TALK IN INTERACTIVE EVENTS:
THE VIEW FROM WITHIN

by

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PREFACE

The bulk of this treatise is devoted to a detailed description of 12 Case Studies of Talk in Interactive Events (this expression is after Schegloff’s felicitous term 'talk-in-interaction'). It is published on the internet rather than in book form for two reasons:

1. A massive amount of analyzed data is more convincing of the validity of a given analytic frame of reference than the few examples usually allowed in a book.
2. This effort is not presented as a finished product but rather as a first step hopefully to be taken up by interested readers. The analyzed data in the Case Studies provide the context for linguistics or pragmatic analyses. They also provide a basis for the investigation of the relation between verbal and nonverbal behaviors in interaction.

Note that no data base schema has been elaborated for the Case Studies. Rather than having the text formatted on the basis of potential queries it is felt preferable to leave the formatting to individual initiative.

The Preface includes three sections:
(1) the data base for the study; (2) the analytical frame of reference; and (3) an introduction to the Case Studies.

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-fn1 Schegloff first used this term in a paper delivered at a Max Plank Institute Conference (1978), entitled On Some Gestures' relation to Talk (personal communication). The paper was later published in Atkinson and Heritage (1984).
I. DATA BASE

The title chosen for this treatise is an attempt to convey the orientation of the approach adopted here: The analytic frame of reference results from the systematic interpretation of participants’ accounts of their own behavior in the interactive events in which they are taking part. It is constructed by using the comparative method guided by the information provided by the participants acting as respondents. In my view, it is only through the utilization of “native” categories of information that the analyst can insure the psychological reality of his theoretical model. Participants’ accounts are part of a dual data base pertaining to a projective technique called the Self-Disclosure Technique for Ethnographic Elicitation (Mathiot, 1982). This technique was developed in order to get at the attitudes and concepts that members of the culture hold about familiar aspects of their environment.

When applied to Talk in Interactive Events, the dual data base consists of recorded interactive events and accounts of these events --verbal reports, written comments, graphic representation-- by participants serving as respondents. More specifically, the data base includes the following information:

1. An interactive event is recorded in its entirety, if possible both audio- and video-tape recorded. Then, a piece of it is selected for scrutiny by the respondent. It is called the specimen.

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The specimen is then transcribed. At this stage, no attempt is made at a narrow transcription a-la-Jefferson. Regular spelling is used. Instead of punctuation, breath groups are written on separate lines in order to better follow the thoughts of the speaker. The rationale for the broad transcription adopted here is that the transcript is only a convenient means of linking the participants' accounts to the interactive behavior occurring in the event. The analyst interprets, not the transcript itself, but the significance of the relation between the participants' accounts and their behavior. An example of Talk transcribed in breath groups, in Case Study 5 lines 12-23, is as follows:

| Mom to Leslie (12): so what does that have to do with grown-up (13): clothes? | Leslie to Mom (14): oh now I have grown-up clothes (15): I have grown-up shorts and grown-up shirts |
| Mom to Leslie (16): did you wash those? | Leslie to Mom (17): yeah |
| Leslie to Mom (18): pretty soon I’ll be getting a dress! (19): Joe said it was the wrong season to be getting a dress (20): ‘cause they look like they’re inherently drafty | Mom to Leslie (21): they’re what? |
| Leslie to Mom (22): inherently drafty | Mom (23): they are |

2. Accounts of the participants’ behavior are obtained from participants acting as respondents in two phases, a permissive phase and a focused phase. (1) In the permissive phase, the goal is to gain a foothold in the respondent’s view of the event. Respondents should feel free to say whatever they want. Only non-directive requests are made, such as: “Tell me whatever comes to your mind about…”.

Two types of accounts pertain to this phase: Recollection and Blow-by-Blow Commentary.

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Note that a narrow transcription a la Jefferson is pertinent in the microanalysis of interactive events (see further down under Analytic Frame of Reference).
a) The Recollection provides access to the mental image that respondents have of the event, the “scenario” for the event, the “structures of expectation” (Goffman). It is elicited without the recorded specimen, in response to requests, such as: “Tell me whatever comes to your mind about what usually happens in this type of event.”

An excerpt of Muriel's recollection in Case Study 4 is as follows:

we like talking to each other about stuff like that
it's good 'cause we get to vent out our frustrations
and we listen to each other
and help each other out

our lunch talks keep us pretty close
I guess
and days at work would probably be real slow
without them in between hours

b) The Blow-by-Blow Commentary gives a sportscaster-like account of the ongoing event. It is elicited on the basis of the recorded specimen. The respondent is asked to view and/or listen to the recorded specimen and respond to broad requests, such as: “Tell me anything that comes to your mind about what’s going on here.” There are two alternatives.
- The first alternative is for the respondent to stop the tape whenever he/she wants to say something and for the analyst to record his/her commentary on another tape.
- The second alternative is to have the respondent, working alone and at leisure, write his/her commentary on a copy of the transcript.

