an "a" or "b" before the unit number. Thus, the above excerpt appears without indentation, but with the addition of an "a" and "b" to the turn numbers as follows:

- P2/T44M My recipe says red wine.
 P2/T45St Yea?
 ==
 P2/Ta46 St Least you could use the one that everyone doesn't like.
 P2/Ta47 Di Who?
 P2/Ta48 St Marg should use the red wine that no-one likes ().
 P2/Ta49 Di Oh yea.
 [tasting wine]
 Now this is magic, this is magic. But the other one you know,
 it's just an average red wine.
 ==
 P2/Tb46 G The trouble with Marek, though, is that- you know he does still
 like cleaning up. But he but he y'know like, he has dinner
 parties all the time, he- and he cooks all the time, he MAKES
 all the mess all the time as well, you know () sort of. You
 know?
 ==
 P2/T51Si No, you don't understand, George- you.

Thus, == indicates points of separation and reunification, whilst "a" and "b" label the simultaneous contributions. By implication, the absence of a prefix before a unit number indicates that only one conversation is going on.

The letters CC mark places at which a concurrent conversation was occurring but was untranscribable (for example, in phase 4 there are approximately 2 seconds of untranscribed concurrent talk between Turns 32 and 33).

Narrow Transcription of the Continuous excerpt

The "broad" transcription discussed above made very little attempt to capture features of rhythm and intonation. This is consistent with most available transcriptions of casual conversation, for although discourse analysts pay almost universal lip-service to the importance of intonation in spoken language, very few make any attempt to capture it systematically in their transcriptions.

The general justification for this is that few models interpret rhythm and intonation as fulfilling a grammatical or semantic role, but see them as phonological features of talk. Thus their relevance in transcription is downgraded to that of supplementing, or reinforcing, rather than instantiating, semantic choice².

² As will be briefly mentioned in Chapter Five, this is not the case within systemic theory, where rhythm and intonation are integrated into the linguistic system, realizing semantic options within both the interpersonal metafunction (through the system of KEY) and the textual metafunction (through the system of INFORMATION). See Halliday (1985a:274-278.)

However, in the early stages of my research it became obvious that rhythm and intonation, or more particularly the phonological unit they realize (the tone group) potentially played an important role in the delimitation of the conversational unit, the move.

Thus, in addition to the "broad" transcription of the entire dinner party, the continuous excerpt was subsequently re-transcribed showing rhythm and intonation. This version of the excerpt appears in Appendix D. I describe this version as a more "narrow" transcription, since it includes all the information already available in the broad transcription (spontaneity and interactional phenomena etc.), but also replaces the "semantic" use of punctuation with a systematic analysis of rhythm and intonation.

The transcription system used to capture rhythm and intonation is that of Halliday, as described briefly in Halliday 1985b:48-60. The main transcription conventions, summarized in Appendix D, involve capturing the following information:

//	tone group boundary (encloses one tonic contour) - indicates that the parcel of talk occurring within one tonic contour carries the same tone
/	foot boundary - indicates that the immediately following syllable carries the "beat", i.e. is stressed
<u>underline</u>	tonic prominence (information focus) - indicates the syllable within the tonic contour which realises the tone choice
^	silent beat - a silent beat does not break the rhythm

The TONES are identified by numbers placed at the beginning of each tone group:

1	tone 1 (falling tonic)
2	tone 2 (rising tonic)
3	tone 3 (level, low rising tonic)
4	tone 4 (falling-rising tonic)
5	tone 5 (rising-falling tonic)
13	tone 13 (1 followed by 3, i.e. falling +low rising)
53	tone 53 (5 followed by 3, rising-falling + low rising)

The degree of delicacy of the transcription was to show primary tones and primary stress only.

For more detailed explications of the system (especially the identification and meanings of the tones) and its transcription, see Halliday (1967a, 1970b), and El Menoufy (1969).

The implications of the transcription of rhythm and intonation for the description of conversational structure developed in this thesis will be discussed in the following chapter.

Summary

In this chapter I have dealt specifically with the method by which "Dinner at Stephen's" was collected, and discussed issues raised in preparing the different versions of transcriptions.

The following chapter focuses specifically on the continuous excerpt. It examines the next step in the procedure of describing and analysing the data: the division of the continuous excerpt into units of conversational analysis: moves.

5. UNITS in casual sustained talk: identifying moves in "Dinner at Stephen's".

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the division of the continuous excerpt into moves (Appendix F).

Following from the interpretation of the move as the basic unit of interpersonal meaning within the stratified approach to conversational structure, discussed in chapter three, this chapter begins by identifying problems applying Martin's definition of the move to casual talk. I will suggest that working with a transcript that includes rhythm and intonation is essential to move analysis, as not only can problem cases be resolved by reference to prosodic analysis, but also recognition of rhythm and intonation in signalling dynamic discourse boundaries can be seen to provide a link between the functional-semantic move of the systemic approach and the dynamic interactional turn constructional unit of the ethnomethodological model.

Using the analysis of rhythm and intonation in the continuous excerpt (Appendix D), the chapter then presents and discusses explicit criteria involving the co-occurrence of grammatical and prosodic boundaries as a means of identifying moves in casual sustained talk. Chapter Six then takes up the issue of assigning speech functions to moves through discussion of the SPEECH FUNCTION network.

The UNIT of interpersonal meaning: the move.

As outlined in Chapter Three, the stratified approach to conversational structure involves a two step account. Firstly, through the stratification of MOOD with respect to SPEECH FUNCTION, it offers a functional linguistic interpretation of ethnomethodological notions of adjacency pairs by formulating a SPEECH FUNCTION network. Secondly, the sequent relations between the units to which speech functions are assigned (moves) are captured in accounts of the structure of the exchange.

Within the stratified approach to conversation analysis, the unit of interpersonal meaning is the move¹, set up by Martin as the discourse unit through which meaning is negotiated in dialogue (Martin i.p/1989).

¹ Since it is clear that this word is being used as a technical term, it will not be further distinguished orthographically.

Martin's early definition of the interpersonal unit established the practical equivalence of the move with the clause, and the functional status of the move as the unit to which speech functions are assigned:

the grammatical unit to which speech functions must be assigned can be defined as a clause realising a bundle of features generated by the (MOOD) network in a single derivation. (Martin 1981a:57)

The explicit grammatical identification of the move with the clause avoided the vagueness of earlier sociological definitions of the move, such as Goffman's where the move was:

any full stretch of talk or of its substitutes which has a distinctive unitary bearing on some set or other of the circumstances in which the participants find themselves. (Goffman 1976:272)

In addition, the explicit link with the interpersonal metafunction through mood selection also made it possible to specify grammatical features left vague in Sinclair & Coulthard's definition, where:

our rank of MOVE is concerned centrally with each discrete contribution to a discussion made by one speaker. (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975:123)

In Martin's definition "discrete contributions" can be defined as modally independent clauses. Such a definition means that whilst neither embedded nor hypotactically dependent clauses constitute separate moves, both minor clauses and paratactically independent clauses do.

However, Martin's initial definition was problematic in two respects. Firstly, we saw in Chapter Three that data suggests hypotactically dependent clauses can be negotiated (and thus appear to function as separate moves), whilst not all paratactically independent clauses do. Secondly, there was a theoretical inconsistency in setting the move up as a discourse unit whilst defining it in purely lexico-grammatical terms. Martin's other discourse units (message, participant) do not display this same equivalence with grammatical units (see Martin i.p/1989).

Martin's revised definition attempts to avoid both these problems, by rephrasing the relationship as one not of equivalence but of congruent realisation, so that the move becomes:

a discourse unit whose **unmarked** realisation is as a clause selecting independently for MOOD. (Martin i.p/1989:30)

However, whilst this revised definition is more theoretically consistent, and more flexible, than the earlier one, Martin's definition remains problematic both to apply and to interpret.

Problems applying Martin's definition to the continuous excerpt

The practical issue of move analysis involves progressing from an initial transcription of the continuous excerpt to a version divided into motivated and replicable analytic units to which speech functions can be assigned.

The assumption throughout Martin's work is that it is possible to analyse casual talk into moves based on a broad transcription, such as the version of the continuous excerpt presented in Appendix B. Thus, in neither his definition of the move, nor his approach to move analysis, does he make explicit or systematic reference to prosodic aspects of the conversation.

However, in the casual talk of the continuous excerpt, stretches both longer and shorter than the prototypical independent clause proved difficult to divide into moves on Martin's basic criteria.

The major problem areas were those of clause complexes (determining the move status of hypotactically dependent and paratactically independent clauses), and elements whose clausal status is ambiguous (e.g. minor clauses, polarity elements, continuatives etc.).

In briefly reviewing the problems I encountered with "Dinner at Stephen's", I will suggest that working with a narrow transcription version of the continuous excerpt it became apparent that many difficulties could be resolved by supplementing Martin's basic criteria by reference to prosodic aspects of the talk.

Clause complexes¹

The difficulty with clause complexes is to determine the move status of hypotactically dependent and paratactically independent clauses.

As mentioned in chapter three, Martin argues that in the unmarked case hypotactically dependent clauses will not constitute separate moves, whilst unbranched paratactically independent clauses will. Thus, for example, his analysis would maintain that both of the following hypotactic clause complexes constitutes only one move (each has selected only one speech function, [response]):

P2/C3	G	we don't want - we don't need Courtney in the bloody conver/sation
P2/C4		cause all you'd get is him bloody raving on
P2/C64	G	But he's TOO clean
P2/C65		because you know like he gets upset about things.

¹ This discussion of clause complexes in the excerpt is based on the clause complex analysis presented in Appendix E.

Whereas the following paratactic clause complex constitutes 2 separate moves ([statement] + [question]):

P2/C2 Di oh he's in London
P2/C3 so what can we do

However, Martin's analysis allows for two marked possibilities: where hypotactic clause complexes constitute two moves, or where independent paratactic clause complexes constitute one move.

Martin suggests that "empirical evidence" be used to determine when such clause complexes are functioning in these marked ways. By "evidence", Martin means looking at what follows; at whether such clauses actually get negotiated or not (Martin i.p/1989:12). He argues that if clauses do get negotiated in subsequent talk, then they should be treated as separate moves. If they do not get negotiated, then they should be considered part of the preceding move.

Thus, for example with the following hypotactic sequence:

P2/78 guys that do the cleaning up do all of the unseen things that you never
thought of
P2/79 like putting out the garbage and
P2/80 G I no no
P2/81 I always put out the garbage

Here, although the non-finite hypotactic clause in 79 is "technically" non-negotiable, it is in fact taken up by George in clauses 80-81. Martin would therefore suggest division into two moves.

However, there are problems using Martin's notion of evidence to determine move status in the continuous excerpt. Firstly, it collapses the distinction between what is presented as negotiable, and what actually does get negotiated. As Sharrock & Anderson point out:

Conversation is a risky business, such that one can seek to predict and control what will happen next, but one is not assured that what one projects will happen. (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:309)

It is one thing for an interactant to package information as a single move; but there is no guarantee that other interactants will respect this packaging, nor that the presentation of information in two packages will be validated by the uptake of the second.

The underlying difficulty here is the synoptic bias of Martin's approach, where move status is only assigned retrospectively. The implication of such a position is that we are not in fact able to identify how moves are dynamically packaged in unfolding talk. Yet this appears contradicted by Martin's own comments.

On the one hand, Martin argues that incongruent moves illustrate that there is a distinction between what is presented as negotiable, and what is actually negotiated on any one occasion. For example, he echoes Sharrock & Anderson, pointing out that:

There is nothing to prevent an interlocutor digging in and negotiating information presented as non-negotiable (Martin i.p/1989:31)

suggesting that interactants recognize at the time the negotiable status of contributions. However, Martin then goes on to imply that the basis of such recognition is not available to the analyst:

seen as process, any dialogue is an on-going site of textual dynamism.Because of this dynamism it is not possible to define discourse units as categorically as grammatical ones. There is a system but its potential for ongoing re-contextualisation means that there will always be rough edges for the analyst. Analysis in words will inevitably involve interpretation. (Martin i.p/1989:31)

Prosodic information in the identification of moves

Rather than settle, as Martin's criteria compel, for a very large category of "fuzzy cases", it is possible to suggest that Martin's analysis is overlooking one significant aspect of the available "empirical evidence", i.e. prosodic information. Whilst some of the packaging involves selections of MOOD, working with a narrow transcript suggests that both rhythmic structure and intonational patterns, in conjunction with grammatical boundaries, may contribute to signalling move status.

In particular, working with a transcript that includes rhythm and intonation provides motivation for distinguishing when clause complexes are functioning ("packaged") as one or more moves.

For example, if we consider the examples already mentioned in light of the rhythm and intonation analysis:

P2/C2 Di //5^oh /he's in /London
 P2/C3 so//1+ what can we /do

In the first, the two clauses are presented with no rhythmic break between them, with a kind of "rushing on" by Diana, suggesting the two clauses are parcelled as one piece of negotiable information, let us say [indirect response].

P2/C4 G //5 we don't /want - we /don't need /Courtney in the//1 bloody
conver/sation
P2/C5 //5 ^ cause /all you'd get is /==him bloody /raving on

Whereas in 4-5 there is a pause in the rhythm (indicated by the ^, marking a silent beat²), suggesting the two are packaged as separately negotiable: e.g. [contradiction] followed by [justification].

In contrast, in the second of the hypotactic clause complexes considered above, there is no rhythmic break:

P2/C64 G //5 ^but he's /too /clean
P2/C65 be//4 cause you know like /he gets up/set about //1 things.

Thus, it seems that this example IS packaged as a single move as Martin's definition would predict³.

Similarly, in Phase 1:

P1/C12 I've /heard it /first in /English
P1/C13 but //1 maybe they were /just trans/lating

Although the fact that clause 13 gets negotiated would cause Martin to see these as two separate moves, the rhythmic analysis suggests a parcelling into only one.

P1/Ca24 //4 ^it's /just /you /know it /doesn't come out in/English
P1/Ca25 //4 ^but you /know
P1/Ca26 what it /means

This paratactic clause complex is realized with a rhythmic break. Prosodic phenomena suggest that these two clauses are being presented as two potentially negotiable contributions (e.g. [statement] and [qualification]).

² For a discussion of silent beats in Halliday's rhythmic analysis, see Halliday (1967a:1-3)

³ Martin [personal communication] has suggested that there may be a correlation here between whether the second clause is introduced by an [internal] or an [external] conjunction, with [internals] typically preceded by a silent beat, and [externals] not. This would suggest a semantic interpretation for the distinction between single-move packaging for "real world" negotiation, vs double-move packaging for rhetorical negotiations.

These examples suggest that the interaction of the prosodic system of rhythm with the grammatical structure provides evidence for determining the move division of clause complexes. Not only is this evidence available to interactants at the time of speaking, but it is also available objectively to the analyst.

Other problematic aspects of the talk suggest that not only rhythm, but intonation can (in fact must), be used to determine move boundaries.

Ambiguous clausal status

Further arguments for including prosodic information in the determination of move boundaries come from recognizing that there are a number of sequences whose independent clausal status is ambiguous. That is, the function and status of elements as either independent clauses or clausal constituents is not always clear without reference to prosodic information.

One example where the function of an element is determined by intonation is that of minor clauses. Although minor clauses are defined technically as clauses which have chosen [non-mood], it is more accurate to describe such clauses as those where mood is realised prosodically, through tone choice.

For example, it is possible to assign five different (but plausible) interpretations to the minor clause RIGHT according to which of the five tones it is realised on. Two of these uses (the declarative and the interrogative) occur frequently in "Dinner at Stephen's".

With rising intonation (T2), the mood is interrogative, and the speech function therefore some subclass of [question] (e.g. [check]):

P4/C106	G	==//1 oh well now /that / <u>proves</u> it
P4/C107		//2 <u>right</u>

With falling intonation (T1), the mood is declarative, and the speech function therefore some kind of [confirming acknowledgment]:

P2/C19	Di	//1 that's /Michael's / <u>sister</u>
P2/20 S		//1 ^oh / <u>right</u>

Further examples of the significance of tone choice in the determination of speech function for minor clauses in conversation are easy to find. For example, REALLY, which can function either as an exclamation of shock, disbelief etc, or as a [tracking] move, or a [challenge] (a fusion of both?) according to whether the tone choice is a 5 or a 2 or a 4:

P1/C5	Di	//4 ^in / <u>English</u> //4 <u>too</u>
P1/C6	S	//4 <u>really?</u>

As these examples illustrate, with many minor clauses the selection of tone is crucial to determining the speech function. This is perhaps so obvious that it does not receive any explicit mention in Martin's work, although he presumably uses intonation to assign speech function for such moves as [calling] and [greeting] since they can perform various functions in dialogue, both as "pre-sequences" (e.g. Martin's i.p/1989 analysis of these speech functions), as well as [responding] moves (e.g. in both responding to goods & services, and in tracking sequences).

However, more significant prosodic implications arise in those cases in which the status of elements as either independent clauses or clausal constituents is not clear without reference to prosodic information.

* This is again an issue with minor clauses. A feature of the lexical items that realise many minor clauses is that they can occur both as minor clauses or as constituents within another major clause. Thus, for example, a vocative may function on its own to seek attention (John!), but also as a vocative element within a clause (What are you doing, John?). Whilst in the first case the vocative can be assigned an independent speech function selection (e.g. [call]), in the second it realizes the nomination of addressee within the speech function of [question].

r Whilst distinguishing the two uses of vocatives is generally unproblematic given positional differences (though not always: e.g. John, what are you doing? could be two speech functions or just one), with other minor clauses it is impossible to differentiate between minor clause and clause constituent uses without reference to both rhythm and intonation.

For example, the lexical item "OH" can function either as an internal additive conjunction (Martin i.p/1989:69), i.e. a textual constituent of the clause, realising continuity between a current and a preceding turn, or as an exclamation of surprise, disappointment, disapproval etc. (as a separate interpersonal contribution). For example, take the following from the broad transcript:

- a) Oh I've never heard that before
- b) Oh the cleaning lady

Without reference to prosodic information, it is not possible to determine which function OH is playing, and therefore how many speech functions (moves) to recognize.

However, rhythm and intonation analysis suggests that in the continuative use, OH occurs non-saliently, and does not select independently for tone (does not constitute a separate tone group). For example:

P2/C8 S ==//4 ^oh /I've never /heard that be/fore

This contrasts with the exclamative OH as a separate tone group:

P2/C40	Di	//5 ^ because /Marek lives in / Manning Road / <u>also</u>
P1/C41	Si	//1 <u>yep</u> /
P1/C42	Di	//5 <u>oh</u>
P1/C43	G	//1 not for much / <u>longer</u>
P1/C57	Si	==//1 that's our / <u>cleaning</u> /lady she
P1/C58	Di	==//5 <u>oh</u> //5 ^the / <u>cleaning</u> /lady
P1/C59		//5 ^well I'm / <u>sorry</u>

Whilst in many instances it may be obvious which way OH is being used, there are occasions when its function can only be determined by prosodic information. For example:

- i) Oh yea, you met Jill
- ii) Oh yea.
- iii) Oh right.

The following realisations, where OH functions as an exclamation, are all possible:

- iv) //5 Oh //1 ^ yea /you met /Jill
- v) //5 Oh //5 yea.
- vi) //5 Oh //1 right.

although in the continuous excerpt the actual analysis shows OH to be functioning as a continuative in each instance:

P2/C15	G	//1 <u>oh</u> yea ==//1 you met / <u>Jill</u>
P2/C16	S	==//1 oh / <u>yea</u>
P2/C17	Di	//1 that's /Michael's / <u>sister</u>
P2/C18	S	//1 ^oh / <u>right</u>

Similar problems arise with determining the move status of the element YOU KNOW. Tone choice suggests a distinction between a [tracking] use (on tone 2 or 3):

P2/Cb72		/he and he/ <u>cooks</u> all the //1+ time
P2/Cb73		he / <u>makes</u> all the //53 mess all the /time as / <u>well</u> you // <u>know</u> () /sort of
P2/Cb74		//3 ^you / <u>know</u>

as opposed to a use to monitor the interaction, as a [request for feedback], on a tone 1:

P3/C5		//1 ^and and /I've got /one of those /metal /galvanised / <u>bins</u>
P3/C6		which is // 1 called a / wake-up-the- /neighbours / <u>bin</u>
P3/C7		//1 ^you / <u>know</u>

But YOU KNOW can also occur as a textual (conjunctive) item within another clause. For example:

P3/C32 //4 ^cause at / least I'm not /parked in the /street
 P3/C33 //1 ^you /know you //1 just sort of /think you'd /lose all your /handles and /sides and //1 side of the /car on the /garbage /truck

where the clause initial "you know" functions as an internal comparative conjunction. It is only by considering both rhythm and intonation that we can differentiate between these textual and interpersonal functions, and therefore determine the move status of each instance of YOU KNOW.

Further items which give difficulty for non-prosodic move analysis are the polarity elements (yes, no, yep, yea). These can function either interpersonally, being all that is retained of the Mood element from an elliptical major clause, or as textual adjuncts, marking continuity with a preceding turn (Halliday 1985a:54). Whilst the full form, YES, usually realises ellipsis, it is not often used in casual talk where by far the most frequent polarity elements are the reduced forms (yep, yea). In many cases, it is only by reference to the intonation and rhythm that the function of these can be determined. For example:

Oh yea, you met Jill

In dividing this into moves it is necessary to decide whether YEA is elliptical, in which case we are dealing with two moves, or whether it is textual, in which case we have only one move.

Intonation reveals that this turn contains two separate tone groups, thus supporting the reading of the OH YEA as an elliptical clause, filled out by the subsequent clause:

P2/C15 G //1 oh yea ==//1 you met /Jill

Similarly, the turn:

Yea take her to the movies

could constitute either one or two moves. The ambiguity is resolved by reference to the prosodic analysis:

P4/C116 Si //1 yea //1 take her to the /movies

Here, separate tone groups can be taken as implying two separate moves.

More complex is a sequence such as:

I- no no I always put out the garbage.

where intonation suggests that whilst the first NO is elliptical, the lack of rhythmic separation between the second NO and the following clause suggests that the second functions to provide continuity to the subsequent contradiction:

P2/C80	G	//1 ^I / <u>no</u> //1 <u>no</u>
P2/C81	I	//1 always /put out the / <u>garbage</u>

This repetition of polarity elements with different functions is a frequent pattern:

P2/C18	Di	//5 <u>no</u>
P3/C19		//3 no in the /end then they had to / <u>back</u> /out

but is only exposed by reference to rhythm and intonation.

Problems interpreting Martin's move: The move as an interactive unit

The examples mentioned above illustrate practical problems in applying criteria for move division that are based solely on a lexico-grammatical definition of the clause. Reference to the narrowly transcribed version of the continuous excerpt was used to suggest that rhythm and intonation may provide critical empirical evidence in determining the move status of problematic, ambiguous, or indeterminate elements.

Although Martin's speech function analysis implicitly involves prosodic criteria (e.g. his analysis of Greetings and Calls implies the intonational distinctions discussed above), there is no explicit statement of how lexico-grammatical and prosodic criteria interact in the definition of the move.

Beyond these practical problems, Martin's definition of the move as a clause whose status is determined by subsequent negotiation can be criticised as not only inherently syoptic, but also non-interactive.

By taking the lexico-grammatically defined clause as the base unit, the move is not interactionally sensitive. For example, Martin's criteria imply that consecutive clausal constituents will always be treated as a single move. Thus, for example with:

P2/C13	Di	//2 you met his / <u>sister</u> //1+ ^ that /night we were /doing the /cutting and / <u>pasting</u> up
--------	----	--

The possible significance of the pause as indicating the speaker's original intention to stop and wait for acknowledgement after "sister", but the dynamic alteration of this position to providing additional information and finally a prompt, is lost if the clause is automatically categorized as a single move.

Similarly, with:

P2/C60	Si	//3 ^she /used to be our /mutual /cleaning / <u>lady</u>
P2/C61		ex//1 cept that/^ she / <u>sacked</u> these /guys
		//1 ^except / <u>Marek</u>

Martin's grammatical criteria would group both clauses as one single move, thereby ignoring the rhythmic break which the speaker uses to separate the final Circumstantial constituent from the preceding clause complex.

A similar example brings out a further complication:

P3/C11..		and they're /saying
P3/C12		//1 who /owns /this / <u>truck</u>
P3/..11		//1 ^you / <u>know</u> //1 really at the /top of their / <u>voices</u>

This example raises the problem of how move analysis is to treat discontinuous clausal constituents. Implicit in Martin's approach is the analogy of notions of clausal discontinuity to move discontinuity, so that the above would be treated as:

M1..		and they're /saying
{M2}		//1 who /owns /this / <u>truck</u>
{M3}	/	/1 ^you / <u>know</u>
..M1	/	/1 really at the /top of their / <u>voices</u>

where the Circumstance of manner is treated as a discontinuous completion of the first move, as in the clausal analysis.

As such examples illustrate, the "grammaticalising" of the move fails to capture the dynamic, interactional dimension of conversation organisation.

A possible alternative unit of conversational analysis which at least in theory recognises these aspects is the turn-constructive unit identified by the ethnomethodologists.

The Turn-Constructional Unit (TCU)

As pointed out in chapter three, the primary unit of analysis for the ethnomethodologists was the turn. However, consistent with ethnomethodological principles, the question of identification of this analytic unit was approached from the participants perspective:

The problem is not to provide us, conversational analysts, with a way of deciding whether a bit of talk comprises a distinct turn or not, but to see how parties to talk decide this. For just this reason that CA has always placed greatest emphasis on the fact that the turn is itself an interactionally defined unit, that it is for the participants themselves to figure out whether or not a turn was complete, no stronger solution to such questions being available to them - very often - than that it was possibly complete but this, it transpires, is often good enough for the organisation of conversation's business. (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:306)

In their discussion of how turn-transfer is achieved in conversation, Sacks et al observed that speaker change appears to occur at non-random points:

If one examines empirical materials to see where, in an ongoing turn, next speakers begin (or try to begin) next turns, one finds that such starts do not occur continuously over the developmental course of a turn, but discretely over its development. That is, possible transition-relevance places recur discretely in the course of a turn (Sacks et al 1974:721)

In other words, Sacks et al suggest that it is possible to draw a distinction between acceptable or appropriate points for speaker transition, and unacceptable or inappropriate points. Since we can observe that speakers don't just jump in and start talking at any point of another speaker's turn, we can thus make a theoretical distinction between an appropriate turn change and an interruption. From a practical point of view, participants must be signalling to each other points at which turn transfer would be acceptable.

Further observation revealed that the "points of speaker transition" corresponded to syntactic unit boundaries:

Examination of WHERE such 'next-turn-starts' occur in current turns shows them to occur at 'possible completion points'. These turn out to be 'possible completion points' of sentences, clauses, phrases and one-word constructions, and multiples thereof. (Sacks et al 1974:721)

That is, whilst it was not obligatory for speaker change to occur, the end of each TCU was a POTENTIAL or POSSIBLE TRP : speaker change COULD occur without violating the co-operative turn-taking rules.

The formulation of TRPs provided Sacks et al with a way of answering the important interactional question: since it is always possible for a speaker to continue, to add more to what they've said, how is it that participants can both signal and recognize APPROPRIATE moments at which turn change can occur?

The ethnomethodologists attempted to answer this by suggesting that each syntactic unit "projects" its possible point of completion (PPC):

Instances of the unit-types....allow a projection of the unit-type under way, and what, roughly, it will take for an instance of that unit-type to be completed. (Sacks et al 1974:702)

Sacks et al suggest that speakers are only entitled to produce one TCU before speaker change becomes an option:

As for the unit-types which a speaker employs in starting the construction of a turn's talk, the speaker is initially entitled, in having a turn, to one such unit. The first possible completion of a first such unit constitutes an initial transition-relevance place. Transfer of speakership is coordinated by reference to such transition-relevance places, which any unit-type instance will reach. (Sacks et al 1974:703)

Since each PPC represents a TRP, a possible point of speaker change, it is crucial to know how each unit may be said to "project" in this way.

This is somewhat problematic in the ethnomethodological account. Given that lexico-grammatical units stand in a constituency relationship, how do we know WHICH of the lexico-grammatical units is "projecting" possible completion in a given instance?

The ethnomethodologists acknowledged that syntactic criteria alone could not therefore be used to determine TCU boundaries, and that:

Clearly, some understanding of 'sound production' (i.e. phonology, intonation etc), ..is also very important to turn-taking organization. For example, discriminations between WHAT as a one-word question and as the start of a sentential (or clausal or phrasal) construction are made not syntactically, but intonationally. When it is further realized that any word can be made into a 'one-word' unit type, via intonation, then we can appreciate the partial character of the unit-types description in syntactic terms. (Sacks et al 1974:722)

Unfortunately, the ethnomethodologists did not explore these prosodic aspects systematically. However, the suggestion they make in "Simplest Systematics" is that conversation proceeds in units whose boundaries are dynamically and co-operatively created, through the interaction of syntactic and phonological criteria.

The move as a unit of INTERACTIONAL meaning

Whilst Sacks et al's account emphasizes the relation between the unit of conversational analysis and the interactive, turn-taking organisation of conversation, there are two main problems with using the TCU as the primary analytic unit of conversational description. Firstly, although recognizing the relevance of phonological systems, they do not offer systematic criteria for identifying TCUs in talk. Secondly, as discussed in Chapter Three, the ethnomethodologists were unable to offer a comprehensive semantic interpretation of the function of TCUs in dialogue.

On the other hand, the stratified approach to conversation has developed a functional-semantic unit of conversation analysis through defining the move as the unit to which speech functions are assigned. This integrates the unit of analysis within a model of language, and provides a motivated basis for the description of adjacency pairs in conversation.

However, at the same time, the grammaticalising of the move within the systemic-functional approach appears to mean that not only are problems of unit identification unresolvable except through synoptic determination, but that the failure of analysts to note prosodic signalling obscures the relation between the move and the interactive organisation of talk through turns.

Yet it is possible to "re-inject" the move with the dynamic and interactive dimensions of the TCU by reinterpreting move boundaries as not only points at which speech function choice is possible, but also as points at which turn transfer is (signalled as) possible.

Given that move boundaries are not determined in advance but created dynamically, prosodic phenomena can be interpreted for their role in indicating where appropriate points of turn-transfer (i.e. move boundaries) occur.

For example, the co-occurrence of rhythmic and syntactic boundaries can be used to distinguish two different interactional strategies which we can label as run on and defer.

Run on occurs when a speaker, reaching a syntactically potential move boundary (i.e. end of a clause), signals non-completion by manipulating the co-occurrence of syntactic and rhythmic boundaries. Run on corresponds to what Schegloff referred to as the "rush through" phenomena, described as:

a practice in which a speaker, approaching a possible completion of a turn-constructional unit, speeds up the pace of the talk, withholds a dropping pitch or the intake of breath, and phrases the talk to bridge what would otherwise be the juncture at the end of a unit. (Schegloff 1981:76).

Revised criteria for identifying moves in casual talk

The problem of revising identification criteria has been represented as involving clarifying the interaction between grammatical and prosodic systems. There is no suggestion that the move is not a grammatical unit, nor that it is a prosodic unit which should form the basis of conversation analysis, both of which would be inherently inconsistent with a stratified approach to conversation.

Rather, the position involves acknowledging that in principle a move can be realised by a grammatical constituent of MORE THAN ONE CLAUSE (e.g. clause complex) or LESS THAN ONE CLAUSE (e.g. group or word). The issue is then whether it is possible to see, in the interaction of prosodic and grammatical systems, criteria which allow the systematic establishment of WHICH grammatical unit is realising a move on any one dynamically unique occasion.

To answer this question it was obviously necessary to work with a version of "Dinner at Stephen's" which transcribed systematically prosodic aspects of talk. This version, in Appendix D, uses Halliday's notation (see Halliday (1970b, 1985a, 1985b), within which prosodic description consists of two integrated components: RHYTHM and INTONATION.

Rhythm & Intonation description⁴

In Halliday's description rhythm is carried by the rhythmic unit, the foot (shown in transcription by / /). Thus, spoken discourse is made up of a sequence of feet, the beginning of each foot corresponding to the stressed syllable.

Halliday's model of intonation in fact consists of three systems:

TONALITY: This system is concerned with the division of the flow of speech into tone groups.

