On the Poetics of Ordinary Talk

GAIL JEFFERSON

This article is based on a talk presented in 1977. Harvey Sacks, the founder of Conversation Analysis, had been killed in a traffic accident in 1975. Without his extraordinary presence the field seemed to be becoming defined by a paper published in 1974, "A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking in conversation." The 1977 talk was specifically directed to loosening up people's sense of the sort of work done in the field of Conversation Analysis. Among his abundant and wide-ranging interests Harvey Sacks had been exploring (and eventually discussing in his lectures) various aspects of a phenomenon which somewhere along the line came to be called "poetics"—most roughly, that occasionally, talk appears to be produced at least in part by reference to, e.g., sounds and associations. Many of Sacks' students found the phenomenon appealing and began to contribute not only further instances of things he had considered, but new possibilities as well. The result was a mountain of roughly-sorted materials. The 1977 talk was a rather casual guided tour of a selected sample of those materials. This article is a more considered and elaborated version of that talk.

FOREWORD

A few years back my friend and colleague Robert Hopper sent me an edited transcript he'd made of a talk I'd given a long time ago on the poetics of ordinary talk. Mercifully he didn't send the tape as well. It was had enough reading even an edited version of the sort of exuberant but not terribly coherent romps I do when I'm not constrained by the printed page. Robert wanted to include it in a special issue of Text and Performance Quarterly focusing on poetics, to come out early in 1993. He was asking me to go over his draft, maybe locate some missing data. I was happy for him to publish the thing, but told him to please get rid of my excesses. His answer, "My dear, if I get rid of your excesses there won't be anything left." (I'm going to try to work that into my epiphany: something like "Here she lies, rid of her excesses at last.") But even with a forgiving eye, some of it was badly garbled. I was forced to dig through a heap of old notes to see what I could have been trying to say. The result is that I've missed the journal's deadline by a good two years, but have come up with a rewrite in which I've tried for coherence without too much loss of the spontaneity captured in Robert Hopper's transcript.

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The talk was given at the Boston University Conference on Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis in June, 1977. It was then a year and a half since Harvey Sacks’ death, and the field of Conversation Analysis was coming to be identified almost exclusively by reference to the Sacks et al. paper “A simplest systematics for the organization of turntaking for conversation” published in 1974. As an antidote to that drastically constricted version of the field, I decided to present the wild side; stuff which we’d pretty much kept to ourselves and played with as a hobby. The stuff was wild, not only in its content, but in its lack of organization or development. It was, and still is, a big heap divided into not terribly descriptive or generative sub-heaps. In the years since that Boston conference I’ve gotten nowhere with it. It’s remained a hobby, I’m still picking up cases, but that’s as far as it goes. I present it now in the spirit I presented it back in 1977; an expression of the wild side of Conversation Analysis.

THE BOSTON TALK (AS IT NEVER WAS)

0. Introduction

This is not a paper. I don’t know if there ever will be a paper. But we keep collecting these phenomena. And I think it’s about time just to show some of the kinds of stuff we’re collecting.

So the talk will be casual, a sort of guided tour through the data. The terms I’ll be using are casual, the organization of the cases into “types” is casual—don’t hold me to any of it, it’s all just to show how this stuff keeps on turning up—the poetics of ordinary conversation.

Somewhere around 1966 Harvey Sacks dropped a note on my desk. It went like this:

With regard to the issue of word selections by reference to sound patterns, the question is, where to begin?

One possibility is with rephrased repetitions: the second variants might exhibit such patterns in a way that would allow attribution to the pattern to be made.

’s breaking my folks
My insanity’s breaking their bankbook
B-K form perhaps relevant to “bankbook” usage

Hone Gail check this out

That’s the note. And here’s the data that the B-K case came from:

(0.1) [GTS:1:2:1]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>Hey you have a hole in yer shoe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>heh Doohin’ tell me. hhh heh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>This place cos’ too much money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken</td>
<td>(Can’t afford buy shoes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>(2 sec)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roger: → ’s breaking mah folks. (2 sec)
Ken: ahahah!
Roger: → My insanity’s breaking their bankbook.

Reading Sacks’ note I thought oh yeah! Sound repetition. Sure! And began to think where would I look to find a phenomenon like that? And what occurred to me was estimated and fanciful numbers. They’re not controlled by a need to be exact. I remembered one bit of talk that went “Nineteen minutes right on the nose.” It came from the same group therapy session for teenagers that the B-K case came from. This is a bit later in the session. A couple of minutes earlier one of the kids, Al, had predicted that Louise would arrive soon. Sure enough, she does, at about eight minutes into the session.

(0.2) [GTS:1:2:12:R]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>“h AHH::hee!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>I toldju I toldju.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(door closes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>Nineteen minutes! Right on th’ nose.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I collected a bunch of those, and then we branched out and collected things like puns and rhymes. It was so easy to gather that I got the feeling that this kind of study must have been going on forever. It couldn’t be new with us. So we started checking out some of the literature. Judy Davidson had a lot of stuff on psychotics that she was using for a project on schizophrenic talk, and ran off some copies for me.

I developed an enormous affection for one guy, W. L. Woods, MD. In his studies of psychotic talk he seems to have a sense for what he called “the living language.” That is, you don’t run tests on people to see how they talk and how they make words, you talk to them and you listen to them and you pull it out of the talk. And you get a kick out of it.

He also had another line. The interesting thing about this kind of talk was that you’d listen to it and try to take it at face value, try to make sense out of it. And that was one of the problems of listening to a psychotic. You could be led to do this because the talk is, as Woods put it, “clothed in the formal structure of speech.” Now, Woods was talking about sentence structure, and he kept insisting this talk is put into these beautiful sentences, and because the sentences are so perfect you don’t see that there’s all these noises, clangs, associations going on. The pathological phenomena are disguised by the formal structures of talk (Woods 312-13).

I figure we can just adapt that, and say that all the interactional structures we’re learning about can be disguising those phenomena in the same way that sentence structures do. So I’ll be introducing you to Dr. Woods, and to these phenomena.

There are two features I want to talk about.

1. The objects (words, phrases, etc.) out of which people build their talk are made of sounds.
2. A lot of these words and phrases belong to more than one category.
It's pretty much figured that all these wonderful mixtures of sounds and meanings are the provenance of poets who make it their business to work out, to seek, to really endeavor to find just the right word. I pitched a poem by Paul Valery out of one of Sacks' folders of sound phenomena. It's in French, but I got together with the overseas contingent of folks at this conference, and they came up with this translation.5

I'm looking for a word (said the poet)
a word which should be:
feminine, of two syllables,
containing P or F,
with a muted ending,
and synonymous with splitting, disintegration;
and not scholarly, not rare.
Six conditions—at least!

That's the poet's job. The arrangement of sounds and categories. Now you look at pathological talk, the psychotics and their clangs and associations, about which people say, well you have all these crazy things going on. What is the difference between what the psychotics do and what the poet does? It seems that sheer effort has to do with it.

As Woods describes the process: "The patient progresses from one...word to another by associations determined by similarities in sound, category or phrase" (Woods 295). He notes about a particular pathological activity which I'm adapting as a generic observation:

...there is probably nothing pathological about [it] as a purely subjective phenomenon. Introspective observation will verify that we are prone to do it...What is pathological is the tendency to incorporate such autistic productions without any endeavor to translate them into a form which considers the needs of a listener. (Woods 302)

With his observations on "the needs of a listener," it seems that Woods was beginning to glimpse what we talk of as "recipient design," a central feature of talk. There was Woods in 1938 in a hospital in Iowa City, talking with patients and thereby finding interactional requirements. And in reading his reports you can see that he was delighting in the fact that he could pull this stuff right out of the living talk.

Now, it is Woods' complaint that those psychotics will not try to design their talk for listeners, while we might say that the poet makes just that his life's work. And when we look at the arrays of sounds and categories in the conversations of ostensibly non-poetic, non-psychotic, ordinary people, we begin to see that just such "autistic productions" are incorporated into a form which does take into consideration the needs of a listener. That is, their produced with an eye to the various rules of competence and conduct by which conversation proceeds. Ordinary people neither reject the task nor make it their life's work. They just get it done.

What follows is a rough sketch, displaying a few of the phenomena we've found—what we talk of as the poetics of ordinary talk. What I'm going to do won't replicate how this stuff was found. I'll be starting off with utterly simple instances, working up to the more complex, when in fact some of the earliest cases were horribly complex. And all of what I'll be saying, please do treat as nothing more than a glimpse of phenomena which are yet to be systematically collected and described. As I said at the start, the categories I'm using here don't deserve to be taken seriously; they're a way to try to subdivide the heap.

1. Errors.

I start with errors because they are places where the conversation's surface is already broken, so we can see a little way inside and begin to catch sight of the phenomena. That is, there is in the first place a problem about seeing these things. They inhabit otherwise ordinary talk; are embedded in those syntactical and sequential structures. Again, as Woods puts it about psychotic talk, the phenomena are "disguised by the clothing of sentence structure," where "the productions, because of their formal structure, have a plausibility which does not stand up before closer scrutiny" (Woods 294, 300).

It turns out that for some of the things we'll be looking at, the same is true for the talk of normals. There are phenomena which only emerge when the surface "plausibility" is pierced. And it makes it easier when the surface is already disturbed for us, as is the case with errors. So we'll be using errors as a window into some of the mechanisms by which words are selected in the course of an utterance.

1.a. Sound-Formed Errors.

I'll start off with a few instances we've collected of speech errors that involve sound rows.3

(1.1.a) [Crandall Show]

in what areas?

Here we get a row of sounds, a [k]-row: kuh, kuh, kuh. "art[ic]le," "[qu]ote," "[C]atholicism." Then we get the sound "kuh"—possibly starting the word "country." But this is abandoned and replaced with "areas." So "kuh" is being treated by its speaker as some sort of error. It is possible that the word "country" was begun, not because the speaker originally thought it was the right word, but because it started with the noise "kuh."

(1.1.a.2) [SBL:1-1:9:1:R]

Audrey: 'hhh en [1-1] [w]ill uh be: up that [w]ay [w]n-(-) uh Thursday.

Here, a [w]-row is in progress, "[w]ill," "[w]ay," and at the point that a day is to be named, out comes another "[w]," possibly a start on "Wednesday," abandoned and replaced by the word "Thursday."

And here's one more, an [s]-row. Asked by her sister Emma what time she'll be leaving for her drive to the desert, Lottie produces an [s]-row, "Probably-[seven] [seven thirty or [s]omething." Emma then asking when Lottie will be
back, looks to be starting and abandoning the [s]-begun "Saturday," replacing it with "Tuesday."

(1.a.3) [NB:IV:4:R:8]

Lottie: Prob'ly. "[slv'n, slv'n third yer
[slvmp'n vilhkarw.
Emma: "Yee a h."
Emma: "I won't take yuh lo vibng.
Lottie: "Hmp."
Emma: "Lah-uh."
Lottie: "Take me."
Emma: "En yu'll be home lah-uh Tues.""udee.

Working through these sorts of materials you get a sense of a piling up of noises, kuh kuh kuh, wuh wuh, suh suh suh, and that those very noises are beginning to choose among possible next-to-be-uttered words. So if we were to examine the talk with an interest in why the errors were made, we could come up with a process, sound-selection. A tendency for sounds-in-progress to locate particular next words. In these cases, words are treated by their speakers as wrong, and replaced.

That seems straightforward enough. It begins to get tricky when we find errors which we would perfectly happily characterize as products of the sound-selection process, but where the participants (speakers or recipients) have gotten in advance of us with an altogether different analysis. Not sound-selection, but something of deep psychological significance, Freudian Slips.

Here's an instance taken from a radio call-in show. The host is now reading out a commercial for suits, "Bond's Blue Chips."

(1.a.4) [Crandall Show]

B.C.: [Big, big beautiful] savings from America's largest clothing. [Big]h Bond's.
Blonds, my goodness. Wuh that's a Freudian Slip.

In this instance there's a double sound-row underway, [b] and [l]. And now there's a projected two-word [b]-row, the first word of which is [b]-vowel (Bond's), the second of which is [l]-vowel (Blue). Call it a CV/CCV alternation. In classic tongue-twister fashion, the projected double consonant occurs first, yielding instead of "Bond's Blue," something moving towards "blonds boo."

Now that CV/CCV reversal turns out to be a standard phenomenon. For example:

(1.a.5) [News broadcast]

Announcer: Bonavista would not; [flight] flight [Flloyd] Patterson.

Here, "...flight Floyd..." becomes reversed and is starting to come out as "flight floyd." Another:

(1.a.6) [Football broadcast]

Announcer: Staubach goes back in a [dřep]-[deep] [drpl]opback.

That is, "...deep drop..." becomes reversed and is starting to come out as "drep dop."

Looking at these three cases we can see a similar sort of CV/CCV reversal, yielding instead of "Bond's," "blonds," instead of "fight," "flight" and instead of "deep," "drep." One of them is treated as something noticeable, characteristic, significant, a Freudian Slip. The other two are not dealt with in the ongoing talk, but might well be characterized by their speakers and recipients as Tongue Twisters, and understood as having no psychological significance.