An excerpt of Theresa's Blow-by-Blow commentary about lines 1-8 in Case Study 11, is as follows:

okay I can tell you about that part
actually I was just being bored
I come in and tell all kinds of wonderful things when I'm bored so part of it was 'cause I was bored
and I wanted to have something to do
so I came in the kitchen
but these people really did want their seafoods in a hurry

-The second alternative is to have the respondent, working alone and at leisure, write his/her commentary on a copy of the transcript.

An excerpt of Eliot's comments in Case Study 5 (when his father starts the family car), is as follows:

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-fn5
Goffman, Erving
when his father starts the family car (lines 3+7-11)
Dad taking off slowly
when his mother and sister are talking about clothes (lines 12-23)
the females are talking about high fashion

(2) The focused phase is called the **Follow-up Interviewing**. In this phase, the goal is to obtain specific information in response to pointed questions, or focused requests, based on the knowledge gained in the first phase. Thus, the respondent is asked to segment the specimen into its major "parts", to fill in by giving examples, to characterize the information present in recollection and blow-by-blow commentary, to explain notions used in his commentary (for example: “What do you mean by ---?”; “Why do you think this happened?”).

The entire data base for the 12 Case Studies was collected by students under my guidance in a one-semester practicum on conversation analysis which I offered over a period of 20 years. It is used in this treatise with their permission and my grateful acknowledgement. Each student researcher chose an interactive event of his liking as well as the one participant who was to serve as respondent, usually a friend or a relative. The event was audio-tape recorded in its entirety by the respondent, usually without the knowledge of the other participants. Then, the specimen was selected by the respondent. It consists of a single piece—or several pieces— of the event, totaling no more than 6 to 7 minutes to provide a doable focus of study within the time frame available. The specimen was then transcribed by the student researcher who proceeded to elicit the pertinent information.

The student researchers did a first rate job of selecting, recording a variety of authentic interactive events and eliciting pertinent information. My interpretation of the theoretical significance of respondents’ accounts is entirely dependent on the richness of the data base they elicited. The shortcoming in the data base are due either to circumstances or poor guidance on my part.

-- Two shortcomings in the data base due to circumstances are: the lack of visual input and the fact that in 11 out of the 12 Case Studies, only one participant per case study serves as respondent.
Within the confine of the course as taught, there was no way interactive events could have been videotaped. The students had neither the training, the time or the tools to do so. The lack of visual input has one negative impact: Whenever there are more than two participants it is difficult to ascertain the participation statuses (Goffman 1981, p.137)\(^6\) of the participants other than the speaker, especially the statuses of addressee versus listener. Respondents do not usually pay attention to this aspect of talk (an exception is the respondent in Case Study 7).

Because of time constraints each student researcher could only work with one respondent per Case Study except for Case Study 3, the one Case Study in which both participants serve as respondents See Mathiot, 2013\(^6\).

One shortcoming in the data base due to poor guidance on my part is the under utilization of follow-up interviewing. The data were collected at a very early stage in the development of the theoretical frame of reference, when it was unclear what direction to pursue. As a consequence, much pertinent information was not elicited. In keeping with the approach adopted here –theory building in the descriptive approach— I now view follow-up interviewing as the opportunity to test the generality of the existing analytic frame of reference and to collect the pertinent information to modify it, if necessary. This view requires that the analyst remain in close contact with the respondent over the entire course of the analysis for occasional consultations, which I was able to do to a certain extent for Case Study 1.


\(^6\)' Mathiot, Madeleine Individual Variation in Participants' Accounts of their own Interaction, Semiotica, 2013
II. ANALYTIC FRAME OF REFERENCE

Synopsis

When requested to account for their own interaction, participants do so from two viewpoints: a subjective viewpoint, manifested as the Interaction Climate, and an objective viewpoint, manifested as the Verbal Flow Structure. The focus here is on the Verbal Flow Structure. It consists of basic units, Verbal Flow Stretches and SubStretches, and the constitutive units making up their internal structure.

- Constitutive units are differentiated as follows:
  The basic distinction is that between Nucleus Units versus Satellites. Nucleus units have three slots: Entry, Core and Exit. Entry and exit are optionally filled. The core is always filled, as the core unit conveys the information defining the sequence.
  The core unit may be constituted by a single unit or by a Core Unit Proper and one, or several Extensions.
  The core unit may have two types of satellites: (a) close satellites, Back Channels and Remarks; and (b) distant satellites, Incidental Queries.

- Constitutive units have three main participatory statuses: Monologue, Dialogue and Multilogue.
The activity of Talk in interactive events is understood here as a complex bundle of simultaneous verbal and nonverbal flows commonly co-occurring or alternating with various other activities (such as smoking, eating, drinking, washing the dishes, cooking, driving the car, walking), in interactive events that reflect the socio-cultural norms of the culture at large (such as a dinner with the family, a staff meeting of a home-care office).