TONICITY: This is the system which locates a focal point in each tone group, the point of realisation of tonic prominence. Here Halliday suggests that the unmarked realisation is for the tonic to occur on the final element of structure in the tone group, i.e. last salient syllable of last lexical item in the clause.

TONE: This is the system of contrastive tone movement. Consistent with many other intonation models, Halliday argues for the basic opposition of falling tone (realising certainty), with rising tone (realising uncertainty).

⁴ For detailed discussion of Halliday's (system of) analysis of rhythm & intonation, see in particular Halliday (1967a, 1970b); and El Menoufy (1969), from which these points are taken.

All three systems operate within the unit of intonation, the tone group, shown in transcription as // // . This is a phonological unit consisting of an obligatory Tonic, and an optional Pre-tonic. The tonic syllable will be salient ("phonologically prominent"), and represents the point of pitch movement.

The relationship between rhythm and intonation as phonological systems hinges on the co-occurrence of the boundaries of the analytic units, the foot and the tone group. Tone group boundaries are co-terminous and co-extensive with foot boundaries. Thus, a tone group may consist of one or any number of feet. A further connection is that the tonic syllable, i.e. the syllable realising tone choice, is always a salient syllable. For example:

P2/C2 Di //5^oh /he's in /London
 P2/33 so//1+ what can we /do

consists of two tone groups, tone group 1 consisting of three feet, tone group 2 consisting of two feet. The tonic syllables fall on "lon" and "do".⁵

The tone group and the move

Whilst Halliday's description of rhythm and intonation positions them as operating on the phonological stratum, he has always sought to integrate these prosodic systems within the language system as a whole, by re-interpreting them from the point of view of their role in making grammatical meaning.

Thus he has associated the intonational system of TONE with the interpersonal metafunction, recognising its function to realise mood in the clause, through the system of KEY (Halliday 1985a:284-5), whilst associating the systems of TONALITY and TONICITY with the textual metafunction, through their function to structure information through the Given^New structure of the information unit (Halliday 1985a:274-281).

More significant for the discussion here, however, is his description of the function of intonation within the grammar as most delicate mood (see Halliday 1970/76:190, and the discussions in Halliday 1970b:22ff, Halliday 1985a:281ff).

⁵ The model thus rules out both of the following:

a)* //^oh /he's //in /London //so /what //can we /do//

- where foot and tone group boundaries do not coincide;

b)* //^oh /he's in /London so //what can we /do//

- where the tonics are realised on non-salient syllables

As part of that semantic re-interpretation, Halliday has suggested that the placement of tone group boundaries has significance for the unit-by-unit interpersonal organisation of the talk:

Tonality marks one kind of unit of language activity, and roughly where each such unit begins and ends: **one tone group is as it were one move in a speech act.** (1967a:30, my emphasis)

But since tone group boundaries need not, and very frequently do not, respect grammatical boundaries, it is in fact difficult to interpret the tone group alone as the relevant unit of interpersonal meaning in conversation.

However, the description of "Dinner at Stephen's" suggests that by merely associating the correlation of tone group boundaries with grammatical constituent boundaries, the units identified as moves can capture both the grammatical basis (as units to which speech functions can be assigned), and the interactional dimensions (as units variably determined by the on-going turn-taking organisation).

Thus, recognition of the move can be clarified by stating that:

the identification of the move depends on the co-occurrence of grammatical constituent and tone group boundaries.

Identification criteria can then be stated from a procedural point of view, as specifying that:

each tone group produced by a single speaker within a single turn at talk represents one move, PROVIDED THAT the tone group boundaries are co-terminous with grammatical constituent boundaries.

Thus although the criteria developed here depend most on the system of tonality, they by implication link the identification of move boundaries to the prosodic systems of:

- 1) RHYTHM: foot, tone group, and grammatical constituent boundaries must all coincide;
- 2) TONICITY: there must be at least one tonic prominence realised for there to be a move;

In addition, although the system of TONE (i.e. which specific tone is realised) does not enter into the procedure of move division, it becomes relevant for the subsequent assignment of speech function.

The division of the excerpt into moves according to these criteria is presented in Appendix F. The following section briefly reviews how these revised criteria were applied to the excerpt to resolve problem areas touched on above.

As the discussion will illustrate, although the move status of some grammatical constituents is determined by only one of these prosodic system (e.g. the status of clause complexes is determined by rhythmic analysis), generally evidence from both rhythm and intonational systems will be relevant to move analysis. For example, determining the move status of OH depends on:

- RHYTHM: whether OH is salient or not
- TONALITY: whether it is alone in a tone group
- TONICITY: whether it realises tonic prominence
- TONE: whether it expresses surprise, disgust, etc.

The final section of this chapter reviews the implications of the revised criteria for the congruent and incongruent realisations of the move.

Discussion of the move analysis of the continuous excerpt

From the point of view of the clause, the criteria applied here for identifying moves state that:

each CLAUSE represents a move PROVIDED THAT

- a) clause and tone group boundaries coincide
- and
- b) one and only one tone choice has been realised

1) **Clause complexes:** The division of clause complexes into moves depends entirely upon the rhythmic and intonational structure of each specific clause complex.

Briefly, where clause boundaries co-occur with rhythmic and TG boundaries, each clause in the clause complex constitutes a separate move. However, where grammatical boundaries do not co-occur, either through the manipulation of rhythmic boundaries (run on, discussed above) or tonicity (no separate tone choice for each clause), the clauses in the clause complex constitute a single move.

Thus, although it is possible to make statements as to the unmarked realisations (see later discussion), the possibility of marked instances is recognized and explicitly handled by the revised criteria.

a) hypotactic clause complexes

i) hypotactic expansion

As far as tonality is concerned, hypotactic clause complexes in the continuous excerpt tend to confirm Halliday and El Menoufy's observations of "conditioning" clause sequences occurring with unmarked tonality, i.e. each clause is generally realised by a separate tone group (Halliday 1967b:20, El Menoufy:1969:65).

However, in contrast to Martin's position of viewing hypotactics as a single move, examples in the continuous excerpt frequently occur as two separate moves. This is most likely where the structure is β^{\wedge} , with the "conditioning" clause preceding the "result". Here, the fact that grammatical dependence is signalled appears to make speakers feel under less pressure to produce the unit as one move. That is, because listeners are alert to the need for an alpha clause to interpret the information, loss of the speaker role seems less likely. There is thus less risk that the rhythmic break will occasion loss of speakerhood, and so each clause can constitute a separate move. For example:

P4/M66	Di	//4 if you can't do the /hop /skip and a /jump along with / <u>me</u>
P4/M67		//^1 well then for/== <u>get</u> it
P4/M86	S	//4 if you're /born /if you're /born in the /Eastern / <u>Suburbs</u>
P4/M87		//1 ^you've /got you're /off to a /good / <u>start</u>
P4/M88*		//^whereas /if you're /born in

It is perhaps significant that there are no examples of β^{\wedge} complexes produced as single moves in the continuous excerpt, although such a possibility would allow speakers who have planned ahead to make sure of getting their go by producing the β^{\wedge} complex within one move (i.e. run on).

However, with $\wedge\beta$ structure, both possibilities do occur. Either the two clauses can be produced as 2 separate moves:

P2/M3 G		//5 we don't /want - we /don't need / <u>Courtney</u> in the //1 bloody conver/sation
P2/M4		//5 ^ cause /all you'd get is /== <u>him</u> bloody /raving on

Or speakers use run on to guarantee holding the turn, thus packaging the hypotactic clause complex as a single move:

P2/M65	Si	//3 ^she /used to be our /mutual /cleaning / <u>lady</u> ex//1 cept that/^ she / <u>sacked</u> these /guys
P2/M68	G	//5 ^but he's / <u>too</u> /clean be//4 cause you know like /he gets up/ <u>set</u> about //1 <u>things</u>

These observations provide evidence to suggest that Martin's reservations about the status of hypotactic clause complexes (Martin i.p/1989:12) are justified, since they are quite frequently packaged as separate moves⁶.

ii) hypotactic projection

Unlike hypotactic expansions, hypotactic projecting complexes appear to reflect their closer structural dependence by being produced typically as one tone group, and therefore one move:

P2/M67 //1 ^I mean you've /got to ad/mit / Marek is /absolutely the /cleanest /guy in the /flat

P2/M106 //3 ^I /hope this is a / new one for the re/order

Even where the clause complex contains two tone groups, these will nearly always occur as only one move:

P2/M96 ==//1 ^see /I even //1 know when /garbage day /is

In fact there are no examples of hypotactic projection occurring as two moves in the continuous excerpt.

b) paratactic clause complexes

i) expanding paratactic clause complexes

The same possibilities observed above occur here, with speakers using run on to avoid interruption at the end of a syntactically complete clause unit:

P1/M10 //4 ^I /think I've /heard it /first in /English but //1 maybe they were /just trans/lating

P4/M73 //4 ^I mean you can /say that we /live in an /egalitarian so/ciety but we //1 don't

Even longer paratactic sequences can be packaged as a single move:

P2/Mb72 G //4 ^the /trouble with /Marek /though //3 is that /you know he /does still /like cleaning /up but

P2/Mb73 //3 he but //he /y' know like /he has /dinner parties //3 all the /time /he and he/cooks all the //1+ time he /makes all the //53 mess all the /time as /well you // know ()/sort of

⁶ Further analysis might also reveal patterns of the type identified by Nesbitt & Plum's (1988) quantitative study of the clause complex. It may emerge that enhancing hypotaxis favours separate move status, whilst extending and elaborating hypotaxis favour single move status.

Since paratactic expansion also requires the minimum forward planning, however, it is common to find extended narrative/recount sequences such as the following, where moves are continually added:

- P3/M2 //3 ^ and they /came a/long
 P3/M3 //3 ^and they /got the /garbage
 P3/M4 //1 ^and and /I've got /one of those /metal /galvanised /bins
 which is //1 called a /wake-up-the-/neighbours /bin
 P3/M5 //1 ^you /I know
 P3/M6 //3 ^and then it /goes around the /corner and //1 there was a
 /truck /parked/ ^ /somewhere
 P3/M7 //1 ^/ ^and the /garbage men/went/ berserk cause they etc.

Paratactic expansions can however be presented as two separate moves, signalled by the rhythmic break at the clause boundary:

- P2/M32 Si //4 he was a /good /boy
 P2/M33 //1 ^but just /no /tolerance for the /alcohol
 P1/Ma21 //4 ^it's /just /you /know it /doesn't come out in/English
 P1/Ma22 //4 ^but you /know what it /means
 P1/Ma23 //53 ^but it /just sounds like sort of /little red /ridinghoods /wolf
 to /me

The continuous excerpt suggests a tendency for extending clauses to be packaged as part of the same move, with elaborations packaged separately:

- P3/M11 //4 ^ and / then they started /blowingtheir /horn and it //1
 sounded /like you were in the /middle of the /harbour
 P3/M12 //1 ^ it was like a /fog /horn

ii) projecting paratactic clause complexes

Unlike hypotactic projection, the projected clause in a paratactic clause complex typically constitutes a separate move:

P4/M31	Di	//1 I don't a/ <u>gree</u> with
P4/M32	//^	//1 I come from / <u>Personally</u>
P4/M33	//1 ^or /^ I /live in / <u>Mosperson</u>	
P4/Ma99	Di	==//3 ^you /don't under/stand what I /mean when I/ <u>say</u>
P4/M100	//1	some people are more /equal than / <u>others</u>
P3/M7	//1 ^/ ^and the /garbage men/went / <u>berserk</u> cause they //1	
		couldn't get /down the / <u>street</u> and they're /saying
P3/M8	//1	who /owns /this / <u>truck</u>
P3/M9	//1 ^you / <u>know</u>	
P3/M10	//1	really at the /top of their / <u>voices</u>

The independent move status of these can be largely explained by the change of voice quality associated with paratactic projection.

c) mixed and layered clause complexes

Clause complexes are often layered, involving both paratactic and hypotactic, expanding and projecting relations. Whilst these longer complexes generally reflect the tendencies noted above, move analysis is determined by the co-occurrence of the rhythmic and grammatical boundaries on each occasion. For example, the following sequence of four clauses:

P4/M99	Di	==//3 ^you /don't under/stand what I /mean when I/ <u>say</u>
P4/M100	//1	some people are more /equal than / <u>others</u>

where the first move is realized by a 3-clause hypotactic sequence, involving both projection and expansion; whilst the paratactically related projection is packaged as a separate move.

Even more complex, this example of a minor clause followed by five major clauses, all packaged as a single move:

P1/Mb16	Si	//1 sorry / <u>George</u> I've //1 cut you / <u>off</u> you //1 said you'd had the / <u>last</u> /one you /1 promised me the /last one was the / <u>last</u> one
---------	----	--

The implications of these marked realisations of moves on the assignment of speech functions will be considered again in Chapter Seven.

2) Clausal constituents

It was suggested above that identifying moves solely on grammatical criteria can obscure the interactional dynamics of the conversation that may be signalled by prosodic phenomena, particularly rhythm.

The revised definition of the move means that the move analysis of clause constituent elements is entirely determined by the rhythmic and intonational structure. Applied to clause constituents, the revised criteria mean that where groups are separated by a rhythmic break from the clause they structurally relate to, and where they select independently for tone, they are treated as separate moves.

There are a number of examples of these sub-clausal moves in the continuous excerpt:

a) **Nominal groups:** Elaborating nominal groups are typically produced as separate moves, reflecting their "afterthought" function, to provide additional clarification or reformulation:

P2/M5 Di ==//13 he's a /bridge /player
 P2/M6 //13 ^a /naughty /bridge /player

With other examples there may be no rhythmic break, but the independent selection of tone for the second nominal group determines its analysis as a separate move:

P4/M78 Di ==//1 ^a /lot of people have /no /way
 P4/M79 //1 no /chance

The continuous excerpt also contains an example of an extending nominal group as a separate move, with ellipsis of the structure marker "or":

113 G //1 that's /Q./E./D.
 114 //3 whatever you /say

b) **Circumstantial elements:** Also common is the addition of further circumstantial information in a subsequent move. The information may be of time:

P2/M13 Di //2 you met his /sister
 P2/M14 //1+ ^ that /night we were /doing the /cutting and /pasting up

Or comparison:

P1/Ma18 //5 some of the /idioms or /sayings are so /cute
 P1/Ma19 //1 ^like /that

c) **Conjunctives:** The revised move criteria make explicit the move analysis for ambiguous items such as Oh, Well, Now, as well as Yes/No already discussed above.

Where such items do not select independently for tone or rhythm, they are considered conjunctives:

P1/Mb19 G //1 ^oh /give me a /break /Simon

P1/M18 S ==//1 oh /yea

They may also occur saliently, but not as separate rhythmic units:

P1/M16 G //1 oh yea

In either case "oh" is a conjunction. as compared to when it is both salient and selects for tone:

P2/M46 Di //5 oh

P2/M62 Di ==//5 oh

P2/M63 //5 ^the /cleaning /lady

P2/M64 //5 ^well I'm /sorry

Similar conjunctive uses of WELL and NOW occur in the excerpt:

P2/Ma76 //1+^now /this is /magic

P2/Ma77 //1 this is /magic

P1/M9 Di //4 well I /think /so

P1/Mb17 G //5 ^ well/I want to have /one /more

Although there are no examples in the continuous excerpt of these used saliently, other analysts have illustrated the use of prosodically independent NOW and WELL to signal generic stages (as in Sinclair & Coulthard's 1975 framing moves).

d) **minor clauses:** The revised move criteria allow for the distinction to be drawn between sequences functioning as minor clauses (i.e. independent moves), and those functioning as clausal constituents (typically, textual elements).

In fact, two types of ambiguity can be resolved by prosodic information. Firstly, rhythm and tonicity indicate whether these elements have selected independently for speech function, or whether they are functioning as textual or interpersonal elements within another move. And, secondly, if they are functioning as minor clauses, tone choice indicates the specific speech function they have selected.

i) **YOU KNOW:** with independent rhythmic and intonational structure, **YOU KNOW** constitutes a separate move:

- P1/Ma23 //53 ^but it /just sounds like sort of /little red /ridinghoods /wolf
to /me
- P1/Ma24 //2 ^you /know
- P3/M4 //1 ^and and /I've got /one of those/metal /galvanised /bins
which is //1 called a /wake-up-the-/neighbours /bin
- P3/M5 //1 ^you /1 know

Where it does not select independently for rhythm, however, it is not an independent move but is interpreted as a textual element (e.g. a marker of cohesion, or a filler):

- P3/M19 //1 ^and it's /really /hard for them to /fit through the /BM
/double-yous and the /^^ you know the /Volvos or //1 whatever
there /is
- P2/Mb73 //3 he but //he /^/y' know like /he has /dinner parties //3 all the
/time /he and he/cooks all the //1+ time he /makes all the //53
mess all the /time as /well you // know () /sort of
- P2/Mb74 //3 ^you /know

ii) **Vocatives:** In the continuous excerpt all vocatives occur as constituents within other moves, not as separate (Calling) moves: i.e. they do not select independently for tone and rhythm:

- P1/Mb15 //1+ where's the ciga/rettes / Simon
- P1/Mb16 Si //1 sorry /George I've //1 cut you /off you //1 said you'd had the
/last /one you /1 promised me the /last one was the /last one
- P2/M80 //1 ^you /don't under/stand /George you

However, the criteria allow for examples where vocatives would be treated as separate moves, due to their independent prosodic structure:

m1	//1 where's the ciga/rettes
m2	// ^//2 Simon//
or	
m1	//2 Simon
m2	//1 where's the ciga/rettes//

4) Discontinuous clauses

Consistent with a dynamic perspective on move analysis, each clausal constituent is considered a separate move if it selects independently for tone and rhythmic structure. Thus in the following examples, the fact that the YOU KNOW clause is interpolated between the main clause and circumstantial enhancements ("in this world", "at the top of their voices"), they are analysed as three separate moves since each selects for rhythm and tone:

P4/M13	Di	//4 ^well /all men are /created /equal but //1 some seem to be /more /equal than / <u>others</u>
P4/M14		//3 ^you / <u>know</u>
P4/M15		//3 ^in this / <u>world</u>
P3/M7		//1 ^/ ^and the /garbage men/went / <u>berserk</u> cause they //1 couldn't get /down the / <u>street</u> and they're /saying
P3/M8		//1 who /owns /this / <u>truck</u>
P3/M9		//1 ^you / <u>know</u>
P3/M10		//1 really at the /top of their / <u>voices</u>

On the other hand, where an inserted clause interrupts another clause, the analysis is determined on the basis of rhythmic structure. So, the following is treated as a single move, because of the run on after both CAME and MORNING:

P3/M1	Di	==//3 actually the /last time the /geh-garbage /came which was / <u>Wednesday</u> /morning I could //1 <u>hear</u> them
-------	----	---

There is thus no such unit as a "discontinuous move".

5) Spontaneity phenomena

A final area of inexplicitness in Martin's move criteria involves dealing with the frequent "messy" bits of casual talk. That is, how move analysis is to handle the range of spontaneity phenomena that effect the production of clauses in casual talk: e.g. false starts, stumblings, hesitations and pauses, incomplete and abandoned clauses. The revised criteria provided suggest how to analyse these instances.

i) **incomplete, abandoned, or repaired moves:** Incomplete or abandoned turns are still assigned move numbers. Rhythmic structure is used to determine whether they constitute separate moves from preceding one: for example:

P2/M10 G //4 ^oh I /like /Michael a /lot/
P2/M11* / ^ /still but

The co-occurrence of rhythmic and grammatical boundaries also allows amended moves to be treated as separate moves from the false start, i.e. both the false start (by definition an incomplete move), and the repaired move, count separately. For example:

P4/M72* S // ^ well the /argument /is that not
P4/M73 //4 ^ I mean you can /say that we /live in an e/galitarian so/ciety
 but we //1 don't
P4/M74* //there are
P4/M75* G //I don't /know what an e-
P4/M76 //1 what's a /whatchama/callit

ii) **Hesitations and pauses:** Although it is the salience which marks the beginning of each foot, by analogy from music Halliday's analysis allows for the possibility of anacrusis (Halliday 1970b:1-2, 1985b:52). Anacrusis occurs when the initial foot (in a turn) begins with a silent beat. This is extremely common in casual talk:

P3/M3 S //1 ^in /France they /say
P3/Ma18 //1 ^you're /probably /absolutely /right

As with a "rest" in music, silence may fill an entire foot:

P2/M63 /Marek is / ^ /absolutely the /cleanest /guy in the /flat
P1/M16 in /English it was // ^ // someone's walked /over

Examples such as these provide the basis for distinguishing between hesitations (a silence after which the previous beat is resumed) and pauses (silences which cause breaks in the rhythm), or between what Pike has referred to as a "tentative" and a "final" pause (Pike 1945:31).

Hesitations, then are captured in the rhythmic analysis by the ^ sign, and may fill only one beat, one foot, or some longer combination.

Where hesitations occur not at grammatical constituent boundaries, or before tone choice is realised, the hesitation is considered part of the on-going move:

- P3/M19 //1 ^and it's /really /hard for them to /fit through the /BM /double-yous and the /^^ you know the /Volvos or //1 whatever there /is
- P1/M12 S //1 ^I /thought in /English it was //^// someone's walked /over
- P1/M13 Di //1 ^oh /over your /grave
- P1/Ma17 //1 ^ I mean /^^ ^in /French what /was it
- P1/Ma18 //5 some of the /^^ idioms or /sayings are so /cute

Whilst most hesitations do occur move-internally, some hesitations occur between moves in a single turn:

- P1/M1 Si //1 this eh /^^ has been a /long conver/sation/^^
- P1/M2 //1 dead /space in the conver/sation

Pauses are silences after which a different rhythm is adopted. They are thus interpreted as boundary marking, occurring by definition either before or after a move, and their length is noted in the transcript:

- P1/Ma15 //1 maybe I /have heard it /only in /French
[pause 3 secs]
- P1/Ma16* // did you /ever get that
- P2/M12 Di //1 ^he has a /very short /fuse with /alcohol
[pause 10 secs. St & M talking in kitchen]
- P2/M13 Di //2 you met his /sister
- P2/M34 //5 ^I've /pulled him out of /so many /fights it's ri/diculous
[pause 5 secs]
- P2/M35 Si //5 ^at /least he's doing /well ^at /least he's doing well in /London

Implications of the revised criteria: congruent and incongruent realisations of the moves

As the above examples illustrate, the revised criteria provide an explicit means of resolving the practical problems associated with move division in casual talk.

However, it is important to consider whether the revised criteria challenge Martin's definition of the congruent realisation of a move.

Congruence between the move and the tone group

The move analysis in Appendix F illustrates that a move can be realized by one or any number of tone groups. Thus, in the continuous excerpt we find moves realised by:

One tone group:

P1/M1	Si	//1 this eh / [^] has been a /long conver/ <u>sation</u> / [^] //
P1/M2		//1 dead / <u>space</u> in the conver/sation

Two tone groups:

P1/M4	Di	//4 [^] in / <u>English</u> //4 <u>too</u>
-------	----	---

P1/M10		//4 [^] I /think I've /heard it /first in / <u>English</u> but //1 maybe they were /just trans/ <u>lating</u>
--------	--	--

Three tone groups

P2/M68	G	//5 [^] but he's / <u>too</u> /clean be//4 cause you know like /he gets up/ <u>set</u> about //1 <u>things</u>
--------	---	---

4 tone groups

P1/Mb16	Si	//1 sorry / <u>George</u> I've //1 cut you / <u>off</u> you //1 said you'd had the / <u>last</u> /one you /1 promised me the / <u>last</u> one was the / <u>last</u> one
---------	----	--

However, there is an overwhelming correlation between the move and one tone group⁷. This very clearly indicates that there is an unmarked realisation relationship between the move and the tone group. Thus, neutral tonality for a move is one tone group.

Congruence between the move and the clause.

Because the revised criteria link the boundaries of Moves to the boundaries of ranking grammatical constituents, although a move will always be realised by a grammatical constituent, there is no one-to-one relationship between a move and any particular grammatical constituent. Thus a move can be realised by any grammatical constituent, ranging from a single word to a multiple clause complex.

⁷ Approximately 80% of moves in the continuous excerpt are realised by one tone group.

The move analysis in Appendix F offers examples of units of different ranks:

a word

P2/M21 Di //1 Jill

a group or phrase

P2/M6 //13 ^a /naughty /bridge /player

a major clause

P1/M1 Si //1+ this conver/sation needs /Courtney

a minor clause

P1/M16 G //1 oh yea

a two-clause complex

P2/M2 Di //5 ^oh /he's in /London so //1+ what can we /do

a three or more clause complex

P1/Mb16 Si //1 sorry /George I've //1 cut you /off you //1 said you'd had the /last /one you /1 promised me the /last one was the /last one

Again, however, the proportionalities for the continuous excerpt overwhelmingly reflect the correlation between the move and a single independent clause.⁸

Whilst this clearly supports Martin's position of an unmarked realisation relationship between the clause and the move (Martin i.p/1989:30), it acknowledges the interactional significance of potential variation.

Cumulative congruence of the move, tone group, and clause

The above information suggests the cumulative congruence of the move with both a single tone group and a single clause.

Thus the revised criteria do not challenge Martin's definition of the move as typically realised by a clause selecting independently for MOOD (Martin i.p/1989:30), but merely provide for explicit and systematic criteria to apply where that is not the case, and offer an interactional interpretation of the potential for variation.

⁸ Approximately 75% of moves in the continuous excerpt are realised by a single independent clause.

Conclusion

This chapter has taken the first step in describing the interactional continuity in "Dinner at Stephen's" by developing criteria for determining move boundaries in casual talk.

It has been assumed throughout this chapter that despite the revised recognition criteria, the move retains its functional semantic identity as the unit to which speech functions are assigned.

Having now established the units of interactional meaning relevant to description, Chapter Six then explores the system these units enter into, by extending the SPEECH FUNCTION network, whilst Chapter Seven discusses the structures realised by the sequential relations between moves in conversation.

6. SYSTEM in casual sustained talk: the SPEECH FUNCTION network for "Dinner at Stephen's".

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss the speech function network developed to describe "Dinner at Stephen's". The move classes in the network will be motivated by reference to the analyses of MOOD, ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION, CLAUSE COMPLEX, and CONJUNCTION for the continuous excerpt. The network is presented in Appendix G, with the grammatical analyses appearing in Appendix E.

Whilst taking the stratified approach as outlined in Chapter Three as the point of departure, the network presented here revises and extends current speech function networks in three main respects:

- 1) by redrawing primary move classes to distinguish between [opening] and [sustaining] moves, thereby clarifying the relation between the assignment of interactional roles and the initiation or maintenance of conversational exchanges in multiparty talk.
- 2) by building in turn-transfer as a systemic opposition between [continuing] and [reacting] moves, thereby integrating the description of monologic move sequences within the speech function network.
- 3) by drawing a systemic opposition between [supporting] and [confronting] moves, thus allowing the incorporation of dynamic or dispreferred reactions within the network.
- 4) by recognizing an ideational dimension to speech function choices, resulting in the incorporation of a module of logico-semantic speech function categories within the [opening], [continuing], and [reacting] move systems.

The implications of these revisions to the issue of relatedness will also be considered, through the elaboration of potential logical-continuation (PLoCC) criteria to complement the existing potential ellipsis criteria (PEC).

The structural relations generated by the speech function network will be described in the following chapter.

Brief review of limitations of the current SPEECH FUNCTION network

In reviewing approaches to conversation analysis in Chapters Two and Three, I suggested there were five main issues to be confronted in order to develop a description of the structure of casual conversation:

- 1) UNITS
- 2) TAXONOMY
- 3) RELATEDNESS
- 4) MONOLOGUE
- 5) SEQUENCE

The issue of units has been dealt with in the previous chapter, with the identification of the *move* as a dynamically created realised discourse unit. Consistent with the stratified approach, it is to this unit of move that speech functions are assigned. Whilst moves are typically (i.e. congruently) realised by a modally independent clause, Chapter Five noted that other realisations are possible, and are identified through the co-occurrence of prosodic and grammatical boundaries.

Within a stratified approach, the issue of taxonomy is framed in terms of a SPEECH FUNCTION network. The systems and options in this discourse network of interpersonal meaning are motivated and constrained by the lexico-grammatical systems of MOOD in the clause.

It has been suggested that the strength of the systemic account of conversational structure lies in its stratified description: i.e. the link it establishes between MOOD and SPEECH FUNCTION. By relating the realisation of the discourse-semantic system of speech function to the lexico-grammatical system of MOOD in the clause, the model provides a means of both constraining and motivating the number of speech function classes recognized, and a framework for extending sub-classification in delicacy.

However, in reviewing current SPEECH FUNCTION networks developed within the stratified approach (such as those in Halliday 1984, and Martin i.p/1989), I noted the following limitations when applying them to describe the casual conversation of "Dinner at Stephen's":

a) INDELICACY: Broad categories of [initiating] and [responding] do not capture differences that appear significant in describing interactional continuity.

For example, the [initiating] speech function fails to specify the difference between the types of moves that initiate each phase in the excerpt, as opposed to possible dependent initiations within each phase (eg moves 5 and 9 in phase 2).

Similarly, the indelicate description of [responses] groups together both minimally sustaining reactions, such as [acknowledgements] (eg P2:39) and [exclamations] (P2:46), with more explicitly supporting moves, such as [answers] to questions (P2:60, 61) or [confirmations] of information (eg P2:45).

b) NON-INTEGRATED: the response systems concentrate on the description of "preferred" options, with dispreferred responses either not exhaustively subclassified (in Halliday's 1984 network), or handled within a separate "dynamic" move category (in Martin's i.p/1989).

For example, whilst the speech function network provides a category for move 4 in Phase 1 as a [response:agreement], move 5 must be handled in a separate system of [tracking] moves, thereby failing to capture that it too is a kind of [response], this time to move 5.

The result of these various problems with the taxonomy was an analysis that was both difficult to apply and essentially unrevealing in its generality.

Associated with the speech function taxonomy is the issue of RELATEDNESS: establishing that pairs or sequences of moves are structurally related. Whilst the ethnomethodological principle of sequential relevance (Atkinson & Heritage 1984:6) suggests that in general moves in sequence will be as far as possible interpreted as (semantically) related to preceding moves, linguistic approaches have attempted to state more explicit relatedness criteria.

In reviewing the stratified approach, I traced the evolution of criteria from Halliday & Hasan's (1976) initial position of "any cohesive tie between moves" (demonstrably too broad), through Coulthard & Brazil's (1979) polarity and Berry's (1981b) ellipsis criteria (too narrow). In discussing Martin's development of ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION criteria, I noted that even Martin's (i.p/1989) and Ventola's (1987) versions of the Potential Ellipsis Criteria (PEC) remain too restrictive, being unable to capture relations between moves which are not potentially elliptical but very obviously related.

For example, observing PEC means we must consider moves 5-7 in Phase 2 as (interpersonally) unrelated to prior talk, and move 8 as an [initiation] of a new exchange, rather than a [reaction] to move 7. The relation of dynamic move categories to prior moves is also unclear, with Martin indicating [personal communication] that he would not apply PEC to dynamics, although alternative criteria have not yet been developed.

Within the stratified approach, I also identified conflicting approaches as to the treatment of monologic move sequences. Whilst Martin (i.p/1989) handles monologic relations within CONJUNCTION, Ventola (1987, 1988) treats move sequences through the univariate structural unit, the move complex. Neither position was considered appropriate: Martin's assignment of monologic relations to CONJUNCTION fails to capture the function of speaker continuations to further expand on an initial move (for example, George's justification of his contradiction in phase 2:4), whilst Ventola's move complex only recognises sequences in which identical speech functions have been selected, thus leaving the same sequence (a hypotactic clause complex) undescribed.

Finally, in reviewing exchange structure theory in Chapter Three I suggested that not only was it difficult to recognize the exchange slots described by Berry's (1981a, 1981c) formula in "Dinner at Stephen's", but that a multivariate formula, biased towards describing the completion of interactive sequences, is fundamentally unrevealing of the continuity of the talk.

The principal task of my research, then, has been to extend the stratified approach to at least partially overcome or resolve these problems.

The aim of the research reported in this chapter has been to develop a speech function network that:

- a) allows a more explicit, exhaustive, and integrated coding of SPEECH FUNCTION choices for moves in casual conversation.
- b) clarifies the criteria for relating moves as structural units

This chapter reports on how the issues of TAXONOMY and RELATEDNESS have been handled in describing "Dinner at Stephen's".