Interesting. It looks to me we've got two categories (Tongue Twisters and Freudian Slips) selectively applied to cases of a single phenomenon.

Here are a couple more which were seen at the time as Freudian Slips. I was among the recipients of the first one, as a passenger on a plane which has just made a very rough landing. The stewardess, delivering her standard spiel says:

(1.a.7) [GJ:FN]

Stew: On behalf of the whole [f]ight [f]light [c]rew I'd like to thank you for flying Air California.

"Fright," and how! Freudian Slip! Lots of nudging and grinning among us passengers. But then I thought, no, it's one of those sound-selection things. As with drep dop, blonde boo, flight floyd, here we were on the way to "fright cloo."

In this next instance, something I would attribute to a sound-produtional foul-up is treated as a Freudian Slip. Here, during a heated interchange in the course of negotiations between representatives of a civil rights organization and the Bank of America back in 1964, the word "bank" is produced in a subsequent word, which should be "stacks," comes out rhyming with "bank" to make the word "stank."

At this point in the talk, the civil rights representative has once again raised the issue of the bank "discriminating against" Negroes, and "systematically excluding them" from the work force.

(1.a.8) [CORE/BA:5:29-30]

Cross: Are we doing that.
Bauemont: Gentlemen in the past you uv done it.
Cross: [Pause]
Bauemont: [And while], [While].
Bauemont: It was your company is scared et this moment.
Cross: " You said yerself the past did not count."
Bauemont: While, this company is scared et this moment.
Cross: [SCA: RED.]
Cross: Oh God in heaven.
Bauemont: Well.
Gross: [He said] we a g i:n.
Bauemont: [this feg:] [Yes].
Bauemont: [feg:] you know I jus' kind'v assume that a
large comp ny like th'Bank' v America thet
s'tank, stacks dozens of gr'ned uh =
is to pull it out and raise the possibility of its operation" (Sacks 2:325). Seems to me it makes sense to push the stuff, keep pushing at it, see how far it might go. You can always pull back to a more cautious, reasonable, sensible position. But when you're doing this explorative work, go ahead and push.)

Okay. Those were a few of our collected sound-formed errors. Some can get pretty fancy, some of them look like Freudian Slips and aren't, and that last one may have been brought on by the avoidance of a Freudian Slip.

I just want to notice about those cases, that where the category Freudian Slip was applied (either by participants or, as in the last, "avoidance" case, by myself as analyst), the talk was particularly ripe for such work; it had to do with Sex ("big beautiful blondes"), Fear ("fright crew"), Hostility ("the bank that stank"), Race ("both blacks in there blocking"). It's as if, in the first place, they qualify as candidate Freudian Slips, and are then duly noticed as Freudian Slips. So, if it can be a Freudian Slip, see a Freudian Slip.

But what if it isn't a reasonable candidate? What about "dread dop" for example? It looks to me that such errors are not at all subject to the same sort of accounting as are the candidate Freudian Slips. A while ago I called them Tongue Twisters, but you don't find participants using that account except in drastic cases. These fleeting mixups, like "dread dop," pass without notice. And it takes special analytic work to discover that in the first place there is a large corpus of sound-formed errors, a few of which can be seen as having psychological significance and therefore are so seen, whether or not they actually have such significance.

When I first started playing around with speech errors in 1968 or thereabouts, anybody I talked to about the thing came up with Freudian Slips, and that seemed enough for them. So I took a look at Freud's article, "Slips of the Tongue," published in 1901. The article begins by citing previous work on the subject by the linguists Meringer and Mayer in their 1895 article "Slips in Reading and Speaking." They had such categories as "transpositions," "anticipations," "perseverations," "contaminations" and "substitutions," and explained the phenomena in neurological terms such as "innervation" and "excitatory process." Freud pretty much replaced those sorts of accounts with the single account, "unconscious motives." It's beginning to look as if his attempted replacement is better treated as a possible addition to the sorts of accounts given by Meringer and Mayer. Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar, and sometimes, maybe most times, a CV-CCV reversal is just a CV-CCV reversal.

1.b. Category-Formed Errors.

Now I want to go on to some category-formed errors. And I'm using the term "category" in the most casual, weakest possible sense. I'm going to go through a series of errors. Some of them you could treat as having deep psychological import; for example, when a young man introduces himself as "Carol's sister." I'll be looking at all of them as cases of this categorical business. This is a series of errors in which you have objects that very strongly belong together; sometimes as contrasts, sometimes as co-members, very often as pairs. Up-down, right-left, young-old, husband-wife. What seems to happen is that a gross selection-mechanism delivers up a category, but not the specific member of
that category, and it's sort of a matter of pot luck whether the correct one gets said. It's like the whole package gets dropped down, and it's up to ... who knows what? your taste buds? to decide which word is going to come out?  
Sometimes speakers produce the full "wrong" word, then correct it.

(1.b.1) [G]:FN
Larry: Hi. I'm Carol's sister- uh brother

(1.b.2) [SBL:3:1:R:2]
Marylou: ...then more people w'll show up. (.) cuz they won't feel obligated uh sp'll teh bu i y.

(1.b.3) [G]:FN
Joe: And maybe there's a better way of getting uh, giving them some power.

(1.b.4) [Pollner:TC]
Mr. L.: I was- made my left, uh my right signal ... 

(1.b.5) [FD:Wife:R:5]
Harry: And. (.) the last we heard they were coming south <uh north>,

In each case we get a correction done on a complete word, "sister- uh brother," "to sell to buy," "getting uh, giving," "my left, uh my right" and "coming south uh north." In these five the correction is done immediately. In the next instance, the error, "wife" for "husband," is apparently not caught until after a next story-component has been produced. These are the group-therapy kids again. Ken was looking through some record albums and found one he figures is his father's.

(1.b.6) [GTS:11:2:27]
Ken: An' the very bottom thing he's got uh
Roger: Oh my, boi.
Ken: [a record that goes How Tuh, Strip Fer=
Al: heh heh heh
Ken: Your Wife. An' I played this thing? or How To
Strip For Your Husband?

(1.b.7) [Anchorage:FD]
Caller: ... my wi- uh my husband is ((up north))

(1.b.8) [Anchorage:FD]
Desk: He was here lay- uh earlier but he left.

(1.b.9) [Pollner:TC]
Mr. D.: So I proceeded through and the car be- in front of me, went on through ...

(1.b.10) [Grondall Show]
Caller: ... uh: of Ar. of Israeli conquests.

(1.b.11) [GTS:1:1:43:R]
Louise: A TWELVE YEAR OLD GUY COMES OVER I say who's yi- older brother is he 

(1.b.12) [Grondall Show]
Caller: ... that it would apply to any t- student

So we've got wife-husband, later-earlier, behind-in front, Arab-Israeli, younger-older, teacher-student, with the wrong word being cut off just as it's gotten started, and replaced with the correct word. Maybe it's just guessing-games to say I'll bet that was a start on "younger"; maybe I'm just imposing categorial co-membership on random little noises. But maybe not. This is beginning to be an obsolete polemic, but here it is anyway: All those messy little false starts and odd little noises are something you want to capture. You find out things if you look at them.

Every now and then you can come across something a bit more elaborate. Here, a word gets started and is cut off, and its categorial pair is produced. But then that word is replaced with the original, cut-off word, now produced to completion.

(1.b.13) [Schenkein:11:98:R]
Ellen: You better be careful because you might marry a woman who eats like Hester's. (0.3) I nee- neph I ew 1 niece.

It looks like what we've got here is a double trouble. In the first place there's a business you could go wrong on, and routinely do go wrong: husband or wife, brother or sister, in this case niece or nephew. We also have a possible sound row. We've got "eats" and now she hears herself saying "niece." Hearing
that very close sound-relationship between "eats" and "niece," she may find herself not trusting her choice, so she cuts it and puts in what would then have to be the correct item; not "niece," but "nephew." But no, just in terms of sheer facts of the matter, it's not the right one. So she puts in the one that was right in the first place but just had to be wrong because it sounded too much like "eats!" As I said, you get an image of some gross selection-mechanism that delivers up a category, and then it's anybody's guess which member of the category pops out.

Here's another sort of trouble that looks to be brought on by the way categories work. You're setting up a contrast, produce the first item of the contrast pair, and then, instead of its contrast, its opposite, you repeat the initial item. In the first case, a speaker sees he's doing that, stops and corrects.

(1.b.14) [GTS:II:2:24]

Dan: The men'll start wearing dresses, and the men'll and the women'll start wearing pants: Is that the idea?
Roger: Yeh.
Al: Yah.

In the next, a speaker doesn't see that she's done it.

(1.b.15) [GJ:FN]

Beth: The Black Muslims are certainly more provocative than the Black Muslims ever were.
Jan: The Black Panthers.
Beth: The Black Panthers? What'd I.
Jan: You said the Black Muslims twice.
Beth: Did I really?

So you say it, and you say it again. And sometimes you hear that you did it, and sometimes you don't.

Here's another sort of trouble with those categoricals. You make an error and attempt to correct it. And in the attempt to correct it, you do the error again. In the first case, a black woman is trying to tell the interviewer about a problem with the research being done on race relations.

(1.b.16) [Television Interview]

Woman: .. instead of you, studying us, 'n find out why white people cannot relate to 'h hwhy white- why black people cannot relate uh white people...

She does eventually get it right. But in the next two cases, they get it wrong, and get it wrong again, and give up. Here, one of the group therapy kids is trying to say "The father isn't holding you back."

(1.b.17) [GTS:V:29]

Roger: The mother isn't holding the father isn't-ah Freudian Slip heh heh "Mother" hsh hshh hshh
The mother, isn't the one they're holding you back. (4 sec)

And this next one caused a big fuss when it happened on a TV broadcast. It's an interview with the new Republican Postmaster General. He's attempting to do a criticism of the rival party, the Democrats.

(1.b.18) [Television Interview]

PMG: The Republicans are less efficient than the Democrats. I mean the Republicans are less efficient than the Democrats. (laughs) You know what I mean."

Okay. That was a collection of errors that I think are clearly sound- and/or category-formed. Now I'm going to turn to a collection where the talk is perfectly correct, but contains such simple and obvious sound- and category-formed components that the poetics phenomenon is inescapable. It just leaps out at you.

2. Correct Sound- and Category-Formed Components

I'll go through these in the same order as I did the errors, starting with sound-formed components.

2.a. Sound-Formed Components

Sometimes a word can be selected by reference to a sound-row. The first instance has a [b]-row in progress. I suppose this is not the easiest case to see the phenomenon in, since the selected word, "bugged," occurs early in the row. I'd want to argue that the rest of the utterance is already formed up, and although not yet actually spoken, can have influenced the choice.

(2.a.1) [Lamb Interviews]

Mrs. R: [B]ut at the time it really, (0.3) [b]ugged us, (b)ecause we were in (B)ermuda.

Next, a [k]-row.

(2.a.2) [SBL:3:1:R:8]

Claire: ... there's only 1 one on the Ways'n Means Committee, and I [c]annot serve on two be 2 because hhh all these [c]aillees and [c]andy and [c]rap...

Here it's the word "crap" that seems to me to have been sound-selected. There are so many alternative expletives. And it looks like words with multiple alternatives are heavily subject to sound-selection. Here we have this [k]-row going, and the word that's used as its expletive is "crap."

In this next case, it's a [j]-row. Having just said "jetty," a speaker picks the expletive "Jesus."
my name is Betty and my Brother’s name is Bob, we live in Boston and we Bake Bread.” And I’ll tell you, if you ever start lecturing on this stuff you have to be very careful, because you start doing it. And worst of all, you begin to get a sensitized audience. You catch them whispering “There’s one! There’s one!”

Okay, that was a quick glance at obviously sound-formed but perfectly correct utterances. In the next set, it appears that words have been selected by reference to some categorial business.

2.b. Category-Selected Components

The result of this sort of selection is a variety of puns. I’ll go through two types.

2.b.1 Co-Class Puns

I’ll start off with a couple of utterly simple ones. We get two members of a paired category. Neither one is wrong, and the talk is otherwise perfectly coherent and correct. But one of the items is not being used by reference to the category in which the two are co-members.

In the first instance, the category in which both items are members is, say, “directionals.” We get “left,” and then we get “right.” But while “left” is used to talk about someone’s left side, “right” is used for something like repair, fix, make better. This is about the victim of a series of strokes.

2.b.1.1 [MC:11:11:9]

| Lila: | “But the second third” uh-eh-vuh—more’n less paralyzed, his left hand, left side. |
| Philip: | “Eh” |
| Philip: | “Oh my goodness” |
| Lila: | “So they uh ke ku-eh his speech is—hh is eh-muddled. hh But they think now, hh that with therapy they can right it.” |
| Philip: | “Mhm” |
| Lila: | “In some extent.” |

In the next one, a magazine, “Life,” is named. Then we get another possible magazine title, Time. But the word “time” is not used for the category in which it would be a co-member with the magazine title “Life,” it is used for something else.

2.b.1.2 [Lamb Interviews]

Mr. A.: “Well, we get Life, which is—I don’t—we don’t have time to sit down and read long stories so—”

It seems to me that the word “time”—and the so-called thought to which it is attached—was put into play by the co-membership of the two words Life and Time, in the category “magazine titles,” although the second word, as used, does not belong to that category.