An overview of the constructs proposed for the analysis of Talk in Interactive Events, is as follows:
The primary distinction is that between two **ANALYTIC PLANES**: **PLANE of INTERPRETATION of TALK**, the “what” is being constructed by the participants, focus of Macroanalysis; **PLANE of ENACTMENT of TALK**, the “how” it is done, the make-up of the “what”, focus of Microanalysis.  

1. On the Plane of Interpretation, one additional distinction is made, **VIEWPOINTS**. The interpretation of the “what” is done from two viewpoints: an objective viewpoint, “what’s going on”; and a subjective viewpoint, “what’s really going on”. This distinction yields the two basic analytic constructs on this Plane: **VERBAL FLOW STRUCTURE** and **INTERACTION CLIMATE**.  
   -The notion of Verbal Flow Structure corresponds to the objective viewpoint. It is the obvious, the taken for granted, because shared by the participants as members of the same culture.  
   -The notion of Interaction Climate corresponds to the subjective viewpoint. It is the participants' “personal experiencing" of the event (Goffman, 1974, p.13).

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*fn7* The implication of this distinction for the order in which the investigation of actual cases is to proceed, is as follows: first macroanalysis, then, microanalysis to be performed within the context provided by the results yielded by macroanalysis.  

*fn8* The distinction was phrased this way by a respondent  

2. On the Plane of Enactment a three-way distinction is proposed to account for the organization of the verbal and nonverbal flows entering into the make-up of Talk: **SEMIOTIC, RHETORICAL and KINETIC**
- The semiotic organization of Talk has to do with the tools --systems, inventories, displays-- used to convey information. The linguistic system is one such tool. Other semiotic tools are: paralinguistic phenomena; kinesic phenomena, such as gestures and gesticulations; gaze; posture.
- The rhetorical organization of Talk has to do with the manner in which the information is presented: patterns, devices, resources etc. It is an aspect of process.
- The kinetic organization of Talk has to do with its biologically based properties, such as rhythm and synchrony. For instance, a man is eating a piece of pizza at the dinner table. As he talks with his family, he wipes his hands in synchrony with each break in his talk.

A graphic representation of the constructs proposed for the analysis of Talk in Interactive Events, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANALYTIC PLANES</th>
<th>VIEWPOINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plane of Interpretation (the “what”)</td>
<td><strong>Objective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macroanalysis</td>
<td><strong>Subjective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane of Enactment (the “how”)</td>
<td><strong>Verbal Flow Structure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microanalysis</td>
<td><strong>Interaction Climate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>semiotic, rhetorical, kinetic organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of verbal and nonverbal flows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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fn10
Note that for the microanalysis of the verbal and nonverbal flows, both visual and auditory inputs are needed as well as a very narrow transcription of all behaviors.
The focus here is on the analytic constructs pertaining to the Verbal Flow Structure. In addition, a number of analytic constructs were developed in two areas:

1. the Interaction Climate, namely, the specification of its various manifestations (not enough information was present in the data base to uncover their organization);
2. the rhetorical organization of Talk (only a partial accounting is given because I needed closure for this study).

Analytic constructs in these two additional areas are now briefly presented in turn, before the detailed description of the constructs pertaining to the Verbal Flow Structure.
INTERACTION CLIMATE

The notion of Interaction Climate is manifested in two modes: Interactive Mode and Reactive Mode.
1. The Interactive Mode has to do with the way participants relate to each other, the interpersonal dynamics between them. Three manifestations of this mode observed in the Case Studies, are: Strategies, Participants' Alignments and Interactive Tone.

(1) Strategies have to do with the various means employed by the participants to achieve particular goals. Examples of commonly used strategies in the Cases, are:
Learning Strategies, used by participants in Case Studies 1 and 12; Support Strategies, used by participants in Case Studies 1 and 2; Anxiety Reduction Strategies, used by both participants, in Case Study 3.
(2) Participants' Alignments (Goffman 1981, p.128) are manifested in two forms, individual and group-oriented.
   a) The individual manifestation has to do with the Closeness/Bonding versus Distance that people feel toward each other.
   Thus in Case Study 2, there are intermittent occurrences of closeness which the respondent calls “connects” while the rest of the time he feels distant, “self-absorbed”.
   b) The group-oriented manifestation has to do with the Power versus Solidarity relations obtaining between the members of a group.
   Thus, again in Case Study 12, the roles played by MrE and Ernie signal a power/solidarity alignment between them. The roles of employer -- employee, teacher -- learner, father -- child are based on unequal status and signal a power relationship between them. The reciprocal roles of companion are based on equal status and signal a solidarity relationship between them.
(3) The notion of Interaction Tone has to do with the quality of the interaction. It is usually characterized in terms of an opposition between light versus heavy/serious:

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fn12 Note that both forms of participants' alignments can apply at the same time. Thus, Gordon (Gordon, David P (1983) Hospital Slang for Patients: Crock, Goners, Gorks and other, Language in Society 12, 173-185) shows how slang used to refer to patients by doctors and nurses in a hospital environment, serves to enhance solidarity between hospital staff members (group-oriented mode) while allowing the individual members of that group to preserve a certain distance from each other (individual mode).
a) A relaxed, more superficial, less intimate type of interaction is associated with a **light** tone.
b) A tense, more personal, more substantial type of interaction is associated with a **heavy/serious** tone.  
Thus, in Case Study 1, the tone is consistently lighter in the dining area and heavier at the bar, because of all they imibe.