The following chapter takes up the final issue of STRUCTURE in casual talk. Given the system of SPEECH FUNCTION developed here, I will suggest that a multivariate exchange structure is neither applicable nor revealing, instead suggesting that structural reticula of interpersonal and logical relations in the conversation are more appropriate for capturing the interactional continuity of "Dinner at Stephen's".

Constructing networks: the purpose of the description

The form of a systemic network is, inevitably, a combination of two factors: the purpose of the description, and the procedure adopted.

Like transcription, network-drawing is a purpose-based activity. Any network is the result of the particular focus of the research, what it is that the analyst is particularly concerned to capture. Existing speech function networks illustrate this point. Halliday (1984), for example, is trying to establish the non-arbitrary relation between language and context, and therefore concentrates only on primary delicacy where realisational relationships are clear and, typically, metafunctionally distinct. Martin (1985, i.p/1989), on the other hand, is trying to make general statements about the relation of discourse-semantics to grammar by demonstrating the differences between lexico-grammatical and discourse-semantic structures, gives emphasis to the dynamic aspects of discourse systems. Whilst Hasan's goal (to code large quantities of data quantitatively on computer) implicates a synoptically very delicate but metafunctionally eclectic network (Hasan 1983).

The purpose of my network is different again from each of these. The goal has been clearly specified: to capture the interactional continuity of casual sustained talk, within a theoretically motivated perspective (i.e. within a stratified approach). This aim necessarily introduces a bias towards emphasizing continuity.

For example, moves 5 and 9 in Phase 2 have semantic ties with prior moves, but also have aspects that justify seeing them as new starts. Motivation can be found for modelling these moves as either [bound-openings] (which emphasizes their newness), or as [open-continuations] (which emphasizes their continuity). Faced with situations like this, my network emphasizes the continuity, since it is only by uncovering the motivation for building in such continuity that I will be able to say more about how the conversation keeps going.

In addition, the construction of the network is influenced by the data towards describing:

- i) the exchange of information rather than goods & services. Thus, there is an emphasis on subclassifying speech function classes of [information], rather than [goods & services].
- ii) the exchange of opinions rather than the exchange of factual information. Thus there is an emphasis on describing argumentative sequences in conversation rather than expository or descriptive ones.
- iii) multilogue rather than dialogue. There is an emphasis on describing interactional alternatives rather than simple reciprocity.

However, despite these descriptive emphases, the development of the network is clearly situated within the theoretical context of the stratified approach.

Alternative procedures in network construction

Consistent with the stratified approach to conversational structure, there are two possible directions to take in extending the speech function network.

The first is to work 'upwards', from the lexico-grammar to the discourse. Thus, for the SPEECH FUNCTION network this would mean making the point of departure the lexico-grammatical system of MOOD. By extending the MOOD network in delicacy, then subsequently offering a discourse interpretation of these MOOD options, one will arrive at a more delicate SPEECH FUNCTION network. This is essentially the strategy adopted by Martin (i.p/1989).

However, there are two problems with this approach. Firstly, the risk of redundancy. Despite considerable attention to the description of modality and modulation within the interpersonal metafunction in Halliday's work (eg Halliday 1970/76, Halliday 1985a), there remain many systems within the MOOD network that could be developed systemically, and many alternative representations of them, yet they might not have particular relevance for basic speech function description.

Secondly, a less obvious problem with this approach is that it presumes that MOOD options are the only options relevant to the description: that the description of MOOD alone will result in a sufficiently delicate, and relevant, network of speech functions. Yet, as has already been implied in the critiques of current SPEECH FUNCTION networks, and as will be elaborated below, it seems likely that extending in delicacy to capture continuity entails recognising the inter-action of metafunctional systems, particularly the role of (a limited domain of) ideational meanings.

The second procedure in developing a network is to work 'downwards', from discourse to lexico-grammar. For the SPEECH FUNCTION network this would mean beginning by outlining the discourse categories that are suggested by the data, and then examines the possible lexico-grammatical motivation for such categories by relating them to the lexico-grammatical system. Since SPEECH FUNCTION classes are only recognized if there is a recognizable "reflex" (i.e. systematic realisation) in the grammar, the method provides a check on the establishment of speech function classes.

This approach has two main advantages over the first approach:

- 1) it ensures that the extensions to the network are relevant to the particular descriptive purpose (e.g. capturing interactional continuity);
- 2) it does not "trap" one within a single lexico-grammatical system;

This second approach has been adopted here, although seen as a process it in fact turns out to involve a constant shunting between discourse and lexico-grammatical systems. Whilst the point of departure is the discourse semantics, the perspective on discourse is a lexico-grammatical one: intuitive discourse categories are only formalized in the network if there is a corresponding and systematic reflex in lexico-grammatical realisation. As a consequence, the perspective on the lexico-grammatical systems is a discourse one: MOOD and other grammatical choices are interpreted for their function in creating and sustaining interactive continuity.

The lexico-grammatical analyses (Appendix E)¹.

It follows from the above discussion that the speech function network presented below can be motivated by lexico-grammatical patterns. In the following discussion I will refer to four kinds of lexico-grammatical patterns analysed to motivate speech function categories: MOOD, ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION, CLAUSE COMPLEX, and CONJUNCTION. These analyses are presented in Appendix E, where the coding sheets for the continuous excerpt for each type of analysis are presented.

¹ These patterns are described as lexico-grammatical on the basis that the units they relate are clauses (i.e. the unit at the grammatical stratum). This classification therefore reflects Halliday & Hasan's (1976, 1985) and Halliday's (1985a) interpretation of these systems, rather than Martin's (i.p/1989).

Although the grammatical coding process will not be discussed in detail here, Appendix E provides references to the versions of the analyses used, includes a brief discussion of each of the columns on each coding sheet, and discusses particular issues that arose during coding.

In brief, the analyses displayed in Appendix E cover the following grammatical systems:

1) MOOD: The analysis for MOOD coded each clause in the continuous excerpt for seven features:

- mood
- modality/modulation
- intensification
- attitude
- Subject
- polarity
- vocation

2) The analysis for ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION coded each clause in the excerpt for:

- mood
- type of ellipsis or substitution
- the elements of clausal structure ellipsed
- the ellipsed elements filled in
- the source of the ellipsed items (in the prior text)

In addition to these two analyses of interpersonal meaning, the excerpt was also analysed for logico-semantic relations, through analyses of the CLAUSE COMPLEX and CONJUNCTIVE RELATIONS. The relevance of these analyses will be explained below.

3) The CLAUSE COMPLEX analysis coded each clause complex for both the type of taxis (parataxis or hypotaxis) and the type of logico-semantic relation (if expanding: elaboration, extension, enhancement; if projecting: locution or idea). (see Halliday 1985a:ch7)

4) The analysis of CONJUNCTION coded all conjunctive relations between clauses according to the following categories (see Halliday & Hasan 1976, and Martin 1983, i.p/1989 for explanations):

- implicit or explicit
- internal or external
- temporal, comparative, additive, consequential, with subclassifications as specified in Appendix E.
- The conjunctive relation was then filled in with either the actual conjunction used (if explicit), or with an example from the class presumed (if implicit);
- The clauses linked by the conjunctive relation were listed.

Only coding categories which are of specific relevance to the speech function system have been displayed in the coding sheets, and only to the level of delicacy considered necessary to reveal relevant patterns. Thus the analyses are not intended as exhaustive lexico-grammatical descriptions of the excerpt.

The role of these analyses in motivating and constraining the speech function network developed below will be discussed at the appropriate points.

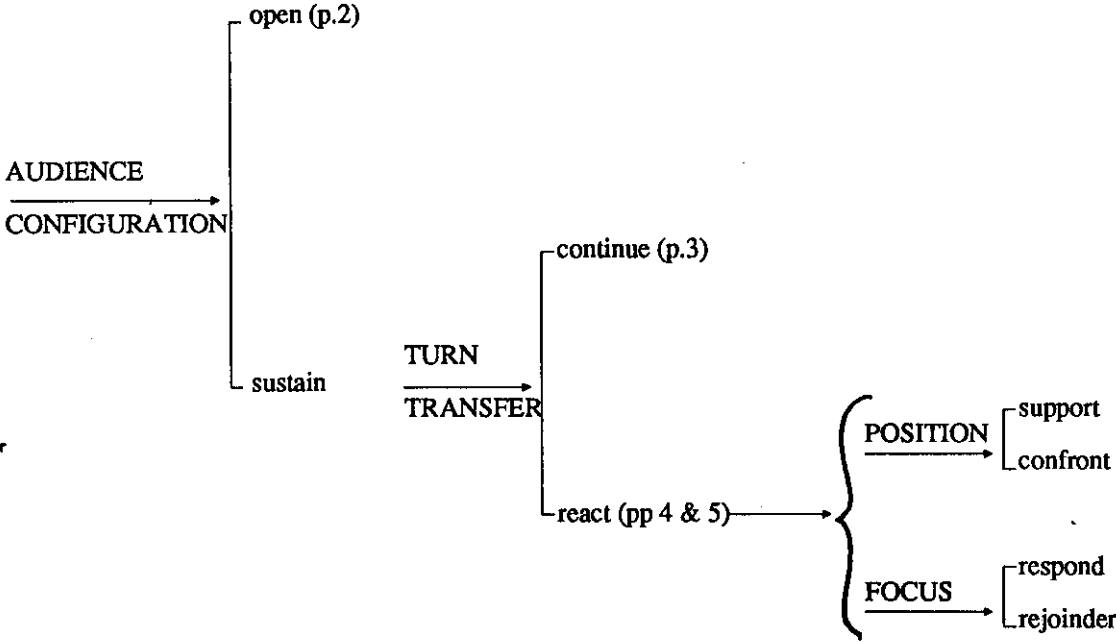
The SPEECH FUNCTION Network: Introduction

Appendix G contains the SPEECH FUNCTION network developed on the basis of the conversational data from "Dinner at Stephen's". The five pages of the network are also reproduced at relevant points during the following discussion.

The following explanation of the network uses the discussion of the overall system (page one of the network) to outline the general features of the network, and their relation to MOOD and other lexico-grammatical systems.

This is followed by the more abbreviated discussion and exemplification of the systems on the remaining pages of the network.

Rank: Discourse-semantics
Unit: move



SPEECH FUNCTION NETWORK: (1) Overall System

Page ONE of the SPEECH FUNCTION network: the overall system

Page one gives an outline of the SPEECH FUNCTION network that is developed in delicacy on the following pages. The network specifies that the SPEECH FUNCTION system operates at the rank of **discourse-semantics**, with the unit of entry being the **move**.

The move is defined and identified according to the criteria discussed in Chapter Five. Whilst the congruent realisation of a move is a single clause, other grammatical units are possible, according to the co-occurrence of prosodic and grammatical boundaries. Thus, viewed procedurally, the assignment of SPEECH FUNCTIONS depends on the prior analysis of the talk into moves.

As this summary of the system shows, the network developed on the basis of the conversational data analysed both REVISES Halliday and Martin's primary categories of speech functions, and also EXTENDS them by introducing new subclasses.

At primary delicacy, instead of a single opposition between [initiating]/[responding to], the network here sets up a distinction between [opening] and [sustaining] moves. At secondary delicacy, [sustaining] moves are then subclassified into [continuing] and [reacting] moves. And at tertiary delicacy, [reacting] moves then subclassify simultaneously on two dimensions: as either [supporting] or [confronting], and as either [responding] or [rejoinder]. Each system, and its motivation, will be discussed in turn.

System: AUDIENCE CONFIGURATION

Options:[open]/[sustain]

This primary system of speech function classes contrasts moves which somehow get the interactive sequence up and running ([open]) with moves which continue an on-going interactive sequence ([sustain]).

This system, labelled AUDIENCE CONFIGURATION, continues the systemic-functional interpretation of speech functions as the interpersonal exchange of speech roles (Halliday 1978:144, 1985a:68). However, the system is based on redefining the range of interactive roles available in multiparty talk.

As a result of the typical concentration on the description of dialogue, systemic description has assumed that role assignment is a simple, reciprocal process. For example, Halliday's description of role assignment:

In the act of speaking, the speaker adopts for himself a particular speech role, and in so doing assigns to the listener a complementary role which he wishes him to adopt in his turn. For example, in asking a question, a speaker is taking on the role of seeker of information and requiring the listener to take on the role of supplier of the information demanded. (Halliday 1985a:68)

assumes that there are only two roles: initiator, and responder.

This same bi-partite bias is reflected in ethnomethodological description. Interpreting speech roles in terms of the availability of a POTENTIAL NEXT SPEAKER, the ethnomethodologists modelled conversation as a situation in which there are only two potential next speakers: the current speaker, or another².

However, in multiparty talk the situation is made more complex by the simple fact that the pool of potential next speakers is much larger. During the four phases of the continuous excerpt there are four main participants (Marg is in the kitchen for most of the time). Thus, when any one person is speaking there are at least four potential next speakers.

This numerical increase complicates the issue of role assignment. Certainly one possible option is that in taking on the speaker role, I assign to the other three speakers equally the status of ADDRESSEE (i.e. potential next speaker). For example, in Phases 1, 2 and 4 Simon addresses his opening remarks to anyone and everyone.

However, another available alternative is to address remarks to a specific member or members of the AUDIENCE (this is the "current-selects-next" option in the ethnomethodological system). Since the conversation takes place in the visible and audible presence of the other participants, it means that although only a sub-group of the audience are filling the role of ADDRESSEE, other participants are attending to the talk.

For example, when Simon addresses George in phase 2:9, it is in the public presence of both Di and Sue. Thus, whilst assigning George the role of (anticipated) responder, he simultaneously assigns the roles of listeners-but-not-anticipated-respondants to both Sue and Di. We need therefore to recognize a further role of AUDIENCE, which could be described in ethnomethodological terms as a present-but-not-selected-next-speaker.

Thus, the multiparty situation requires recognizing the potential for the interactional roles of SPEAKER, ADDRESSEE, and AUDIENCE.

² But note that given the position taken on monologic move sequences, systemic models generally interpret there to be only ONE potential next speaker in dialogue, i.e. YOU (e.g. implicit in Halliday's quote given above).

Seen as a process, the conversation involves a continual re-distribution of these basic interactional roles. For example, Phase 2 begins with Simon as SPEAKER and everyone else as ADDRESSEE; then moves to Di as SPEAKER and Sue as addressee, and everyone else as AUDIENCE; then Simon as SPEAKER, George as addressee, and everyone else as AUDIENCE, etc.

Although these three roles are potentially available, sometimes there may be no audience. The obvious example has already been mentioned: when a remark is addressed to everyone or anyone. However, in conversations with four or more participants, a second possibility arises, where there may be two concurrent conversations, each with the role configurations SPEAKER/ADDRESSEE.

For example, although Phase 1 begins with Simon as speaker and everyone else as ADDRESSEES, then moves to Di as SPEAKER, Sue as addressee, and George and Simon as AUDIENCE, there is an overlapping point at which Di is speaking to Sue whilst George is speaking to Simon.

The ethnomethodologists' observation that there is pressure to keep one conversation to avoid competing turn-taking systems (Sacks et al 1974:713) seems supported by "Dinner at Stephen's". Whilst concurrent conversations occur frequently, they are generally very short. A return to a single conversation is rapidly achieved, with either one conversation "giving in" to the other (eg Di's discussion of the wine in Phase 2 fizzles out, whilst George's criticisms of Marek become the sole conversation), or both conversations fizzling out more or less simultaneously, allowing the start of a new, single conversation (eg Phase 1).

Interpreted in light of the interactional roles recognized above, we can suggest that one of the functions of casual conversation is to PERFORM, and that this is seen in the pressure to have some participants filling the role of AUDIENCE.

This first system, then, recognizes that it is the alteration in the assignment of the roles of SPEAKER, ADDRESSEE, and AUDIENCE that is the realisation of a new start in conversation. A conversational exchange can be defined as lasting as long as a particular configuration of interactive roles is sustained.

[Opening] moves are moves which establish a particular audience configuration: a particular relation between opening speaker, and the other participants as either addressee(s) or audience.

The function of [openings] to establish a new audience configuration is reflected in their realisation in the MOOD systems of mood and ellipsis. Opening moves are typically realised by non-elliptical major clauses.

[Sustaining] moves continue the audience configuration established in an opening. That is, they take as their framework the initial assignment of interactive roles. [Sustaining] moves are realised by major or minor clauses which are structurally dependent on an opening move in ways that are specified by later options in the network.

[Opening] moves are identified in terms of their interactional, or interpersonal, discontinuity with prior talk. There is thus no implication at primary delicacy that they are experientially, or topically, discontinuous with prior talk. The difference between [opening] moves which are topically discontinuous (e.g. George's request for cigarettes in P1:mb14), and those which pick up on a prior topic (eg Simon in p2:m9) is handled at greater delicacy through the system of [initiating] and [pursuing openings].

Beyond the general category of non-elliptical major clauses, [opening] moves also select from the MOOD system of VOCATION. However, since only some of the choices in the VOCATION system are actually realised linguistically (through terms of address), VOCATION alone cannot be used to identify [opening] moves.

When a particular addressee is intended, a vocative may be used:

P1/Mb15 //1+ where's the ciga/tettes / Simon

P2/M9 Si //1^ s'/pose he /gives you a /hard /time /George

The use of vocatives is most common when the audience configuration is shifting from an unspecified "audience at large", to one specific addressee.

However, not only are vocatives rarely used when the addressee is the audience at large, but even the targeting of specific individuals may not be explicitly realised. Given the physical proximity of participants in the continuous excerpt, a change in the audience configuration may be signalled non-verbally, through gaze, or a change in body posture etc.

For example, both moves a16 in Phase 1, and move 5 in Phase 2 are [openings], although there is no explicit indication of a change in roles. However a consideration of the logic of what is being said, combined with "insider knowledge", explain the classification.

When Di says "he's a bridge player...", it only makes sense if we interpret her move as an [opening] move of some kind, addressed not back to Simon but to a different audience. Having been part of the conversation, I also know that Di turned to address me at this point, making it quite clear with her gaze that I was her (only) intended addressee. Similarly with the Phase 1 example, only Sue has the relevant knowledge of French, and Sue is also targeted through gaze.

Frequently, then, the realisation of audience selection may be implicit, and general or "insider" evidence has to be used to determine [opening] moves.

System:TURN-TRANSFER**Options:[continue]/[react]**

This system of [sustaining] moves contrasts moves which relate to a prior move by the SAME speaker ([continue]), with moves that relate to a prior move produced by a DIFFERENT speaker ([react]). Thus, this system assigns a functional-semantic category to options in the system of turn-transfer.

Although the ethnomethodologists recognized turn-taking as the "fundamental organising principle of conversation", linguistic approaches to conversation have tended to downgrade this aspect, to the extent that Edmondson can claim that:

the identification of discourse structure is not to be found in turn-taking procedures observed in conversational behaviour. (Edmondson 1981:41)

This effacement of interaction within linguistic approaches to conversation, criticised by contemporary ethnomethodologists (eg Sharrock & Anderson 1987), is also reflected in systemic-functional accounts of conversation.

In its current form, the speech function networks of Halliday or Martin say nothing at all about the relationship between speech functions and turns. In fact, in replacing the turn with the move as the unit of analysis, the term "turn" has almost dropped from use.

Whilst the identification of a functional-semantic unit distinct from the turn has been a major contribution of the systemic approach, it has been at the cost of ignoring the interactional significance of the turn. Although when we read Martin's speech function network we "assume" that [initiations] and [responses] are produced by different speakers in different turns, there is nothing in the system which captures that fact.

The reason that the turn-by-turn organisation of talk has been largely ignored can in part be explained by the kind of data on which descriptions such as Halliday's and Martin's have been based. In pragmatic talk, it is fairly common (though not as common as their descriptions suggest) for one turn to correspond to one conversational unit: i.e. one turn equal one move. In fact, systemic descriptions have generally assumed situations where (in ethnomethodological terms) turn-transfer occurs at the completion of each and every TCU.

However, this is not the situation in the casual talk of "Dinner at Stephen's", where very many speaker turns consist of more than a single move (thus, at the end of the TCU the speaker re-selects self). These continuations range from short 2-move turns, through to lengthy monologic segments, such as Di's in Phase 3. Sometimes such continuations are foreshadowed (eg the first move in Di's recount is strongly suggestive of a following recount), but very often they are not.

In order to capture these different possibilities, it is necessary to recognize that the dimension of turn transfer is significant to assigning/determining the speech function of any move.

At the simplest level, incorporating turn-taking means distinguishing whether a change of speaker has occurred. The realisation of this distinction is the obvious one of turn-transfer.

However, the category of continuing moves is a SEMANTIC, not a physical, one. It is obvious that simply retaining the speaker role is not on its own an indication of a semantic relation between moves. For example, George is speaker in both moves b14 and b15 of Phase 1 but his second move is not a [continue] but an [opening].

Thus, [continuing] moves are moves which are structurally related to prior moves by the same speaker, in ways that are further specified by the more delicate description of [continuing] moves. The discussion of [continuing] systems will explain that [continuing] moves are typically sequences of moves related either through logical relations (either as clauses in clause complexes, or through conjunctions), or through mood systems of minor clauses and elliptical projecting tag questions.

[Reacting] moves are moves which are structurally related to a prior move by a different speaker. The nature of these structural relations is captured by the more delicate description of [reacting] moves, and will be discussed in the following section.

The [continue]/[react] system is interpreted as a necessary development to the stratified model of conversational structure. Although the systemic representation of dialogue has so far given priority to the INTERPERSONAL organization of conversation, this system acknowledges its complementary INTERACTIONAL organization, through a functional-semantic reinstating of turn-taking.

It also faces up to the consequences of the definition of the move within the stratified approach. If the move is the unit to which speech functions are assigned, and a single speaker's turn may frequently consist of more than one move, then all moves must be assigned a speech function. The inclusion of a move class of continuing moves thus makes the model more consistent, by providing the framework for an exhaustive description of moves.

System:POSITION

Options:support/confront

This system of [reacting] moves contrasts moves which react by expressing some kind of consensus ([support]) with a prior move, with moves which react by expressing non-consensus ([confront]).

The system thus recognizes the basic opposition between what the ethnomethodologists identified as "preferred" and "dispreferred" responses, referred to within systemic description as "expected" and "discretionary" responses.

Whilst there has been general agreement for the bi-partite classification and a corresponding emphasis on the description of preferred options, there are different interpretations as to the basis for the distinction.

The ethnomethodologists identified dispreferred options on the basis of their greater "markedness", realised principally through their greater structural complexity when compared to preferred options. Indications, or realisations, of this structural complexity are generally provided as a fairly ad hoc listing, including prosodic features (pauses/hesitations before delivery), the use of prefacing particles (e.g. "well"), and being accompanied by additional information to account for why the preferred option was not supplied (see Levinson 1983:307). Unfortunately, as with so many aspects of ethnomethodological account, the elaboration of these criteria remains at an informal, essentially anecdotal level, with the description of dispreferred options relatively underdeveloped.

Martin motivates his classification of dispreferred options into a class of "dynamic moves" by considering their occurrence in sequence: dynamic moves can occur at a range of exchange slots, making their realisation in sequence not synoptically controlled. The main critique that I levelled against this category in Chapter Three was that in failing to integrate dispreferred move classes Martin does not capture their status as available reactions. Thus, in emphasizing how these moves differ from others, Martin loses the generalisation that they are the "other" choice in the system of preferred reactions.

Martin's description of dispreferred moves is determined, or dictated, by his model of the exchange. By interpreting speech function classes in terms of their occurrence in exchange structure slots, Martin is forced to emphasize the differentness of these moves. This biases his description of these moves to present them as somehow "interference phenomena" in the business of achieving well-formed exchanges, rather than an integral component of creating conversational sequences.

The relevance of an exchange structure formula to conversational data has already been seriously questioned in Chapter Three, and further arguments against it will be offered in Chapter Seven. Once the step is taken not to model conversational interaction within multivariate structure, then the integration of [confronting] moves becomes feasible. If the generation of multivariate exchange structures no longer determines the form of the SPEECH FUNCTION network, there is no problem with developing a synoptic description³.

As well as this theoretical reason for rejecting Martin's approach, the conversational data of "Dinner at Stephen's" strongly supports an attempt to integrate these moves within the synoptic SPEECH FUNCTION network. For not only do such moves occur with great frequency (as compared with the pragmatic registers Martin and Ventola focused on), but they appear to play a very significant role in sustaining the talk.

³ The implications of abandoning the multivariate model on the question of predicting structural sequences in conversation will be addressed in Chapter Seven.

An early observation I made of the data was that whereas preferred options (such as expressions of agreement, acknowledgment etc) tend to lead to closure of interactive sequences (i.e. exchanges), it is the choice of dispreferred options (such as challenges, queries etc.) that regenerate the conversation, sustaining an on-going exchange, or providing the context for a linked [opening]. The evidence for this observation will be considered in detail in Chapter Seven.

The system of POSITION, then, provides the framework for developing an integrated description of both types of [reacting] moves. The labels [supporting] and [confronting] are used rather than preferred/dispreferred, or expected response/discretionary response, to avoid the register-biased implications. Whilst the network represents a register-neutral description of SPEECH FUNCTION classes, the relative frequency with which different options are chosen will be register-specific. Thus, it may well turn out that in casual conversations it is the choice of [confronting] options which is more likely than [supporting] options - which of course makes the label "dispreferred" confusing.

[Supporting] moves, then, are moves which express a range of consensual reactions to prior talk, the types of which are further subclassified by the network. They are typically realised either through MOOD systems of polarity (a continuity of polarity with prior talk), and modality, or through LOGICO-SEMANTIC relations of taxis and conjunction. The following moves are all types of [supporting reactions]:

M2/M45	Si	//1 <u>yep</u> /
P1/Ma14		//1 ^you're /probably /absolutely / <u>right</u>
P2/M8	G	//5 ^and he just /yap yap /yaps all the / <u>time</u> [laughs]

[Confronting] moves, on the other hand, express the "other" meanings: degrees and types of non-support, further subclassified by the network. They are realised through either a discontinuity of polarity with prior talk, or through particular patterns of logical relations and ellipsis. Thus, all of the following moves are types of CONFRONTING reactions:

P2/M3	G	//5 we don't /want - we /don't need / <u>Courtney</u> in the //1 bloody conversation
P2/M68	G	//5 ^but he's / <u>too</u> /clean be//4 cause you know like /he gets up/ <u>set</u> about //1 <u>things</u>
P4/M19	Si	//1 why /men as o/posed to / <u>women</u>

The difference between these moves and the need to recognize both MOOD and LOGICAL RELATIONS in the realisation statements will be clarified by now discussing the second, simultaneous subclassification of [reacting] moves, through the FOCUS system.

System:FOCUS**Options:[respond]/[rejoinder]**

This system simultaneously subclassifies [reacting] moves according to whether their focus is an INTERPERSONAL one ([respond]), or an IDEATIONAL one ([rejoinder]). It attempts to systematize distinctions between "direct" and "indirect" responses (e.g. Halliday & Hasan 1976:212-213, Halliday 1984:18).

The motivation for recognizing these two different types of [reacting] moves in conversation comes from considering sequences such as the following:

P2/M1	Si	//1+this conver/sation needs / <u>Courtney</u>
P2/M2	Di	//5^oh /he's in / <u>London</u> so//1+ what can we / <u>do</u>
P2/M3	G	//5 we don't /want - we /don't need / <u>Courtney</u> in the //1 bloody conver/sation

Here, Simon's initial opinion receives two [reactions], both [confronting], but both grammatically quite different. George's reaction is a direct contradiction of Simon's position. By simply negating of the modulation in Simon's proposition, George provides an immediate indication of where he stands on the "issue" Simon has initiated. The modal relationship between George's move and Simon's can be made clear by reducing George's move to the elliptical version "No we don't".

Di's reaction, on the other hand, is more of an "avoidance" response. Rather than take up a position on the polarity/modality scale (yes/no/maybe), she simply opts out by providing a statement that not only makes answering Simon's initiation unnecessary, but in the process provides the conversation with further discussible material (that Courtney is in London). The relationship between Di's move and Simon's is not created through the MOOD system of ellipsis: there is no elliptical version of Di's move that can be filled in by reference to Simon's. However, it is obviously a [reaction]. One explicit indication of this relation is the turn-initial OH. A less obvious indicator is the implicit conjunctive relation which links Di's move to Simon's through an internal conjunction of consequence.

These two types of reactions illustrate two different focuses, or orientations, in negotiation. Whilst George's reaction can be said to be INTERPERSONALLY focused, anchored in the proposition (Mood^Residue structure) presented by Simon, Di's reaction is IDEATIONALLY focused, introducing a new interpersonal structure altogether (a new Mood^Residue). This is not to say that Di's reaction does not indicate her position, but this is captured through the classification of the move as [confronting].

The same distinction can be found in [supporting] moves. For example, the following answering moves are both [supporting], and both interpersonally focused, as is seen through their elliptical dependence on the preceding moves:

P2/M59		//5 who's /Stephanie
P2/M60	G	//5 ^the / <u>cleaning</u> /lady
P2/M44	Di	//5 ^ because /Marek lives in / Manning Road / <u>also</u>
P2/M45	Si	//1 <u>yep</u> /

However, the following sequence is also [supporting]:

P2/M7		//1 he gets / <u>banned</u> from //1+ everywhere be/cause of his/ anti/social or /drunken be/ <u>haviour</u> (())
P2/M8	G	//5 ^and he just /yap yap /yaps all the / <u>time</u> [laughs]

In this sequence, George "chips in" with some supporting evidence for Di's description of Courtney. However, the relation between George's move and Di's is not one of modal identity, but instead one of ideational continuity. Thus, although George's reaction is not elliptically dependent on Di's move, it is LOGICO-SEMANTICALLY dependent: we make sense of this move, occurring in this place in sequence, by reading it as related through a logical relation of "addition". This relation is explicitly stamped through the move-initial internal additive conjunction.

As a result of the metafunctional "modularity" underlying the stratified approach, current SPEECH FUNCTION networks are limited to describing the first type of [reactions] illustrated in the above examples. Thus, maintaining the link between MOOD and SPEECH FUNCTION has meant that description deals only with classes of interpersonally focused moves, related through potential ellipsis.

However, in the description of interactional continuity, these "other" reactions play a crucial role. Like the [confronting] move class discussed above, these "other" [reacting] moves occur very frequently in "Dinner at Stephen's". And also like confronting moves, they appear to play an important role in sustaining the talk. Whereas [responding] moves appear to limit further talk (since, anchored in the negotiation of an existing proposition, they present no further conversational material), [rejoinder] moves promote further talk by expanding the experiential material that is on the table for discussion. This point will be discussed in Chapter Seven, but is mentioned here to justify incorporating the opposition in the FOCUS system on the network.

The FOCUS system, then, establishes two classes of [reacting] moves. [Responding] moves are moves which react by buying into the negotiation in the terms established by the prior speaker. They engage MODALLY with the proposition as put. This interpersonal focus is in terms of negotiating the modality, modulation, attitude, intensification, or polarity of the proposition.

[Rejoinder] moves, on the other hand, react by extending the negotiable proposition put forward. Rather than "argue" the proposition as offered, [rejoinders] develop LOGICALLY.

The term logically is used technically, and refers to the system of LOGICO-SEMANTIC RELATIONS in English as presented by Halliday (1985:192-251) and also in Martin (i.p/1989:ch4). Within this system, the ideational focus of [rejoinders] can be described as involving building on, developing, or exploring the proposition, by offering or demanding further ideational precisions (e.g. elaboration, extension, or enhancement)

Structural Relatedness : PEC and PLoCC

As the discussion of the FOCUS system has already brought out, the implication of extending the network to include both kinds of [reactions] is that the criteria for structural relatedness need also to be revised.

In particular, it becomes necessary to recognize two types of criteria for determining relatedness:

a) **PEC**: The Potential Ellipsis Criteria, developed by Martin can be used to determine whether a move relates INTERPERSONALLY to a prior move. Thus, PEC can be stated as:

a sequent move counts as a [response] if it is related through potential ellipsis ⁴

This criterion states that wherever a second move relates through either ELLIPSIS or SUBSTITUTION, then it can be considered a reacting move of the class response.

b) **PLoCC**: As a result of establishing the category of rejoinder, a second type of structural relatedness needs to be recognized. The Potential Logical Continuation Criteria (PLoCC) can be used to determine whether a move relates LOGICALLY to a prior move. Thus, PLoCC states that:

a sequent move counts as a [rejoinder] if it is related through logico-semantic relations.