In the next instance, neither of the terms (again, “left” and “right”) occurs by reference to their shared category, “directionals.” In this interchange, one
occurs for "went away" and the other for "correct," but the words are "left" and "right."

(2.b.1.3) [GJ:FN]

Alan: You told him I was coming so he left.
Jean: Right!

As they are being used here, neither "left" nor "right" belongs to a category that has anything to do with "direction," or in which one word has to do with the other. So it's a sort of double crossover, neither being used for the category in which they are co-members, and by reference to which the word "Right" may have come into play.

The same sort of thing holds for the next instance. The words "fall" and "stand" meet in a category having to do with, say, movement. But in this case, "fall" is used for "autumn" and "stand" is used for "tolerate."

(2.b.1.4) [Lamb Interviews]

Mr. N.: I voted for Cranston in the Fall, mainly because I couldn't stand Rafferty.

The words "autumn" and "tolerate" have who-knows-what to do with each other. But with this double crossover we get a pair of synonyms which are intensely related, albeit in a category that has nothing to do with what's being talked about.

There are no errors to catch our attention in these four cases. We listen, it's plausible, we take it at face value, and we aren't led to see Woods' "autistic productions" crawling around through the matrix of the talk. But if you start looking for that sort of thing it seems to be there.

Just a couple more of these co-class puns. They're not as crisply related, and maybe strain the argument, but I like them, and what is exploration for anyhow?

(2.b.1.5) [Lamb Interviews]

Mr. R.: The computer business is absolutely filled with guys who pose as experts,

who's opinions are viewed as holy, when they ought not to be.

Something which is not "filled" might, by a bit of a stretch, be seen as . . . it's not even a word . . . "holey"? Well, I'm not ready to throw it out yet.

And in this next one, there seems to be an egg-y image at work. Two women have been talking about seeing a pair of slacks with a yoke in the back.

(2.b.1.6) [Schenkin:11:197]

Ellen: You might find something very similar t'his

without the yoke en they're just ez easy t'up

whip yupp.

(2.b.2) *Topical Puns*

This is something Sacks had been working on for a while now. I'll just run through a few cases. I don't think they need any commentary.

(2.b.2.1) [Lamb Interviews]

Mrs. A.: I wanted to go to an [agricultural] college but my mother [steered] me away from that.

(2.b.2.2) [GJ:FN]

Dwight: I hope to become more consistent as I get [deeper] into this w[hole] problem.

For this next one, we need to know that Camarillo is a state mental hospital.

(2.b.2.3) [GJ:FN]

Barney: I'm [committed] to visiting my sister at [Camarillo] every week.

(2.b.2.4) [HS:FN]

Anne: Russia's the worst. We went twenty four hours once without [eating] a thing. I just got [fed] up waiting.

And the next one is about a stolen [ring.]

(2.b.2.5) [HS:FN]

Ginny: Could you think of anyone who would want to steal it? uh, [off hand?]

(2.b.2.6) [GJ:FN]

Beth: They're not doing anything to catch the rainfall. They're not building [reservoirs]. They just don't give a [dam]n.

(2.b.2.7) [Lamb Interviews]

David: And what does it mean, the [flag] on your car.

Mr. B.: I think it means I'm proud to be an American.

David: I mean I ask that because there was something of a [flag] over what it was supposed to mean.
Actually, these are pretty much what we think of as common and garden variety puns, I guess. They really are all over the place. You can't get away from them.

Here's one last one, from a television interview with Senator Hubert H. Humphrey. He was discussing the delicate balance of governmental agencies, using the 3-legged stool as an image, where, if one leg is short, everything becomes unbalanced.

(2.b.2.8) [HHH Interview]

HHH: ... somebody's gonna fall on a [portion of their anatomy], and you know what I mean? The short leg of the Federal Reserve Bank has got everyone in a [tailspin].

This may be another instance of "suppression-release" that I talked about for Fragment (1.a.9), the dreaded word "blacks" being avoided, and then mention being made of the Oakland Raiders' black uniforms. Here, the delicately alluded-to "portion of their anatomy" shows up a bit later in the word "[tail] spin."

Those were the arrays of perfectly okay talk in which sound and category-formed components might be present. We've got these phenomena subdivided in all manner of ways, none of which seems to take us very far. But we've got to keep the stuff from piling up in one big heap called "poetics," and at least these sub-heaps give us a chance of finding a bit of data if we happen to need it. I'll go through a few of the sub-sets.

3. Sub-Collections

Each of us who's become addicted to the poetics stuff develops affection for one or another sub-type. Here's one of my favorites.

3.a. Names in Sound-Rows

To report these cases I need to preserve the names unchanged. In other fragments I've now and then changed a name even though it was part of a phenomenon I was discussing. For example, in Fragment (2.a.4), pretty much all I've preserved about this guy's name is that it starts with an [F]. But who knows what other relationships are present that I've obliterated?

I'm a professional transcriber, and I really take a position about changing names in this data. We have to do it to protect their identities. It turns out that if you're projecting identities, you're messing up the data. You're rapping up the texture. You change a name, you step on a butterfly. (You know that Ray Bradbury story)? Watch out! You may have removed some of the texture of the talk that matters to the way it's getting built up.

So, on to some names in sound-rows. Actually, in only two of them am I putting anyone at risk, since all the rest are public property, taken from broadcasts of football games. But the first and last cases are taken from private conversations.

(3.a.1) [GJ:FN]

Martha: I called [Terry] and told her to come over around nine thirty.
Jan: It's nine thirty now.
Martha: Well then she'll be here momentarily.

There's something in this instance that we've noticed now and then. Sometimes a word occurs that seems a bit special, maybe out of character, maybe not register-fitted to the surrounding talk. In this case "momentarily" is such a word. And it may have been selected from alternatives such as "any minute now" by the sound relationship between the word "Terry" and the last bit of "momentarily." A sound-row. What we're learning to do is to track back into the talk and see if we can find a possible source for some striking word.

Alene Terasaki was working on some materials where the word "affronted" popped up. Tracking back, she found a possible source; reference to someone who "came up [behind] me." I won't go through that case because the distance between the odd word and its possible source is too great. I'm trying to stay with utterly simple instances.

And here is a batch of the simplest possible cases. As I mentioned, they all come from broadcasts of football games.

(3.a.2) [Football Broadcasts]

(a) Bill [Knox] [knocked] the ball loose ...  
(b) Kenny [Stabler] has really [stabilized] the club.  
(c) [Chester] Markel [checks] in ...  
(d) And [Escheid] has really been [shining] here in the second half.  
(e) A nineteen yard touchdown run by Gregg [Fruite]. So the Browns are really [proving] tough today.  
(f) Willie [Lanier] [nearly] took his head off!  
(g) And we have Lawrence [McCUTCHEON], a [clutch] runner.  
(h) Jim Le[Clark] had a good [clear] shot at Franco.  
(i) Plunkett may make a [last] ditch attempt throwing to Jim [Lash].  
(j) [Norm Sneed] throwing to his favorite receiver who has [enormous speed] potential.  
(k) [Fore]man is stopped at the [fourty, thirty yard line].

I'll finish off this set with a more complicated instance, again from a telephone conversation. Here we get a question asked which ends up being produced in overlap. The question is "What's his name?"

(3.a.3) [GJ:FN]

Norm: He'll be here a little after one. He's at my house now.
Gail: 'What's his name.

Now, it's perfectly possible and routinely done that an overlapped speaker goes on to respond to the overlapping talk. Here, another tack is taken. We get a display of "I'm still occupying this turn, undisrupted by what you did."!!
As it happens, I was one of the participants. Having asked the question "What's his name?" when Norm produced the "bar..." of "barring," I thought he was going to say "Barney." I was wrong. But not all that wrong.

It looks like what happened is, at a place where an answer to "What's his name?" is due, we get an artifact, in "[barring];" of the object that will constitute the answer, "[Bart]." This could be another case of "suppression-release," like (1.9a) and (2.2b.2) where something being avoided ("blacks" and "tail" respectively) slips out. Here, building a display of imperturbably going on with one's own talk, not desiring to answer an "interruptive" question the moment it is asked, something wonderfully close to that answer pops out.

That's one little sub-collection, "names in sound-rows." Here's another.

3.b. Numbers

These come up in all sorts of ways. We can get a pure sound phenomenon as in this instance in which "nine" shows up first as a number and then in a way that has nothing to do with numbers. And this may be one of those striking words, uncharacteristic for its speaker, that I mentioned about Fragment (3.a.1), "momentarily," and Terasaki's experience with "affronted."

(3.b.1) [GTS:II:2.65]

Roger: We mebe g'thio (nine)ty miles o'th'n a Friday night. Going nowhere. An' my dad thinks it's asf'nine.

On the other hand, looking at numbers as numbers you can find them organizing themselves in ways extrinsic to what's being talked about. For example, here's a 3, 2, 1 series in talk that has nothing to do with a countdown.

(3.b.2) [NB:IV:13:R:22]²

Emma: Yihknow en ah'm a big [m]eat eater

Loatie: Wh' come [dog]en

Lottie: I knaw it e'n you know I 'n ever eat meat at.

You can start getting a little punchy with this stuff, wandering around mumbling "First three two;" "Three one four?" Or, as in the next case, you can find yourself tempted to say "The [four]some is going to [five] it out for [sixty] thousand dollars," rather than "...[fight] it out..."
(3.b.7) [SPC Calls]

Caller: [First of all] he gave me [Second].

I'll close this sub-collection with a case that hasn't got to do with numbers, but with measuring terms. It's something like Fragments (2.b.1.3) and (2.b.1.4), "left" and "right" for "went away" and "correct," and "fall" and "stand" for "autumn" and "tolerate," in the sense that the words are not being used for the set in which they meet, as "half" and "whole." So it's a double cross-over. But in this case, the words aren't "half" and "whole" at all, but sound-alikes.

(3.b.8) [Football Broadcast]

Announcer: Staubach in trouble, he'll [hal]uh [hold] it

It took a lot of words to try to describe that thing. It took a lot fewer to mark it as a candidate instance on its occurrence: "There's one!" was adequate to that task.

So far we've looked at the sub-collections "names in sound-rows" and "numbers." Here's the next.

3.c. Colors

Now and then we come across materials in which it looks as if a category like "colors" is in operation; where the naming of a color can select how a next thought will be phrased. That is, also in terms of color.

(3.c.1) [Football Broadcast]


The next instance is from a 1968 sensitivity training session for prison guards. They're being encouraged to air their feelings about homosexuals and blacks.

(3.c.2) [Ward-Kassebaum:II:2:28-63:17]

Baines: -- When I see a [white] girl with a [colored] man I always want to go over and punch him in the nose, but -- I saw several [colored] girls that I might have gone out with but I figured I got caught you know, somebody might see me and I'd feel awfully guilty about it.

Arlett: Why would you punch him in the nose.

Baines: I don't know. I just see [red]. I mean who does the son of a bitch think he is.

These two "color" instances have a detail in common. It's not only that we get the colors but we get them in an identical format, "I [see] [color]." The football player "saw a [golden] opportunity," Mr. Baines tells us "When I [see] a [white] girl with a [colored] man," and "I [saw] several [colored] girls that I might have gone out with," and "I just [see] [red]." This may be a fluke of these two cases. Maybe not.

I said it's presented as a story about age discrimination. For one, it's bracketed by that sort of talk. The left bracket, "They see that you're seventeen years old, and WHAM you've had it" (lines 4-5). The right bracket, "They sure wouldn't stop an adult . . . somebody thirty, thirty five years old" (lines 36-7). And in mid-story, "age discrimination" is the key to a cryptic "Mm hm" by the police officer who, having asked for Ken's driver's license, "Looks at it real carefully and sees I'm not eighteen" (lines 23-7).
So there's a thread, "age discrimination," running through the story. And we're introduced to the on-site representative of "they" who do that discriminating: Ken skids past the stop sign whereupon "Cops says pull over" (line 19). As the incident unfolds, there's no description of the cop, who is referred to exclusively as "he" (lines 20, 22, 23, 24, 27, 30 and 32). Suddenly comes this thing, this announcement, "he's a colored guy" (line 33). And then it's over; the story closes off with the right-hand age discrimination bracket "They sure wouldn't stop an adult, you know, somebody—somebody thirty, thirty-five years old" (lines 36–38).

It's like catching sight of a streaker out of the corner of your eye. What the heck was that?

So, what was it? If it's true that the naming of a color can beget further reference to color, then this may be an innocuous case: Ken's quoting the policeman's own words, "It's against the law to go over that white line," summoning up the otherwise unremarkable, and to this point unremarked, fact that he was "a colored guy."

(ken seems to be working at reproducing the policeman's ways of formulating things. For example, he initially quotes him as saying "Can I see your license?" and amends it to "... operator's license" [lines 20–1]. He starts to quote him as saying "I'm going to have to write you a ticket," a formulation he himself used earlier, "I got a ticket for going two feet over a stop sign" [lines 7–8], but breaks off and changes to "citation" [lines 29–30]. And his description of the offense, "going two feet over a stop sign" shows up again attributed to the policeman, "He says well you know, you went two feet over that stop sign" [lines 27–8], but soon after we get another version, which may be closer to the policeman's actual words, "He says it's against the law to go over that white line" [lines 31–2].)