2. The Reactive Mode has to do with characteristics attributed to individuals by the respondents. Three manifestations of the Reactive Mode are observed in the case studies: **psychological states, character traits** and **attitudes**.

1) Psychological States are the feelings experienced by the participants in the course of the interaction. Examples are: exasperation, incredulity, concern, excitement.

2) Character Traits are the characteristics attributed to participants—what they are like—to account for their behavior.
Thus, in Case Study 7, Sheila’s father explains her behavior to himself as due to the fact “she is afraid of commitments but afraid of being alone”.

3) Attitudes are the evaluative stances taken by the participants: approval versus disapproval.
Thus, in Case Study 8, the Mother is constantly evaluating what her Son tells her: either approving of it (“I feel he used his food money wisely”), or disapproving (“I don’t think he should have more hours”).

Note that, at this stage, no conceptual apparatus has been developed for the analysis of the various manifestations of the Interaction Climate.
One attempt was made in the case of Psychological States (see Mathiot et al, 1986).  

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SOME RHETORICAL PATTERNS

An initial foray into the rich area of inquiry that is the rhetorical organization of Talk, yields a number of patterns very similar to the processual information favored by conversation analysts. Following are three patterns commonly occurring in the data base:

1. The first pattern has to do with the presentation of new information.
Typically, new information is presented in 3 steps: a preparation for the new information; the new information; and an elaboration of the new information. Thus, in case study 12, MrE’s informing is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1: preparation for informing:</th>
<th>2: informing proper:</th>
<th>3: elaboration of informing:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(6) let me explain to you</td>
<td>(7) I’ve never gotten this far with this company before</td>
<td>(8) and I don’t want to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The second pattern has to do with the answer to a yes/no question.
Typically, the answer includes 2 parts: affirmative/negative; and echoing the question.
Thus, in Case Study 10

K’s query is:  
(159) is he medicaid?

M’s response is:  
affirmative:  
(169) yes  
echoing question:  
(161) he is medicaid

In Case Study 9

D’s query is:  
(1) should I shake up first?

A’s response is:  
negative:  
(19) no  
echoing  
(19) I don’t think you need to
3. The third pattern has to do with the organization of narratives. Typically, a narrative has two parts: Part 1 is the background/set up; and Part 2 is the conclusion/climax/point of narrative. Thus, in Case Study 9, D tells a horror story about his class being observed the day before a vacation:

1: narrative set up
   (96) one year I got observed
   (97) the day before Thanksgiving vacation
   (98) and the day before Christmas vacation

2: point of narrative:
   (114) I got three days but nobody shows up on those days
VERBAL FLOW STRUCTURE

It consists of basic units and the constitutive units making up their internal structure.

BASIC UNITS

Basic units are the smallest autonomous interactive units. Ascertaining them requires two steps. The first step consists in identifying prospective basic units, the Verbal Flow Sections. The second step consists in specifying how many basic units, Verbal Flow Stretches and/or SubStretches, each Section contains.

1. VF SECTIONS

They are obtained as follows:

First the respondent is asked to segment the Talk occurring in the specimen. Then, the respondent's segmentation is systematized by the analyst on the basis of two orders of criteria: criteria differentiating the individual verbal flows present in the specimen; and criteria for segmenting individual verbal flows into VF Sections.

(1) Criteria Differentiating Individual Verbal Flows

Three criteria jointly differentiate individual verbal flows. They are: Type of Talk, Modality of Talk and Focality.

a) The notion of Type of Talk has to do with the overall content of Talk.

Examples of Types of Talk in the Case Studies, are:
- CHIT-CHAT, SOCIAL TALK, FAMILY TALK = talk as a way of relating;
- WORK-RELATED TALK= talk directly connected with one’s work;
- ACTIVITY-RELATED = talk involved in the performance of a specific activity unrelated to one’s work, such as paying toll, parking the car;
- INFORMATIVE TALK= talk conveying some specific piece of information unrelated to one’s work or the performance of an activity, such as, asking where the license plate of a car going by on the thruway is from;
- REGULATING TALK= talk aiming at controlling someone’s behavior, such as chiding someone;
- EMOTING TALK= talk expressing one’s emotions.
b) The notion of Modality of Talk has to do with the way in which Talk is anchored. Two common Modalities of Talk in the Case Studies, are: displaced (Hockett, 1966, p.11) and here-and-now.