According to this criterion, wherever two sequent moves are linked by a logical relation (realised either through TAXIS in the clause complex, or CONJUNCTION between clauses), then the second can be classified as a reacting move of the class: [rejoinder].

These two types of criteria (PEC and PLoCC) are taken as defining what is meant by "structural dependency" between moves. Other relations between sequent moves (e.g. lexical cohesion, reference, etc), are interpreted as NON-STRUCTURAL as the term is defined here.

⁴ Martin's [personal communication] suggestion that PEC be modified to state that "a move counts as a response if its congruent realisation is related through potential ellipsis" seems attractive (and provides criteria for relating Moves 1 and 3 in Phase 2), but this modification has not been explored in detail here.

It will be apparent that as a result of PLoCC the notion of what counts as a reaction (or a "response" in Martin's terms) is now considerably broadened. This opening up of the category of [reaction] is justified on two grounds. Firstly, by the data itself: the speech function description of the continuous excerpt in Chapter Seven illustrates the frequency with which this second [reacting] move class is selected. And secondly, by the research aim: in order to capture the continuity of conversational talk, such sequences must be integrated in the SPEECH FUNCTION description.

Given the combination of PEC and PLoCC, however, the question arises as to which, if any, move sequences are in fact NOT structurally related. And here the answer that the data itself suggests is: very few. In fact, as the network presented here states, [opening] moves are the only moves NOT structurally related to prior talk. However, it is also recognized that the enormous continuity this ascribes to conversational sequences may be a feature of the particular data analysed in this thesis ("Dinner at Stephen's" does appear to be a particularly "successful" and fluid interaction).

Whilst acknowledging, then, that further exclusions may need to be recognized in describing other types of conversation, the principle of structural continuity as identified above is suggested as a distinguishing characteristic of conversational sequences.

Extending in delicacy: metafunctional integration

Although the FOCUS system deals specifically with reacting moves, it in fact embodies a more general claim, that in extending the SPEECH FUNCTION network in delicacy it is necessary to recognize the interaction of metafunctional components.

However, whilst suggesting that in order to capture the continuity of talk description must acknowledge the role of ideational systems, the network also claims that this ideational role is limited. It is not necessary to incorporate an entire description of experiential meaning into the SPEECH FUNCTION network. In fact, the network will be used to demonstrate that the description of speech functions in conversation can be greatly increased in power and exhaustiveness by including only one limited aspect of ideational meaning: the system of LOGICO-SEMANTIC RELATIONS.

As discussion of the more delicate systems of the network will reveal, these logico-semantic relations are built into the SPEECH FUNCTION description at two further points:

- in the [opening] move network, through the system of [pursuing] moves, which captures the ways an [opening] move may relate ideationally to prior moves;
- in the [continuing] move network, through the system of [expanding] moves, which captures the ways in which a speaker can expand on his prior moves.

Thus, the same logico-semantic "module" of choices occurs at three separate points in the network, reflecting the complexity introduced by crossing metafunctional boundaries.

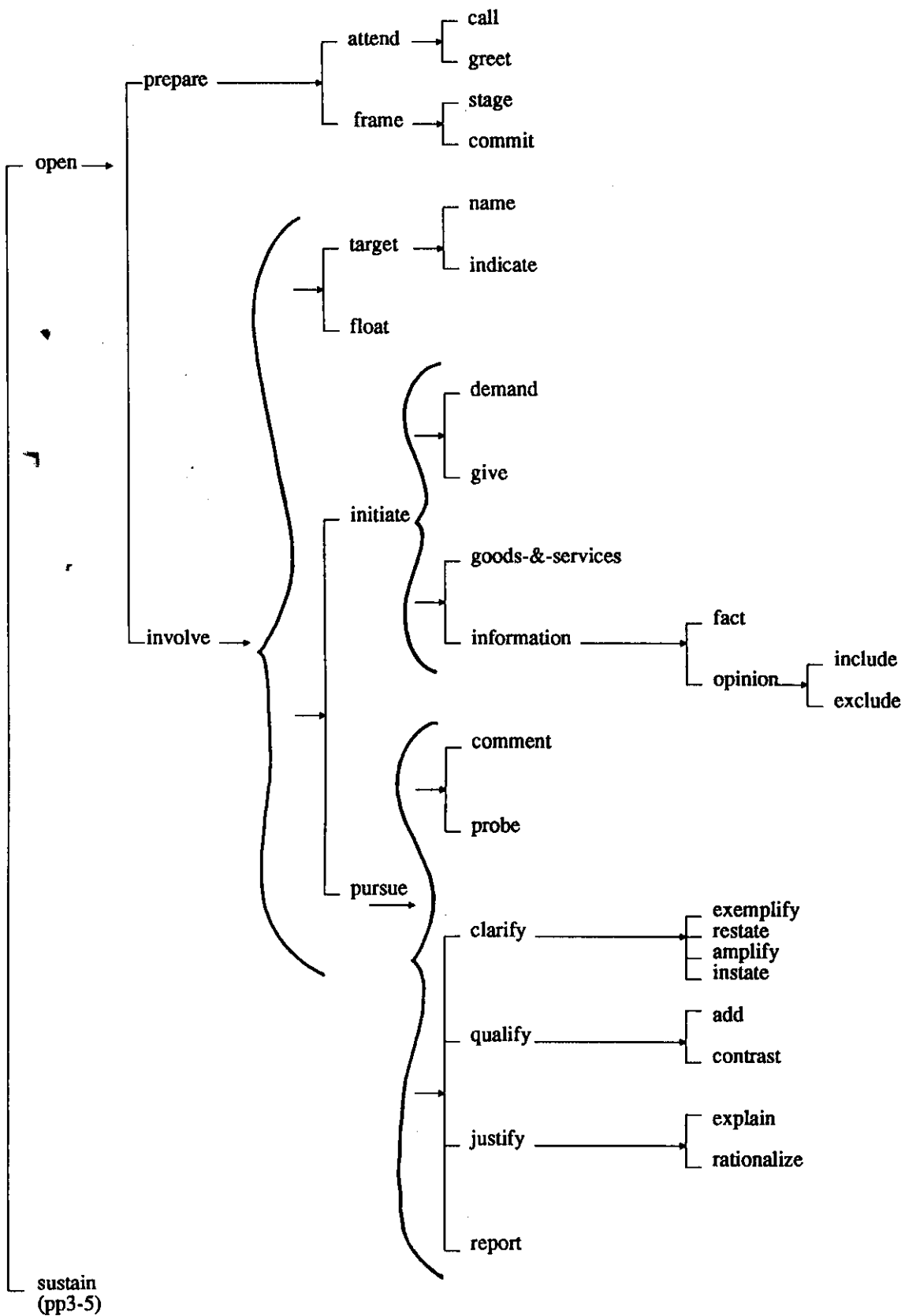
Consequently, the criteria of relatedness developed above to recognize reacting moves are also generalized, so that moves (of all classes) are described as "structurally related" if they can be shown to be tied either through PEC or through PLoCC.

Grammatical Motivation and Constraints

It will now be obvious why the grammatical analyses presented in Appendix E include not only the interpersonal systems of MOOD and ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION, but also the analyses of CLAUSE COMPLEX and CONJUNCTION. Whilst the MOOD systems of mood, ellipsis and substitution provide the motivation and constraints for establishing interpersonally-oriented move classes, the ideational systems of CLAUSE COMPLEX and CONJUNCTION provide the motivation and constraints for establishing logical relations between moves. Thus, realisation relationships for more delicate move classes will make reference to both types of grammatical patterns.

Discussion and exemplification of pages 2-5 of the network

In discussing pages two to five of the network I will begin by briefly describing each system. Then, for terminal options (i.e. most delicate choices), I will briefly explain each speech function separately, indicating typical realisations, and providing an example taken, wherever possible, from the continuous excerpt or from other sections of "Dinner at Stephen's 2B". Further examples can be deduced from the speech function coding sheets presented for the continuous excerpt in Appendix H.



SPEECH FUNCTION NETWORK: (2) [opening] moves

PAGE TWO:[opening] moves

This page displays the system for opening moves.

SYSTEM: [open]/[sustain]

As was discussed above, the function of [opening] moves is to establish a particular audience configuration within which an exchange will unfold. By contrast, [sustaining] moves are moves which maintain the audience configuration set up by the [opening] move: they accept the speech role framework the opener has established, although there is no implication that they accept or agree with the opener's position.

- The function of [opening] moves to achieve "fresh starts" in conversation is realised by their relationship with prior moves. [Opening] moves are moves which are not structurally related to prior moves. Thus, whilst [sustaining] moves are related to prior moves either through interpersonal structures (ellipsis, substitution), or logical structures (clause complex, conjunction), [opening] moves are STRUCTURALLY independent. There may of course be textual cohesion between [opening] moves and prior moves: typically there will be lexical or referential links with prior talk. However, there will not be any structural dependency.

As the system shows, [opening] moves are either [preparing] or [involving]; if [preparing], then [attending] or [framing]. [Involving] moves choose simultaneously from two systems: they are either [targeting] or [floating], as well as either [initiating] or [pursuing].

SYSTEM: [prepare]/[involve]

This system of [opening] moves contrasts moves which in some way alter or interfere with the normal operation of the turn-transfer system ([prepare]), with those that do not ([involve]). [Preparing] moves are [openings] which (aim to) bring about the suspension of the normal interactional rule applying in conversation, i.e. that "at the end of each move turn transfer may occur".

The difference in function between [preparing] and [involving] moves is realised through the MOOD systems of ELLIPSIS, MOOD and TONE. The interactional incompleteness of [preparing] moves is reflected in their typical realisations, as minor clauses, hypotactically dependent clauses, or with non-terminal tone choice. By contrast, [involving] moves are typically realised by non-elliptical independent major clauses, with terminal intonation.

SYSTEM: [attend]/[frame]

This system of [preparing] moves contrasts moves which manipulate the turn-taking system by guaranteeing the return of speaker role to the opener once the sequence they initiate has been established ([attend]), from those which actually suspend the turn-taking system to permit the opener to continue talking ([frame]).

[Attending] moves are generally realised by minor clauses, whilst [framing] moves by non-elliptical major clauses.

SYSTEM: [call]/[greet]

This system of [attending] moves contrasts moves which delay involvement by first establishing audience attention ([call]) from those which establish phatic contact ([greet]).

SPEECH FUNCTION: CALL

[Calling] moves modify the turn-taking system by offering the addressee the potential to respond (by acknowledging the call), but then implying the immediate return of speaker role to the original caller.

Realisation criteria are presumed from Martin (i.p/1989:12-13), with [calls] typically realised by vocatives (functioning as independent moves). Although there are no examples of [calls] in the continuous excerpt, these examples occur in 2B:

- i) M [from kitchen] Stephen?
- ii) St Yea?
- iii) M Will you just come and hold something for me?
- iv) St Simon! You said you were an expert with one of these.

These examples illustrate that although the addressee's reaction may be verbal (e.g. Yes? What?), in face-to-face casual conversation the mode considerations make it likely that reaction/acknowledgement of the [call] will be non-verbal. Thus, although in the second example there is no verbal reaction from Simon, the vocative occurs as an independent move and we presume Stephen receives sufficient non-verbal reaction from Simon (e.g. eye contact, posture) to sustain the interaction.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [greet]

Again, because the transcript is from a middle section of the conversation, it is not surprising that there are no examples of [greetings]. However, their description and realisation is presumed from Martin i.p/1989, where he illustrates that they are typically realised by minor clauses (e.g. "G'day"), although they may be realised by major clauses, functioning as lexicalised formulas (Martin i.p/1989:13):

- How's it going?
- Nice weather we're having

The position of both [calls] and [greetings] in the network here is a statement that such moves strongly imply further interaction. Unlike [framing] moves, however, they prepare for interaction through possible preparatory interaction, whereas [framing] moves prepare for interaction through monologue. Consequently, a further difference is that whilst [preparing] moves are typically followed by [involving] moves, [framing] moves (if successful) are typically followed by [continuing] moves.

By producing a move which is clearly grammatically suggestive of a following move, the opener tries to ensure that s/he will be permitted at least one further move. This can be a particularly frustrating technique for other participants, since it prevents their interaction by making it into "interruption".

Whilst [committing] moves generally aim at postponing all reactions from addressees, [feedback] is a possible reaction which would not be seen as interrupting.

SYSTEM: [target]/[float]

This system of [involving] moves contrasts moves which open the interaction by directly specifying an addressee or addressees ([target]), from those moves which open the interaction by addressing remarks to "the audience at large" ([float]).

The function of specifying the audience can be seen as an attempt to control the turn-transfer system, by nominating a next-speaker. [Floating] moves leave the role of next-speaker open for self-selection by interested parties.

The principle realisations of these speech function classes is through the systems of vocatives, personal Subject pronouns, and non-verbal signalling.

SYSTEM: [name]/[indicate]

This system of [targeting] moves contrasts moves which specify the addressees by naming them ([name]), with those that specify the addressees by other means ([indicate]).

SPEECH FUNCTION: [name]

Moves which [name] the addressees are realised by the inclusion of a vocative element within the [opening] move. For example:

P2/M9 Si //1^ s'/pose he /gives you a /hard /time /George

The vocative typically occurs at the end of the move, but it may occur move-initially and still constitute a [naming] rather than a [calling] move.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [indicate]

[Indicating] moves are moves which are clearly directed at a particular addressee, but without naming the addressee. For example, Di's comments in Phase 2:

P2/M5 Di ==//13 he's a /bridge /player etc

only make sense when we realise that they are directed not back to Simon (the original opener of the phase), but to Sue, since Sue is the only member of the audience to whom an explanation of Courtney's identity is necessary. In this case, the indicating of addressee is achieved through gaze and posture (Di turns away from Simon to face Sue).

Similarly, Di's later remark:

P2/M13 Di //2 you met his /sister etc

also indicates Sue through the same non-verbal actions, as well as the use of the personal Subject pronoun "YOU".

SYSTEM: [initiate]/[pursue]

This system of [involving] moves, selecting simultaneously with the [target]/[float] system, contrasts [opening] moves in terms of their topical, or ideational, focus, as realised through their logical relation to prior moves. It distinguishes between moves which begin "talk on a topic" ([initiate]) from moves which follow-up a topic that has already been mentioned ([pursue]).

The realisational criteria depend on the logical dependency on prior moves. Whereas [initiating] moves are not logico-semantically tied to prior moves (i.e. there is no tactic or conjunctive relation between them), [pursuing] moves are structurally related, typically through internal conjunction (specifically, through PLoCC). Thus the interpretation of the term "topical continuation" here is a very specific one, involving logico-semantic dependency, rather than textual ties of reference or lexical cohesion.

[Initiating] moves choose simultaneously from two systems: [demand]/[give], and for [goods & services]/[information].

SYSTEM: [demand]/[give]

This system of [initiating] moves is already familiar from Halliday and Martin's work.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [demand]

As in Halliday and Martin's analyses, [demanding] moves are moves which request, either [information] or [goods & services]. [Demands] are typically realised through interrogative or imperative mood:

P4/M26 St //2 ^will /you /play that /back

SPEECH FUNCTION: [give]

In contrast, [giving] moves are typically realised through declaratives (if the commodity is [information]) or minor clauses (if it is [goods & services]). For example:

P4/M1 Si //1 ^we /live in an e/galitarian so/ciety

SYSTEM: [goods & services]/[information]

This system of [initiating] moves, also familiar from Halliday and Martin, concerns the commodity being exchanged.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [goods-&-services]

As in Halliday and Martin's analyses, [goods & services] are generally exchanged through proposals, realised as imperatives or modulated interrogatives. For example:

P4/M26 St //2 ^will /you /play that /back

However, there is frequent incongruence, so that requests for [goods and services] can be "dressed up" as requests for [information], as in George's move from Phase 1:

P1/Mb15 //1+ where's the ciga/rettes / Simon

As a result of the focus on transactional data (e.g. Ventola 1984, 1987; Martin i.p/1989; Hasan 1985b) goods & service exchanges have received considerable attention, and Hasan (1985a) in particular has developed a very delicate description of this speech function. Partly because of that, and partly because the conversation analysed here is heavily biased towards the exchange of [information], rather than [goods and services], this section of the network is not further subclassified.

SYSTEM: [fact]/[opinion]

This system of [informing] moves distinguishes between information presented as objective ([fact]), versus information presented as the speaker's evaluation ([opinion]).

The major realisations of this distinction are through the MOOD systems of modulation, attitude, and intensity, with [facts] being unmodulated propositions, whilst [opinions] are modulated or involve attitudinal or intensified lexis.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [fact]

The speech function [fact] includes all propositions which are not graded (see Martin in press b) for attitude, intensity, or modulation. For example:

P2/M13 Di //2 you met his /sister

Although [facts] cannot include modulation, they can be modalised, so that had Di said: "You probably met his sister" or "perhaps you his sister", the move is still classified as a fact.⁵

SYSTEM: [include]/[exclude]

This system of [opinion] moves contrasts opinions which are gradable by both the addressee(s) and the opener ([include]), versus opinions which are gradable only by the opener ([exclude]).

The realisation of this difference is principally through the MOOD system of Subject, with [including] moves having either WE or YOU as Subject, whilst [excluding] moves do not.

⁵ The incorporation of the system of MODALITY within the [information:fact/opinion] network is an obvious direction for future research.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [include]

Although in an [opinion] the opener is obviously doing the grading, [including] moves acknowledge the possibility that the addressee(s) or audience may also be able to grade the proposition for themselves. That is, they may form or hold their own opinions on the matter. Thus, when Simon says:

P1/M1 Si //1+this conver/sation needs /Courtney

he is presenting a modulated proposition ("need"). Once once the incongruence is unpacked to give the congruent version of this move ("We need Courtney in this conversation"), the Subject (those in need) is revealed as the inclusive one: WE need. Any of the present participants (who know Courtney) can agree or disagree, as indeed they do.

Similarly, when he opens Phase 4 with the opinion:

P4/M1 Si //1 ^we /live in an e/galitarian so/ciety

This time realised by attitudinal lexis (the purr word 'egalitarian'), Simon's [opinion] is again [inclusive], through its predication on the pronoun WE.

These types of [including] opinions are not only extremely frequent in casual conversation, but appear to be the [openings] most likely to generate lively and contentious talk (see discussion of the excerpt in chapter seven).

SPEECH FUNCTION: [exclude]

In contrast, [excluding] opinions are opinions in which only the speaker his/herself is really in a position to do the grading. For example, when Di remarks, on sipping her wine:

P2/Ma76 //1+^now /this is /magic

she expresses an [opinion] ('magic' as attitudinal) that no-one else can assess. These [excluding opinions] tend to fall flat, generating little talk since there is very little one can say in response.

SYSTEM: [comment]/[probe]

This system of [pursuing] moves contrasts openings which pick up on a prior topic and give further information ([comment]), from those which pick up a prior topic and investigate it ([probe]). The distinction is realised through the mood systems, with comments typically realised by declaratives, and probes by interrogatives.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [comment]

[Comments] are moves which seek to reinstate a topic, or an aspect of it, which may have become lost, dropped, or interrupted. For example, George is not content to merely react to Simon's assessment of Marek. He wants to make more of it, by fleshing out the topic of Marek's cleanliness:

P2/Mb72 G //4 ^the /trouble with /Marek /though //3 is that /[^]/you know he /does still /like cleaning /up but

Through this [comment] move George manages both to broaden the audience involved in the debate (its no longer just George and Simon involved), and also to turn the tables on Simon, since control of the propositions debated has shifted to George. Thus, instead of George being in the position of reactor/responder to Simon's initiations, now Simon is put into the position of having to react to George.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [probe]

[Probing] moves follow up prior talk, reinstating (an aspect of) it as a topic by investigating it. For example, when Simon follows up George's negative reaction in Phase 2 by asking:

P2/M9 Si //1 ^ s'/pose he /gives you a /hard /time /George

he is not only narrowing the intended audience, but focussing not just on Courtney in general, but on George's relationship with him. In this case the [probe] involves investigating George's opinion.

However, when Di asks:

P2/M44 Di //5 ^ because /Marek lives in / Manning Road /also

her [probe] picks up on the factual information implicit in Simon's earlier remark (that Marek rang Manning Rd). By her [probe], Di not only finds a sequentially relevant means of getting herself (and perhaps others) included in the interaction, but also a means of getting the talk out of the somewhat limited focus on verification that George was pursuing.

Soon after, Stephen also uses a [probe] to formulate the implicit opinion in George's remarks:

P2/M52 St ==//2 ^so /it's that /bad

[Probes] are used quite frequently in casual conversation. Their value seems to lie in their dual function: they provide a means of broadening the interactional system (a means by which excluded participants can get into an on-going exchange), whilst retaining topical coherence.

SYSTEM: [clarify]/[qualify]/[justify]/[report]

Selected simultaneously with the [comment]/[probe] system, this system of [pursuing] moves, is the point at which the logical relations of expansion and projection are built in to the [opening] move system. The association between the speech functions of [clarify], [qualify], [justify] and [report] and Halliday's categories can be tabulated as follows:

Categories of LOGICO-SEMANTIC RELATIONS in Halliday (1985a)	SPEECH FUNCTION categories
elaboration	clarify
extension	qualify
enhancement	justify
projection	report

Table 3: Association between Halliday's (1985a) categories of LOGICO-SEMANTIC relations and the SPEECH FUNCTION classes proposed here.

This system thus contrasts moves according to the way they follow up on prior experiential content. This link is realised through conjunctive systems of internal comparison ([clarify]), addition ([qualify]), or consequence ([justify]), or the tactic system of projection ([report]).

This logico-semantic system, or module, also slots in to the network of [continuing] and [supporting] moves. However, the following exemplification deals only with their realisation as [opening] moves.

SYSTEM: [exemplify]/[restate]/[amplify]/[instate]

This system of [clarifying] moves contrasts four different ways of elaborating on prior experiential content: through example ([exemplify]), through paraphrasing ([restating]), through fleshing out one aspect ([amplify]), or through "unpacking" ([instate]).

These speech functions are realised through the choice of logical relation, expressed as either an implicit or explicit internal conjunction. The realisations in terms of the categories of conjunctive relations are, typically:

[clarify]: internal comparison:similarity

[qualify]: internal additive or internal comparison:difference

[justify]: internal consequence.

Similarly, when George announces that: :

P2/M104 G ==//1 ^well /we've got /whole lot of /garbage /tins that's /good

he again [opens] a new exchange, but the ideational continuity is created through the implicit logical relation of internal comparison between his move and the prior discussion of garbage bins.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [instate]

Unlike the other [clarifying] move classes, the category of [instate] does not correspond to one of Halliday's (1985a) or Martin's (i.p/1989:ch4) elaboration/internal comparison classifications. The category of [instating] moves was first introduced to deal with [continuing] moves, and its interpretation in that context will be explained below. Briefly, such an [opening] would consist of a move that "unpacked" a prior polarity response by another speaker. The parentheses around the option [instate] in the network indicate that although no example can be offered from the data, I am hesitant to delete it as a possibility, on the basis that more data may well provide an example of this category of [opening] move.

SYSTEM: [add]/[contrast]

This system of [qualifying] moves subclassifies logico-semantic extensions as either offering additional information ([add]), or offering alternative information ([contrast]).

SPEECH FUNCTION: [add]

[Adding openings] pick up on a topic from prior talk by merely providing more about (an aspect of) it. The relation is realised through internal (and external) additive conjunctions of the addition class. For example, when Di turns to Sue and [adds] the background information on Courtney:

P2/M5 Di ==//13 he's a /bridge /player

SPEECH FUNCTION: [contrast]

[Contrasting openings] relate to prior talk by presenting contrasting information. This relation is realised through internal comparatives of difference, e.g. rather, instead, on the other hand, but. For example, when Di begins to say that:

P4/M6* Di ==//some people are

we can see from the subsequently completed version of this in move 9:

P4/M9 Di //13 some people are /more equal than /others I /think

that her move is offered as a [contrast] with Simon's [opinion] that everyone is equal.

SYSTEM: [explain]/[rationalize]

This system of [justifying] moves is based on Halliday's subcategories of enhancement. It contrasts [openings] which extend prior talk by probing or providing spatio-temporal information ([explain]), with those that expand the cause or condition ([rationalize]).

The realisation is through logical relations of consequence and time.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [explain]

[Explaining] moves probe or comment on prior talk by expanding the temporal or spatial details. This is typically by adding or seeking further specification of the time, place, sequence of events. Thus, [explaining] moves typically relate to prior moves through temporal conjunctions. For example, Sue's intervention in Di's recount in Phase 3:

P3/M14 S //2 did someone /come and /move the /truck

is classed as an [explaining] move, probing information about time: i.e. what happened next? This speech function class thus provides a conversational interpretation of what Hasan identifies as a "probe" in generic description (Halliday & Hasan 1985:66).

SPEECH FUNCTION: [rationalize]

[Rationalizing] moves probe or comment on prior talk by explaining cause or consequence. This relation is typically realised through internal consequential conjunctions. For example, when Simon probes the reasons for George's implicit reservations about Courtney, suggesting that:

P2/M9 Si //1^ s'/pose he /gives you a /hard /time /George

The continuity between Simon's [opening] and George's earlier remarks is made clear by filling in the internal consequential relation implicit in Simon's move: e.g. "So the reason you say that is because he gives you a hard time..."

Similarly, when Di follows up the exchange between George and Simon by asking:

P2/M44 Di //5 ^ because /Marek lives in / Manning Road /also

the explicit conjunction "because" clearly relates her move as a investigation of cause/consequence.

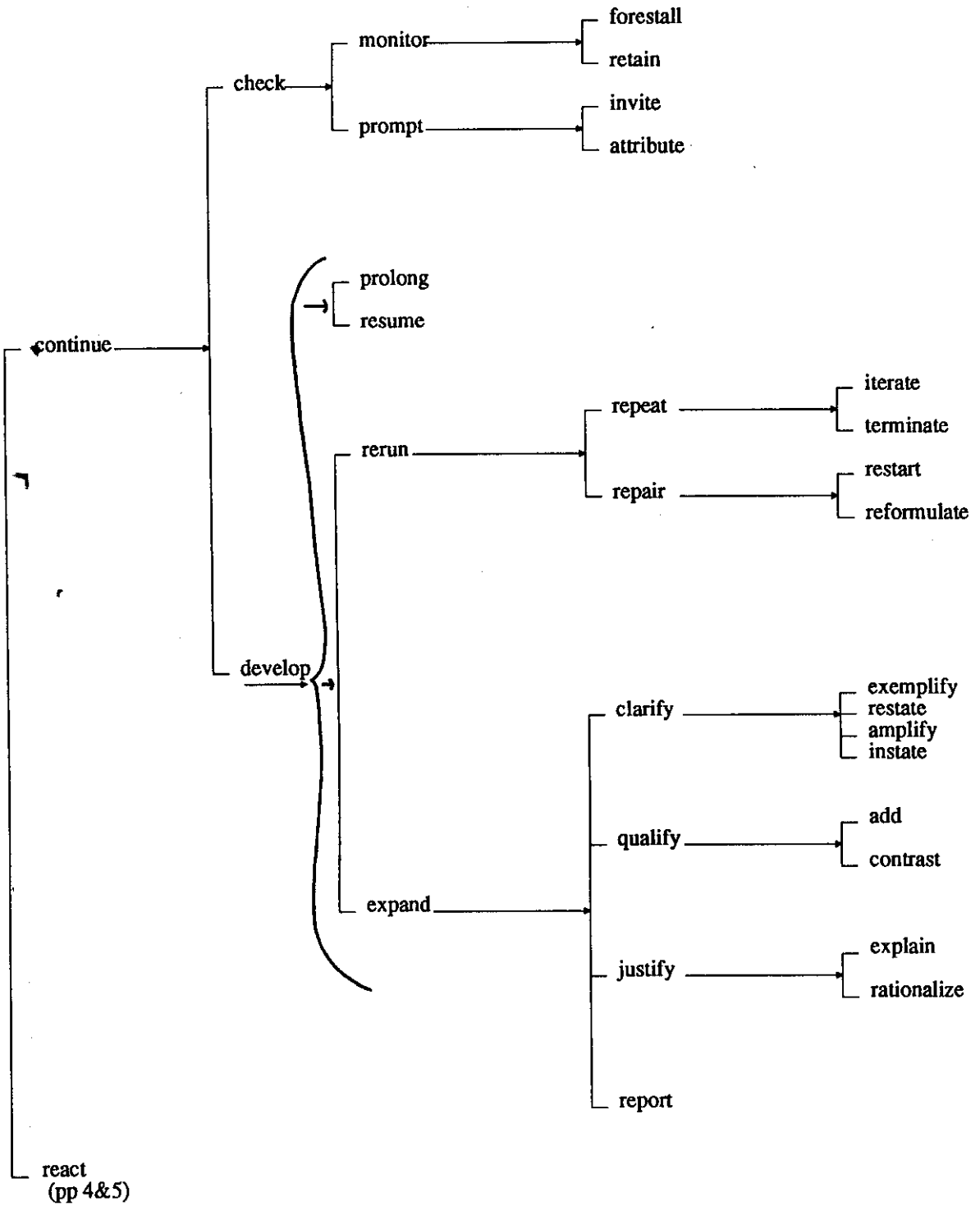
Pursuing the reasons or consequences of something revealed in prior talk appears out to be a common type of [opening] in "Dinner at Stephen's". Like all [pursuing openings], [rationalizing] moves provides ideational continuity, but their prevalence also indicates support for an interpretation of casual conversations of this type as involving not merely a fairly passive exchange of information, but a more active probing of motivations and implications.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [report]

[Reporting] moves are [openings] which comment or probe some verbal action of a previously mentioned participant. For example, when Di, referring to Marek, remarks that:

P2/M69 Di //1 he kept /telling me /I've got a /big oper/ation on with ()

This type of [opening] is infrequent, perhaps because it establishes a rather tenuous topical link (merely the identity of the participant).



SPEECH FUNCTION NETWORK: (3) SUSTAINING Options: [continuing] moves

Page THREE: [continuing] moves

SYSTEM: [continue]/[react]

As discussed earlier, this system contrasts successive related moves in terms of the operation of the turn-taking system: subsequent moves are either produced by the same speaker ([continue]) or by another speaker ([react]).

Only structurally related moves (i.e. moves related through either ellipsis/substitution, taxis, or conjunction, as discussed above) are classified through this system, since structurally unrelated moves are handled through the network for [opening] moves.

SYSTEM: [check]/[develop]

This primary system of [continuing] moves distinguishes moves whose function is principally the interpersonal one of managing the interaction ([check]), from those whose function is principally the experiential one of pursuing the topic ([develop]). Thus, while [checking] moves halt the experiential development in order to check on the interactional situation, [developing] moves are non-interactive (i.e. monologic) pursuing of the topic.

The realisation of [checks] is through either minor clauses or elliptical major clauses, while [developing] moves are typically realised as non-elliptical major clauses.

SYSTEM: [monitor]/[prompt]

This system of [continuing] moves contrasts moves which check by temporarily relinquishing the speaker role ([monitor]), from those which check by handing over the speaker role to the addressee ([prompt]).

While [monitoring] moves function to elicit only minimal supporting reactions (typically [feedback]), prompting moves seek to elicit [negotiating] reactions (see later sections of the network).

While [monitoring] moves are typically realised by minor clauses, [prompts] are typically realised by major clauses.

SYSTEM: [forestall]/[retain]

This system of [monitoring] moves contrasts moves which do not explicitly require feedback ([forestall]), with those which invite feedback ([retain]).