Rather than a case of bigotry revealed, this might be no mere noxious than had he said, after "... white line," and in place of "And it is the kind you up you know," something like "And I just saw red, you know." Color begets color.

On the other hand, this could be another case of "suppression-release." Perhaps in general, perhaps specifically in these therapy sessions, Ken may be cautious about expressing some of his attitudes. Although he may well see it as adding insult to injury that he was given not only a ticket but a "big long lecture" by this "colored guy" (as Brother Baines has it), "Who does the son of a bitch think he is." That's in (5, c.2), he might equally well be trying to avoid saying anything that could be turned into therapy talk. He may be concentrating on not mentioning it, as the sportscaster in (1, a.9) may have been concentrating on not producing the [l] that would turn the two "backs" into two blacks, which they happened to be. And perhaps in this case, using the policeman's formulation of the offense, not "going two feet over a stop sign," but "over that white line," trips the release mechanism and out comes the suppressed "he's a colored guy."

Either way, innocuous color pun or a pun-triggered release of suppressed bigotry, it's possible that had Ken not been trying to so faithfully quote words which were not his own—"white line" among them—there would have been no mention of "colored guy."

In fact, I tend to see it as a suppression-release, not a harmless pun. One reason is that he uses the idiomatic expression "it burned me up," as his commentary on the event. And that may be overly apt for reference to something done by a "colored guy." These materials were recorded in Los Angeles in 1964, the Watts Riots were still fresh in people's minds, as were such slogans as "Burn, baby, burn."

It turns out that this over-aptness of an appended comment is a systematic business. In one of his papers, Sacks points out that various idiomatic expressions which occur after, and who understand, appreciate, etc., a prior one, tend to stand in a punlike relation to it. (Sacks, "On Some Puns With Some Intimations") Sacks argues this systematicity with one instance. I like to do it the other way, with a mob of instances. So here is a small mob. Another sub-set.

3.d. Categorically-related Assessments

And here I'll just show the very few that have black people as the target and/or source of the assessment.

(3.d.1) [GTS:V:9]

Ken: Have you ever seen the [Harlem Clowns] before?

(Jim): "Pro ball?"

Ken: "The basketball team?"

Dan: "Oh yes, Mr. Hin.

Ken: "I saw 'em last night, at our school."

Jim: "They're a [riot]."

So we have this black basketball team getting assessed as "a riot." One nice thing about this fragment is that although it's from the same corpus that gave us "white line" "colored guy" "burned," the pun is produced by a new-comer to the group. It's now about 15 minutes into his third meeting with them. So it's unlikely that he's picked it up from them. Rather, the poison seems to be all over the place.

In the next instance we get reference to "a colored man," and later an assessment "He's a riot." But in this case the colored man is not what's being assessed. It may be, however, that that's the source of the assessment's terminology.

(3.d.2) [MC:I:16–17]

Harmon: ... I said is her boyfriend a nice man?

Joey: He says oh he's very nice he's a [colored man] hhhHHHH, HAH hah!

Lila: [Oh no : the poor kid=]

Lila: [Yer, kidding.]

Harmon: "I said."

Harmon: No waita second I said Joseph that not your mother's boyfriend. That [colored man] is the man ( ) takes her rhuh work every day.

Lila: [Huh huh.]

Lila: This [colored man]. ( )

Lila: [Sure, what difference does it make, Sure.]

JACOBER
TEXT AND PERFORMANCE QUARTERLY

JANUARY 1996

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JEFFERSON

The next two are spread out over a longer stretch of talk.

(3.e.4) [SBL:2:3:R:23] Unit: Ace in the Hole

Chloe: Well that's the way George bid you know I
told you he went to a little slang and didn't
→ have the [ace] King queen.
→
Chloe: → 'hahaha Now I know [in the] name of all
→ that's [hahaha]
→
Chloe: → could anyone in their right mind and...

("Ace in the hole" is a card-game idiom, but I think it comes out of Poker, and
Chloe is rehashing a Bridge game here.)

(3.e.5) [NB:VII:7] Unit: Golf Course

Emma: . . . so finally Al came in from playing
→ [golf] on the golf course to McGee how's the
beach and every thing I [oh] nice I [oh] very
God I have the most wonderful neighbors
down the street the new people I [said you]
know really know Jerry Fulton I seem to a
→ [course] I do.

This fragment appears as (2.a.4). I had collected it as a case of an [f]-row and
on some Nth typing, the unit Golf Course emerged.

Now comes the one I like best because it prompted a transcription error. As I
was transcribing along, I had Ken saying that someone he knew was "second
in command of the dorm." On re-hearing it I realized he hadn't said that, but
"second in charge." I'd done a piece of rotten transcribing.

And you see errors like that now and then, where a word with the same
meaning but different sounds appears in a transcript. One I think of off-hand is,
the transcript shows someone talking about this or that "guy," where what is
actually being said is this or that "duke." The transcriber had "heard" a more
conventional version of what had actually been said. And here, I'd done
something similar. But then, as I worked through the subsequent talk, I got the
sense that what had happened to me as transcriber had happened to one of the
coparticipants. Both of us had come under the influence of a powerful idiom.

(3.e.6) [GTS:IV:22]

1 Ken: When he had the responsibility to take the
take
2 → charge of. He was [second] in charge of the
3 dorm. When I'd leave that j-dorm
4 Roger: [hahaha heh]
5 Ken: [that] dorm would act perfect.
5 Ken: No shit he'd rule with an iron hand.
7 Roger: → well in [command] of his __ situation and all
8 of his faculties and he knew when to act like
9 an asshole an when to uh
11 (1 sec)

(3.e.3) [GTS:FN] Unit: A name, Inoyue (in-uh-way)

This guy's wife recently quit working for a Mr. Inoyue.

Frank: . . . and he wants her back [inna] worst [way].
play in it, but what emerges is not a distillation of words into sound. Rather, the sound is transformed into other words. And that’s the core of this phenomenon. Noises from a prior utterance generate words in a next.

I overheard this one in a Southern California sauna. Two young married women are lazily chatting; one mentions the high price of her husband’s latest hobby, hi-fi equipment.

(4.a.2) [GJ:FN]

Alice: The speakers cost twenty dollars.17
Betty: => Each!
Alice: => Each heart out!

Our comic-book orthography is not very pretty, but it captures the "each"- "each" replication here, which would be lost in standard orthography’s "Eat your . . . ."

In the next case we’re getting an "ord"-"ord" replication.

(4.a.3) [SPC Calls]

Caller: I wasn’t aware of the fact at that time that you do have certain people that you send out
Caller: when necessary.
Desk: Well wait a minute.
Caller: [Or do you]
Desk: [Ord]mately we don’t.

In the next instance, an exclamation, “Bitchen!” is put together out of a series of sound-particles in a prior utterance. Again, the group therapy materials. Al is doing horrible things with a cigar.

(4.a.4) [GTS:11:72]

Ken: Taste good?
Al: => I-
Al: [No I [bit] off the [en]d of it I was
Roger: [chewing the [en]d of it.
Ken: => [Bitchen]!

"[Bit]" + "[chewing]" + "[en]d" = "[Bitchen]."

The next one, from this same gang, was collected for its "[plastic]." "[plast]ered" relationship, and a couple of other things turned up.

(4.a.5) [GTS:1:2:35:R]

Here, Roger takes Louise’s stammering "1, l-l" and turns it into the Judeo-Cuban war chant, "Ay yai." Now, the next case has a similar feel; there’s some
The "plastic"-"plastered" relationship jumped out right away. Then at some point we wondered if we could do with "innovated" (line 10) what we'd done with "affronted": track back and find a source. Didn't have to look far. There it was, the "[No]. "[No]."innovated" series (lines 9-10). Then somebody wondered if "bottle of beer" (line 7) and "atmosphere" (line 14) might not belong together.

In this next, and last, instance of "cross-speaker sound-selection," a whole topical is generated from a bit of repetition. Here, three women, Barbara, Claire and Jean, are sitting around a kitchen table having coffee. Barbara, whose kitchen it is, gets up and starts rummaging through a cupboard.

(4.a.6) [G]:[FN]

Claire: (to Barbara) What are you doing.

Barbara: I'm looking for r. I'm looking for.

(brief silence)

Claire: (to Jean, with whom she has a lunch date) I'm looking for Saturday. I hope I'm feeling well enough.

In this set we're looking at discrete little groups, "I, I-I". "Ay, ay," "Each".--"Be your heart out," "Oh you do"."Ordinarily," "bit . . . chewing . . . end" -- "Bitchen," "plastic:" "plastered," "No." "No." "innovated," and "I'm looking for. I'm looking for." "I'm looking forward to Saturday." In other materials you can find flurries of similarities across big chunks of talk.

4.b. Flurries

Again, I'll divide them up into "sound" and "category," and look at a few cases of each sort.

(4.b.1) Sound Flurries

These can be the sorts of things that Sacks put me to work on in the first place: that [b]-[k] series in "My insanity's [b]ean[k][k][k][k][k]." I'll just show two of these; they're terribly long and cumbersome.

The first is a [k]-[g] flurry. I'm going to have to use the real name of one of the group-therapy kids, whose name occurs in the talk itself. The one we've been calling "Al." Real name, Mike.
sequences—or, as I might eventually get to claim, within a kind of unit within conversation that we otherwise talk about as "topic," but where we don't think of topics as having this sort of intensity of organization. (Sacks 2:343-44)

In short, flurries may be topically boundaried. And it seems to me that there is a drastic shift in the talk, around about Dan's reference to Mike as a "plant" (lines 45–44). It's not a change in topic, but some sort of sub-topical shifting maybe. And it's there that the [k]-[g] flurry dwindles away.

Here's another chunk of conversation in which I think I see something similar happening. In this case, with a flurry of [a]-[a]. (Here also I'm using the real name of one participant because it appears in the talk itself. Again, the name is Mike.)

(4.1.4) [Goodwin:AD:11–14] R

---

53 Louise: =come in to observe.
54 (0.2)
55 Louise: "instead of be in the [g]roup?"
56 Ken: No?
57 (0.4)
58 Ken: You were uh
59 (0.5)
60 Roger: Yiknow right away you tried uh win me over
61 buhfore we walk[ed] in here.
62 (1.2)
63 Ken: Me?
64 Roger: Yah
65 (0.3)
66 ( ) : hhh
67 (0.5)
68 Mike: 0-1 don't [a]wan'.
69 Louise: "Check YOU LOO[K] [K]I[KE]A J HOO-[D]."

It seems to me that up to about line 44 the talk is liberally sprinkled with [k]s and [g]s, which more than occasionally form [g]-[k] or [k]-[g] clumps:

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5- "[G]OOD [C]LOTHES" (line 7)
6 - "the [k]ind of [g]uy who" (line 10)
7 - "[k]il[ck]k", "[g]uidance", "from [K]ieretza" (lines 21–5)
8 - "[g]cause my father said now there's [g]oing to be a bunch of [k]ids in here" (line 32–3)
9 - "[K]eep your [g]uard up" (line 37)

And one possibility is that the [g]-[k] or [k]-[g] clumps have to do with the forming up of two joking completions to two-as-yet-incomplete utterances. The first, in response to Ken's "He lool[k]ed [l]ike he was [g]oing in here for uh," where Mike provides a completion which is one big [k], "[K]il[ck]k[ck]," which Louise transforms into a [k]-[g] clump with her contribution, "[g]uidance," and then makes her own independent [g]-[k] clump by appending "from [K]ieretza" (lines 18–25). The second, in response to Ken's "[g]cause my father said now there's [g]oing to be a bunch of [k]ids in here and this routine and," where Roger offers a hypothetical quote of Ken's father's advice, "[K]eep your [g]uard up" (lines 32–37).

And it seems to me that the [k]-[g] clumps dwindle away after culminating in "[K]eep your [g]uard up." There's one thin clump by Louise, "Or one of these [k]ids who [g]oing in to observe, instead of be in the [g]roup?" (lines 51–55), and that's it.00 Sacks has an interesting angle on the presence and non-presence of flurries. Here's what he says.

One also wants to get—not now but eventually—some idea of where these compactions of local organization occur. They don't build up in a conversation to some kind of finale where, say, at some point all people are doing is producing variants on what's so far been done. Though it can happen that within, say, a topic in conversation, there are places where people are almost exclusively employing the resources so far for the topic, to produce a next utterance... But if conversation were proceeding simply in a step by step step historical development in which parts are being picked up and put into a different organization, we might suppose that it would just continue that way, additively, and it does not. So one wants to deal with the disjointiveness as well as the way things get put together within flurries or short
In this case the flurry may have to do with the forming up of Mike's story-commentary "Th[a]t's a f[a]ct" (lines 46 and 55). And the flurry is extinguished at what may be a topical boundary, after Cal's attempt to tell a story about McHugh by tying it to the Dejong story with "Well you remember when McHugh did th[a]t." (line 58).