- In the displaced modality, Talk is anchored in reality but removed from the immediate spatial and temporal environment. Thus, in Case Study 5, Father and Daughter talk about a church in Albuquerque.
- In the here-and-now modality, Talk is anchored in the immediate spatial and temporal environment, the here and the now. Thus, in Case Study 5, Son and Daughter advise Father as he parks the car.

c) The notion of Focality has to do with the importance attributed to a piece of Talk. Usually respondents differentiate between two manifestations of focality: focal versus marginal, in which focal means important and marginal means unimportant.

Occasionally, respondents make more refined distinctions. Thus, for one respondent in Case Study 5 the focal member of the opposition is manifested as 3 degrees of importance, namely, primary, secondary and tertiary.

An example of how the 3 criteria jointly differentiate 7 individual verbal flows in case study 5, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VF1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Talk: CHIT CHAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modality of Talk: displaced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focality: focal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VF2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Talk: CHIT CHAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modality of Talk: fictitious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focality: focal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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-fn15
Note that it is likely that more Modalities of Talk will be uncovered as additional data are processed.

-fn16
(2) Criteria for Segmenting Verbal Flows into VF Sections

They vary in keeping with the modalities of talk, as follows:

a) In the case of the displaced modality, as many sections are segmented out of a given verbal flow as there are separate topics, agenda items or stages in a process. Thus, in case study 4, the subtopic Muriel's diet (lines 115-135), is the criterion for segmenting Verbal Flow 2 into VF2 Section (115-135). The subsubstage Justification by Muriel (44-75), is the criterion for segmenting Verbal Flow1 into VF1 Section (44-75).

-b) In the case of the here-and-now modality, a section is segmented out of a given verbal flow which constitutes the verbal response(s) to a given triggering agent. Thus, in Case Study 11, VF1 Section (9-21) corresponds to the response to the triggering agent, need for more chicken soup.
2. VF STRETCHES and VF SUBSTRETCHES

They are obtained as follows:

The information present in the VF Sections is specified on the basis of Illocutionary-Force-like notions\textsuperscript{17} called \textbf{semantic schemas}. As many basic units are differentiated per VF Sections as there are semantic schemas required to specify the information present in it.

Commonly occurring semantic schemas, are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic Schema</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>query + response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>directive (demand, order)+/- response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offer+/- response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advice +/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>informing +/- response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>telling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reminder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rebuke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admonition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exclamation of surprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exclamation of pain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Semantic schemas serve to ascertain the number of basic units in a given VF Section, as follows:

(1) In the case of the displaced modality, the common pattern is to have a single semantic schema, therefore a single basic unit, per VF Section. Thus, in Case Study 5, the information conveyed in VF1 Section (12-23) is specified by a single schema, Mom asks Leslie about grown-up clothes. To this semantic schema there corresponds a single basic unit, VF1 Stretch (12-23).

\textsuperscript{-fn17}

Occasionally, two very closely related semantic schemas are required to specify the information present in a given VF Section. Thus, in Case Study 5, the information conveyed in VF1a Section (24-93)+(98-105) is specified by two semantic schemas: Dad tells Leslie about a church in Albuquerque, and Leslie describes the church to Dad and Mom. These two semantic schemas define two basic units: VF1a Substretch (24-81) and VF1a Substretch (82-93)+(98-104).

Very rarely, three very closely related semantic schemas are required to specify the information present in a given VF Section. Thus, in Case Study 9, the information in VF Section (21-95) is specified by three very closely related semantic schemas: A's first attempt to inform the group about a visit by observers; A's second attempt to inform the group about the visit by observers; and A's third attempt to inform the group about the visit by observers. These three semantic schemas define three basic units: VF Substretch (21-54); VF Substretch (53+55-69); and VF Substretch (70-94).

(2) In the case of the here-and-now modality, the common pattern is for one triggering agent to give rise to several responses, each response being specified by a semantic schema. Thus, in case study 11, in the VF1 Section (9-21) the triggering agent, chicken soup, gives rise to two sets of verbal responses specified by the semantic schemas: Tania asks Sally for more chicken soup; and George attacks Sally for being slow with the soup. These two semantic schemas define two basic units: VF1 Substretch (9-13) and VF1 Substretch (14-21).

INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF BASIC UNITS

The constitutive units making up the internal structure of the basic units are differentiated on the basis of two types of criteria, structural statuses and participatory statuses.

Structural Statuses
The basic distinction is that between Nucleus Units (the main line) and Satellites (excursions away from the main line).

The information conveyed in nucleus units occurs in three interrelated parts: first, a brief announcement of the gist of the matter; then, the gist proper; and finally, a brief acknowledgement of its termination. This corresponds to three sequential slots: Entry, Core and Exit.
The core is always filled as the core unit develops the information specified by the semantic schema that defines the sequence as a whole. The entry and the exit are optionally filled. They function as brackets (Kendon, 1977) for the core unit. Both brackets, when present, are by the same participant: Whoever initiates a sequence with an entry unit also terminates it with an exit unit.