The realisational patterns are typically intonational. While [forestalling] moves are typically realised by minor clauses with declarative intonation, [retaining] moves are typically realised by minor clauses with interrogative intonation.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[forestall]

[Forestalling] moves are a means of indicating concern for the maintenance of audience attention, without actually relinquishing the speaker role even temporarily. Into this category fall Di's moves 5 and 9 from Phase 3:

P3/M5 //1 ^you / know

P3/M9 //1 ^you /know

Inserted during her extended monologue, these moves signal to the audience that Di is still aware of them, and still requires their attention and their silence. While no reaction is called for, [feedback] (especially non-verbal) would not be inappropriate, and may indeed have occurred after the examples cited.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[retain]

Like [forestalling] moves, [retaining] moves attempt to keep the speaker's role. However, they are a more "active" attempt to check the attention and comprehension of the audience. For example, Di's :

P4/M103 //2 ^you /see

in Phase 4. Whilst these moves more strongly anticipate [feedback], and perhaps even explicitly [supporting responses], such as [acknowledgements] or [agreements], they imply an intention to take another turn to finish.

SYSTEM:[invite]/[attribute]

This system of [prompting] moves contrasts moves which elicit an objective reaction ([invite]), with moves which elicit a subjective reaction ([attribute]). While [inviting] moves are typically realised by tags (as separate moves), [attributing] moves are typically realised by mental processes, with the addressee as Subject.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[invite]

[Inviting] moves hand over the speaker role to the addressee by calling for a response to factual information. For example, when George continues his reaction to Simon's information about Marek with the move:

P2/M42 //2 did he

he is [inviting] Simon to confirm the information he (George) has stated.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[attribute]

[Attributing] moves call for a reaction that is either an [answer] (to a fact) or an [agreement] (with an opinion). In either case, it is not the information per se that is under focus, but the addressees mental awareness of it. These moves are realised by elliptical mental process clauses, for example:

P2/M15 //2 d'you re/member
 or
 P4/M16 //2 don't you /think

Such [checking] moves are particularly frequent in casual conversation, adding to the evaluative, opinion-oriented flavour of the talk, supporting an interpretation of the conversation as involving not just the exchange of information, but the establishment of personal positions vis a vis information.

SYSTEM: [prolong]/[resume]

This system of [developing] moves contrasts moves produced in immediate succession by the same speaker ([prolong]), with moves where some kind of intervention occurs between the related moves ([resume]).

The realisation of this distinction is obviously in the turn-taking structure, depending on whether turn transfer occurs between the [continuing] moves or not.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[prolong]

[Prolonging] moves are [continuing] moves produced without any delay or interruption, in direct sequence to the prior moves they relate to. For example, Simon's remarks about Jill:

P2/M22 Si //5^ Jill's /very bright /actually
 P2/M23 //5 ^she's /very /good

And later, his comments on Michael:

P2/M26* //1+ Michael's always pre/cocious with his /[^]/_^
 P2/M27* //1 ^ the /only /14 /year old /superstar ()
 P2/M28 //1 ^ a/rrives in /Sydney at six/teen
 P2/M29 //5 ^ and /straight into the /mandies

In both cases he is able to get out at from two to four moves before interruption. The more extended example of [prolonging continuing] moves is of course Di's recount in Phase 3.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[resume]

Although [continuing] moves are defined as moves produced before turn transfer, rapid multiparty conversation means that speakers may lose the speaker role earlier than intended. A concurrent conversation may begin which overwhelms their contribution, they may be interrupted, overlap may force a delay, etc. The speech function [resume] allows such moves to still be coded as [continuing] moves, provided that there is clear evidence of their structural continuity (i.e. they are not in fact [opening] moves).

For example, in Phase 4 Di's remarks in move 6 are swamped by Simon's reaction to George, and it is not until three moves later that Di gets a chance to come back in, with:

P4/9 Di //13 some people are /more equal than /others I /think

Or, in the following sequence from Phase 2:

P2/M22 Si //5^ Jill's /very bright /actually
 P2/M23 //5 ^she's /very /good
 P2/M24 Di //5 ^she's ex/tremely /==bright
 P2/M25 Si ==//1+ ^aca/dem- aca/demically she's /probably /brighter than
 /Michael

Here it is fairly obvious that, had Di not rushed in with her move 24, Simon's contribution in move 25 would have been a simple continuation of his comment in move 23.

SYSTEM:[rerun]/[expand]

This system of [developing] moves, simultaneous with the [prolong]/[resume] system, contrasts moves which focus on going back over the experiential content already presented ([rerun]), with moves that build on that experiential content with new information ([expand]).

The realisational correlates are relatively straightforward, with [rerunning] moves realised by lexical items from prior moves, and with [expanding] moves realised by new lexico-grammatical content.

SYSTEM:[repeat]/[repair]

This system of [rerunning] moves distinguishes moves which go back over experiential content either without altering it ([repeating]) or by introducing some amendment ([repair]).

SYSTEM:[iterate]/[terminate]

This system of [repeating] moves distinguishes moves which merely give again the content of a prior move ([iterate]) from moves which complete the content of a prior move ([terminate]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[iterate]

[Iterating] moves are exemplified by Di's simple repetition of her previous move:

P2/Ma77 //1 this is /magic

SPEECH FUNCTION:[terminate]

[Terminating] moves allow the continuing speaker to finish a move left incomplete at an earlier point. For example, in Phase 4 move 9 Di is able to terminate the opinion she began earlier:

P4/M9 Di //13 some people are /more equal than /others I /think

SYSTEM:[restart]/[reformulate]

This system of [repairing] moves distinguishes between [continuing] moves which repair by going back to the beginning and saying the same thing again ([restart]), and those which repair by finding an alternative way of expressing the prior attempt ([reformulate]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[RESTART]

[Restarting] moves are repetitions made necessary because of a problem the first time (as distinct from [iterating] moves, which are generally produced for rhetorical reasons, such as for emphasis or as a stalling tactic). For example, in Phase 4 Di takes the opportunity to restart her earlier move which had been partly obscured by Stephen's interruption:

P4/M66 Di //4 if you can't do the /hop /skip and a /jump along with /me

SPEECH FUNCTION:[reformulate]

[Reformulating] moves offer a restatement of a prior move because of a problem the first time. For example, Sue's :

P4/M73 //4 ^I mean you can /say that we /live in an /egalitarian so/ciety
but we //1 don't

is a [reformulation] of her aborted attempt in move 72:

P4/M72* S //^well the /argument /is that not

The distinction between [reformulations] and [clarifying continues] (see below) is that whilst [reformulations] may contain new experiential content, it is by way of repairing a prior attempt; whilst with [clarifying] moves there is no unsuccessful prior move involved.

SYSTEM:[clarify]/[qualify]/[justify]/[report]

This system of [expanding] moves is the same logico-semantic module already encountered in the [opening] move system. The same four main options of [clarifying], [qualifying], [justifying] and [reporting] also occur as [continuing] moves, i.e. where sequent moves produced by the same speaker are related in terms of experiential/logical continuity.

However, realisation of [continues] can be through both tactic relations (clause complex) and internal and external conjunction.

Whilst [expanding] moves are generally realised by clause complexes, this is only the unmarked case and the category of expanding moves includes both tactic and conjunctively related sequent moves.

SYSTEM:[exemplify]/[restate]/[amplify]/[instate]

This system of [clarifying] moves classifies the different types of expanding moves according to the four categories already discussed above. Applied to continuing moves, these categories describe the alternatives by which the speaker can elaborate the experiential content of a prior move.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[exemplify]

[Exemplifying continuing] moves develop the experiential content of a prior move by providing an example or illustration. These moves are related to prior moves by elaborating conjunctions "e.g." For example, a prolonging exemplification:

P1/Ma19 //1 ^like /that

In Phase 3, implicit conjunction relates Di's move 21 to her prior description of cars in the street:

P3/M21 //13 there's this Mer/cedes which is /bigger than the //1 house
the guy /lives in

SPEECH FUNCTION:[restate]

[Restating continuing] moves develop the experiential content of a prior move by paraphrasing it. The (implicit) conjunctive relation is one of "i.e.". For example, when Di follows her admission of:

P1/Ma14 //1 ^you're /probably /absolutely /right

with the continuation:

P1/Ma15 //1 maybe I /have heard it /only in /French

the functions of the second move as [restatement] of the first can be brought out by inserting the implicit conjunction "I mean" (the conversational version of "i.e.").

[Restating continues] are extremely frequent in the continuous excerpt (see the coding sheets in appendix H), suggesting that we spend much of our time saying the same thing over and over in slightly different ways.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[amplify]

[Amplifying continuing] moves develop the experiential content of a prior move by focusing in on one aspect of it. For example, when Di expands on Courtney's naughtiness:

P2/M7 //1 he gets /banned from //1+ everywhere be/cause of his/^ anti/social
or /drunken be/haviour (())

SPEECH FUNCTION:[instate]

As mentioned above, the subclass [instate] does not have a specific correlation with Halliday's subcategories of elaboration (Halliday 1985a), or Martin's (i.p/1989) categories of internal comparative conjunctions. I first included it to handle the relationship between [continuations], where a speaker in one move expressed a polarity/modality, and in the next offered a full clause which appeared to relate by spelling out what the polarity stood for. This apparent "unpacking" of the polarity has generally been treated as elaboration by Ventola (e.g. 1987:110), and it does seem most closely related to an "i.e." relation (what I meant by my yes/no was....). However, I felt it necessary to distinguish these unpacking or filling-out elaborations from the more traditional type of [clarifications] (the "e.g." and "i.e." types).

[Instating continuing] moves therefore develop the experiential content implicit in a prior move. For example, the following moves when Simon and George each explain the meaning of their preceding "no":

P2/M80 //1 ^you /don't under/stand /George you

P2/M83 //1 no I//1 always /put out the /garbage

SYSTEM:[add]/[contrast]

This system of [qualifying] moves contains the options for extending prior moves, through relations of addition or difference.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[add]

[Adding] moves develop the experiential content of a prior move by adding further information. These are typically realised by the conjunctions "and" or "or". For example:

P1/Ma20 //1 ^ and /one I really /like was /manger a /belles /dents

Di's recount in Phase 3 can, from the point of view of speech functions rather than genre, be seen as a long [continuing] sequence of largely [adding] moves⁶:

P3/M2 //3 ^ and they /came a/long

P3/M3 //3 ^and they /got the /garbage

P3/M4 //1 ^and and /I've got /one of those /metal /galvanised /bins
which is //1 called a /wake-up-the-/neighbours /bin

⁶ See Slade 1989 for a discussion of the relation between speech function and generic descriptions of "texts in conversation".

SPEECH FUNCTION:[contrast]

[Contrasting continuing] moves develop the experiential content of a prior move by opposing further relevant information. For example, Di's qualifications to her proffered information in Phase 1:

P1/Ma22 //4 ^but you /know what it /means

P1/Ma23 //53 ^but it /just sounds like sort of /little red /ridinghoods /wolf
to /me

Or Simon's qualifying remark about Courtney's behaviour:

P2/M33 //1 ^but just /no /tolerance for the /alcohol

SYSTEM:[explain]/[rationalize]

This system of [justifying] moves corresponds to the system of enhancing logico-semantic relations. [Justifying] moves relate to prior moves through relations of time or place, typically realised through temporal conjunctions.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[explain]

[Explaining continuing] moves develop the experiential content of a prior move by further specifying relevant circumstantial information. This may be through a clause:

P3/M6 //3 ^and then it /goes around the /corner and //1 there was a
/truck /parked/ ^ /somewhere

or, more frequently, through moves realised by circumstantial elements. For example, circumstances of location:

P4/M15 //3 ^in this /world

or a circumstance of manner:

P3/M10 //1 really at the /top of their /voices

or a circumstance of time:

P2/M14 //1+ ^ that /night we were /doing the /cutting and /pasting up

SPEECH FUNCTION:[rationalize]

[Rationalizing continuing] moves develop the experiential content of a prior move by providing an explanation of cause or consequence. For example, when George explains why Marek doesn't like living at Manning Rd:

P2/M48 //1 ^/^we're /too /messy for /him

where the causal relation is implicit; or why the conversation is best without Courtney:

P2/M4 //5 ^ cause /all you'd get is /==him bloody /raving on

where the causal relation is made explicit.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[report]

[Reporting continuing] moves develop the experiential content of a prior move by providing reported information from another source.

For example, Di develops her recount using a direct quotation from the garbage men:

P3/M8 //1 who /owns /this /truck

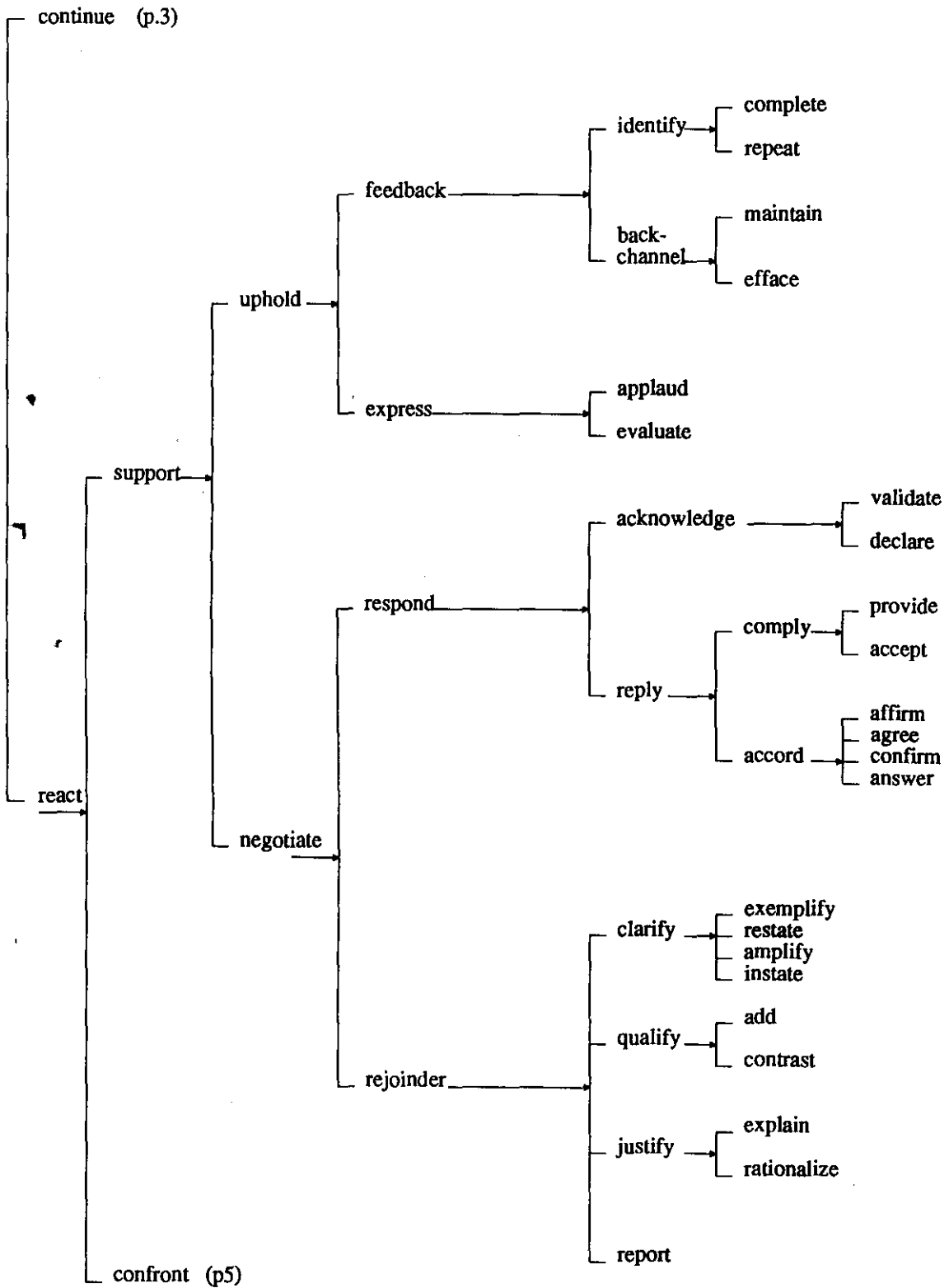
And she later furthers her own argument with artificial quotations:

P4/M32 //^ //1 I come from /Personally

P4/M100 //1 some people are more /equal than /others

PAGES FOUR and FIVE: [reacting] moves

The remaining two pages of the network concern [reacting] moves, i.e. moves which relate structurally to a prior move produced by a different speaker.



SPEECH FUNCTION NETWORK: (4) REACTING options: [supporting] moves

PAGE FOUR: [supporting reactions]

SYSTEM:[support]/[confront]

As already discussed earlier, this first system subclassifies [reacting] moves as either essentially positive, consensus reactions ([support]), or as "other", i.e. negative or non-supporting ([confront]).

The realisation of this distinction involves a number of different grammatical systems: polarity, ellipsis, and logical relations. Specific realisational information will be given for more delicate subclasses.

SYSTEM:[uphold]/[negotiate]

This system of [supporting] moves distinguishes between moves which are most minimally, or passively, supportive ([uphold]), and those where support is more actively and explicitly expressed ([negotiate]).

[Upholding] moves can be realised through a variety of systems. Verbal realisations include ritual/idiomatic expressions, through to non-linguistic sequences such as Mmm, Uh huh etc, and tone choice. Non-verbal realisations include laughter, and possible inaudible systems of gaze, posture, head nods etc.

[Negotiating] moves are realised verbally, typically through major clauses.

SYSTEM:[feedback]/[express]

This system of [upholding] moves distinguishes between moves which support the interaction merely by keeping the channels open ([feedback]) from those which support by providing an evaluation ([express]).

While [feedback] moves are typically realised through ritualistic expressions (either non-verbal, repetitions, or idioms), [expressing] moves are typically realised through intonational and paralinguistic patterns.

SYSTEM:[identify]/[backchannel]

This system of [feedback] moves distinguishes between moves where the supporting speaker takes over the speaking role but expresses virtual identification with the prior speaker ([identify]), as opposed to moves where support is expressed but there is no effort to take over speaker's role ([backchannel]).

SYSTEM:[complete/repeat]

This system of [identifying] moves support a prior move by taking the speaker's propositions upon oneself.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[complete]

[Completing] moves identify with prior moves by finishing the move off for the other speaker. For example, Di indicates her support for Sue's observations by taking over in move 13 with:

P1/M13 Di //1 ^oh /over your /grave

SPEECH FUNCTION:[repeat]

[Repeating] moves identify with prior moves by simply reiterating the other speaker's observations. For example, when Di repeats George and Simon's information:

P2/M63 //5 ^the /cleaning /lady

SYSTEM:[maintain]/[efface]

This system of [backchannelling] moves distinguishes moves which support merely by registering alertness ([maintain]), from moves which support by getting the reacting speaker out of the exchange ([efface]).

While [maintaining] moves are typically realised by quasi-linguistic expressions of positive polarity (mmm, hmmm), [effacing] moves are realised by minor clauses or idiomatic expressions of excuse.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[maintain]

[Maintaining] moves provide backchannelling that merely indicates the channels are functioning (I heard you, I'm still awake), without either expressing any evaluative content, or taking up the speaker role. For example, when Sue reacts to Di's observations about French idioms, with a non-committal:

P1/Ma25 S //1 mmm

she indicates to Di that Di's monologic segment has been heard and understood, and she offers no obstacle to its continuation. At the same time, of course, such moves are essentially passive in their support, providing no impetus for sustaining the interaction.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[efface]

This category of [effacing] moves is introduced to handle moves which seem to both register support whilst trying to downplay the reactant's role. For example, when Di responds to information about Stephanie with:

P2/M64 //5 ^well I'm /sorry

she appears to be indicating almost that she should have had no role in the interaction in the first place!

SYSTEM:[applaud]/[evaluate]

This system of [commenting] moves distinguishes between moves which express non-verbal evaluations ([applaud]) from those where comment is verbally explicit ([evaluate]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[applaud]

This [applauding] speech function is introduced in response to the frequent occurrence of laughter throughout "Dinner at Stephen's". The importance of laughter in conversational management has long been recognized, especially by ethnomethodologists (notably Jefferson et al 1984). While not being examined in detail in this research, it seemed that in "Dinner at Stephen's" group laughter often functioned as a [supporting] slot in the interactive exchange. Reflecting perhaps the "performance" dimension of much casual conversation, it does seem that accomplished conversationalists anticipate laughter, allowing time for it to fill the [reaction] slot after their move. For example, Stephen's clever "aside" to the tape-recorder in Phase 2:

P2/M106		//3 ^I /hope this is a / new one for the re/corder
P2/NV4	G	[laughter]
P2/M107	St	==//1^/^a /garbage dis/cussion

Thus, the occurrence of the group laughing together functions both to register their attention to what has been said, as well as expressing a simple kind of approbation for the speaker's comments:

P4/M49	St	==//5 ^well /why /throw it a/way
P4/M50		//1 why not /bring it /back
P4/MNV1		[laughter]

Thus the network provides the possibility of coding examples such as these as [supporting reactions]. No doubt had the conversation been video-recorded, rather than merely audio-taped, this category (as well as the [feedback] one) could have been more delicately analysed.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[evaluate]

[Evaluating] moves express support for a prior move through verbally indicating approbation. These moves create "the warm fuzzies" by a combination of intonation patterns and positive evaluative lexical items. They are often produced in response to non-verbal events in the context of situation. For example, Sue's reaction when the dinner is placed on the table:

2B	S	Wow! That looks great. God!
----	---	-----------------------------

SYSTEM:[respond]/[rejoinder]

As discussed earlier in the chapter, this system of [negotiating] moves distinguishes between [supporting] moves which react interpersonally ([respond]) and [supporting] moves which react ideationally ([rejoinder]).

The difference is realised through ellipsis: while [responding] moves are related through potential ellipsis to a prior move, [rejoinders] are related through logico-semantic, and not ellipsis, relations. (These points were also discussed above).

SYSTEM:[acknowledge]/[reply]

This system of [responding] moves contrasts moves which merely express a position towards the "newness" of information ([acknowledge]), with moves which actively express support for information ([reply]).

SYSTEM:[validate]/[declare]

This system of [acknowledging] moves contrasts moves which acknowledge information as "news" ([validate]), with moves that state the information is known ([declare]). The realisation is through the mood system, with validating moves realised by interrogative tags, and declaring moves by major clauses of mental process.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[validate]

[Validating] moves express support by [acknowledging] a prior move as "news", without either explicitly confirming or denying it. For example, when George reacts to Simon's information about Marek, with:

P2/M39 G //2 did he

there is really no expression of doubt in George's response (which would make this move a [query]), but rather simply a time-filling recognition that Simon's statement is news to him.

Similarly, Stephen's:

P2/M71 St //2 yea

in response to Marg's need for the wine is not [challenging], but merely [acknowledging].

SPEECH FUNCTION:[declare]

[Declaring] moves support a prior move by stating it as known (i.e. no longer "news"). For example, when George finally gets a definition of an egalitarian society, he acknowledges it with:

P4/M80 G //1 oh /I /see

SYSTEM:[comply]/[accord]

This system of [responding] moves contrasts responses which express support for proposals ([comply]) with those which express support for propositions ([accord]).

While [complying responses] are generally realised either through minor clauses or non-verbally, [according responses] are typically verbal, realised by elliptical major clauses.

SYSTEM:[provide]/[accept]

This system of [complying] moves distinguishes between responses which support requests for goods & services ([provide]), and those which support offers of goods & services ([accept]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[provide]

[Providing] moves function to support a command by furnishing the goods or service requested. Their typical realisation is through minor clauses (e.g. Here you are), or non-verbally.

7 Predictably, most [providing] moves in "Dinner at Stephen's" (for example during the serving of dinner) are realised non-verbally, and therefore not noted in the transcript).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[accept]

[Accepting] moves function to support an offer by complying with it. They are typically realised by polarity items, potentially accompanied by minor clause items such as Thanks. (see Martin 1981a:64).

SYSTEM:[affirm]/[agree]/[confirm]/[answer]

This system of [according] moves distinguishes between ways of expressing support for different propositions. Whilst [affirming] and [agreeing] moves typically support prior statements, [confirming] and [answering] moves support prior questions. The four classes are distinguished realisationally as follows:

[affirm]	minor clause, declarative intonation
[agree]	positive polarity (ellipsis to statement)
[confirm]	positive polarity ((ellipsis to question)
[answer]	elliptical major clause (wh-question ellipsis)

SPEECH FUNCTION:[affirm]

[Affirming] moves express support by offering positive recognition of the accuracy of a prior statement. These are almost exclusively realised by the minor clause "OH YEA" on declarative intonation. For example, when George affirms that Sue has in fact met Jill:

P2/M16 G //1 oh yea

And Di agrees that Marg should use the wine:

P2/Ma75 Di //1 ^oh /yea

SPEECH FUNCTION:[agree]

[Agreeing] moves express support by taking up a positive position vis a vis a prior proposition. Thus, they are typically realised by positive polarity items. For example, when Stephen adds his support to George's protest:

P4/M58 G //5 what's /that got to /==do with /anything
 P4/M59 St ==//5 yea

And when George shows support for Di's explanation:

P4/M29 Di //4 man means /people for /me
 P4/M30 G //1 yea

SPEECH FUNCTION:[confirm]

[Confirming] moves express support through positive polarity reactions to polar questions. For example, when Simon answers Di's question:

P2/Ma27 Di //2 did I
 P2/Ma28 Si //1 yes

Or George responds to Simon:

P2/M90 Si //2 ^be/fore /bridge
 P2/M91 G //1 yes

SPEECH FUNCTION:[answer]

[Answering] moves express support by providing information sought. They relate through wh-question ellipsis patterns. For example, Di's elliptical answer to George's elliptical question:

P2/M30 G //2 straight into the /what
 P2/M31 Di //1 mandies/ [laughs]

And a more straightforward example:

P4/M76 //1 what's a /whatchama/callit
 P4/M77 S ==//1 ^a /society where /everyone's /equal

SYSTEM:[clarify]/[qualify]/[justify]/[report]

The system of [rejoinding] moves comprises the same interactionally relabelled logico-semantic categories familiar from both the [opening] and [continuing] move networks.

[Rejoinders] support a prior move of another speaker by expressing a logico-semantic continuation. They are realised (and recognized) according to the tactic or conjunctive relations between successive moves.

Since [rejoinders] are supporting expansions, the simplest test for determining whether a move is a rejoinder is to see whether the two moves, rewritten as a clause complex, could have been produced by the first speaker only. [Supporting rejoinders] are thus like [continues] but produced by another speaker. In constructing the clause complex, it will also become apparent which speech function category the second move fills, since these categories are realised through the type of logico-semantic relation implicit between the moves.

The [supporting rejoinder] move class thus gives distinct recognition to Halliday's suggestion, that logico-semantic relations may operate across turns at talk (Halliday 1985b:87).

SYSTEM:[exemplify]/[restate]/[amplify]/[instate]

This system of [clarifying] moves distinguishes the same four categories of elaborating relations already discussed above. Moves from this system relate to a prior move by another speaker through either elaboration or internal comparative conjunctions.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[exemplify]

[Exemplifying rejoinders] support a prior move by a different speaker by providing an illustration. For example, when Di offers support for Sue's argument in moves 86-88:

P4/M89 Di ==//4 look at all those /people out /west

SPEECH FUNCTION:[restate]

[Restating rejoinders] support a prior move by a different speaker by providing a paraphrase. For example, when Di supports Sue's explanation of what an egalitarian society is, by pointing out that:

P4/M78 Di ==//1 ^a /lot of people have /no /way

As above, the logical relation can be made explicit through the conjunction "that is".

SPEECH FUNCTION:[amplify]

[Amplifying rejoinders] support a prior move by a different speaker by adjusting some aspect of it. For example, when Simon offers supporting information for Di's assessment of Jill in move 24:

P2/M25 Si ==//1+ ^aca/dem- aca/demically she's /probably /brighter than /Michael

or when George follows up Simon's observation about the cleaning lady, with:

P2/M50 G //1 she won't /come back to /our place

In both cases the [amplifying] relation can be brought out by making the conjunction "in fact" explicit.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[instatate]

[Instating rejoinders] support a prior move by a different speaker by spelling out what has been left implicit, or presented in a reduced form. For example, when George supports Di's largely non-verbal move in Phase 2:88, with:

P2/M89 G //1 ^so /stick /that

SYSTEM:[add]/[contrast]

This system of [qualifying] moves contrasts different ways that [rejoinders] can support a prior move by contributing a logico-semantic extension of some kind.

[Qualifying rejoinders] relate to a prior move through tactic or conjunctive relations of addition, or through internal comparative conjunctions of difference.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[add]

[Adding rejoinders] support a prior move by a different speaker by presenting additional relevant information. The following examples all express support for prior moves by adding information. For example, George's evidence in support of Di's description of Courtney:

P2/M8 G //5 ^and he just /yap yap /yaps all the /time [laughs]

And Simon's reaction to the question of egalitarian birthplaces:

P4/M90 Si ==//4 ^well /George was /born born in /South Aus/tralia

SPEECH FUNCTION:[contrast]

[Contrasting rejoinders] support a prior move by a different speaker by furnishing information that contrasts with the proposition they support. For example, when George qualifies Simon's explanation about Marek, with:

P2/M47 G //1 not for much /longer

the implicit contrastive "but" provides the link to Simon's move. Similarly, when Di comes in on George's "side" against Simon, pointing out that:

P2/M12 Di //1 ^he has a /very short /fuse with /alcohol

the logical continuation relation is again one of contrast.

SYSTEM:[explain]/[rationalize]

This system of [justifying] moves corresponds to the logico-semantic category of enhancement. It contrasts moves which support moves by different speakers by contributing further circumstantial specifications ([explain]), with those that contribute information about cause or consequence ([rationalize]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[explain]

[Explaining rejoinders] support a prior move by a different speaker by further specifying relevant circumstantial information about time, manner, place. For example, when Sue offers support for Simon's opening move by pointing out that:

P1/M3 S //1 ^in /France they /say an /angel is /passing

The enhancing relation between Sue and Simon's moves can be brought out by filling out Sue's move:

In France, when there is a dead space in the conversation, then they say an angel is passing

SPEECH FUNCTION:[rationalize]

[Rationalizing rejoinders] support a prior move by a different speaker by furnishing a statement of cause or condition. For example, when Stephen "chips in" to justify George's and Simon's (rhetorical) pursuit of Di in Phase 4:

P4/M98 St //1 ^we're /trying to catch /==up

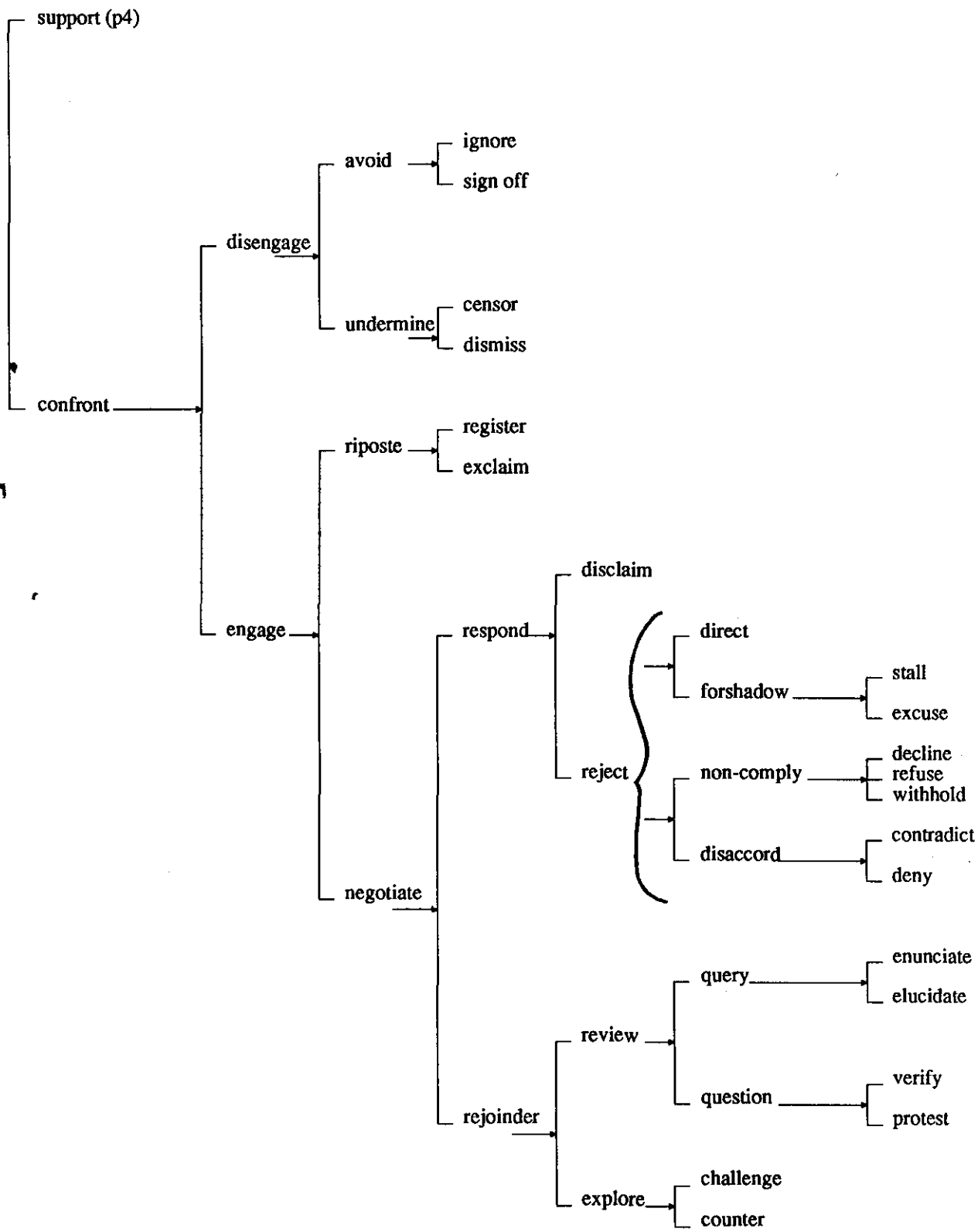
Similarly, Stephen offers a supporting reason for George's position at the end of the Phase, when he suggests:

P4/M115 St //4 take her to the /movies

SPEECH FUNCTION:[report]

[Reporting rejoinders] support a prior move by a different speaker by providing a report or quotation of supporting information from another person. For example, when Simon brings in Stephanie's remarks to support George's contention in Phase 2:

P2/M49 Si //53 that's what the /cleaner - your /cleaner lady /cleaned /my
place /(thought)



SPEECH FUNCTION NETWORK: (5) REACTING options:[confronting] moves

PAGE FIVE: [confronting reactions]

This page displays the systems for [confronting reactions]: i.e. related moves by a different speaker which offer some kind of either interpersonal or experiential non-collaboration with the prior move.