(4.b.2) Categorical Flurries

I mentioned earlier that Sacks had collected case (3.e.1) as a "body-part flurry." It is a compact instance, "foot" and "head" appearing in a single utterance.

(4.b.2.1) [Jack Green Data]

Jack: As long as your parents are [footing the bill kid], you just go right [head].

Judy: You're not kidding.

Here's another compact instance, with "hand" and "face" appearing across a couple of utterances of a single speaker.

Some of the body-part flurries can get pretty elaborate. Here's one where body parts are scattered across a long story-commentary by one speaker, Maggie. At one point her recipient, Lynnie, does a most powerful display of understanding. She takes up the story-commentary as if it were her own. In the course of which, she tosses in a body part (lines 28-9).

(4.b.2.3) [Goldberg Data]

Maggie: When I ca- really (0.5) I mean it was just
shocking when I came (back) from Europe =
Lynnie: (Yeah) y
Maggie: 'm I had been gone what three enna half weeks.
Lynnie: Yeah.
Maggie: I might just as well of either never come
Lynnie: (back) or never gone (0.5) because the problems
that I [faced] were so insurmountable that uh
where they had hidden things that they
[had] and I didn't want anybody to find
Lynnie: Yeah mean ([falsetto]) righ in your store?
Maggie: Yuh.
Lynnie: ([falsetto]) In your little store?
Maggie: In eight hundred and thirty six square [feet]
they hid things they threw things out =
huhhhhh
Maggie: they just ignored them. I have had San
Lynnie: Francisco on my [neck] where is this money=
Maggie: Where are these transfers, where are- where
is the merchandize. I said now waitaminute.
(0.5) I wasn't here. Do you wanna know who
was here. I can give you that person's name=
Lynnie: Yeah.
Maggie: I don't har[ass] me, I don't know.

The thing culminates in a literal use of the word "body" (line 34), and...
Lynn's reciprocation verges on Holy Communion, her "good Christ" (line 36) fixing on the utter martyrdom of "here's my body."21

I'm going to move now to phenomena that seem to have rather more consequence for the interaction in which they occur. I'll just note that while most of them are cross-speaker events, one or two are not.

4.c. Triggered Topics22

It's one sort of thing for sounds and categories to select from among a series of possible words which might be used—and much of the data we've looked at so far has that character. (I made special note of the fact that in [4.a.6] not merely a word, but a topical node was generated.) It is a whole other sort of thing for sounds and categories to select something like a train of thought to generate what can turn out to be a considerable chunk of conversation.

On psychotic Words, notes:

It is a common finding in schizophrenia that the point of departure from one idea to the next takes place from a single word rather than from the organic unit of thought, the legitimate content of a well organized sentence. . . . A part of the whole is taken and the response is made to this part only. . . . A schizophrenic girl, for example, interprets the proverb, you can't teach pitch without being tarned, by the single word "Music." It is seen that she takes the single word, pitch, and gives a response which belongs to the like category. The mechanism involved has wide implications when we observe it in the natural setting of conversation. (Woods 307-09)

And in our work in the natural setting of conversation we find materials in which "a part of the whole" serves to trigger perfectly lovely blocs of talk.

At the start of this talk I mentioned Woods' complaint about these psychotic characters who just won't design their talk for their recipient. He says that the various "autistic productions" are not in themselves pathological; that what is pathological is that they are incorporated into the talk "without any endeavor to translate them into a form which considers the needs of a listener."

A thing I'll be noting about the materials here is that the triggered talk is managed in various ways for a listener. That is, you get the "autistic" object (or the poetic object, whichever way you want to see it. Or both.). And it is very carefully managed to tell its recipients exactly how to hear it, and specifically not to hear it for what it might well have been. Not to hear it as a noise fathering a thought, but to hear it in the ordinary conventional ways that we know and accept as legitimate, that people get their talk.

I'll start off with a sound-triggered topic. It comes from an interminable, meandering, deeply boring conversation between two young mothers. Sacks every now and then tried to get me interested in transcribing some of these materials, at one point offering as bait that there was a lot of laughter in them, at a time when I was working on people's laughter-togethers. No sale. It was just too boring. Eventually I did get around to it, deciding that the sheer boringness of it was something we'd have to come to grips with. Also, I began to see it as pure Americana, a sort of museum piece. And of course it turned out to be wonderful stuff.

This is early in the conversation. One of the women, Joan, is talking about problems cutting her little boy's hair. I think what happens here is this mention of the word "part" triggers talk about a "party."

(4.c.1) [TCI(b):16:11-12]

Joan: My biggest thing is tryin' tnh figure out how tnh cut the neck en around th' ears.

Linda: Yeah.

Joan: [That's the hard [pshhah][b]art]=

Linda: =Yeah.

Joan: =m'hnh without makin' it look yihhnok c's

I c'n take the scissors 'n cut right around it ears but then yih c'n rilly tell it, too. So.

Linda: [Yeah].

Joan: Yehah.

Linda: Yehah.

Joan: =t'[t hhh that's (t) the [part] I gotta figure out how tnh do;hh

Linda: =Yah how much did ju get ef yer gift n gadget

Joan: [party].

Linda: =Hm. hh I hadda pretty good party hhh hh quite a few people came.

Joan: Uh huh.

Linda: A-n'h hh s-h hh ths w' ths lstry ths ssson.

Joan: Yeah =

Linda: =So she sold out'v er kl to,

Joan: =hh oh: that we nisce.

In the first place, "part," as in "that's the hard part" and "that's the part I got to figure out how to do," may be as good a "topical pun" as any in set 2 b.29 What I want to focus on is that the possibly pun-generated word "part" then sound-triggers a new topic, Linda's successful gift "n gadget party" (which she initiates by inquiring into the success of Joan's gift 'n gadget party). You couldn't be crazier, or you couldn't be more poetic, or maybe you just couldn't do it better in perfectly normal conversation.

Supposing it did happen that way, then I think Linda is designing her talk to show what she's saving now is not the sound-triggered topic that it in fact is, but just an ordinary change of topic, and who knows how these things come up. She uses a particular format to initiate the new topic; the terse, compacted "Yah" followed by the shift. I suspect that it's a way to show the agenda character of the new topic; to show that if anything, she was hardly listening to what Joan was saying—when—at least in this pathological/poetic sense—she was listening, but good! But I couldn't begin to develop the argument here.

This may be a sort of reverse analogy to the Freudian Slip. In that case, if an event can be such a thing it gets treated as such a thing. In this case, it may be that it's not the sort of triggering that is accepted as rational and legitimate, then it is not acknowledged to have been a triggering. Where there are, of course, some triggers that routinely do get marked as such (Jefferson 220-22). One of the simplest, most obvious markers is the "speaking of X" format. For example (this is from well into a very long conversation): Maggie has been telling all about her trip to Europe, where one of the advantages is a day-care system where you can drop off your kid (she has a 12-year-old boy) and call your life your own.
(4.c.1.1) [Goldberg Data]

Maggie: ... an' you say y'know gubhve love y'know
→ because when y'get back I'll see you when
→ yuh get back. 'hh, 'hh an'.
Lynn: → Talking about getting back
I've gotta take my mother home.
(0.6)
Lynn Uh, she was over here t'day an' I've gotta drive her back t'Beverly Hills. "When can I come over..."

Here's another.

(4.c.1.2) [SBL:2:5:12:R]

Gloria: I 'sd I'm gunnuh go else. Becuh but
→ uh thn when I found out the water w/0
→ yeh: I ah
Bea: = I saw ev'ry thing (.) ih drumming its head
→ even the dahlias.
Bea: Uh, uh.
Gloria: hh I thought well good Lord y'hn can't
→ let the yard uh do th.: o.: so.
Bea: → Saying 'saying dahlias?
→ I jus' cut some fresh dahlias et my neighbor's
→ this evening?

But it's one thing to have been reminded about your freshly cut dahlias by your friend's mentioning her drought-striken dahlias. It's something altogether else to have been reminded of a party by your coparticipant's having made the noise 'part.'

The next instance is a combination of sound and category. Emma's grandchildren were at a traditional Thanksgiving dinner she prepared, complete with turkey and all the trimmings. She's remarking to her sister how nice the kids looked, "all dressed in turtlenecks." A bit later comes an announcement, "Hey I've been eating a lot of turkey" which has been good for her psoriasis.

(4.c.2) [NB:IV:13:R:6]

Emma: "God they're all grown up'n they look" so
→ nice all dressed'n (turtleneck) n:
Lottie: Uh huh,
(.)
Emma: "Ril cute." But uh (0.7) 'hnh ↑ They left
→ early 'cause they decided we jis we
→ were goin' 'cause they'n then when we decided it w/2
→ goin' 'cause they left." They cooked 'cause they
→ didn't want to eat
→ LOTT [TURKEY] YIKNOW I DON'T HAVE ↑ ONE:
→ BITTA ITCHY: N'GK?
(1.2)
Emma: 'hnh YIKNOW AH HEARD THEH THT TURKEY w/2
→ GOO↓ FOR YUH with this tht thing?
Lottie: Is that right?
Emma: eevah a grn'n the apartmn't tol' me tht.

(4.c.2.1) [NB:IV:13:R:1]

Emma: "hhhhhh So they came down'n had dinner,
→ hh,hh
Lottie: Uh huh?
Emma: h h h h
Lottie: → Wa it nice?
(0.6)
Emma: → "Oh yeah the turkey they're delicious."
Lottie: Oh I good=
Emma: = hh They stop'thby tuh see Mister Cole on the
→ way down. So they left' kahna early but she
→ she'd the beh'ud the bus schedules were so: 'hh hh
→ hh hard on Sundee uh gud Griououd and hhh
Lottie: hhhh
Lottie: "It's a very nice day anyway, en, then it's...
Emma: (tearful) ↓ thn: o: ↑ N_o:
(3)
Lottie: gonna rain.
Emma: We'll...

It may be that the triggering mechanisms are not something inevitable and irresistible, something that we're just not in control of. It's possible that you can have selective triggering. So, for example, the point in a conversation at which a topic is introduced can be informative about its importance to the one who introduced it, and can have consequences for how the conversation runs off and/or how the topic is handled. If that is so, then a topic which is triggered at an inappropriate place in the conversation might be suppressed. And that could be happening here.

This next instance may be a version of the sort of thing Woods was referring to in the case of a schizophrenic response to the proverb "You can't touch [pitch] without being tarred" "[Music]." but where, rather than immediately producing the triggered word, some work is done to mask the triggering.

Here, in an utterance assessing the world of politics, "Kind of a [mess]," the word "mess" may trigger a related word, "[garbage]," and a story that goes with
it. Now, the story is introduced immediately on the occurrence of "mess," with "Really when you consider it. It's... it's like uh I heard Senator Kennedy say...", which proposes that the talk to follow is topically coherent; it is not, as Woods has it, "departing from a single word, but from the organic unit of thought." We don't get to the triggered word "garbage" until well into the story.

(4.3.5) [Adato:N1:21]

Stano: The guy in the middle is playin' both of 'em against the other, so, you know, whaddiyousay.
Jay: hiih! huh huh kikshhnd of a [methhshs].
Stano: Really when you consider it. It's... it's like uh I heard Senator Kennedy say uh... when he was in Watts, and he talked to a kid over there... some kids

Tony: you mean Robert Kennedy?
Stano: Yeah. He wuz, he wuz talking, he wuz talking to them ( )... he got up there, en these kids wouldn' siddown... Okay so finally he got one kid tuf talk to him, (after a minute), you gonna tell me about he sic cz I'm eighteen years old... I'm sick'n tired of the (garbage) here. They don't pick up trash ( ) (the garbage you know).

Tony: Yeah yeah yeah.
Stano: He said en uh t... I went down to the office, en asked the guy, y'know, about, asked him about... y'know havin' the trucks come through a liddle more often... he said en the man asked me how old was I was, I told im I was nineteen. He sid you hafta be twunny one y'know tuf talk becuz... ( )

Tony: To make a complaint?
Stano: Yeah. To discuss, this thing with um y'know,
Jay: huh-huh-huh, huh huh
Tony: Is that what's told im?
Stano: Yeah. You gotta be twunny one, you know, to... so he said, now, I've gotta be twunny one tuf do this. Yet when I'm eighteen they draft me tuf go fight a watchh yhiknow...

Simply enough, in terms of an "organic unit of thought," Stan's story is not particularly coherent with politicians playing each other off, one against the other. At the level of "departing from a single word," "mess," "garbage" is as nice a clang as any.27

The next instance is a possibly sound-triggered matter, and in this case there are clear instructions how to hear it, and that is not as a sound-triggering. The participants to this conversation have just come back from a local art fair with a piece they bought. They don't quite know what it is; maybe it could be used as a toothpick holder, or maybe as a candlestick.

(4.4.5) [Scheken:IN:137:R]

Bill: Actually this'd make a nice: uh, m=
Lori: =Yeah I wouldn' put it n'tgether,
Ellen: Jack be nimble Jack be quick.

(0.2)

Ellen: Jack jump over the (cand)lestick=
Bill: "Mh"
Ellen: =it's a darling (cand)lestick,'(proba'ly)."
Bill: (Uh huh)"
Lori: "Yeh (rilfry)."