Examples are:
The first four VF Stretches in Case Study 8 illustrate the significance of the presence versus absence of brackets.
In Stretch 1, initiated by Mom, both brackets are present:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENTRY: Mom (13): okay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mom asks if he got his paycheck which she sent him in the mail (14-16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORK:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son answers in the affirmative (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXIT: Mom (18-19): okay you got that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son (20): uh huh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Veronique Traverso, a student of Catherine Kerbat-Orecchioni, uses identical notions ("ouverture", "cloture" and "corps") in her investigation of French everyday conversation. See her La Conversation Familiere, Analyse pragmatique des Interactions, Publication of l'UMR 5612, groupe de Recherche sur les Interactions Communicatives, CNRS-Universite Lumieres, Lyon 2. Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1996.

Note that Schegloff and Sacks' notions of 'opening' and 'closing' apply to parts of what is here regarded as the 'core'. See Emmanuel Schgloff and Harvey Sacks, Opening up Closings, Semiotica VII/4, pp289-327. 1977.

In Stretches 2 and 3, also initiated by Mom, only one bracket is present in each case.

In Stretch 2, only the exit is present:

| CORE: Mom asks Son if he has received another item she sent him (21-22) | Son answers in the affirmative (23-24) |
| **EXIT: Mom (48): okay** |

In Stretch 3, only the entry is present:

| **ENTRY: Mom (49): and** |
| CORE: Mom tells Son that she picked up his clothes (49-53) | Son is pleased (54) |

In Stretch 4, initiated by Son, no bracket is present:

| **CORE: Son informs Mother that he got a new jacket (55-60)** |

In Case Study 8, the presence versus absence of brackets seems to be a question of interaction style and information flow. Mother’s style is leisurely: She always uses one or both brackets. Son’s style is abrupt: He does not use brackets.

The presence versus absence of an entry, for a participant who usually uses brackets like Mom, relates to the continuity or discontinuity of what is being talked about:
- The absence of an entry indicates the continuity of the information present in two contiguous stretches.
  Thus, in Stretch 2, Mom is pursuing a topic similar to the one in Stretch 1: what she has sent Son. In Stretch 2 she is mentioning another item that she just sent.
- The presence of an entry indicates the discontinuity of the information present in two contiguous Stretches.
  Thus, in Stretch 3, Mom is starting a new topic: she informs Son that she picked up his clothes.

The presence versus absence of an exit relates to the way the transition between stretches is effected:
- The presence of an exit in Stretch 2, is a normal transition for Mom.
- The absence of an exit is Stretch 3, is an abnormal transition for Mom: Son is taking over.
Core units are constituted by a single unit or by a **Core Unit Proper** and one or several **Extensions**.

Extensions are initiated by the ongoing main speaker or by an addressee. Extensions initiated by the ongoing speaker observed in the data base include a large variety of **Pres**.\(^{20}\)

An example of a short Pre is:
In Case Study 4, Louise is ready to forgive Muriel for having taken a day off work. She starts her informing of the good news that she made extra money with a Pre responded to by Muriel:

```
Pre to Announcement:
    M1: L (89): one good thing did come of it though
    M2: M (90): what's that?

Core Unit Proper: Announcement
    L (91): I made $1500.00 in sales
```

An example of a long Pre is:
In Case Study 5, Dad asks his daughter Leslie a series of three questions (26-39) about a church she visited when she was in Albuquerque, as a Pre to his informing her that he heard on the news about a church that sounds like the same one (40-56).

**Pre to Announcement:**
Question 1: Was the church new?
Question 2: How many people did they start with?
Question 3: How many people do they have now?

**Core Unit Proper:** Announcement
'cause ..... 

Extensions initiated by the addressee observed in the data base include **Co-Constructions** and **Solicitations to Repeat**.
An example of a Co-Construction is:
In Case Study 2, Peter is telling Bonnie how excited he is at the prospect of leaving Buffalo. Bonnie finishes his sentence for him. He acknowledges Bonnie, and goes on with his narrative:

**NUCLEUS + Extension**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D1: P to B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CORE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Unit Proper:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) it tells you that I’m excited about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Co-Construction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (10): uhhuh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10): leaving Buffalo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P (11): yeah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Unit Proper:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) and go some place else</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An example of a Solicitation to Repeat is:
In Case Study 8, Son asks Mom about his brother Dan and his wife Audrey. Mom does not hear the question. She asks Son what he said, and Son repeats his question:

**NUCLEUS + Extension**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M1: Son to Mom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CORE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Unit Proper:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>initial formulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solicitation to Repeat</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mom to Son (248): pardon me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repeated formulation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son to Mom (249): how’s Dan and Audrey?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core units and satellites are in a hierarchical relation to each other: Core units are in the foreground and satellites are in the background. There are two types of satellites: (a) close satellites, Back Channels and Remarks and (b) distant satellites: Incidental Queries.