[Confronting] moves are realised by a variety of grammatical systems, including intonational patterns, polarity and mood systems, ellipsis, and logico-semantic relations.

SYSTEM:[disengage]/[engage]

This first system of confronting moves captures the possibility that interactants will choose to terminate the interaction. Thus in contrasting a disinclination to proceed ([disengage]), with the commitment to get involved ([engage]), the system contrasts implicit confrontation with explicit confrontation.

Interactionally, [disengaging] options are attempts to get the turn-taking system to lapse. Although [disengaging] is [confronting] in that it is implicitly uncooperative, it can be performed in more or less offensive ways.

It might seem odd to class disengaging options as [sustaining] moves, given that aim to get the turn-taking system to lapse. But they do in fact involve a sustaining of the interaction, in that they fill an interactive slot in the Act[^]React sequence, even if it is only silence.

Whilst [disengaging] moves are implicitly confronting, are, in fact, partly motivated by a desire to disguise their confrontational nature by avoiding interaction, [engaging] options are those which explicitly take up the interaction and express confrontation with a prior move. [Engaging] moves thus co-operate interactionally, but do so in order to express confrontation.

SYSTEM: [avoid]/[undermine]

This system of [disengaging] moves contrasts moves which disengage from a prior move by trying to get out before the interaction gets off the ground ([avoid]) with moves that try to terminate an interaction that is already underway ([undermine]).

SYSTEM:[ignore]/[sign off]

This system of [avoiding] moves distinguishes avoiding options in terms of how explicitly they express their confrontational intentions, implicitly through non-verbal means ([ignore]) or more explicitly through verbal statement ([sign off]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[ignore]

[Ignoring confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker by simply not reacting: i.e. through silence. [Ignoring] is the most obvious refusal to participate, and can be considered the closest option to a non-reaction, and perhaps therefore the most offensive.

The fact that there are no examples of such reactions in "Dinner at Stephen's" is not surprising, given the likely disastrous consequences [ignoring] would have on the conviviality of the conversation.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[sign off]

[Signing off confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker by expressing a disinterest or unwillingness to proceed. For example, when Di tries to get the matter dropped in Phase 4:

P4/M41 Di //1 oh for/get it

SYSTEM:[censor]/[dismiss]

This system of [undermining] moves contrasts alternative ways of getting out of the interaction by challenging either its interpersonal basis ([censor]) or its experiential validity ([dismiss]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[censor]

[Censoring confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker by challenging the interpersonal grounds for the interaction:i.e. the role or position of the other interactant. For example, when George reacts to Simon's prevarication with:

P1/Mb19 G //1 ^oh /give me a /break /Simon

he seems to be trying to terminate the interaction on the basis that Simon's treatment of him is unjustified (i.e. Simon is exerting a power relationship that is unacceptable).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[dismiss]

[Dismissing confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker by focusing on the experiential irrelevance of the other move. For example, when George gets out of the exchange with Di and Sue by claiming that:

P1/Mb14 G //3 that's (/nothing to /do with it)

he seems to be rejecting the truth or relevance of Di's interpretation of French idioms.

SYSTEM:[riposte]/[negotiate]

This system of [engaging] moves contrasts moves which confront by expressing negative or unexpected reactions ([ripostes]) with those that confront by entering into argument with the prior move ([negotiate]).

Whilst [ripostes] are typically realised through exclamative mood and/or intonation, [negotiating] moves are realised through non-exclamative moods.

SYSTEM:[register]/[exclaim]

This system of [riposting] moves contrasts confronts which react by simply recording that a prior move is somehow unexpected ([register]), with those where the negative evaluation is made more explicit ([exclaim]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[register]

[Registering confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker by recording that the reactant finds the prior move somehow unexpected or surprising. For example, when Di reacts to the information about Marek, with an:

P2/M46 Di //5 oh

her reaction suggests surprise, but there are no overtones of pejorative reaction.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[exclaim]

[Exclaiming confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker by expressing a stronger pejorative evaluation: rather than simply surprise, [exclaims] imply disbelief. For example, Di's reaction to her request for information from George is:

P2/M58 Di //2 Stephanie

said with an intonation that clearly implies incredulity. Similarly Simon's reaction later in Phase 2:

P2/M86 Si //5 ^to/day

clearly expresses a total disbelief in George's claim to have put the garbage out.

The same exclamative particle can function either as a [registering] or an [exclaiming] move. For example, when Di reacts to Stephanie's identity with an:

P2/M62 Di ==//5 oh

Unlike the "OH" in move 46, however, this OH is produced with an intonation clearly expresses Di's pejorative evaluation of the information (as perhaps trivial or uninteresting).

SYSTEM:[respond]/[rejoinder]

This system of [negotiating] moves identifies the same opposition found in [supporting] moves, between reactions which focus on confronting interpersonally ([respond]) with those which focus on confronting ideationally ([rejoinder]).

Whilst [responses] argue the proposition put forward in a prior move, [rejoinders] can be seen as non-supportive continuations by a different speaker.

As with [supporting] moves, the distinction between [confronting responses] and [rejoinders] is realised through the contrast between modal ellipsis (responses) or logico-semantic relations (rejoinders). However, unlike the [supporting] move network, there is a point of overlap between grammatical patterns in the [confronting] system, with [reviewing] moves realised through both ellipsis and logico-semantic relations. The semantics underlying this pattern will be discussed below.

SYSTEM:[disclaim]/[reject]

This system of [responding] moves contrasts moves which confront by denying knowledge ([disclaim]), with those which enter into explicit confrontation ([reject]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[disclaim]

[Disclaiming confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker by pleading insufficient knowledge. For example, George's reaction to Simon in Phase 2:

P2/M40 /I I didn't know /that

It may seem odd to classify [disclaimers] as [confronting], since lack of knowledge is not a voluntary state. And it is true that if someone says that s/he does not have the knowledge or means to comply/support an act, then that cannot be regarded as explicitly confronting as an outright refusal, even though one may suspect them of lying. However, since [disclaiming] is a way of avoiding commitment without developing the interaction, it has more in common with [confronting] reactions than with [supporting] ones.

7

[Disclaiming] moves are typically realised by negative polarity in an elliptical mental process clause.

SYSTEM:[foreshadow]/[direct]

This system of [rejecting] moves contrasts moves which delay the statement of confrontation ([foreshadow]) with those which state the confrontation straight out ([direct]).

SYSTEM:[stall]/[excuse]

This system of [foreshadowing] moves contrasts moves which delay a confronting response by prevarication ([stall]) with those that delay by apology ([excuse]).

While [stalling] moves are typically realised by intonation patterns on adjuncts such as WELL, OH, AH, [excusing] moves are realised by ritual expressions.

SPEECH FUNCTION: [stall]

[Stalling] confronts react to a prior move by a different speaker by refusing to provide an explicit response. For example, the intonation in George's reaction to Sue suggests he would like to reply "nothing" but is delaying the moment of truth:

2B	S	So what DO you notice when you walk into somebody's house?
	G	Ahh

SPEECH FUNCTION: [excuse]

[Excusing confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker with an apology, which implicitly expresses refusal to provide or to agree. For example, when Simon turns down George's request for a cigarette in Phase 1:

P1/Mb16 Si //1 sorry /George I've //1 cut you /off you //1 said you'd had the /last /one you /1 promised me the /last one was the /last one

SPEECH FUNCTION: [direct]

[Directing confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker by immediately taking up a position which conflicts with the prior move. For example, there is no prevarication in George's contradiction of Simon in Phase 2:

P2/M3 G //5 we don't /want - we /don't need /Courtney in the //1 bloody conver/sation

SYSTEM:[non-comply]/[disaccord]

This system of [rejecting] moves contrasts moves which confront by declining to provide goods and services ([non-comply]), with those that dispute information ([disaccord]).

While [non-complying] moves are generally realised through minor clauses, [disaccording] options are typically realised through negative polarity within major clauses.

SYSTEM:[decline]/[refuse]/[withhold]

This system distinguishes moves which refuse an offer ([decline]), fail to provide requested goods & services ([refuse]), and those that refuse linguistic services, i.e. refuse to provide information ([withhold]).

SPEECH FUNCTION:[decline]

[Declining] moves are typically realized through negative polarity, accompanied by the typical goods-&-service particle, THANKS. For example:

2B G Do you want some more of this pastry stuff?
 S No thanks, but I will ()

SPEECH FUNCTION:[refuse]

[Refusing confronts] react to a prior move by a different speaker by not providing the goods & services requested. For example, the move cited above where Simon rejects George's request for a cigarette:

P1/Mb16 Si //1 sorry /George I've //1 cut you /off you //1 said you'd had the /last /one you /1 promised me the /last one was the /last one

[Refusing] moves must be realised verbally, and can therefore be distinguished from [disengaging] moves, which avoid verbal engagement.

These moves, corresponding to Martin's system of [confirming tracking] moves (Martin i.p/1989:39), can be considered ideationally as elaborations of prior moves, generally realised by identifying clauses with the Wh-element conflated with the Value.

SYSTEM:[verify]/[protest]

This system of [questioning] moves contrasts demands which merely seek confirmation of (some of) the content of a prior move ([verify]), with demands that question the position taken towards that information ([protest]).

Both are confrontational in that they imply disagreement and disapproval (whereas [querying] moves do not have any evaluative overtones). But while [verifying] moves leave the door open for the opener to revise his position to avoid further conflict, [protesting] moves go straight on the attack.

The realisation of these moves involves logico-semantic relations, typically operating to link moves from different mood classes. While [verifying] moves relate to the moves they investigate through elaboration, or conjunctions of internal comparison:similarity, [protests] relate through extension, or conjunctions of internal comparison:difference.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[verify]

[Verifying questioning] moves react to a prior move by a different speaker by seeking confirmation of what has been said. For example, when George reacts to Simon's information about Marek by asking:

P2/M41 //2 ^ what he /rang Manning /Road

the explicit internal comparative conjunction "what", accompanied by an intonation of disbelief, clearly conveys that George's question is not only a request for elaboration, but that he has serious doubts as to the truth of Simon's remarks.

Similarly, Simon's reaction to George's claim in Phase 2 not only implies disbelief, but also the potential for a future challenge:

P2/M87 //1 what be/fore /bridge

Thus, [verifying] moves represent logical elaborations, but with the overtones of disbelief and non-support that foreshadow a future [challenge].

SPEECH FUNCTION:[protest]

[Protesting questioning] moves react to a prior move by a different speaker by asking what we hear as³⁰ explicitly challenging question. Related to prior moves by internal consequential conjunctions, these moves explore the motivations and justifications for propositions, whilst clearly indicating lack of support. For example, when Simon pursues Di in Phase 4, by asking:

P4/M17* Si //why /why why the /particular eh

his question probes Di's justification for using the term "men", whilst the very fact of his asking such a question indicates his disagreement with such usage.

Similarly, Stephen's later rejoinder to Di:

P4/M43 St ==//5 why

refuses to accept her attempt to disengage from the interaction, by following up her reasons.

SYSTEM:[challenge]/[counter]

This system of [exploring] moves contrasts moves which confront a prior move by asserting reasons for disagreement ([challenge]), with those that confront by asserting a contrary, conflicting proposition ([counter]).

Both move classes are realised by non-elliptical major clauses, and the difference here is in terms of the logical relation. While [challenges] relate through enhancement, typically through internal consequential conjunctions, [counters] relate through extension, typically through internal comparative conjunctions of difference.

While both moves are quite explicitly confrontational, in that they directly refuse to provide a [supporting reaction], they differ in the logico-semantic direction they take in disputing another speaker's contribution.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[challenge]

[Challenging rejoinders] relate to a prior move through a relation of enhancement, typically realised through internal consequential conjunctions such as: but, after all, nevertheless, still, in any case, etc.

This consequential basis to [challenges] explains why we "hear" them as interpersonally confrontational; they in fact reject by challenging the reasons, justifications, or motivations of the other speaker. For example, when George reacts to Simon's refusal by insisting:

P1/Mb17 G //5 ^ well/I want to have /one /more

his [challenge] is to Simon's assumed power over him. Similarly, when Di accuses the men of teasing in Phase 4, with:

P4/M93 Di //1 ^you /know what we're /talking about

she is challenging their right to play the role of questioners in an exchange when she considers they already know and understand the information.

And when Sue and George both react to Di in Phase 1, with:

P1/M7 S ==//4 ^oh /I've never /heard that be/fore

their [challenge] puts in question the truth of Di's information, and therefore her role as a giver of information.

SPEECH FUNCTION:[counter]

[Countering rejoinders] relate to a prior move through the logico-semantic relation of extension, typically realised through internal comparative conjunctions expressing difference, such as: rather, instead, on the other hand, conversely, etc.

This extending basis to [countering] moves helps explain why we hear these moves as very close to re-[opening] or re-[initiating] moves; they express difference by asserting a contrary or conflicting (counter-)proposition.

For example, when Di refuses to give in to George and Sue's [challenge] in Phase 1, Sue points out that:

P1/M12 S //1 ^I /thought in /English it was //^// someone's walked /over

This move confronts not merely by implicitly undermining the validity of a prior move (as did the previous [challenge]), but by actually stating a contrary proposition. Since it is not possible for both Di and Sue's assertions to be valid, the [counter] is strongly confrontational, as well as opening up the exchange by introducing a new proposition for argument.

[Counters] are very typical reactions in opinion exchanges. For example, when Di reacts to Simon's [initiating opinion] in Phase 2, with:

P2/M2 Di //5^oh /he's in /London so//1+ what can we /do

Here Di does not merely [contradict] Simon (as George does), nor does she [challenge] (eg "I don't know why you'd think that"). Instead her [countering] moves asserts a state of affairs which makes Simon's move irrelevant.

A little later, George uses the same technique to react to Simon:

P2/M10 G //4 ^oh I /like /Michael a /lot/

Refusing to "buy into" the request for an opinion as it is framed by Simon, George instead reacts with a contrary proposition of his own.

George and Simon's interaction is characterized by frequent [counters]. For example, when Simon urges George to an admission about Marek's cleanliness, George reacts with:

P2/M68 G //5 ^but he's /too /clean be//4 cause you know like /he gets up/set about //1 things

Refusing to argue with the proposition Simon has put forward (yes he is/no he's not the cleanest in the flat), and not merely [challenging] Simon's statement (I wouldn't say that), George sets up a counter opinion, which turns out to generate a lengthy sequence of talk.

[Confronting] moves are also frequent as reactions to [initiating facts]. For example, the initial sequence in Phase 1 (considered above). Similarly, although the immediately preceding talk is obscured in Phase 2, it seems likely that Simon's move 38 is also a [counter] to information about Marek's location:

P2/M38 Si //53 well he rang /Marek /^he rang /Marek a /week ago

[Counters] also occur as the reaction to extended monologue, as with Simon's reaction in Phase 3:

P3/M23 Si ==//1 they get /two /months /holiday a /year

[Counters] occur very frequently in "Dinner at Stephen's", and often in the environment of a preceding [challenge], suggesting their role in a cline towards outright confrontation. Their frequency in opinion exchanges throughout the continuous excerpt, and particularly in Phase 4, illustrates if not a preference, then at least a non-avoidance of disagreement.

The usefulness of [counters] in these environments lies in the simultaneous continuity and originality of their experiential content. While explicitly linked to prior moves ([counters] are clearly distinguishable from [openings] or [initiating] moves by explicit interactional markers such as OH, WELL, and other conjunctions); [counters] also involve the introduction of fresh material for discussion. As such they regenerate an on-going argument, rescuing the talk from a childish confrontational technique of simply [contradicting] each other, or the overtly hostile technique of repeatedly [challenging] each other's roles.

They provide strong evidence for claiming that at least some types of casual conversations involve the exploration of difference, rather than the reaffirmation of similarity. These implications will be taken up in the next chapters.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed all the systems included in the speech function network developed to describe interactional continuity in "Dinner at Stephen's".

While acknowledging the origins of this kind of description in the ethnomethodological notion of adjacency pairs, the network presented here builds most directly on prior speech function descriptions within Birmingham and systemic-functional approaches. For example, it elaborates and extends Halliday & Hasan's (1976) distinction between [direct] and [indirect responses] through the [response]/[rejoinder] classification; it takes up and redefines Burton's (1978, 1980) distinction between [supporting] and [challenging] moves as a way of extending the description of dispreferred reactions.

However, the network differs from those presented by other contemporary systemic analysts. The main differences are that it abandons Martin's (1985, i.p/1989) distinction between "synoptic" and "dynamic" move classes, incorporating Martin's dynamic moves across a range of different classes of [confronting] moves; it assigns speech functions to monologic continuations; and it introduces logico-semantic relations to both classify moves and to establish criteria for relations between move sequences. These changes are proposed as a necessary consequence of applying the stratified approach to the description of casual conversation.

Conclusions

While this chapter has developed a description of the SYSTEM of interpersonal meanings through the SPEECH FUNCTION network, it has said nothing about the STRUCTURES generated, beyond specifying structural criteria for relating moves. The following chapter uses an explanation of the speech function coding of Phase 1 of the excerpt to provide the justification for representing the structural relations between moves in the continuous excerpt in the form of structural reticula.

7. **STRUCTURE in casual sustained talk: interpersonal and logical relations in "Dinner at Stephen's".**

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss the structural reticula used to capture relations between sequent moves in "Dinner at Stephen's" (Appendix I).

Based on the SPEECH FUNCTION network presented in Chapter Six, this chapter begins by discussing the move-by-move SPEECH FUNCTION coding for Phase 1 of the continuous excerpt. (The coding sheets for all phases are presented in Appendix H).

This coding process will illustrate four features of SPEECH FUNCTION sequences in conversation:

- a) "janus" relations: some moves depend on other moves but are themselves depended on
- b) multiple relations: one move can relate to a number of prior moves in different ways
- c) cumulative relations: one move can relate to more than a single prior move
- d) non-adjacent relations: related moves need not occur adjacently

In exploring the question of how to represent these structural relations, I will suggest that these four features make the imposition of a multivariate exchange formula both difficult and unrevealing.

The alternative proposed is the representation of move relations through structural reticula, by analogy from Martin's representation of CONJUNCTIVE RELATIONS (1983, i.p/1989:ch4). Alternative reticula are presented to illustrate the simultaneous contribution of both logical and interpersonal meanings in conversational structure.

After presenting and explaining the reticula, the chapter concludes by discussing what they show about the structure of the casual talk in "Dinner at Stephen's".

Summary of the developments presented in Chapters Five and Six.

In developing the description of "Dinner at Stephen's" within the stratified approach, two main steps have so far been taken.

Firstly, the status of the move as the unit of analysis has been addressed, with the clarification of identification criteria in Chapter Five. By relating move boundaries to the co-occurrence of grammatical and prosodic boundaries, these criteria free the move from its "grammaticalisation", and also redefine it as a unit of not only interpersonal, but also interactional meaning.

Secondly, the SPEECH FUNCTION network for conversation presented in Chapter Six extends and revises the description of move classes in conversation, based on the primary systems of AUDIENCE CONFIGURATION, TURN-TRANSFER, POSITION and FOCUS. The principle of stratification was respected by motivating move classes by reference to realisational patterns of MOOD, ELLIPSIS & SUBSTITUTION, CLAUSE COMPLEX and CONJUNCTION.

A distinctive feature of the SPEECH FUNCTION network presented in Chapter Six is the inclusion of a "module" of logico-semantic relations, motivated by patterns of TAXIS and CONJUNCTIVE RELATIONS. In justifying the inclusion of this module at major points in the networks of [opening], [continuing], and [reacting] moves, it was argued that although the description of SPEECH FUNCTION is fundamentally "interpersonal", extension in delicacy involves the recognition and integration of a logical dimension of ideational meaning.

As noted in Chapter Six, a result of the revisions to the SPEECH FUNCTION network is that the criteria for establishing pair part relations between moves have been expanded to recognize both PEC (criteria of modal dependency, Martin 1981), and PLoCC (criteria of logico-semantic dependency).

Within the stratified approach, the SPEECH FUNCTION network is the SYSTEMIC representation of interpersonal meaning in conversation. However, as was pointed out in Chapter Three, the network also provides a basic account of conversational structure as a theory of adjacency pairs, by "matching" [initiating] and [responding] pair parts.

It was also pointed out that the stratified approach currently augments the SPEECH FUNCTION representation with a second level of structural analysis through EXCHANGE STRUCTURE theory, which describes the occurrence of SPEECH FUNCTION classes in sequences varying from two to five moves in length.

Following from the network in Chapter Six, the SPEECH FUNCTION description of conversation leaves us at a point where we are able to code each move for its function(s) in sequence, and, through the relatedness criteria, establish a description of basic adjacency pair structure, through matching [opening] and [reacting] moves.

The following section demonstrates the application of the SPEECH FUNCTION network by tracing the move-by-move coding of Phase 1 of the continuous excerpt. The types of move sequences revealed in the coding process are then used to re-assess the the relevance of EXCHANGE STRUCTURE as a supplementary account of conversational structure, with the suggestion that it is neither applicable nor revealing of the types of move relations found in casual sustained talk.

Coding the continuous excerpt for SPEECH FUNCTIONS

Appendix H contains the SPEECH FUNCTION coding sheets for each of the four phases of the continuous excerpt. These coding sheets show each move assigned SPEECH FUNCTION selections based on the move classes identified and discussed in Chapter Six.

By way of explaining the process of coding, this section provides a move-by-move discussion of the SPEECH FUNCTION coding for Phase 1 of the continuous excerpt (Appendix H). The SPEECH FUNCTION coding for Phases 2-4 is also presented in Appendix H, but discussion is confined to footnotes commenting on points of interest or ambiguity.

Discussion of the SPEECH FUNCTION coding of Phase 1

Move SPEECH FUNCTION assignment
no.

1 [Open; involve; float: initiate; give: information; fact]

This move is coded as an [opening] move, since it establishes a new audience configuration from prior talk (although the immediately prior moves are not properly audible, and therefore incompletely transcribed). The re-distribution of interactional roles is also made likely by the lengthy pause which immediately precedes this move. The move is [involving], since it does not manipulate the turn-transfer system; it is [floating], since Simon does not direct his remark to any specific participant, but assigns the addressee role to "the audience at large"; it is [initiating], since there is no logical (conjunctive) relation with prior moves (so far as can be discerned); and it [gives] [information] which is non-modalised, thus it is coded as a [fact].

The completion of Simon's move theoretically represents a point of possible speaker transfer, but since nobody competes with Simon for the speaker's role, and no reaction is forthcoming, he decides to have a second go.

2 [Open; involve; float: initiate; give; information; fact]

This move is another [opening] although produced by the same speaker in a single turn, the move is not a [continue] since there is no structural relation between moves 1 and 2, but only a loose relation of lexical cohesion (through repetition of "conversation"). Like move 1, it is also [involving], [floating]; it is also [initiating], for the same reasons of lack of structural relations with prior moves. And again it is also [information:fact].

3 [React; support; negotiate; rejoinder; justify; explain]

Simon's second [opening] now receives a [reaction]: a structurally related contribution from another speaker. Sue's move is [supporting], in that it does not dispute but rather extends on Simon's comments. It is a [negotiation], since it goes beyond merely avoiding the termination of the exchange. However, since its semantic relation with the prior move is one of logical continuation, rather than modal engagement, it is a [rejoinder] rather than a [response]. This can be established by recognizing that although move 3 is not modally elliptical, in order to make sense of Sue's remark we need to "fill it out" as:

In France when there is dead space in the conversation they say an angel is passing i.e., the filled out version is a clause complex. Thus Sue's move logically depends for its interpretation as a reaction on Simon's move. Further, Sue's move is a [rejoinder] of the [justifying] type, since it extends a prior move by fleshing out further circumstantial information: i.e. the full clause complex it completes is an enhancing one.

4 [React; support; negotiate; respond; reply; accord; agree]

Di's move illustrates what later structural representation will reveal as a common pattern in casual talk: "chain reactions", i.e. moves which are reactions to reactions. Di's [reaction] is [supporting] (going along with Sue's proposition), and this time [responding], since it is elliptically tied to Sue's move. It is [replying], since it goes beyond mere acknowledgement to the more explicit statement of [accord], realised as [agreeing] with Sue's prior statement. Thus Di's move is lexico-grammatically "cumulatively dependent": a [responding reaction], (elliptically) dependent on Sue's move which was itself (logically) dependent on Simon's [opening].

5 [React; confront; engage; negotiate; rejoinder; review; question; verify]

This move illustrates a further common feature of conversational sequences: "janus-type" moves, moves which are themselves dependent for interpretation on prior moves (as this one is on Di's move 4), but which themselves anticipate or require further dependent reactions (i.e. a [response] from Di). Thus, Sue's next move continues the reactive chain. This time, however, the [reaction] is [confronting], since Sue does not accept Di's claim. It [engages] in the exchange, rather than merely registering a reaction. But it does not [respond] (take a definite confronting position), but as a [rejoinder] of the class [review], it asks for an expansion of Di's prior move by [questioning]. Thus, rather than merely seeking a repetition of missed wording, or an explanation of meaning, it actually seeks to [verify] Di's remark, and in doing so implies doubt and foreshadows potential challenge. *

6 [React; support; negotiate; respond; reply; accord; confirm]

Di's move is a further [reaction], this time back to Sue's immediately preceding move. Treating this "Umm" as elliptical polarity, its filled out version is:

"Yes, they do say that an angel is passing in English as well as in French".

This full version not only shows this move to be a [supporting confirmation] of her previous claim, but it also illustrates the pattern of cumulative relations between moves, with Di's reaction interpretable only in the light of both Sue's question and also the prior sequence of moves 3 and 4.

7 [React; confront; engage; negotiate; rejoinder; explore; challenge]

Di's [confirmation] elicits a further [reaction], but this time it is a [confronting rejoinder]. The internal additive conjunction "OH" clearly signals the tie between this move and Di's preceding move, thus making explicit its reactive status. It is not modally dependent on prior talk (there is no ellipsis), but in order to interpret its occurrence as a reaction at this place in the talk, we need to recognize it as logically dependent on prior move(s), thus a [rejoinder]. Its declarative mood indicates it is [exploring] (new directions) rather than [reviewing] (past propositions). Its status as a [challenge] is realised through the logical relation of enhancement that relates it to the prior talk, realised through an implicit internal consequential conjunction "however". Looking back, we can see that this [challenge] was in fact foreshadowed by Sue's verifying Di's initial remark.

8 [React; confront; engage; negotiate; rejoinder; explore; challenge]

Produced simultaneously with Sue's move 7, George's move is coded identically, as a second simultaneous [challenge] to Di.

9 React; support; negotiate; respond; reply; accord; answer

The move-initial "well" indicates the [reaction] status of this move from Di. The fact that it is coded as [supporting] captures its function as a second answer to Sue's [questioning] back in move 5: it could have occurred in the place of move 6. The substitution of the Residue signals this as a [response], and the cumulative dependence is brought out by filling out:

Well I think they say an angel is passing in English as well as in French.

Di's choice of a modalised response, rather than an assertive modality-free answer (Yes they do), indicates her tentativity, and leaves her position open to further undermining, which she in fact goes on to provide herself.

10 [Continue; develop; prolong; expand; clarify; restate];

This is the first [continuing] move in this phase. Di retains the speaker role without interruption (hence, [prolonging]), and this move relates as a logical expansion to her preceding move, and is thus [developing]. The specific logical relation of this move to her preceding move is one of elaboration, hence it is coded as [clarifying], through [restating], realised through the implicit conjunction "i.e." (or "I mean", in conversation).

11 [Continue; develop; prolong; expand; justify; rationalize]

This move is a further [continue] from Di, also [prolonging]. This time however the logical relation is one of enhancement (hence, [justifying]), specifically extending her prior move by [explaining] the rhetorical implications of her prior admissions. This is realised by the implicit internal consequential conjunction "so", which links move 11 to the clause complex in move 10.

12 [React; confront; engage; negotiate; rejoinder; explore; counter]

Perhaps because her [challenge] has received such a promising reaction (with Di's admissions of doubt), Sue now moves in for the kill. Reacting to Di by further [confronting] her claims, but this time through a [countering] move rather than a [challenge]. The move is interpretable as a [reaction] (logically dependent on moves 9-11), but the logical relation is one of extension:contrast, realized through the implicit internal conjunction ("but", or "on the contrary").

13 [React; support; uphold; feedback; identify; complete]

Di's [reaction] (signalled as such by the move-initial "OH") is now to abandon defending her own position in favour of [supporting] the counter position offered by Sue. This first reaction is a minimal [supporting] option, of [upholding] the exchange by [completing] Sue's own move, rather than [negotiating] it by taking a position of her own.

At this point, the single conversation splits into two simultaneous dialogues: Sue and Di, and George and Simon. Moves a14 and b14 are produced contiguously.

a14 [React; support; negotiate; respond; reply; accord; agree].