Ellen produces the word "candlestick" twice, and then the talk goes into a lapse. When a conversation lapses and goes into silence, a task imposed on participants is to think of something to say. One thing that can happen is you remember something you wanted to say at some point in the conversation, and this is as good a point as any, so you say it. And Bill ends the silence with "Oh did you see Candid Camera." "[Cand]lestick," "[cand]lestick," "[Candid] [Calmera]." How could it not be a sound-triggered topic? However, given the way the talk, and the absence of talk, have gone, coparticipants are led to see it as a matter of a search during a lapse. Bill having remembered something out of the blue, specifically not generated out of what was said before.

Furthermore, his comments on the program are an account of how he remembered it — and it's certainly not "Speaking of cand, you did see Candid Camera?" Rather, "I was thinking of you when it was on." That is, trying to find something to say to end this silence, I remembered a while back when I was thinking of you. It's telling his coparticipants exactly how to hear how that topic came to be raised, and it guides them quite away from any inspection of the prior talk; where, if they looked, they might find the poetic/ pathology of "[cand]lestick," "[cand]lestick," "[Candid] [Calmera]."

In this next instance, two young mothers, Beth and Ann, are sitting together at a picnic, watching Beth's little girl work a hoola hoop. The child's legs are getting abraded from the hoop.

(4.5.6) [Goodwin:N1:91:E]

Ann: Yiknow I think's that from that hoop goin' around th' m much, h
Beth: Yes...
Ann: Y'c'n see the marks of it. It's gettin'...

(3.0)

Beth: It is it's fr in the hoola hoop,

(0.8)

( ) "hmm"

Ann: They're ( )
Beth: They're ( )
Ann: Threwin' those [egg]s I got some cracked over my leg'd.
text and performance quarterly

Ann's announcement that she got an egg cracked over her head generates a series of egg-throwing-contest mishap stories. In this case the trigger may be something like a shift from "raw legs" to "raw eggs." Much like (4.c.4) the triggering is masked with a lapse, a casting around for new material, and what may be reference to the appropriate if not actual source of the egg story, some people throwing eggs: "They're ( )." This might be a case of mis-attribution of source, a version of "speaking of X" (in this case, some people still tossing eggs around after the contest), where the actual "X" was the word "raw" in conjunction with their gazing at the little girl's abraded legs. Where "speaking of raw legs" is simply an unacceptable attribution of source.

While here I can only guess that "They're ( )" is a reference to people throwing eggs, and thus a version of "speaking of X," in the next instance there is no question that that's being done. And it may be, as here, a mis-attribution of source, where the actual source is unacceptable.

The general topic is occult phenomena. At this point the issue is whether one participant, Tina, was actually cured by a faith healer.

(4.c.6) [Theodore:Alt]

Milly: Lotta times headaches er caused i'm an anxiety en diet.

Milly: Sole, 1 x.

Brenda: 'Bt she ad da pinch ed nerve.

Milly: I don't eat things! that give me headaches.

Tina: We don't [eat] a lotta [crap]. wha's got preservatives of stuff.

Brenda: 'Bt they [eat] [crap].

Jason: En spee king o: i.

Brenda: She [eat] a pinch ed nerve.

Jason: Speaking of, weird experience.

Tina: 'Bt the [eat] 'nah wit causes the headache. That's sep, rare, really.

Did [eat] Da d anybuddy see that Night Gallery where the guy bastuh

= (eat) (the [crap]).

Given the general topic, Jason's "Speaking of weird experience" is legitimate enough. But there is a much finer relationship with a much more local possible source. Specifically, Tina's "We don't [eat] a lot of [crap]" may be the trigger for Jason's remembering a TV show about someone who has to [eat] the [sins].

As with (4.c.5) where "raw legs" triggers "raw eggs" but the source gets attributed to some folks nearby throwing eggs, here "eat ... crap" may be the trigger for a story about someone who has to [eat] the [sins].

Now, the literature on psychotic language treats the various processes that show up in psychotics as also present in normals. "But," according to Eugen Bleuler, "they occur only exceptionally and incidentally, whereas in schizophrenia they are exaggerated." Schneider also has it that in psychotic talk the processes "are not constantly suppressed as in normal thought progression" (in Woods 291).

What if these processes are not all that "exceptional" or "incidental" or "constantly suppressed" in normal talk? It may be that because they are conceived of as abnormal by the culture, by its professionals and by its lawmakers, then, on those occasions when they do occur, they are recognized as such and masked in ways. For example, the triggering may be left unacknowledged as in (4.c.1) and (4.c.2), with the shift in topic passed off as just an ordinary topic shift. Or it may be proposed as simply coherent with the talk in which the trigger occurred, as in (4.c.3). Or it may be buried in a lapse and presented as the product of a search for a new topic as in (4.c.4) and (4.c.5). And/or it may be masked by mis-attributing the source, as in (4.c.5) and (4.c.6).

So it doesn't look as if these processes are constantly suppressed in normal thought progression. Rather, they are embedded in and obscured by a range of syntactic, sequential and interactional structures. Most of them, then, become unnoticeable. And the few that are noticed, for whatever reasons we come to notice them, can be explained away as exceptions. 

I'm going to close, and I'll do it on an uninvited note with a look at a close-relevant phenomenon.

4.d. Triggered Terminations

It's simple enough. Someone in the course of talking uses a word or phrase that has its home in leave takings, departures, closings. It is not being used as such in the talk that's now underway. But on its occurrence a coparticipant initiates closing or leavetaking.

We have that case I showed as one instance of the "speaking of X" format (4.c.1.1). As it happens, it's also an instance of a triggered termination. Specifically, a hypothetical leave-taking triggers an offer to close this conversation.

(4.d.1) [Goldberg Data]

Maggie: = . . . an you y know [gushy love] y know because when y get back I'll see you when yuh get back. 'huh huh an-

Lynnie: Talking about getting back I've gotta take my mother home.

Lynnie: Uh: she was over here t'day an I've gotta drive her back to Beverly Hills. When c'n I come over . . .

Lynnie's "When can I come over" refers back to the reason Maggie got in touch with her, and initiates close-relevant arrangements.

In this next instance, some neighborhood cronies are sitting around drinking beer. For a good long while several of them have been trying to get Vic to tell his best story. He finally lets himself be persuaded. It's about his time in the armed forces, posted in Newfoundland, wandering the streets of Saint John's.
case is (2.1.5), the simple arithmetic relationship of "[three] shots in [seven] seconds and so forth," three from seven equals four.

As to the triggered termination here, it may be a double trigger. That is, Fred's announcement that he's "going to split" (lines 10 and 13) may select the phrase Vic then uses to describe his horror at being solicited by the fat woman—"I said 'Man, let me get out of here'" (line 22). Which may then set off James' "Hey . . . Quarter past. I got to go." (lines 24/28).

(James explains a bit later that he's got to pick up his wife from work. And he does leave before the story proper gets underway. Fred, who may have started the series, sticks around until the story is over.)

This next instance was actually the first. Anita Pomerantz turned it up. It's from a radio call-in show. The caller is chatting about the joys and perils of flying your own plane. He's been going on for some five minutes, and as he is describing a dangerous situation he uses "Goodbye!" to express the sheer awfulness of it.

(4.d.3) [Crandall Show]

Caller: Y'haftuh say undu(h)neah(h) de approah(h) ch.
B.C.: Oh great.
Caller: → I tried it once. 'hh [Gubbye: !]
B.C.: hehh heh heh hahh ha hahh ha hahh hahehh
Caller: "hh!
B.C.: → I know whatah mean. [I gotta go air] [52]
Caller: De place is gone now, but uh: i-yuh know, even at those days. It was scary.
B.C.: → Flying, flying i think now for the private pilot for pleasure, should be restricted way out of metropolitan areas.

And in this last instance, an hour and fifty-plus minutes into a two-hour group therapy session, Roger is talking about his parents' inability to see him as an individual.

(4.d.4) [GTS:IV-68]

Roger: I don't think any of 'em—many parents do.
1:54:00
B.C.: They see you as a part of them. Too much a parta them. And all the hassle come in when—when they—when you realize it's time to break—and they don't an' vice versa, an' all that shit.
Dan: → Well let's see whether or not we can get into it a little earlier next uh next week. [5 sec]
(  )
Roger: Yeah.
(5 sec) (people leaving, their voices fading)
Dan: (C'n I see you now?)
Roger: Okay.
(Jim): I have to go, I'm dead.
Jim: I hafla
Ken: Does anybody wanna run over an' grab a cup of coffee?
Jim: Yeah.
Al: Yeah, (.) when we come back over here though.
Ken: Oh
1:54:45 (end recording)

It is literally getting to be "time to break." And now Roger has produced this description of family life which is so apt for the situation at hand, "you realize it's time to break." Having done that, he may thereafter be specifically putting some work into capping off an utterance which might otherwise have a longer trajectory, with the two idiomatic phrases "and vice versa, and all that shit." These contribute nothing substantive, and don't invite inspection for substance. If "and vice versa" were to be taken literally here, Roger would be proposing that his parents see it's time to break and he doesn't, which is altogether counter to his position. And "all that shit" has its home in lists, where it and things like it (for example, "and stuff like that," "and so forth and so on") work as "generalized list completers" (Jefferson "On Some" and "List"). Their occurrence here may be analogous to another sort of idiom, "over and out."

So: Perhaps still in full spate, Roger produces this terribly apt component, "you realize it's time to break," whereupon he brings his utterance to a screeching halt with "and vice versa, and all that shit," and becomes silent. It's not only that Roger becomes silent, but that no one else starts to speak for a good five seconds. And it's the therapist who breaks the silence, announcing the end of the session.

I think an argument might be built that if Roger himself did not break the silence, turning it into a mid-utterance pause, then it is the therapist who would expectantly do so, and perhaps specifically do so with an announcement of closure. One part of the argument would have to do with the fact that the last ten minutes of the session have been focused on Roger, and that the last seven of those ten minutes have been on sufferance of the therapist, who had made an initial attempt to close the session after a three-second silence.

(4.d.4.1) [GTS:IV:65]
1:46:45 Dan: But the point is you weren't hurt by it just now were you?
Roger: No.
Dan: As a matter of fact I think maybe you expressed some of the feelings of the other members.
Roger: I think I broke the ice. Maybe somebody else who would not uh
Dan: Well, ( )
Roger: Follow in uh open uh their armor.
( ): t'hh
Roger: Take off the ( ) lid.
(3 sec)

And the next silence, some five minutes later, is the one that follows Roger's capped turn, "... you realize it's time to break and they don't and vice versa, and all that shit." I'd want to argue that at that point "continuation" and "closure" were the relevant alternatives, given the occurrences at the two prior silences. At this point the therapist would be the one to speak, and would either offer continuation or move to close. And Roger's capping of his own utterance might be designed as a vote for closure.

Looking at each of the four cases of "triggered terminations," I think a case could be made for something like pressure to close, imminence of closure, readiness to close. In each case the pun-like reference to closure is made by someone other than the one who then initiates closure. But in each case the one who makes that reference may well be sensitive to the pressure to close. In (4.d.1) Maggie's reason for the call had been dealt with at length, and unrelated matters are now being chatted about. In (4.d.2) Vic had offered to finish his drink and go home with his wife Carol about a half hour earlier, and now Fred is making noises about leaving. In (4.d.3) callers to radio talk shows have closure as a possibility almost from the start, and this call has been going on for five minutes now. And I've roughed out the possibilities for imminence of closure in (4.d.4).
There could be great orderliness here—and for at least some of the other poetics phenomena. There may well be systematic, specifiable conditions for their occurrence. We’re still slogging around wondering if these things are really happening, never mind systematics. But it’s these sorts of materials that Sacks could have been talking about in the two sentences I’ll use to close this talk.

We’re dealing with something real and powerful. And not just grossly powerful, like providing for the rate of industrial development, but it provides for little tiny things that God might have overlooked... (1:238)5

Comments and Questions

Following the talk there were several comments and questions, a few of which Robert Hopper included in his transcript.

Q: A psychologist, George Malle, ran an experiment of monitoring. Four different situations. With and without earphones, with and without white noise. What he got was the less monitoring they could do of their own speech, the more this sort of stuff came up.

GJ: Wonderful. Oh that’s fabulous.

Q: And other things—

GJ: Wait a minute. You have to be suspicious when a recipient says oh that’s terrific. It means they’re going to talk. About monitoring: What I’ve been noticing doesn’t have to do with people being able to monitor their own speech, but the importance of the back-and-forth, instant-by-instant monitoring of each other’s talk that goes on in conversation. I’ve tried to give a nice spread of cases here, but it seems to me that in the base collections there is a disproportionate amount of stuff occurring in things like interviews or sportscasts, things where people are forced back into their own resources to talk, and keep re-using their own materials. I get the feeling that if they are kept for long out of this ongoing instant-by-instant monitoring of each other, they’re almost into a state of sensory deprivation.

Q2: Let me just raise what I take to be the obvious objection. Why are these examples not coincidences.

GJ: That’s right, absolutely.