Back channels have to do with the participants monitoring their interaction rather than conveying substantive information. Three types of back channels occur in the Case Studies: (1) Contact Exchanges, initiated by the ongoing speaker to affirm his contact with the addressee. (2) Continuers, initiated by the addressee to affirm his attention to the ongoing speaker (the term is from Schegloff\textsuperscript{21}). (3) Information Receipts, affective responses on the part of the addressee upon receiving some information (this is an extension of the term used by Heritage\textsuperscript{22}).

\begin{footnotesize}

\end{footnotesize}
An example of a contact exchange is:
In Case Study 8, Mom asks Son if he watched the Bills' game. He tells her that he did and that the Giants lost. At which point, he utters the following Back Channel responded to by Mom:

**NUCLEUS** | **SATELLITE**
---|---
**CORE**
M2: Son to Mom

**BACK CHANNEL**
Son to Mom (228): good
(229): huh?
Mom to Son (230): yeah
(231): real good

An example of an information receipt is:
In Case Study 8, upon hearing that Son has received the parcel she sent him, Mom reacts as follows:

**NUCLEUS** | **SATELLITE**
---|---
**CORE**
M2: Son to Mom

**PHATIC QUERY**
entry: Mom (25): oh
M1: Mom (26): did it really?!
core:
M2: Son (27): yeah
exit: Mom (30): oh super!
Examples of information receipts and continuers are:

In Case Study 3, as Georgina tells Gabrielle how the astrological charts she did for her boyfriend turned out, Gabrielle punctuates Georgina's description with a series of information receipts and continuers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUCLEUS</th>
<th>SATELLITES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ge:</td>
<td>(116)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(117): you did? (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(118): (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(119): that's cool! (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(120): (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(121): that's cool! (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(122-124): (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(125): wow! (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(132): (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(133): oh no!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(135-136): a Capricorn! (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(137): yeah (continuer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(138): uh-huh (continuer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(140-141): (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(142): that's cool! (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(143): (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(144): that's great! (information receipt)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remarks are commentaries on the information conveyed in the core unit. They are initiated either by the addressee or by the ongoing speaker.

An example of a Remark by the addressee, is:
In Case Study 4, Muriel is describing her relationship to her boyfriend. Louise expresses her longing for such a relationship in her Remark acknowledged by Muriel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUCLEUS</th>
<th>SATELLITE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CORE</strong> M2: M to L</td>
<td><strong>REMARK</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**L** (178) I wish I could have a normal evening like that  
(179) with Charley  
(180) without an argument blowing up  
(181) it must be nice  
**M** (182) yeah  
(183) I guess so  
(184) we don't really have anything to fight about lately  
(185) things have been relatively pleasant

An example of a Remark by the ongoing speaker, is:
In Case Study 9, A is circulating refreshments. At one point, she suggests that they should thank the person who provided them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUCLEUS</th>
<th>SATELLITE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CORE</strong> M1: A to J</td>
<td><strong>REMARK</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A** to all (7) be sure to thank him for it when he...
Incidental Queries are excursions away from the main line. They are initiated either by the addressee or by the ongoing speaker.

An example of an Incidental Query by the addressee is:
In Case Study 5, Leslie talks to her mother about her clothes. Mother’s Incidental Query to her is whether she has washed them.

An example of an Incidental Query by the ongoing speaker, is:
In Case Study 3, Georgina is telling Gabrielle about her having had her astrology chart made. At one point, she checks on Gabrielle's knowledge of astrology.
Occasionally, an Incidental Query may itself have a nucleus unit and a satellite. Thus, in Case Study 11, Emily’s Incidental Query, itself a Satellite (111-121), has a Nucleus and a Satellite. The Nucleus is the query by Emily to Tania regarding how to block a draft in their fireplace (111-113), and George’s response as to how to do so (114-115+119). The Satellite is a Remark by Tania to George to the effect that his suggestion is irrelevant because the fireplace in question is gas, not wood burning (120-121).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUCLEUS</th>
<th>SATELLITES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CORE: T to E</td>
<td>INCIDENTAL QUERY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M1: E to T (111-113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M2: G to E (114-115)+(119)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REMARK T to G (120-121)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participatory Statuses**

Participatory statuses differentiate constitutive units on the basis of three criteria involving the participants: **number of speakers, interactional roles of speakers and relative weight of speakers**

The three criteria enter into the following algorithm:

1. If there is only one speaker, the unit is either a **Univox/Monologue** or a **Quasi Exchange**, depending on the addressee's response.
   - In a Univox/Monologue, there is no observable response from the addressee. Univoxes are very short. Monologues are medium long, or very long.
   - In a Quasi Exchange, there is a nonverbal response by the addressee.