This second [reaction] from Di is also obviously [supporting], but this time the support goes beyond identification with Sue's move to a [response] where Di takes a position of explicit [agreement] with Sue's counter position in move 12.

a15 [Continue; develop; prolong; expand; clarify; restate]

Di's next move is a [prolonging continue]: an immediately sequent logically dependent move. This one is [clarifying], since it elaborates move a14, specifically through [restating] it, realized by the implicit internal comparative conjunction ("i.e.") between moves a14 and a15.

a16* [Open; involve; target; indicate; initiate: demand; information; fact]

This incomplete move represents an attempt at (re-)[opening] the interaction after the pause that follows, and marks, Di's defeat. Its [opening] status is signalled non-verbally, by the [targeting] of Sue (the only possible addressee, given the subject matter). It is [initiating] because although there is obvious lexical cohesion between this and the prior talk, there is no structural (logical, modal) relationship. Although incomplete, the interrogative syntax makes it codable as [demand] for [information:fact].

a17 [Continue; develop; prolong; rerun; repair; reformulate]

This [prolonging continue] represents an immediate attempt to [repair] the previous move, by [reformulating] (indicated by the explicit conversational form of the reformulating conjunction, "I mean").

a18 [Continue; develop; prolong; expand; clarify; restate]

A further immediate [continuation] by Di. Having somewhat muddied the waters of her [opening] move by a false start and a [reformulation], this move tries to [develop] her proposition theme by providing a [clarifying restatement] of a17. This relation is realised through the implicit elaborating conjunction "i.e."

a19 [Continue; develop; prolong; expand; clarify; exemplify]

A further [prolonging continuation], this time [clarifying] by [exemplifying] (realised through a circumstance of comparison), although the example is anaphorically presumed.

a20 [Continue; develop; prolong; expand; qualify; add]

Di keeps going, this time [expanding] by simply [adding] further information. The layering of [continuing] move relations becomes apparent, with this [adding] move logically dependent on the sequence in a19-a18, which is itself dependent on the prior move, a17.

a21 [Continue; develop; prolong; expand; justify; rationalize]

Di [continues] with a [prolonging clarification], this time linked only to the immediately prior move, and this time a [justifying] move, rather than a [clarification]. Di justifies her comment in move a20 by [rationalizing] (enhancing through expressing concession), realized by the implicit consequential conjunction "although".

a22 , [Continue; develop; prolong; expand; qualify; contrast]

Still [prolonging] her turn as speaker with [continuing] moves, Di this time [qualifies] her [justification] in move a21 with a [contrasting] move (realized by the explicit conjunction "but").

a23 [Continue; develop; prolong; expand; qualify; contrast]

Yet a further [continue], this time [qualifying] both a21 and a22 with a further [contrasting] move.

a24 [Continue; check; prompt; attribute]

The final [continue] in this lengthy monologic sequence is not an [expanding] move, but a [checking] one. Di, perhaps concerned that she has gone on too long and may have lost the interest or attention of her audience, offers voluntarily to relinquish the speaker role by [prompting] Sue to react. She does this by focusing on the shared knowledge she has been assuming throughout this sequence. The move is [attributing] rather than [inviting], since it prompts by establishing Sue's agreement with her interpretation (i.e. "You know what I mean?"), rather Sue's acknowledgement of the fact itself (i.e. "Doesn't it?").

a25 [React; support; uphold; feedback; backchannel; maintain]

Perhaps indicating that Di's interactional fears are well-grounded, Sue's [reaction] is the most minimal [supporting] position available. Whilst her [feedback] indicates that "the channels are open", she also signals to Di that she has no intention of taking up the speaker role, and therefore no great involvement or commitment to the continuation of the exchange. The fact that the Di/Sue dialogue subsequently lapses can be attributed to the very minimal support Sue provides here.

a26 ([Continue; develop; resume; expand; clarify; restate])

This uncertain move is most probably a [continue] that [resumes] the monologue Di pursued above by [expanding], perhaps [rationalizing], her position in a23. It cannot be a [pursuing opening], since there is no change in the audience configuration: Sue is presumably still cast in the direct addressee role.

b14 ([React; confront; engage; negotiate; rejoinder; explore; challenge];
or ([React; confront; disengage; undermine; dismiss])

This uncertain move, which occurs simultaneously with Di's in a14, is probably directed at Di and Sue's remarks in a12 and a13. If so, it is a [confronting reaction], but it is not clear whether it should be coded as a [negotiating rejoinder] which seeks to [extend] the exchange by [challenging], or as a [disengaging] move, which seeks to get George a way out of that interaction by [dismissing] their remarks. The progress of the interaction obviously favours the second interpretation, but both are shown in the coding sheet.

b15 [Open; involve; target; name; initiate;
a) demand; information; fact]
b)[demand; goods-&-services]

This is an [opening] move, which sets up a new audience configuration. It [targets] Simon directly as addressee by [naming] him. However, as an [initiation] it requires double description.

Literally it is a request for [factual information]: a non-modulated wh-interrogative. However, both Simon and the analyst have no trouble interpreting that lexico-grammatical structure as an incongruent realisation of a [demand for goods & services] ("Pass me a cigarette, Simon"). Both codings are displayed, the second being necessary to explain the relevance of Simon's reaction, and the first to capture how possible alternative reactions (eg "Over there") would also be interpretable.

b16 [React; confront; engage; negotiate; respond; reject; non-comply; refuse; foreshadow; excuse]

i) as above
ii) [continue; develop; prolong; expand; justify; explain;]
iii) [continue; develop; prolong; expand; justify; rationalize]
iv) [continue; develop; prolong; expand; clarify; restate]

This move is extremely complex, illustrating a different type of incongruence in casual talk. Although the move as a whole clearly functions to [refuse] George's [demand] for [goods & services] (and is therefore a [confronting response] to move b15), the move is marked in that we can recognize within the one move a sequence of distinct SPEECH FUNCTIONS (i.e. what in the unmarked case would be realised as 4 separate moves). Thus, in the unmarked case Simon's turn would be coded as a [reaction:excuse], followed by three [continuing] moves which [justify] and [clarify] his refusal.

The coding sheet captures these congruent and incongruent interpretations, by firstly coding the entire move as as [refusal]. It then codes each of the conflated SPEECH FUNCTIONS separately.

i) sorry George: a [confronting response], that [foreshadows] rather than directly stating the refusal. The foreshadowing is achieved through using an [excusing] move.

ii) I've cut you off: This is coded as a [continue], which [expands] Simon's excuse by offering an [explanation] for his refusal.

iii) you said you'd had the last one: This is also a [continue], again [expanding] by [justifying], this time offering a [rationalization] (realized by the implicit conjunctive relation "because").

iv) you promised me the last one was the last one: This is also coded as a [continue], but this time a [clarifying restatement] of iii).

By this multiple coding the analysis is able to capture the conflation of SPEECH FUNCTIONS within a single move.

b17 [React; confront; engage; negotiate; rejoinder; explore; challenge]

If Simon hoped to avoid direct confrontation over his refusal, George does not take the hint. This move, marked as a [reaction] by the move-initial "well", is coded as a further [challenging rejoinder], linked to Simon's prior move through an implicit internal consequential conjunction "nevertheless" (or "but", in conversation).

b18 [React; confront; engage; negotiate; rejoinder; explore; challenge]

Simon's [reaction] is again [confronting]: there is still no sign of the cigarette's being handed over. However, this time in response to a [challenge] he offers a [challenge], in the form of specifying conditions. This relation of internal consequence between George's challenge and his own move is brought out by "filling out" Simon's remark:

"If you want another cigarette, then it will cost you a buck"

b19 [React; confront; engage; negotiate; rejoinder; explore; counter]

or [React; confront; disengage; undermine; censor]

Although obviously [confronting], this move is open to two possible interpretations. On the one hand if it is interpreted as "Just hand the cigarette over and shut up", then it is interpretable as a [counter] (internal contrast), but if interpreted as "I'm fed up with this so forget it", then it needs to be coded as a [disengaging] option, which tries to get out of the exchange by dismissing Simon's remarks. Non-verbal evidence is not available as to whether the cigarette is in fact handed over at this point or not, so the resolution of the dispute is not clear.

Implications of the coding process

As the discussion of the coding of Phase 1 has illustrated, the process of assigning SPEECH FUNCTIONS to moves in conversation is both **dynamic**, and **relational**. Each of these has implications for the structural representation of the conversation.

The process is **dynamic**, in that each move is coded as it occurs in sequence, in terms of its relation to prior moves only. Thus, like the conversationalists, the analyst is not aware of where the conversation is going next, but only where it has already been. This dynamic approach contrasts with a synoptic analysis, in which moves would be coded in light of both prior and subsequent moves.

The implications of the dynamic perspective are that the structure generated by the semantic system underlying conversation is not one of global (synoptic) structure, but rather one of localistic (dynamic) relations. Thus, the SPEECH FUNCTION network suggests a structural interpretation based not on an end-oriented, multivariate structural model, but rather one which can capture instead the move-by-move structure realised as relations between sequent moves.

This leads to the second aspect shown up in the coding process: that the process is **relational**. That is, the assignment of SPEECH FUNCTIONS depends not on the constituent structure of a move itself, but on the relation between the current move and prior moves. This principle may appear obvious once logico-semantic relations are built in to the SPEECH FUNCTION network, but it underlies the coding of ALL SPEECH FUNCTIONS. Even moves realized through interpersonal patterns of MOOD can only be coded in light of a prior move. Just as there is no such move as a JUSTIFY without a prior move to be justified, there is no such move as a CONTRADICT until there is something to be contradicted. As Hasan points out, the description of SPEECH FUNCTIONS therefore involves one not in coding acts, but in coding interacts:

the status of most acts is really the function of their interacts - and although we are labelling acts, the basis of the label is the interact. (Hasan in press:8)

As a result, the assignment of a SPEECH FUNCTION to a move is a statement that a relation (of dependency) exists between that current move and at least one prior move.

Thus the coding process leads to the recognition that the description of conversational structure involves the dynamic modelling of dependency, rather than constituency, relations. I will now consider what type of structural representation is appropriate to model conversational structure.

From SYSTEM to STRUCTURE: Exchange Structure Theory

Within the stratified approach, the structural account of conversation captured by the SPEECH FUNCTION description is supplemented by Exchange Structure Theory.

The motivation for positing the higher rank of EXCHANGE came from the observations that structural sequences very often consist of more than two moves, and that structurally related moves need not always be adjacent. In Chapters Two and Three I reviewed attempts by Coulthard & Brazil (1979), Berry (1981a, 1981b, 1981c), Martin (i.p/1989), and Ventola (1984, 1987) to handle these sequences by developing exchange formula, i.e. multivariate functional accounts of the possible sequencing of particular classes of moves.

The exchange formula proposed by Berry, and subsequently modified by Martin and Ventola was given as:

$$((Dx1) \wedge X2) \wedge X1 \wedge (X2f) \wedge (X1f)$$

However, in reviewing exchange structure I demonstrated a number of serious difficulties in applying such a model to the casual conversation under analysis:

1) Determining what fills an exchange slot. Exchange structure theory complicates existing problems with recognizing moves by introducing the move complex. I noted the tension in Ventola's work between the definition of the move complex as a paratactic clause complex, and the identification of the move complex as any logically related move sequence produced by the same speaker. The result is ambiguity as to the exchange status of sequences such as, for example, moves 9-11 in Phase 1 (how many exchanges?) or how to code a16-a24 (all one move complex?), or if not, how many exchanges?

2) Fitting the move sequences into the structural formula.

many of the move sequences in conversation do not conform to the "grammatical" sequences described by the formula, with the majority of moves falling "outside" the multivariate formula (for example, moves 5, 7, 8, and 12 in Phase 1 do not fill exchange slots). Martin uses these non-multivariately constrained moves to argue for a separate category of **dynamic moves**, currently recognising the two major classes of [challenging] and [tracking] moves. However, Martin's approach was criticised for failing to capture generalisations about the systemic opposition between [preferred] and [dispreferred responses], and its implicit assumption of the interference status of these dynamic moves.

3) Limited definition of the exchange. Because it is based on criteria of only modal relations between sequent moves, exchange boundaries do not capture observed continuity in conversational sequences. Thus, the concept of the exchange does not help to answer the fundamental question of move sequences: "Why this now?" (Schegloff & Sacks 1973/4:243). For example, the strict application of exchange structure criteria would mean treating both moves 1 and 2 in Phase 1 as independent exchanges (each k1 only); also move 3 would be a new exchange (k1), and perhaps also moves 7-9, and 12-a14. This fails to capture the continuity between move 3 and Simon's preceding remark; or that the way we make sense of Sue's remark in move 12 is by reference to the preceding sequence.

By limiting the exchange to a purely modal unit, defined only by potential ellipsis, all non-modal relations between sequent moves must be handled "outside" conversational structure, either through a macro-level of generic structure, or through cohesive relations. Yet each of these alternatives is problematic for casual conversation.

Firstly, as discussed in Chapter Three, much of casual conversation does not display generic structure (for example, Phase 1), leaving the work of capturing the continuity between exchanges to cohesive relations (lexical cohesion, reference, conjunction). However, whilst cohesive relations are textually explanatory, they are structurally non-predictive. Whilst cohesion allows us to look back and explain WHY or HOW a subsequent exchange has continuity with a prior one by enumerating its cohesive ties, we are unable to make dynamic predictions as to the classes of moves which may follow one exchange and maintain or create continuity.

Other problems with exchange structure raised briefly in Chapter Three included the knowledge/action distinction, and the status of specific exchange slots, such as Ventola's k1f slot. I suggested that the combined result of these problems with exchange structure was that the multivariate exchange formula proposed did not appear to "fit" the data, nor was it revealing as a description of interactional continuity.

However, the revisions and extensions to the SPEECH FUNCTION network in Chapter Six have already resolved or obviated some of these problems.

Firstly, the problem of the move complex has been resolved by recognizing the class of [continuing] moves and by integrating the logical component, thus allowing the SPEECH FUNCTION coding of all units identified as moves.

Secondly, the network developed in Chapter Six has integrated dynamic moves on the basis that modelling them as somehow "outside" the system fails to capture both their function and their frequency in casual conversation.

Thirdly, the integration of a logico-semantic dimension to the SPEECH FUNCTION network has resulted in the coding of both interpersonal and ideational dimensions to the continuity between moves.

Given that these three aspects have been integrated within the SPEECH FUNCTION network, and that the network generates dynamic dependency relations, it should already be apparent that there is little role in the description here for a higher rank of EXCHANGE. In fact, I would suggest that there are three reasons for abandoning the pursuit of a multivariate structural description of conversation.

Firstly, there is no apparent need to posit a separate rank, since much of the work of exchange structure has been built in to the SPEECH FUNCTION network. However, although abandoning a multivariate exchange description entails giving up the aim of generating formulae of "well-formed" exchanges, it does not entail giving up the aim of predicting and explaining conversational structure. Rather, since the enriched SPEECH FUNCTION network embodies a description of the systematic potential for coherent move sequences in conversation, it is no longer necessary to export this task to an EXCHANGE system.

Secondly, the imposition of a multivariate formula appears inherently contradicted by the dynamic dependency relations generated by the network.

Thirdly, there are four specific features of the dependency relations in move sequences in casual sustained talk that cannot be described within a multivariate model. These will be briefly outlined as justification for adopting a dependency-based representation, in the form of structural reticula.

Features of relations between moves

Two features have already been illustrated in the coding of Phase 1:

1) the existence of "janus" move classes: in conversation: it is frequently the case that moves depend on other moves but are themselves depended on. For example, moves 3 and 5 in Phase 1. A constituent-based formula cannot assign dual identities to constituents, but must decide to classify the relation either as one or other of its two functions.

2) cumulative relations between moves: some moves relate to more than one prior move: e.g. move 4. Constituents in multivariate structures are defined by their functions relative to the whole, and must therefore be assigned only one structural value.

In addition, two other features of conversational sequences which arise repeatedly during the coding of phases 2 to 4 of the continuous excerpt are problematic for a multivariate model.

3) multiple codings: some moves need to be assigned two different SPEECH FUNCTIONS, since they relate in different ways to more than one preceding move. For example, in Phase 2, move 12 relates both to George's prior move, as an [addition], and also back to Di's sequence in 5-7 as a [continuation]. This again is an obvious problem for a constituent-structure model which needs to assign single and unique function labels.

4) non-adjacency: some moves are not directly adjacent to the prior moves they relate to. Thus, for example, in Phase 2 move 3: George's [reaction] is separated from Simon's [opening] by Di's [reaction]. We have already seen the problems created by this factor in current exchange structure theory, with the separate classification of "dynamic" moves.

These features suggest that the appropriate structural analogy is not that conversational structure is like the structure of the clause, but rather that conversational structure is more like the clause complex or conjunction, concerned with:

relations between things, not relations within things. (Martin 1983:55)

It is this analogy between relations between moves and relations between clauses that suggests a more appropriate representation of structural relations may be found in the form of structural reticula.

Structural Reticula

Here, the alternative taken to the imposition of multivariate structural relations is to model move relations in the form of a reticula.

The use of reticula is taken from Martin (1983, i.p/1989:ch4), who himself adapts them from the Hartford Stratificationists (for a discussion, and references to the Hartford work, see Martin 1983:46 and i.p/1989:ch3).

Originally developed to describe temporal relations between processes, Martin adapts their reticulum notation to represent CONJUNCTIVE RELATIONS.

A reticulum consists of a central line of **unit numbers** (messages, in Martin's i.p/1989:ch4 analysis), arranged in sequence vertically down the page, related by dependency arrows (lines indicating the messages related and the direction of the dependency), so that in Martin's analysis:

Succeeding messages are shown to depend on preceding ones ...with an arrow indicating the direction of dependency. (Martin 1983:48)

Martin's adaptation of the reticula involved:

1) **Bipartite Division:** The fact that the line of unit numbers divides the diagram into two sides is given functional significance. On one side Martin represents [internal] relations, and on the other [externals], thus capturing the fact that many texts have simultaneous internal and external structure.

2) **Range:** to capture the fact that CONJUNCTIVE RELATIONS may obtain between more than a pair of messages, Martin uses a "ranging dependency" notation.

3) **Dependency:** Direction of the dependency is shown by the point on the arrow. Typically, dependency is retrospective, but Martin does recognize some instances of prospective dependency (e.g. internal temporal sequencing, see Martin 1983:51, Martin i.p/1989/4:91)

4) **Contiguity:** Whilst Martin notes that the unmarked case is for related messages to be contiguous, he also notes examples of discontinuity (Martin 1983:52, i.p/1989/4:92-3).¹

Conversational Structure Reticula (CSR)


Much of Martin's notation can be applied with minimal redefinition to the description of move relations, in the form of CONVERSATIONAL STRUCTURE RETICULA (CSR).

Thus, re-assigning the components of Martin's reticula:

1) **Units:** In a CSR, the units related are moves. Thus, a CSR consists of arranging move numbers vertically down the centre of the diagram. For example:

Move
1
2
3
..n

2) **Dependency Relations:** dependency relations between moves are captured through lines which link the relevant move numbers. For example:

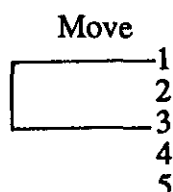
Move

1
2
3
..n

should be read as indicating that moves 1 and 2 are in a dependency relation of some kind.

¹ For examples of conjunctive reticula, see Martin (1983), and Martin (i.p/1989:ch4).

Relations are assigned by the SPEECH FUNCTION system. Thus, the theoretical position of SYSTEM as prior to STRUCTURE (Halliday 1981:15) is maintained, with the procedural consequence that the elaboration of the reticulum is dependent on the prior assignment of SPEECH FUNCTIONS to moves.

3) **Contiguity:** Whilst maintaining Martin's principle, that related moves will be typically adjacent, the reticulum can capture the fact that in the multiparty situation there is a fairly strong possibility of related moves not always being adjacent. For example:

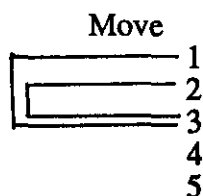


This diagram indicates that move 3 is related back to move 1, not to move 2.

7

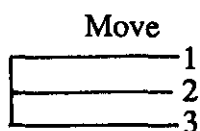
4) **Multiple Relations:** The reticulum recognises two possibilities:

a) multiple but different relations: that one move can enter into (different) relations with more than one other move. This is represented merely by multiple dependency lines with a common point of origin. For example:



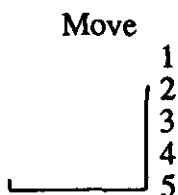
This shows that move 3 relates both to move 1, and also to move 2.

b) multiple but identical relations: that one move can be related to two (or more) prior moves, but in the same way.



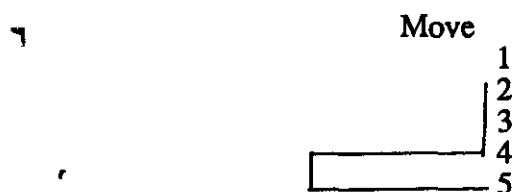
This shows that move 3 relates back to both moves 2 and 1 in the same kind of relation.

5) **Cumulative Relations:** that one move relates to more than one other prior move. Cumulative relations are represented with the same "ranging dependency" notation as Martin used (i.e. extending the dependency line along the inside of all related unit numbers). For example:



This should be read as indicating that move 5 relates cumulatively back to move 2.

However, since in conversation a move typically relates explicitly to an immediately prior one (e.g. a reaction is usually localistic), and then by implication to a sequence prior to that, this typical pattern is slightly modified as follows:

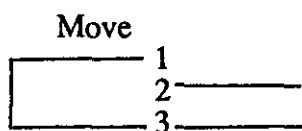


This should be read as indicating that move 5 relates directly to move 4, and then cumulatively back to move 2.

However, in order to simplify diagrammatic representation, the same principle observed by Martin (1983:49) will be adopted here; i.e. that in general, move relations will be represented as ranging over as few contiguous moves as possible.

6) **Direction of Dependency:** Since moves typically relate to prior moves (although framing moves may relate either to following or to both prior and following moves), directional arrows are not necessary to indicate dependency. They will instead be used with specific meanings, assigned within each particular reticulum, as discussed later.

7) **Simultaneity:** The reticulum recognizes the principle that one move can enter into two different relations simultaneously. (e.g. one on each side). Thus:



This should be read as indicating that move 3 enters into two relations, one on the left-hand side with move 1, and the other one the right-hand side, with move 2.

This last point raises the question as to the function or interpretation of the two sides of the "line" in conversational reticula. The alternative interpretations of this diagrammatic division discussed below will also enable the specification of the use and meaning of dependency arrows in the reticula notation.

Structural reticula for the continuous excerpt

One of the most useful features of Martin's reticulum is that it divides the page into two sides, separated by the line of unit numbers. For Martin, this separation is used to capture the distinction between [external] and [internal] conjunctive relations. Giving status to this particular opposition over other systems in the CONJUNCTIVE RELATIONS network itself embodies a claim that the distinction between rhetorical and "real world" sequencing is of fundamental significance in the organisation of text.

In determining the value this distinction should have in move relations, the SPEECH FUNCTION network suggests a number of primary oppositions which generate dependency relations; for example, the opposition of [opening] to [sustaining] moves, [continuing] to [reacting], [supporting] to [confronting], and [responding] to [rejoinder], for example.

However, in developing a description of move relations in "Dinner at Stephen's", it seemed that two of these oppositions have fundamental significance for a description aimed at capturing the maintenance of conversational continuity:

- 1) the contrast between [supporting] and [confronting] moves.

This essentially interpersonal semantic dimension of POSITION captures not only the relative amounts of different types of [reactions], but also allows the analysis of how the different [reactions] effect the structural sequence.

- 2) the contrast between [non-continuing] (interactive) and [continuing] (monologic) contributions.

This essentially logical semantic dimension of TURN-TRANSFER captures the role of different types of logico-semantic relations in sustaining ideational continuity, and in generating further talk.

It also seemed that ONE reticulum alone could not capture the relevant information generated by both these systems.

Appendix I displays the two separate reticula used to describe structural relations in the continuous excerpt. The preparation and implications of each type of reticulum will be discussed in turn.

Interpersonal Structure Reticulum (ISR) for the continuous excerpt

As can be seen from Appendix I, the reticulum of interpersonal structural relations between moves in the continuous excerpt is framed around the opposition between [supporting] and [confronting] moves.

The line of move numbers appears down the centre of the page, with the left hand side displaying [confronting] move relations, and the right-hand side [supporting] move relations.

Whereas Martin used labels to further describe the class of relations, the CSR employ a variety of different types of lines, keeping verbal information to a minimum. Whilst the general distinction of [responses] to [rejoinders] is captured as a difference between straight or squiggly lines, further sub-classes are also captured. The key at the beginning of Appendix I indicates the codes used.

¶ Although the reticulum focuses on the description of these [reacting] moves, a certain amount of information about both [continuing] and [opening] moves is also captured:

- 1) [continuing] moves are represented by a parenthesis linking central unit numbers, with additional notations as follows:
- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|---|---|
|) | linking move numbers | = | [continuing] moves |
| x) | | = | [checking continues] |
| .) | next to move number | = | [resuming continues]
(non-adjacent relation) |

The type and layering of [continuing] relations is not further specified, since it is captured on the logical structure reticulum elaborated below.

2) [opening] moves are indicated by printing the relevant move numbers in **bold**. In addition, [initiating openings] are also underlined.

Notes on the process of elaborating ISRs

To restate, the structural representation of moves is based on the SPEECH FUNCTION coding (i.e. the coding sheets in Appendix H). Thus, each move in sequence is assigned a dependency status, with reactions appearing either on the right or left hand side. The dependency line notation captures:

- the specific type of reaction (the more delicate SPEECH FUNCTION classes as noted above)
- the range of the dependency relation
- the referent for the dependency relation

Where there is any ambiguity in the SPEECH FUNCTION assignment (indicated as **alternative** codings on the coding sheets in Appendix H), only the **first** (more likely) alternative is represented in the ISR.

However, where moves receive **multiple** SPEECH FUNCTION assignment (indicated as **additional** codings on the coding sheets in Appendix H), **both** (or **all**) of the codings are represented in the ISR.

Where there is any ambiguity as to the range of a dependency line, a conservative position has been adopted, with dependency limited to contiguous moves.

Where there is any ambiguity as to the prior referent for a dependency line, a conservative position has been adopted, with the reference generally attributed to the nearest likely move.

Discussion of interpersonal structure

The schematic representation of move relations through the Interpersonal Structure Reticulum (ISR) provides an immediately accessible description of the interaction in terms of the interactants POSITION *vis a vis* each other's contributions.

The ISR thus makes it possible to compare and contrast the four phases of the continuous excerpt in terms of their interpersonal conversational structure.

Overall, the four phases display the four features which were used as a justification for the reticula representation, i.e.:

- 1) "janus" moves: each phase contains examples of moves which both relate to prior moves and are themselves depended on by subsequent moves;
- 2) cumulative relations: each phase illustrates that the dependency relation can range over a considerable number of prior moves.
- 3) multiple codings: most phases contain moves which enter into more than one dependency relation with prior moves, either on the same side or one relation on either side.
- 4) non-adjacent relations: most phases contains moves which are some distance from the prior move they relate to.

In addition, each phase reveals interpersonal structure on both sides of the line: thus, each phase involves both [supporting] and [confronting] relations.

However, the phases differ along a number of dimensions:

- a) the overall amount of interpersonal structure: Phase 3 has very little, whilst Phase 4 is very dense.
- b) the proportions of the different kinds of relation: Phases 1 and 2 both contain a significant amount of [supporting] relations, whilst Phase 4 is dominated by [confronting] relations.
- c) the complexity of the interactive structure: In Phases 1 and 3 relations are largely simple, adjacent and contiguous, whereas Phases 2 and 4 present more complex structural patterns, with both multiple, cumulative and non-adjacent relations.

These differences can be brought out by briefly discussing the structural representations of each phase.

PHASE 1

Phase 1 presents almost a balance of interpersonal positions, with 9 [confronting] and 8 [supporting] relations. It is not particularly dense, since of the 32 moves in the phase, 20 are involved in structural relations, leaving 12 not involved (=37.5% not involved). Structural relations are generally simple, with most relations between adjacent moves (or as close to adjacent as possible, given the participation of 4 interactants). In addition, most relations are contiguous, with only one ranging dependency relation (Sue's counter in move 12). Finally, there are no examples of multiple codings, although move 9 functions identically in relation to two different referent moves (a [response] to both Sue and George's [reviewing] moves).

As well as providing a summary of the interpersonal quality of this phase, the ISR also helps explain the interactional continuity that we perceive in "reading" this phase.

The phase contains 4 [opening] moves, 2 of which initiate dense interactive sequences. Thus, if we define an exchange as **all those moves linked by unbroken dependency relations**, we can see that moves 2 to a14 are all engaged in one exchange, and moves b15 to b19 another exchange. The structure of each exchange illustrates the typical "chain reaction" of conversation: moves are [reactions] to prior moves, whilst also functioning as [initiations] to subsequent moves. Although the range of the dependency relation in move 12 has been limited to only 3 moves (moves 11 back to 9), the interdependencies of moves 9 back to 2 captures the interactional continuity of this exchange.

The ISR says little about Di's extended monologic segment in moves a15-a26, which is one reason for supplementing the ISR description with the LSRs, discussed later.

PHASE 2

Phase 2 is not only much longer than phase 1, but also more densely interactive (35 out of 110 moves are NOT involved = 31.8%). Like Phase 1, it is almost exactly balanced between [supporting] and [confronting] reactions (29 to 27), which explains the impression we have of this phase as distinctly less confrontational than Phase 4.

However, the interpersonal structure is considerably more complex than in Phase 1. Whilst many relations are simple and adjacent, Phase 2 also offers examples of multiple relations, with for example moves 88 and 89 entering into both [supporting] and [confronting] dependencies.

In addition, this phase displays a greater range of [reactions] than in Phase 1, including numerous examples of [acknowledging] and [riposting] relations.

The impression of this phase as covering a number of different "topics" is also supported by the ISR. There are 18 [opening] moves, although only 8 of these are [initiating openings]. In addition, the reticulum reveals that the phase consists of a number of distinct exchanges. In particular, we see that the first part of the phase involves a number of separate exchanges, before settling down to more focused interaction in the long exchange of moves 37-64 (the section about Stephanie), becoming more fragmented again until the new focus of George's garbage behaviour is found to link moves 81 to 95.

PHASE 3

Phase 3 is of course very different from all the other phases, being largely monologically produced. Of the 29 moves, 22 are not involved in direct interaction (75 %). There are in fact only 3 [reactions] to consider: 2 [supporting], and one [confronting]. Whilst the [supporting reactions] are straightforward (adjacent and contiguous), Simon's [confronting rejoinder] is more interesting, since his [countering reaction] relates not just to the adjacent move, but back cumulatively to most of Di's preceding recount. Thus, this ranging dependency explains in part the continuity of his interactive interpolation into the monologue. However, it is obvious that the description of the interpersonal structure on its own tells us relatively little about what is going on in this phase. A clearer picture of how it is structured will emerge from the logical structure reticulum for this phase, presented later.

PHASE 4

This phase is both the most complex, and also the most interesting from the point of view of interpersonal structure. Our impression of this phase as being largely one sustained argument is partly explained by the interpersonal structural analysis. Firstly, there are very few [initiating openings] in the phase: only 2, in fact, thus suggesting that much of the talk is focused on a single topic.

Secondly, there is a striking domination of [confronting reactions], with only 21 [supporting] to 38 [confronting]. As a consequence, the types of [confronting] moves are more varied, involving not only [exploring rejoinders], but also a large number of [reviewing rejoinders].

In fact, in this phase we see an interesting dominance of [confronting rejoinders], with relatively few [confronting responses]. Given the definitions of [responses] and [rejoinders] developed in the previous chapter, this preponderance of [rejoinders] can be interpreted as indicating that this is an argument actively pursued and developed by the interactants, rather than one where they merely establish their position relative to another's.

On the other hand, the [supporting responses] in this phase display a preference for [upholding reactions], suggesting that whilst the confrontation is active, the support is fairly minimal. This would obviously further explain the fairly aggressive tone of this phase.

The ISR also illustrates how active argument in a multiparty situation can involve fairly complex positioning and repositioning. We find here a much greater number of moves than in other phases involved in multiple functioning on both sides of the line. This occurs particularly in the second half of the phase, where for example in move 59 we see Stephen [supporting] George, whilst implicitly [confronting] Di; similarly, in move 69 Sue expresses simultaneously [support] for Di and [confrontation] towards George; and later, in move 89 roles are reversed, with Di offering simultaneously [support] for Sue's explanation, and a [counter] to George's earlier [challenge].

This pattern of double functioning reveals the forming of allegiances in the argument, explaining our impression that in this phase we see a strong alignment of the women (Di and Sue) supporting each other against the counter attacks of the men (Simon, Stephen, George). The dynamics of this phase as revealed by the ISR are indeed fascinating. Whilst the phase may begin as confrontation in reaction to Simon, it quickly becomes a confrontation between Stephen and Di, with George actually supporting Di against Stephen. However, this momentary and unexpected allegiance between George and Di breaks down, as the argument becomes a confrontation of George against Di, with the other men coming in on George's side, and Sue eventually coming in on Di's side, until the final positioning along simple sexist lines.