Q2: In other words, why is it not simply gratuitous linkage of uh:::

GJ: That’s the objection =

Q2: Phonetic similarities.

GJ: Absolutely.

Q2: I mean obviously there are um, there are countless conversations in which these connections do not appear. So in a sense you’re sort of uh you’re data dredging. You’re supplying only the cases that validate your thesis.

TEXT AND PERFORMANCE QUARTERLY

GJ: That’s the one!

Q2: I mean that’s the obvious objection =

GJ: That’s the one.

Q2: And is there any sort of,

GJ: Not me.

Q2: rejoin(der)

GJ: Nope.

(laughter)

Q2: Let me raise one other—It’s rather disconcerting. You’re implying that much of everyday business conducted through talk hinges to a large extent on phonetic accidents. Given that premise, you might want to examine particularly fateful interactions to see if rather critical outcomes turn on what appear to be conversational flukes.

GJ: So you’ve given us two ways to go: Just don’t believe it all, and go see if it works really crucially. And that could be something for someone to do, but I’ll stay with the everyday stuff as it happens to emerge. I think, by the way, that Sacks was looking to see if this stuff could work in important ways. Towards the beginning of the talk, I read from that interchange between Sacks and the student who’d asked if this couldn’t be carried too far, Sacks answering that we first have to raise the possibility that it operates at all. He goes on to say that perhaps the only way to get yourself to work on this “otherwise boring” stuff...

... would be under the hope that it was really much more important than it will turn out to be. So the fantasy that leads you to try to work on it is that it might turn out to have some really outrageous operation. I guess I don’t think so, but while I’m working with it I’m going to propose that it could be.” (Sacks 1:325)

APPENDIX A: THE UNLIKELY CASE.

I’ve always figured that this case is so improbable that presenting it would simply impeach anything else I might say. Even at the Boston conference where my aim was to show the loopy side of Conversation Analysis, I left it out. But at this point I don’t see that there’s anything to be gained by being self-protective, so here it is.

I’ll first give some background, and work up the surrounding talk a bit. The conversation takes place in June, 1968, in the week that Robert Kennedy was assassinated in Los Angeles. Emma and her husband Guy live in Los Angeles and are weekending in a beach community some fifty miles further south, where Emma’s sister Lottie and an acquaintance of Emma’s, Nancy, live permanently. As Guy is preparing to leave for a noon golf date, Emma tries to phone Nancy but the line is busy. So she phones Lottie instead. After her conversation with Lottie, she succeeds in reaching Nancy.

In each conversation Emma introduces the television coverage of the assassination and its sequelae, and does it with the same device: “This has really been a week, hasn’t it,” adding “I won’t even turn the TV on.” In her conversation with
Lottie we can see Emma discovering the device. She first tries with "What a miserable weekend!" but that is treated as a weather report, and some weather-talk follows, in the course of which a misunderstanding arises about exactly when it rained, last week or this week. And out of that emerges the successful introduction of talk about the assassination coverage on TV.

(A.1) [NB:11:1:R:2–3]

Emma: → WHAT A MISERABLE WEEKEND.

(0.2)

Lottie: Yes, en ge, it's been: beautiful | down here
I know you've had it (.) lousy in town
have, nch.

Emma: Yeah, it rained yesterday.

Lottie: It rained about uh ↓ ↓ ↓ u-let's, se e -:

Emma: "Ye,h."

Lottie: = Thursday morning real ri, I heard about five
uh, clock down here.

Emma: ↓ Did it?!

Lottie: Yeah.

Emma: Memorial Day y.

(0.4)

Emma: = That we, the:

Lottie: ↓ Ng ↓ Th ↓ is ↓ this week =

Emma: = Oh this week. Th ↑ That, ri?

Lottie: "Ye,h."

Emma: = God's lost track a 'time = This' silly been a
week hasn't it.

Lottie: Oh ↓ God a long wee, k. Yeah...

Emma: ↓ Oh: ↓ my ↓ God I'm (.)

→ glad it's over ↓ won't even turn the tvee
n.f.

Lottie: ↓ I won't either.

Emma: ↓ Oh no. They drag it out so'

And in her conversation with Nancy, Emma moves directly to the newly-discovered—and successful—device.

(A.2) [NB:11:2:R:2–3]

Emma: → gosh uh this is really been a ↓ week hasn't
it? =

Nancy: "(sadly) Oh: it really has.

Emma: ↓↓↓ r ↓ h

Nancy: "Gee it ↑ lll, it really hasn't.

Emma: → ev'n turn the tvee n.f h

And once into talk of the television coverage, Emma brings out her little gem, perhaps the reason for the two phone calls. It seems that she has a personal involvement in this historic event. The very spot where RFK's body was put onto the airplane was precisely where she and her husband had taken off on their trip to Hawaii.

Here's how it is announced and received in her conversation with her sister.

(A.1)

Emma: → THAT'S WHERE THEY WE TOOK OFF on ar chartered
flight that same spot diddy see it?

(0.7)

Emma: 'hh when they took him in the air plane =

Lottie: ↓ ↓ ↑ n ↓ g ↓ ↓ =

Lottie: = Hell ↓ wouldn't ev'n watch it. I think it's
so ridiculous. I mean it's 'hh it's a
horrible thing but my: God play up that
thing it's not ↑ h'ghn ble.

Emma: ↓ It'll drive

people nuts.

Lottie: Why id i-en makes Americen people think why
ther no good.

It appears that while the remarkable coincidence is a topic for Emma, Lottie doesn't find it a topic for us, for this conversation, and stays with the topic-for-us that Emma herself introduced—complaints about the television coverage—to which Emma accedes for a time. And then tries again a bit further on.

Emma: I think tveege's ruined the world myself.

Lottie: Ye,h.

Emma: ↓ Da'mn tveege: 'hh, hh

Lottie: ↓ Ye,h.

Emma: = ↑ Th'ts where ↑ we
took off. The exact spot, on that chartered
flight. (0.4)

Lottie: ↓ Oh:

Emma: = "where the" plane came in. ↓ ↓ just watched
that but

(0.5)

Emma: 'hh

Lottie: Uh ↓ wouldn't ev'n turn it on. (.) mean ↓ ↓ j's

Emma: ↓ Uh-uh ↓
TEXT AND PERFORMANCE QUARTERLY

(A.2.1) [NB: II:2:R:5-6]

![Image of a page from a document with text]

In the end, Emma’s historic moment is sunk without a trace by Nancy, just as it was by Lottie. But whereas Lottie flatly rejected the topic—Emma then giving up and beginning the conversation all over again with “What’s new?”—Nancy effuses for a bit and then, with “Yeah it’s been a rough week,” circles back to the starting point of Emma’s story, seamlessly replacing it with her own.

So much for background information and a tour of the surrounding talk. Now to the triggering mechanism(s).

Each of the announcements is formed up in the same way. Emma is pointing at something, “that spot,” as if she and her recipient were passengers on a bus, and she’s noticing a feature of the landscape. And in each case her recipient has difficulty locating what’s being pointed to.

![Image of a page from a document with text]

A world of contrast between this, and Lottie’s stoic recipiency. Nancy is an adroit and facile conversationalist, taking Emma on a little carousel ride and dropping her just where they started—reviewing the week that was. Now, both Lottie and Nancy go on to tell of their own week. Lottie had a successful fishing trip, her description of which gave us (2.a.3), “…we went out to the mouth of the jetty Tuesday and Jesus did we catch bass and halibut.” And Nancy, who has returned to college as a mature student, just had her final exams—including an evaluation by her Psychology classmates which seems to have been an accolade.
and

(A.2)

Emma: gosh uh \textit{this} is really been a \textit{a week has'}
\textit{u?}
Nancy: =((sadly)) \textit{Oh: it rilly has.}

While "this has really been a week" is adequate to its task, getting immediate and rich response even from Lottie the taciturn recipient, "that was the same spot we took off" gets silence, even from Nancy the fluent recipient. So what is going on?

It may be that Emma is indeed pointing to a feature of the landscape, but a landscape accessible only to her; an internal landscape. And it may be that the feature of the internal landscape that she's pointing to is present in the words that immediately precede each announcement.

(A.1)

Emma: I won't even turn the teevee on.
Lottie: \textit{I won' gether.}
Emma: =\textit{Oh no. They drag it out so} THAT'S WHERE THEY \textit{WE TOOK OFF...}

and

(A.2)

Emma: Ah won't ev'n turn the tee vee on,h
\textit{( )}
Nancy: Well I 1 hed turn it on w'n l fiis' got up
j's tuh see: how th'ingis were: pgregressing
but the thing was so sad'n all that b'rible
sad music they kep' ( ) keep playin'
\textit{Oh b:}
Nancy: =all th'time yuh. know.
Emma: =\textit{Good}
Emma: (=) They go on on on on with this
Nancy: \textit{Y a: h. *}
Emma: Like yesterday showin' um goin' in the chur-
hh \textit{Ah mean so much i know it's sad but
my God let's don't throw it in the pubic}
\textit{'constantly'}
Nancy: \textit{I bhh Well I think it's sad
then they d'nt ah: h allow u- you know the
families et leh th' decen cye of hav'ing =
\textit{eeY a h})
Emma: \textit{I'm \textit{privacy.}}
\textit{(0.4)}
Nancy: Yeah 'n the church yesterday this 'hh
flashin' the cam'ras on um when the w're
there yuh know went in um pray and an' ( )
\textit{God g-} \textit{h} J a-h-
Nancy: \textit{Ah thu bk is 1 terrible. =}

What I'm proposing is that "They drag it out" and "Jackie looked up" trigger the noticing of some feature of an internal landscape, which is then pointed to in "That's where we took off" and "That was the same spot we took off," respectively.

In (A.1) "they drag it out," which is being used there as an idiom for "prolong," has a literal sense that might capture a scene shown on that morning's television: The taking of Robert Kennedy's coffin body from the holding area out to the plane. And that may be the scene that Emma is pointing at with "That's where they we took off!"—to the utter mystification of her recipient.

And "they drag it out" may have the same fate as another problematic utterance, the "What a miserable weekend!" that generated weather talk and was abandoned for the in-situ-discovered "This has really been a week!" which was then stored for re-use.

That is, in (A.2) when Emma makes her comment on the prolonged television coverage, we no longer get "they drag it out," but "They go on and on and on" (see bracketed arrow, above); that substitution possibly having to do with Emma's attributing the failure of her announcement in (A.1) to its precipitousness, and resulting in abandoning the graphic phrase that triggered it for something devoid of imagery. And indeed she gets past "They go on and on and on" with no outburst of the story that so much wants to be told—only to fall prey to another image.

In (A.2) "Jackie looked up" describes a poignant moment captured on film, perhaps in closeup. I don't have a clear sense of this trigger. For example, it's possible that there were several such moments, including one at the church the day before, and one at the airport that morning. Where, then, one image crossed into the other, and here we are at the airport, again at the scene to which Emma now points with "Hey that was the same spot we took off for Honolulu!"—again to the perfect confusion of her recipient.

Another possibility is that there was just the one occasion when "Jackie looked up," and now we're getting a transformation involving who looked up. That is, "looked up" triggers for Emma exactly what happened to her. She looked at the television screen and there it was: "The same spot we took off!"

This latter version is perhaps supported by Emma's subsequent talk.

(A.2)

Emma: I c'd see the building en then the World Airways we uh: \textit{hhh on the side
there whur it comes in en that's} \textit{1 j's where \textit{we took off)

She's reporting on her own looking and seeing—at the time she and Guy went on their trip to Hawaii, and then this morning watching the scene unfold on television, and now, with such a phrase as "World Airways was on the side there where it comes in," she is taking us through that internal landscape that she can see so clearly.

This may be an extreme case, both in general and in this lady's life. That is,
she's got this brush with history to tell about, but however exciting she may find it, she knows it does not qualify as a "reason for a call" (if it were, she could begin the conversation with something like "Guess what just happened to me!" and she does not), but has to be worked into the conversation somehow, to emerge as "interactionally generated"; something that just came up as we were talking together.37

That what happens is not so much an emergence as an eruption results perhaps from the combination of pressure to tell the story, and the aptness to the story of a phrase being used to refer to something else. That Emma has twice succumbed to such a triggering and has twice produced this enigmatic pointing to something that just isn't there (as Woods has it, "... without any endeavor to translate it into a form which considers the need of a listener") (Woods 302), might testify to the terrible urgency of the story's need to be told.

Appendix B. Sample of "working with" poetics.

In one of his lectures, Sacks offers a way to approach a piece of data: "A kind of easy way to start out is to pick out various sorts of word sequences, and just mark them out on the transcript" (2:320–21). Here's a replica of a doodling of that sort, that he did on a segment of transcript. (For clarity's sake I'm only replicating that set of markings and not the wealth of notes, arrows, circles and lines for other issues as are present.)

(B.1) [Sacks:4 Calls:Draft 1:1–3]

A: ((Hello))
B: Hi honey,
B: How are // you.
A: Fine.
A: How y u.
B: hhhhhhh oh, I'm pretty good:
B: I had a little operation on my toe this week. (Redflag have toenail taken off)

A: Why hh
B: oh, I have a fungus of bad n infection,
B: T's a // hell of a
A: Ohhh Amha
R: In fact even

A: Well what a shame
A: Did ke hit the hosp?
B: No... I just had a local deal en I k'd wdn't anything but it better I w 2, lying on the couch and front.