An example, in Case Study 12, is:

E to MrE: (86): I need money for the toll booth  
(86'): MrE gives money to E
(2) If there are more than one speaker, the distinctive characteristic is the interactional roles of the speakers: whether there is an **alternation** of two, or more, speakers playing the same interactional role, or a **permutation** of one speaker by another playing a complementary interactional role, like that of questioner and responder.

If there is an alternation of speakers, then the unit is a **Multilogue** (Duo, Trio, Quartet, Quintet).

An example of a TRIO is the Ritual Lament about N’s actions in Case Study 9:

| Round1: Lamentations by D and A |  |
| T1: D (156-7) | T2: A (163-4) |
| Round2: Lamentations by D and A |  |
| T1: D (166) | T2: A (167-8) |
| Round3: Lamentations by D and S |  |
| T1: D (170) | T3: S (171-2) |

(3) If there is a permutation between two speakers, the distinctive characteristic is the relative weight of the speakers: whether or not they are on a par with each other.

- If both speakers are on a par with each other, then the unit is a **Dialogue**.
- If the 2 speakers are not on a par with each other, as when the second speaker only acknowledges what the first speaker says, then the unit is a **Dyad**.

An example in Case Study 8, is:

```
Mom (38): that was fast then
Son (40): yeah
```

A graphic representation of the algorithm for the participatory statuses of constitutive units, is as follows:
Constitutive units characterized on the basis of the participatory statuses are represented in the following formats:

In the case of Monologues, Univoxes and Quasi Exchanges, nothing is indicated.

In the case of Dialogues and Dyads, each occurring Exchange is indicated with its two members, M1 and M2.

In the case of Multilogues, each occurring Round is indicated with a list of the participants active in it, as follows: D1 and D2, for Duos; T1, T2 and T3, for Trio; Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4, for Quartets etc.
III. INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDIES

The 12 Case Studies are grouped on the basis of the relation existing between the participants. This yields three main groupings: Cases Studies in which the interaction is taking place between intimates (family members or friends); Case Studies in which the interaction is taking place between coworkers at the workplace; and Case Studies in which the interaction is taking place between intimates who are also coworkers.

I. INTERACTION BETWEEN INTIMATES (family members or friends)

Case Study 1: Golden Girls of Hamburg: Three Women at a Bar
Case Study 2: Once a Therapist, always a Therapist
Case Study 3: Man Troubles Talk: Two Housemates Shoot the Breeze
   (Ga's account; Ge's account)
Case Study 4: Reconciliation
Case Study 5: Driving to Toronto with the Family
Case Study 6: Back from the Bridal Shower
Case Study 7: Dinner with the Family
Case Study 8: Mother and Son on the Telephone

II. INTERACTION BETWEEN CO-WORKERS AT THE WORKPLACE (informal and semi-formal)

Case Study 9: A Meeting on Campus
Case Study 10: A Weekly Staff Meeting of a Home Care Office
Case Study 11: In the Kitchen of the Koinonia Cafe

III. INTERACTION BETWEEN INTIMATES WHO ARE ALSO CO-WORKERS

Case Study 12: A Productivity Meeting on the Thruway
In order to preserve the anonymity of the participants the student researchers’ names are not associated with the individual case studies. Thirteen student researchers collected the data base for the 12 Case Studies, two of them working with each of the two participants in the same specimen, Case Study 3.

The thirteen student researchers, listed in alphabetical order, are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brian Bunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Jakobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeline La Porta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Marie Malachowski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Malecki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Mc Carthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monica Milleron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rai-An Perrish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donna Rubens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krista Stanisland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Strainey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather Weber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Zelie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information provided in each Case Study is as follows: It starts with a Background Information before proceeding to the description of the Verbal Flow Structure and ending up with a brief presentation of the information relevant to the Interaction Climate.
I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
information available about event, participants, respondent(s) and place of the specimen in the event.

II. VERBAL FLOW STRUCTURE

A: SEGMENTATION OF TALK IN SPECIMEN

1) RESPONDENT'S SEGMENTATION
   + Transcript of Talk in specimen as segmented and characterized by respondent.

2) ANALYST'S SYSTEMATIZATION OF RESPONDENT'S SEGMENTATION: VF SECTIONS.

3) COMPARISON between ANALYST'S and RESPONDENT'S SEGMENTATION.

B: BASIC UNITS
   Each VF Section is examined in turn in order to ascertain how many basic units it contains. Then, the internal structure of each basic unit, and the partial rhetorical organization of Talk in their respective cores, are described in detail.
   For each VF Section:
   1) RECAPITULATION of what is known at this stage:
      a) analytic specification of VF Section
      b) transcript of Talk in VF Section

   2) ASCERTAINING THE BASIC UNITS through semantic schemas

   3) DETAILED ANALYSIS of each basic unit:
      internal structure with partial rhetorical organization of fillers of core

III. DATA FROM RESPONDENT’S ACCOUNTS PERTAINING TO INTERACTION CLIMATE