However, whilst the ISR provides an explanation of the interpersonal manoeuvring in this phase, its explanation of the continuity of the phase is only partial. Whereas we might have expected that the argument involved only one or two prolonged exchanges, we actually find that the phase consists of a number of separate exchanges: moves 1-9, 16-30, 33-37, 40-45, 48-52, 56-62, 67-80, 87-98, and 114-end.

The explanation for this apparent interactional fragmentation is two-fold: first of all, the separate exchanges reveal the changing interpersonal allegiances being negotiated, as discussed above. Second, the continuity we perceive is in large part being carried by the ideational meaning: the fact that the argument is basically about the same topic. One indication of this already mentioned is the infrequency of [initiating openings]. However, to capture the logical continuity of the phase we need to supplement the ISR with the LSR, which will now be elaborated.

Logical structure reticulum for the continuous excerpt

As the above discussion has indicated, although the ISR captures a significant amount of structural information about move relations in the continuous excerpt, it provides only a partial account. Given its focus on the interpersonal dimensions of interaction, it does not fully display the role of logical meaning in structuring conversation. In particular, the ISR does not display the specific types of [pursuing], [continuing], or [rejoinding] options, represented through the logico-semantic "module", nor does it make clear which type of [confronting rejoinder] has been selected (i.e. [challenge], [counter], [question], [query]).

In order to capture the simultaneous structural contribution of these logical dimensions, I have elaborated a second set of reticula, with a focus on the logical rather than the interpersonal description of move relations.

A second reticulum is made necessary only partly because the reticulum would become unreadable if all the information were crammed on to it. A more significant justification for separate diagramming is that for logical relations the primary systemic opposition is not the same. That is, the value of the two sides of the line needs to be defined differently, to give priority to logical meaning.

Thus, whereas the interpersonal reticulum described move relations through a [supporting]/[confronting] opposition, the logical reticulum contrasts move relations in terms of their engagement in interaction, i.e. it contrasts the interactive with the monologic contributions to conversation. In terms of the SPEECH FUNCTION network, this means that the fundamental opposition is that of [continuing] to [non-continuing] move relations².

Thus, the Logical Structure Reticulum (LSR) presented in Appendix I divides the diagram into the two sides of [non-continuing] moves (on the left) and [continuing] moves (on the right). Again, dependency lines link moves with the prior move(s) to which they relate, and again the KEY accompanying the analysis describes the variety of different lines and symbols used to capture the following information:

Notes on the process of elaborating LSR

Like the ISR, the LSR are compiled by reference to the coding sheets in Appendix H. However, because the LSR concentrates on describing moves with a logical focus, it does not code interpersonally oriented moves, since these have been adequately handled in the ISR. Thus, [responses] (both [supporting] and [confronting]) are not displayed, but only [rejoinders]; for the same reason, [disengaging], [upholding] and [riposting] move relations are not repeated on the LSR.

² Note that the split is not simply one between [reacting] and [non-reacting] moves, since [opening] moves (which are "reactive") need also to be displayed.

This means that the LSR displays:

on the left-hand side:

- the type of [rejoinders] (both [supporting] and [confronting])
- the type of [pursuing openings] ([opening] move unit numbers are printed in **bold**, and [initiating openings] are also underlined)

on the right hand side:

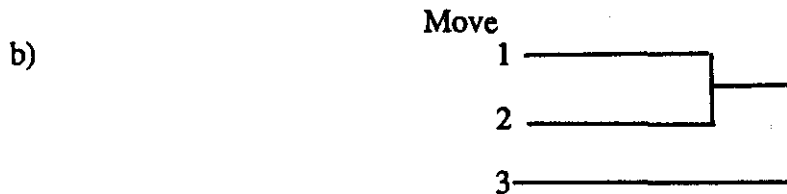
- the type of [continuing] moves

Principles for resolving ambiguities with both the referent and range of dependency relations are the same as for the ISR (i.e. nearest contiguous move wherever possible).

The diagramming of [continuing] moves in the LSR involves recognizing the possibility of LAYERING in reticula relations. Thus, both the following will be found:



This should be read as indicating simple sequential expansion: i.e. move 2 depends on move 1, and move 3 then depends on move 2.



This should be read as indicating layered expansion: i.e. that moves 1 and 2 are in a dependency relation, and move 3 then depends on both 1 and 2.

Layering is only represented where there is lexico-grammatical indication (e.g. in the above example, moves 1 and 2 constitute a clause complex, with move 3 conjunctively related).

Discussion of LSR of the continuous excerpt

The schematic representation of move relations through the LSR provides an immediately accessible description of the interaction in terms of the logical development of the talk.

The LSR thus makes it possible to compare and contrast the four phases of the continuous excerpt in terms of their logical conversational structure.

Two points of commonality that are immediately obvious from the diagrams are that:

- 1) each phase reveals logical structure on both sides of the line: thus each phase involves both [non-continuing] and [continuing] relations.
- 2) each phase reveals a very high level of logical structure: thus, very few moves in any phase enter into NO logical relations on one or other side of the line.

Both these observations support the claim that the analysis of logical relations between moves is critical to understanding how conversation is structured.

However, the phases also differ along a number of dimensions:

a) the specific amount of logical structure present: Thus we can distinguish Phase 3 in which ALL moves enter into logical relations, from Phases 2 and 4 where approximately 15% of moves do NOT enter into logical relations, and from Phase 1 where only 9% of moves enter into logical relations with other moves. This different role played by logical structure suggests that we can interpret Phase 3 as the most ideationally-oriented ("field-building") phase, with Phase 1 as the most interpersonally-oriented ("tenor-defining"), and with Phases 2 and 4 involving a blend of establishing positions and developing field.

b) the proportions of the relations on the different sides of the line: Again we can distinguish Phase 3, in which almost all the logical structure is on the [continuing] side of the line, from Phases 1 and 2 in which there is almost a balance (in Phase 1: 11 [non-continuing], 10 [continuing]; Phase 2: 35 [non-continuing], 33 [continuing]), through to Phase 4, in which there is a clear majority of [non-continuing] relations (40 [non-continuing], and only 34 [continuing]). This numeric indication of the "degree of interactivity" of the phases may be obvious for Phase 3, but provides useful evidence to support the impression that Phase 4 is indeed the most "interactive" of the phases, as well as re-emphasizing the point raised above: that "interaction" inherently involves monologue.

c) the dominating type of [continuing] logical relations: On the [continuing] side there is a difference between phases in which the ratio is [clarifying>qualifying>justifying] (phases 2 and 4), and Phase 3 in which the ratios are reversed: i.e. [justifying>qualifying>clarifying]. This captures the distinction between phases which focus on the identity and exemplification of information, from the phase which is focused on events and their sequence.

d) the dominating type of [non-continuing] logical relation: On the [non-continuing] side there is a cline in terms of a preference for [reviewing] (phases 2 and 4) or [exploring] (phases 1 and 3), reflecting a distinction between the phases which probe information, as opposed to those which either give it or take it as given. The implications of further interesting differences in the proportions of different sub-classes (particularly [challenges] to [counters], and [queries] to [questions]) are discussed below.

These differences can be brought out by briefly discussing the structural representation of each phase.

PHASE 1

Although Phase 1 reveals the lowest ratio of logical relations per moves, it does display almost a balance between [non-continuing] and [continuing] structure, capturing the alternation between monologue and interaction. The [non-continuing] reactions are dominated by [challenges] rather than [counters], suggesting the essentially negative aspect to the arguments that develop in this phase: interactants dispute each others propositions, rather than offering the more positive contributions of counter-propositions.

Di's monologic segment is also a blend of semantic relations, with [clarifying] moves dominating over both [qualifying] and [justifying] moves, though the numbers are perhaps too small to interpret. The pattern of layered move relations perhaps in part explains why she is allowed to hold the floor; it indicates the structure of her [continuing] segment is more complex than merely adding whatever she thinks of next.

There are no [pursuing openings] in this phase: [opening] moves initiate new directions in talk, rather than following up on prior talk. Thus continuity is created "locally" (through adjacent move relations) rather than "globally".

PHASE 2

Like phase 1, the logical structure in Phase 2 is more or less equally distributed on the [continuing] and [non-continuing] sides of the line. However, there is significant difference in the type of [non-continuing] relations preferred, with the highest proportion being [reviewing] moves (9), including both [queries] (5) and [questions] (4), followed by [counters] (5), and finally [challenges] (3). This dominance of [reviewing] moves indicates the exploratory nature of this phase, in which all participants can be seen to be learning new things about each other's lives. The preference for [counters] over [challenges] also suggests this phase is more forward looking than phase 1, with interactants developing ideational alternatives rather than dwelling on positions already presented.

In addition, the phase contains a high number of [pursuing openings], which explains our impression of this phase as covering a lot of "ground", but moving from one topic to another with continuity.

The monologic sequences in this phase are strongly dominated by [clarifying] moves (17), although there are also a large number of [qualifying] moves (11). This suggests the phase is largely concerned with both field establishment (sharing the ideational information), and field building (increasing shared information).

PHASE 3

Phase 3 is of course very different from all the other phases, with not only every move involved in logical relations, but the overwhelming majority of those moves as [continuing] moves. The action-event nature of Di's recount is clearly indicated by the proportionalities of [continuing] move types, with a dominance of [justifying] relations (9) expressing the time sequence, over [qualifying] relations (6), which add further stages, and [clarifying] moves least important (5). In addition, the relatively simply structural relations between Di's moves also indicates that much of her recount is merely dynamically added moves.

Although there are only two [non-continuing moves] in the phase, their role is important. Simon's choice to [counter] rather than [challenge] can be seen as largely responsible for generating Phase 4. The other [non-continuing] move is a [pursuing opening], by which Sue supports Di by trying to get her back to the "point" of her story, recognizing perhaps that further talk is largely on hold until the obligatory stages of the genre have been completed.

The LSR also illustrates the role of these interactive contributions in this phase in creating logical continuity: both [non-continuing] moves relate back not to single adjacent moves but to extensive segments of the recount, thus providing a link between the core (event) sections of Di's recount, and the type of interaction generated.

PHASE 4

Unlike the other 3 phases, in Phase 4 we find the dominance of [non-continuing] over [continuing] logical relations. This helps to capture the impression of this phase as the most highly "interactive" of the 4 phases. Of these [non-continuing] moves, the majority are [reviewing] options (12), Next most numerous are [counters] (10), followed by [challenges] (6). These figures provide clear indication of the very interrogatory nature of this phase. A break down of the [reviewing] moves is even more revealing, with 8 [questioning] moves (2 [verifying], 6 [protesting]), and 4 [queries]. Thus, unlike Phase 2, the concern in this phase is less with merely checking that (accurate) ideational knowledge is shared, but instead with actively disputing that knowledge.

Dominance of [counters] over [challenges] also indicates how the argument avoids becoming too repetitive, with the injection of counter propositions to expand the ideational base.

The [continuing] moves reflect a similar pattern to Phase 2, with a dominance of [clarifying] moves (15), indicating the concern in this phase with repeatedly restating one's propositions. However, the more equal proportions of [justifying] (8) to [qualifying] (9) moves reflects the greater emphasis in this phase on exploring the consequences and reasons for the things being talked about.

The [opening] move structure is again significant in explaining the continuity that underlies the interpersonal fragmentation in this phase, identified above. Although there are several [opening] moves (7) during the phase, 4 of these are [pursuing openings], i.e. logically related to prior talk. Thus, there is in fact very little changing of topic going on. In addition, the [pursuing openings] establish ties with very large portions of the prior talk, thus emphasizing not only the continuity between adjacent interactive segments but the more global continuity with ties the phase together ideationally.

A note on [checking] moves

Although [checking] moves have been displayed on the LSR, they do not in fact contribute to the logical structure of the conversation. However, since their interpersonal function involves either delaying or prompting interaction, they can be seen to fall mid-way between what the ISR and the LSR describe, and the decision to include them on the LSR was largely motivated by practicalities.

Since [checking] moves indicate the speakers concern with the progress and "health" of the interaction, they are perhaps more an indication of individual speaking style than a guide to general structural relations. For example, Di's relatively frequent use of checking moves (compared to either George, Stephen, or Sue, for example), no doubt relates to her generally tentative style in arguments.

Characterizing the structure of casual sustained talk

As the above discussion has tried to illustrate, the reticula notation offers an applicable, interpretable, and relevant representation of conversational structure.

The reticula are applicable because they capture the dynamically created dependency relations between sequent moves, allowing the representation of the bi-functional, multiple, cumulative, and non-adjacent nature of move relations in casual talk.

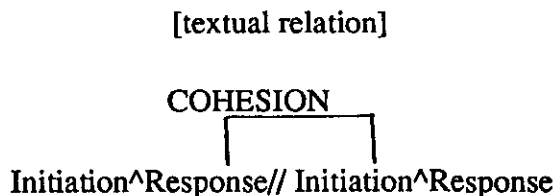
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The reticula are interpretable, because they provide a means of capturing the simultaneous realisation of both interpersonal and logical dependency relations between moves. The value of this is firstly to recognize that there are these two dimensions contributing to the structure of casual talk, i.e. the positional dimension of [confronting] vs [supporting], as well as the "interactional" dimension, of [continuing] to [non-continuing]. Secondly, the possibility of separating these two dimensions necessarily also highlights their points of contact and interdependence. For example, the role of move classes such as [challenges] and [counters] to link the interpersonal dimension of confrontation to the logical dimension of expansion; and the role of [continuing] moves, to create an ideational basis for interaction to explore.

Finally, the reticula are relevant, because they provide a means of characterising casual sustained talk. The description of conversational structure developed over the past chapters, and summarized in the structural reticula, suggests it to be a kind of talk characterised by:

- both confrontation and support: this challenges the general view of casual talk as close to "phatic communion", as well as justifying the integration of dispreferred move classes into the SPEECH FUNCTION network.
- both monologic and interactive segments: this challenges the view of interaction as one move/one turn, as well as justifying the integration of continuing move classes into the network.
- continuation rather than initiation: this challenges the view that the continuity of conversation is best handled textually rather than structurally, as well as integrating "dynamic" moves within the opening and reacting networks.

Overall, the picture of conversational structure that emerges from the reticula is quite different from that proposed currently within exchange structure theory. The exchange structure model interprets conversation as composed of sequences of multivariate exchanges (at base, the adjacency pair), linked cohesively, which can be schematised as:



However, the description of "Dinner at Stephen's" suggests quite a different schema. In the most informal terms, what appears to go on is that someone ACTS linguistically, by making either one or a logically related sequence of moves. Then someone else, or a number of other people, REACT, again by making either one or a number of moves. Then someone, maybe the original speaker maybe not, REACTS to the REACTION, and then someone else REACTS to the REACTION to the REACTION - and so on. So we end up with a basic schema something like this:

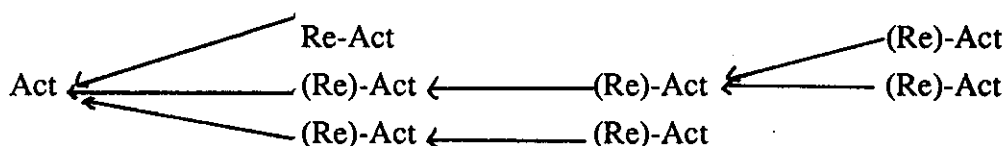


Figure 17: A schema of conversational structure in multiparty casual talk.

That is, looked at retrospectively, some ACTS are in fact (Re)ACTS to preceding ACTS. But, looking forwards, those same (Re)ACTS are in fact ACTS to succeeding (RE)ACTS. Thus, the basic structure is not only one of dependency, but one of potentially infinite continuation, as each RE-ACT can become a link in a conversational chain reaction.

How conversation keeps going

With this revised schema in mind, it is now possible to return to the original thesis question, and ask how conversation keeps going.

In part the answer is already obvious from the description of conversational structure elaborated above: conversation keeps going because it is structured to do just that. As the ethnomethodologists so astutely pointed out (e.g. Sacks et al 1974), the fundamental organisation of conversation is that of infinite (re)-generation. Reinterpreted semantically through the move and the SPEECH FUNCTION, rather than mechanistically through the turn, this infinitely generative capacity is seen in the type of move relations that characterize casual talk; relations which dynamically establish ranging dependency structures with what has gone before, whilst themselves becoming available as the "referent" of subsequent dependencies.

But the focus of the thesis on interactional continuity was based on redefining the research question as investigating not just how conversation keeps going, but how conversation keeps going and keeps making sense. The structural description developed here also offers an explanation of how continuity is created and sustained: through the simultaneous realisation of two types of structural relations, the interpersonal and the logical.

Conversation reveals on the one hand a "periodic" structure (cf. Halliday 1979), of clusterings of sequent moves into exchanges. These moments of dense interpersonal "anchoring" indicate the points during which positions are established across a dimension of support or confrontation.

However, these clusterings of interpersonal meanings are both surrounded and supported by logical continuities between moves. This background of ideational development indicates the simultaneous concern of conversationalists, to expand and explain, to give content to their talk.

It now becomes possible to interpret some of the specific structural findings from the continuous excerpt in light of this issue of continuity. When we ask why are there so many [queries], [questions], [challenges], [counters] in casual talk, the answer is fairly clearly: because they generate further talk. It is the [confronting reactions] which, by their janus structure, promote subsequent reactions, or provide new but related ideational directions. And when we ask why are there so many [pursuing openings], [supporting rejoinders], and [continuing] moves, the answer is again: because they sustain continuity. It is the module of logical relations which provides the ideational continuity essential to sustain the flow of talk.

Conclusion

This chapter has used the description of move relations in the continuous excerpt to characterize the structure of casual conversation, and in so doing to suggest a partial answer to the initial thesis question, of how interactional continuity is sustained.

The following very brief chapter offers both a summary of the contribution of the thesis, and a concluding interpretation of the description, by asking not how but **WHY** conversation keeps going.

8. Conclusions: Synthesis and Extension in describing casual conversation

Synthesis

This thesis set out to explore the question "How does conversation keep going?" Interpreted as involving the description of interactional continuity, the research focused on the linguistic description of structure in "Dinner at Stephen's". This necessitated the development of a SPEECH FUNCTION network and structural reticula to describe moves and move sequences in casual talk.

The principal contribution of this thesis has been to offer a semiotic interpretation of the organisation of turn-taking in casual conversation.

In presenting this functional-semantic interpretation of conversational interaction, the thesis provides a practical illustration of the synthesis possible between ethnomethodological and systemic functional approaches to conversation analysis.

That such a synthesis is possible should not be surprising, given the many points of commonality that can be identified in the two approaches.

There is, for example, a shared conviction that recognition of interactivity is fundamental to the description of conversation. The ethnomethodologists conceive of their task as involving:

the examination of conversational activities wholly from the point of view of the necessity for turn taking. The policy is to examine anything and everything in conversation to see in what ways it is affected by/responsible to the basic organisational fact that conversation is a turn taking pursuit. (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:314).

This centrality of interaction is echoed in Halliday's observations that:

The essential feature of text...is that it is interaction. The exchange of meanings is an interactive process, and text is the means of exchange. (Halliday 1987:139)

More specifically, Martin notes a number of shared concerns towards interactional continuity: i.e. notions of adjacency pairs as critical in structuring conversational sequences; recognition of sequences longer than pairs (e.g. through pre-sequences, and exchange structure); recognition that pairs can be interrupted (e.g. repairs, side sequences and insertion sequences, and "dynamic" moves); notions of markedness and congruence in preferred and dispreferred seconds, etc (Martin i.p/1989:45-46).

Another point of commonality is the concern with the relation between interaction and social context. There is a striking parallel between the predictability relationship that underlies the systemic concept of the register variables and the ECA description of the "audibility" of the "social situation" in talk, as formulated by Sharrock & Anderson:

the character of the social situation and the nature of the social relationships between the participants are audible in the talk. Give someone a transcript and they can, very often, get quite a definite sense of who the parties to the talk are, in what capacities they are relating to one another, what kind of personal relationships they have and a great deal more beside....One can do this by examining the way in which social relations are 'audibly present' in verbal exchanges, seeking to determine just what it is about a sequence of talk which makes it quite audible (say) a conversation between old friends, a student ringing a teacher at home, a member of the public calling an organisation in search of help or service? (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:317-318)

There is also a shared concern with the description of the dynamics of talk, with conversation as an unfolding, locally and co-operatively managed process. In addition, the ECA interpretation of interactive behaviour as "strategic interactive achievement" (Schegloff 1981) is closely related to the systemic interpretation of linguistic behaviour as goal-oriented, purposeful, and staged through the concept of genre (Martin 1984b, 1985).

Similar commonalities exist in the empirical approach to data. The ethnomethodological insistence on "naturally occurring" conversation is echoed in Halliday's position, that:

The data are the observed facts of 'text-in-situation': what people say in real life, not discounting what they think they might say and what they think they ought to say. (Or rather, what they mean, since saying is only one way of meaning.) (Halliday 1978a:192)

More specifically, the focus on casual conversation as a variety reflects both systemic and ethnomethodological convictions of the key role such "ordinary" talk plays in constructing, maintaining, and modifying the social reality. Halliday's assessment of its role in developing the language system:

It is in the process of spontaneous discourse that new meanings are made, and that our resources for making them - the grammatical and semantic systems of our language - continue to grow and develop. (Halliday et al 1985:32)

is closely related to ethnomethodological recognition that the greatest insights about both language and social behaviour are likely to come:

by paying to the most commonplace activities of daily life the attention usually accorded extraordinary events (Garfinkel 1967:1)

Taking these points of commonality as a basis, the research reported here has sought to extend the contributions of each approach in the description of conversational structure.

Extension

In the use of a naturally occurring conversation as data, and the presentation of both transcription and tape-recordings with the research, the thesis recognizes the strength of ethnomethodological empiricism.

In designing the research around the exhaustive analysis of a sustained, continuous excerpt from the "Dinner at Stephen's", the methodology also recognizes the truth of both Sacks' comment, that:

detailed study of small phenomena may give an enormous understanding of the way humans do things (Sacks in Atkinson & Heritage 1984:18)

And simultaneously that of Halliday:

Many things about language can be learnt only from the study of very long texts." (Halliday 1978:14)

By describing exhaustively a substantial and continuous excerpt from the data, I have sought to overcome the limitations of the somewhat fragmentary approach to data description characteristic of the ECA.

At the same time, the methodology represents the claim that, if Hasan's judgement of text analysis is correct in that:

interest in text analysis is a good means of making us aware of some of the most glaring misconceptions about language. (Hasan 1985c:118)

then this can only be achieved by the presentation and analysis of an extended, authentic excerpt of casual talk.

Although in many respects the contributions from each approach have been complementary, there are two points on which clear preference has been displayed.

Firstly, the description of conversation has been interpreted as a linguistic, not a sociological, exercise. In adopting linguistic procedures for focusing close-up on the lexicogrammatical and discourse patterns of the conversation, the research seeks to demonstrate that linguistic analysis provides a method which explains "how conversation means" (Halliday [in press]), and not just a method which highlights interesting features, or annotates what conversationalists are saying.

By anchoring description in the systemic function model of language, with its key components of **stratification** and **realisation**, the approach reinforces the systemic position that:

The linguistic analysis of text is not an interpretation of that text; it is an explanation. (Halliday & Hasan 1976:327)

The second point of preference, however, has been to take from the ethnomethodologists the priority given to turn-taking as the fundamental organising principle of conversation.

Whilst the dimension of interaction has always been recognized within systemic linguistics (as illustrated by the quotation from Halliday given above), the description of the interpersonal organisation of talk has tended to downgrade interaction by effacing the turn from accounts of SPEECH FUNCTION and conversational structure. The description developed here has re-positioned the turn at the centre of the analysis (through the definition of the move, and within the SPEECH FUNCTION network), thereby emphasising that the description of conversation is inherently tied to its nature as an interactive process.

The specific description of conversational structure elaborated in the previous chapters owes much to both perspectives.

From the ethnomethodologists comes recognition that the structure of conversation is inherently generative and open-ended (rather than multivariate and closed); through the concept of sequential relevance comes a means of interpreting continuity between sequent moves; and through the notion of the turn constructional unit comes an interactive interpretation of the move as a unit of conversation analysis.

From the systemic functional approach comes the basic model of conversation through the stratification of MOOD and SPEECH FUNCTION.

In extending the stratified approach to describe authentic, highly interactive casual conversation, the research drew on Halliday's description of rhythm and intonation to systematise prosodic criteria for move identification; in extending the SPEECH FUNCTION network to integrate "dynamic" or dispreferred moves, the description made reference to Halliday's description of logico-semantic relations; and in replacing a constituency representation of move relations with a dependency one, the model recognized systemic suggestions of the univariate, or "choreographic" structure of spoken language (Halliday 1985b:87).

My research suggests that what is often perceived as an incompatible "divergence of frameworks" (Sharrock & Anderson 1987:319) between linguistic and ethnomethodological approaches to conversation analysis is perhaps better described as a convergence of perspectives, presently obscured by the absence of a shared technical vocabulary; the most fruitful approach to conversation analysis will result not from arguments about the "demarcation of territory", but rather from the exploration of synthesis and complementarity.

Indeed, it seems likely that similar synthesis may be possible in the second aspect of conversational organisation identified but not explored in this research, i.e. its experiential, or topical, continuity. The description of patterns of TRANSITIVITY through systemic analyses such as LEXICAL RELATIONS (Martin 1984a, i.p/1989) COHESIVE HARMONY (Hasan 1984a, 1985c) provide techniques for identifying topic boundaries, and offer the means of developing explicit linguistic description of the dynamic processes of topic development identified by the ethnomethodologists.

The nature of conversational structure

Beyond establishing a theoretical and methodological complementarity, the descriptions presented in this thesis have, I believe, contributed to an understanding of the nature of conversational structure, at least as exemplified by "Dinner at Stephen's".

The classes of SPEECH FUNCTIONS and the representation of their relations in sequence, which gave priority to capturing the continuity of casual talk, revealed that conversation is simultaneously structured as consensus and conflict, implicating simultaneously interpersonal and logical semantic dimensions.

The exploration of difference

In Chapter One "Dinner at Stephen's" was identified as an example of casual conversation, defined through the power aspect of the Tenor variable as a variety of talk free from control.

However, the description of structure in "Dinner at Stephen's" suggests two different meanings of "casual" need to be distinguished to differentiate between two very different varieties of casual conversation.

One meaning of casual is that of "infrequent", "accidental", "undesigned". Ventola is using this meaning of casual when she defines casual conversation as the language used in face-to-face, everyday encounters:

where two or more participants meet without a specified purpose. (Ventola 1979:267)

As examples of such casual encounters she lists:

visiting, dropping by, meeting at parties, meeting in the street or in the cafe, waiting for a bus, etc. (Ventola 1979:267)

The goals generally ascribed to this kind of talk are summed up by Plum:

The goals of casual conversation are assumed to be interpersonal in nature, not experiential; they are to do with creating rapport, not with achieving knowledge or carrying out tasks. (Plum 1986:1)

However, before generalising these goals to all varieties of casual conversation, it is important to note the TYPE of interpersonal purpose served by such infrequent encounters.

When neighbours or strangers get chatting at the busstop, there may be no social stratification imposed, but neither is there any great emotional investment by the interactants in the outcome of the encounter. As Ventola suggests, language is being used to establish and maintain social relations between people. (Ventola 1979).

If casual/infrequent talk has these sorts of goals, it looks, as Ventola and others have suggested, very like Malinowski's description of phatic communion as:

a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words.
(Malinowski 1946:315)

But there is a second meaning for the term casual, that of "relaxed", "laid back", "informal". Using this meaning, casual conversation would be the talk that goes on amongst friends or family, for example at a dinner party such as "Dinner at Stephen's".

Such situations are characterized by not merely the absence of social stratification but also by relationships of familiarity and intimacy between interactants. Familiarity implies that interactants come together already having built up a rapport, founded on shared experiences. Intimacy means that the interpersonal dimension of the event is affectively loaded: these interactions occur with people you see frequently, whose positive evaluation of you is important, with whom you have already built up some emotional tie. The situation is not at all the same as the five minute chat with the neighbour at the busstop.

As the description of "Dinner at Stephen's" has illustrated, when we analyse the type of talk that goes on at a dinner party, it becomes less and less satisfactory to describe such talk as "phatic communion". The analysis of the dependency relations between moves (the conversational exchanges) in the continuous excerpt demonstrates that what keeps them going, what turns a sequence from a minimal adjacency pair exchange to a multiple-move sequence, is **NOT** the discovery of unity or accord, but, on the contrary, the discovery of **DISUNITY** or **DISAGREEMENT**. It is when information is **not shared** that it prompts [queries], [questions], [clarifications], [explanations], etc. It is when attitudes are **disagreed** with that talk gets [challenged] and [countered], [protested] etc. While union and rapport provide the foundation on which the conversation is based, the talk that grows out of this appears to be motivated by probing the limits of what is shared, and discovering what is not shared.

The solidarity that emerges at a successful dinner party such as "Dinner at Stephen's"¹ appears to result from having explored difference, having discovered partial likeness, and not from having found others to be "little synonyms" of ourselves.

¹ The evening was judged a success by all the interactants involved, not just by the analyst.

In the exploration of difference, we may find the motivation and mechanism for keeping the conversation going: difference, disagreement, and unshared experience generate talk.

If so, the analysis of "Dinner at Stephen's" suggests the importance of developing a typology of casual conversations, with which we may need to identify quite different interpersonal motivations. While the dimension of power provides a definition of casual conversation as a type, Poynton's (1984, 1985) two further Tenor dimensions of **affective involvement** and **frequency of contact** may provide systematic criteria for differentiating sub-varieties of that general class.

Such criteria would allow us to distinguish between what we might call **confirming** casual conversations such as "Dinner at Stephen's", where there is high affective involvement and high frequency of contact, and the **communing** conversations Ventola focused on, where there is low affective involvement and low frequency of contact; as well as **reunion** conversations, such as Horvath's data, where there is high involvement but low frequency of contact; and **customary** conversations, such as Slade's work-place conversations, where there is high frequency of contact, but low affective involvement.

Whether the motivational differences between establishing similarity and exploring difference discussed above can be associated with all four varieties, or whether we need to recognize further motivations (e.g. conversation as performance vs conversation as exchange) will only become apparent as more casual conversation data is systematically compared².

The simultaneous creation of Tenor and Field

While the register variable of Tenor provides an insight into the support/confront duality in "Dinner at Stephen's", the systemic notion of text provides a useful context within which to interpret the second duality: the simultaneous realisation of interpersonal and logical relations between moves.

Participants in a conversation can be described as involved in a dynamic process of creating text. While motivated by the exploration of interpersonal goals, this task implies the simultaneous creation of **both** an interpersonal reality (roles, relationships, attitudes), and an ideational world (people and events).

The description of interpersonal structure in "Dinner at Stephen's" has illustrated that the exploration of interpersonal goals involves both the exploration of attitudes (through the exchange of modality and modulation), and the exploration of relationships (through patterns of mood). Through the exchange and negotiation of these interpersonal meanings, interactants reveal their own positions, and establish their (role) relationships with the other participants.

² See Slade (1989) for a discussion of work-place talk as motivated by the exploration of similarity.

But in order to explore these interpersonal meanings, and to achieve these interpersonal goals, the conversation must have an experiential content, an ideational representation of participants and activity sequences (Martin 1984a, i.p/1989) through which attitudes and roles can be revealed. Thus we need to have introduced the participant "Courtney" if we are to be able to state our attitude towards him by describing him as "naughty, drunken, and antisocial".

In order to get ideational content into the conversation, while maintaining the continuity of the talk, participants draw on logico-semantic meanings. These meanings allow participants to introduce new topics to be explored, while relating what has just been talked about to what is being talked about now, and what may well be talked about next.

The achievement of conversation involves the simultaneous creation of Tenor and of Field. While the interpersonal dimension of Tenor (the exploration of attitudes and relationships) may provide the principal motivation which drives casual conversation, the ideational dimension of Field (the participants and activity sequences) provides the essential backdrop against which interpersonal positions can be articulated.

Casual conversation as a social process

In summary, we can interpret casual conversation as a process of making meanings, characterized by continuity, motivated by the exploration of interpersonal positions, and implicating the creation of both interpersonal and ideational relations.

This social semiotic interpretation of casual talk offers an explanation of why casual conversation keeps going.

It keeps going because the process of developing, maintaining, and exploring social relations is itself an open-ended one, whose goals can only be achieved in the achieving. For in casual conversation the goal is the process, and the process is the goal.

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