NOTES

3The exploration of the poetics of ordinary talk was introduced and developed by Harvey Sacks in his UCLA and UCI lectures, an edited version of which can be found in Sacks 2: 264–65, 291–95, 305–09, 314–15, 396–401, 425–28, 451–36, 505.

3The "we" in this case included Judy Davidson, Rich Frankel, Anita Pomerantz, Jim Schenkein, and Alene Terasaki.

3Here is the original, see Valery 413–14.

Je cherche un mot (de le porte) un mot qui soit:
fin, voilé, de cÃ©rs, de deus villabe,
contenant P ou F,
termine par une muerte,
ed synonyme de brisure, desagregation;
et pas savant, pas rare.
Six conditions—au moins!


1In many of the instances throughout these materials, square brackets in a transcript text are added as a display device. They do not represent any particular emphasis by the speakers, but are intended as pointers to the phenomena under consideration.

4In American football the team is populated by "backs." There is the quarterback, running back, fullback, scatback, etc.

5In programs broadcast by the satellite channels CNN and CNBC in which the O. J. Simpson murder trial was being discussed by various legal experts—virtually on a daily basis—the contrast past defense prosecution was chronically problematic. Time and time again the one was produced when the other was meant. Often the mistakes were noticed and corrected: sometimes they seemed to pass unnoticed.

6For a discussion of this phenomenon or something very like it, see Sacks 2: 419–36.

7The story in question is Ray Bradbury's "A Sound of Thunder." Briefly, Mr. Eckels, a time traveler on safari, steps momentarily off the safari path. Returning to his own time he finds everything horribly changed. It turns out that when he stepped off the path, he'd stepped on a butterfly now embedded in the mud on his boot.

It fell to the floor, an exquisite thing, a small thing that could upset balances and knock down a line of small dominos and then big dominos and then gigantic dominos, all down the years across Time. Eckels' mind whirled. It couldn't change things. Killing one butterfly couldn't be that important! Could it?

8The data is as follows:

Frankel: TC:1:1–5

([Laverne is reporting an incident at a restaurant where she works, which is popular with her under-21-year-old friends who keep trying to get away with mixing liquor into their soft drinks.])

Laverne: So one a the-o-one a the other guys came up — behind me they geeze do. Y'know they-whenever you take a drink away fr'm a girl. hh ( ) you alwaes have a bouncer with you. hh jst in case the guy-0.2 who's with her decides t'come t hh stand up on her.

Esther: M-hm. —

Laverne: o hhhhhhh So she goes w/j oh'mn't see w/ her so concerned about you didn't save it uh me.

(1.0)

Laverne: 'hh So I looked at her and I said Cathy, I — said hh I feel personally, [affronted], 'hh thecu w/do in a place that I w/o h ( ) en put me in a [position]like you just put me in.

The first time I noticed this business of finishing one's own line before addressing the other's, was back in 1968, transcribing the following:

(1) [NB: H:R:10:9–11]

Nancy: — I U-had-a-chhh why he lives in Vg in Nu 1 1, 13.
— uh-mhh. m'mhh, h h h h h h

Emma: — site unconned here
Nancy: — uh works e-out there Vg in he's living with his ANT, h
Recently I've come across a few more cases, including these:

(2) [Holt:88:1-8:1-7] (Modified standard orthography)

((Jove's dog is being "absolutely stupid"))

Jove: Geoff, put down the phone in the hall 'n went to pick up the 'hsh you know the
cell phone in the bedroom 't bringin' (Y v e ; )

Leslie: "Oh:

Jove: =in to me 'hsh An' as soon as he sort of
herrettes down the (0.5) down the
corridor sligh(a) slabsots to who, pe:

Leslie: "Oh:

Jove: Are you not in bed are you?

Leslie: 1. Most peculiar

Jove: mN o no 1 1 no i'm:

Leslie: "Oh:

Jove: No i'm in the sitting room.

(5) [Holt:88:1-9:7-8] (Modified standard orthography)

Ed: An' I've only just gh got back from::

holiday as well.

(3)

Leslie: aGh yes did you go to ireland,

Ed: "( ) half term

Ed: "hsh N, I went to Spain.

(4) [Tracy:1:64] (Modified standard orthography)

Tracy: "I mean I've done done it all my life" (0.5)

Tracy: Charming people 'n getting along 'n being

(0.5)

Tracy: you k now w

Bernie: = But what about the black, "marks."

Tracy: "(0.6) "all of that stuff"

Tracy: The black marks they just once uh you know they
don't come up very often.

(5) [Hospit:8:27-92:4] (Modified standard orthography)

Patient: MAYBE you can 'i t h y k now (0.5) help me to
get a (1) strong 'hsh PAI-N (1) reliever.

Intern: Ah hgg, h

Patient: "Cause the QNES: (0.4) on the market

( ) don't work.

Intern: = What've you been u sing.

Patient: "( ) "I don't work" (0.5)

Patient: "I 'hsh I've used (1) Motro :

"If Ed is saying "During half term," this could be an attempted collaborative completion of Leslie's "Did you

go...?"

This material was recorded in 1968 when $3.00 could buy you "a great big steak."

Here, the word "compliments" is confused to "compen."

For some discussion of story characters introduced in the way the policeman is here, see Sacks 1: 410-11, 185-84.

The Harlem Globetrotters is a basketball team entirely populated by blacks, a version of the Harlem Globetrotters.

See (1, a), (2, b), (3, b), (4, b), (5, b), (6, b). See (6, b) and (3, e).

This conversation was overheated around 1970 when $20 was a lot of money.

See page 19 and note 10.

Something in the way Roger produces this makes it a reference to something green and leafy rather than

someone deceptively positioned.

TEXT AND PERFORMANCE QUARTERLY

January 1996

JEFFERSON

9 Here is some more of that conversation, tracking the occurrences of [k] and [g] in the text.

69 Louise: [G]uar YOU [LOO][k] L(I)KE A [k] HOOD.

70 (0.2)

71 Louise: I HE [WNN][D][A][k] I for a ho-o-cod.

72 (0.5)

73 Dan: "Well, n u ha', wait

74 Roger: "[G]uey with the h h, h h h.

75 Dan: "Yah this is

76 [k]ind a v, thin[k] in i-n'trestin g

77 Ken: "h h h h h h h

78 Dan: "poin't view = A h wann know wht Ken's

79 "reaction was toh Mfke't too.

80 (0.4)

81 Dan: "Tub Me (h k)e

82 Dan: "I Yeah sh mean you s, you wr', startin dish

83 ( )

84 Ken: "Uh

85 (0.5)

86 Dan: "He log[k]ed lik[e] (0.4) uh (-) i-he

87 "loog[k] lik[e] a h kjid (0.4) gee kinnn h n no

88 "(shh)ig out h, shh

89 Louise: "I'm-

90 Ken: "I[k]e a (h)id who (-) who j got out ( ) u:

91 (0.6) sch (-) u: ho ye (0.2) ye (0.6) loog ye hshush

92 hsh-ch

93 ( )

94 Roger: "hshh (1) unmented up, th'st' jine

95 Louise: "R e f o r m [h] [k]e f o r [h] h h o (-) b

96 Roger: "saw yu u n jn so happened l wr i right.

97 Ken: "Veg.h [o]p-s mol l[e] y h g: (t.

98 (0.3)

99 Louise: Reform [k]ood o jas [got out y]

100 Ken: "Yah, I'd know why, maybe it was a way e was
dressed er (-) th'way u glced er

101 something b'

102 ( )

103 hh hh

104 Ken: "he did(-) he did (-) in some way

105 ( )

106 "lik[e] (1) somethin' like who j [k]e (h)one

107 (h) a refor[m] [k]ood or something

108 "th u me

109 Roger: "En so did(-); (-) y n u walk[ed to]

110 right awag you spek(-)

111 (0.3)

112 Roger: "( )

113 Louise: "What'd Bill Be'hly bok[k] b[ke].

114 (0.6)

115 Mike: "T'hood damn he must [k]ook[k] like

116 Louise: "hsh hsh

117 Ken: "The (b(h)h)(h) talk (g) (h)y

118 Mike: "ex (g) y

119 Louise: "ng The hgh

120 (0.4)

121 Ken: "Oh u (h) ter.

122 (0.2)

123 Louise: "I NO: thh was e-as W'dj thin[k]

124 o: the (1) gir[er] A I am

125 Dan: "(h) That w i like a h.

The sprinkling of [k] remains fairly consistent, but there are few [g] and only three strong [h]-[g] clumps: "He

looked..." lik[e] a (h)id who j got out of u, a h'w lodge" (lines 86-91), "Reform [k]ood he got [g] out of?" (line
99) "What is the difference between 'all' and 'everybody who put [g] out of a frame of thought'" (lines 106-7). A thing to note here is that the clumping is a matter of repetition (e.g., all three [g] appear in the same word, [g]on), and does not seem to be genuine in the way it may have been earlier in the interchange. There is one dubious clump (lines 117-18). Keny: 'big' [big] [big], which is overlapped by Mike's [ex-] [com], but I'm not sure that the [g] in [big] qualifies for this set of [k] [g], and by the time the [g] in [g] 'gave' has occurred. Mike is already committed to the phrase "ex- [com], i.e., again may not be genuine.

Keny's real name has no [k] in it. It would be nice to see if the furry is topically bounded, but someone else (probably Jo Ann Goldberg) transcribed the conversation, and I don't have a copy of the tape or transcript.

101) This phenomenon has been given some consideration. For example, Sacks talks about "touched off" topics (1:76-1-3), and I talk about "triggered topic" in "Sequential Aspects of Storytelling in Conversation."

102) Here is another, similar, possible pun. The year is 1964, the topic is the Beatles, who had recently appeared on the scene.

[GETS 1-2-17]

Roger: They gotta get them screaming, those some day.

'Cause I know, so, a (0.5) combination of things.

In [hair] is part of it.

About which, somewhere in his research notes, Sacks jotted down, "The 'part' is part of the hair."

24 Emma and her husband Guy live in Los Angeles, where he works. They have a little house at the beach some 50 miles south of L.A., and that's where everyone gathered for the Thanksgiving dinner. Emma and Guy had been planning to return to L.A., but decided to stay down at the beach.

25 Watts is the sprawling Los Angeles slum where the Watts Riots took place, not long before (4.5.) occurred.

26 Recall (5.3) in which a complaint by a white teenager about treatment by a black policeman is formed up as a story of age discrimination. Here, a young man who is more than likely black, seems to have formed up his complaint about the city's neglect of his neighborhood as a story of age discrimination. Maybe there's something like a surrogate complaint, something less volatile than the actual one, which is more talkable about?

In the Foreword I mention my tendency to excess. I might as well supply an example. Here is some of my discussion of the "mess" "garbage" material as it appears in Robert Hopper's transcript. It can be seen as representative of the sort of thing I'm leaving out of this draft.

You get "kind of a mess" "garbage," not introduced that way. He doesn't say "Oh, speaking of messes I have a story about garbage." (laughter) No, but he says "Here's a story about politics," which eventually has in it what the story is about, which is that they don't pick up the garbage. He builds it in, and by the time he's finished you're not going to believe me, right? You're not going to believe me that "kind of a mess" triggers garbage because you're not supposed to. So because if you believe me we'd have to empty out the booby traps or all move in.

37 There may also be a shadow of sound-triggering here. Although the 1990 Webster's New World Dictionary defines "crap" as "nonsense" or "junk" or "trash," the word has long been used as a euphemism for "shit." Actually it seems to me it's no longer a euphemism but a synonym. Euphemism or synonym, it may be that aside from invoking a category that it shares with "shit," the word "crap" also invokes the word for which it is routinely substituted in a metaphor, a word which stands in at least an aesthetic relationship with "shit." I.e., "shit."

38 See Appendix A for a case that I never had the nerve to present outside of the classroom.

39 "[n]" is an attempt to capture a nasalized "I'm gonna."

40 "Simplicity" is a good example of an effort to capture a nasalized "I'm gonna."

41 "Sounds like Mike just had a big swallow of beer, and now comes the 'uh huhh.'"

42 Call is very likely laughing as well. Routinely, when B.C. gives utterance, his coparticipant's voice fades.

43 "I've got to go, sir" (or "ma'am") is this radio show host's standard entry into closings.

44 There may be a [w] row developing here. [Well ... [we're ... [we're ... [we're ... [we're ... [well]."

Dan may be doing an error-preemptive checkout in his "well... this next week." Recall (1.1) the speaker's difficulties with "well... this next week like Hether's (0.3) [n]: nephew [loose]." In this case they've revising the schedules, so it's not automatically going to be "next week." Rather, something like "next time" might be more appropriate.

45 Sacks 1:218. The quote as it appears here is slightly edited.

46 See Appendix B for a sample of "working with" poetry.

47 For some discussion of "interactically generated" matter, specifically, invocations, see Sacks 1: 781-95, and 2: 218-21 and 574-75.

WORKS CITED

