THE LOCAL ORGANIZATION OF

LITERARY AND RHETORICAL

FEATURES IN SOCIOLOGICAL

ARGUMENTS

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To Docteur Louis and Renee Goni with thanks

Abstract

This thesis is concerned with some features of natural language in sociological argument and the implications of the presence of such features in such arguments for the satisfaction of the arguments.

Part I describes some 'troubles' that natural language can occasion scientific methodology in research settings. It looks specifically at the damage to finality and uniqueness in questionnaire and interview interpretation.

Part II describes four ways in which natural language may facilitate sociological arguments: by presentation devices; in display of author as credible; in transfer of materials in citation and in the invocation of common sense, It is suggested, then that natural language acts as a 'trouble' and a resource, the resource possibly repairing the trouble.

PREFACE

Many people, not a few unwittingly, have helped me in the studies reported here.

I owe a considerable debt to the professionalism, kindness and criticism of my super⸻ David Marsland of Brunel University.

Colleagues and friends at Manchester University, Manchester Polytechnic and Didsbury College of Education made mimeos and references available and offered insights, criticism and guidance. In particular I would like to thank Dr. W.W. Sharrock for time and trouble beyond any normal call.

Advice and kindness, papers and references also came from colleagues at the University of California, Los Angeles and San Diego and California State University at Los Angeles and Dominguez Hills, in particular Professor Darrough, Professor Rya⸱e and Professor Mehan. Professor Schegloff pointed out the Fish and Strauss references to me, Professor Pollner the Booth reference, on which references so much of this thesis is built.

Professor Turner of the University of British Columbia gave the introductions that made the visit to California so useful and also gave time, thought and advice.

Steven Woolgar of Brunel University listened to, criticized, and corrected drafts.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC FEATURES OF SOCIOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS

1.1 Origins and Objectives of the Research

Most sociological research is conducted in natural language[1]. That fact together with some of its implications has received some attention from commentators such as Phillips[2] who see the use of natural language in, for example interviews, together with the other characteristics of social interaction, as some kind of problem or 'trouble'. In the early parts of this thesis, we shall describe in detail some of these troubles.

Most sociological arguments are presented in natural language. That fact has received less attention. In the second and larger part of this thesis, we shall describe some of the features of the language used in sociological arguments together with some implications of their use for sociological arguments.

The simple origin of this thesis is, then, a fascination with the role of natural language in sociology. The fascination is refined by a particular ethnomethodological view of language and produces a very open objective:

a)   To describe certain localized features of sociological arguments as objects in their own right.

Thus conceived, the enterprise has little or no import for 'normal' sociology. It is indifferent.

The notion of 'ethnomethodological indifference'[3] to sociology is however, playfully coy. Ethnomethodologists, especially those who work with the methods pioneered by Harvey Sacks[4], frequently claim

to be engaged in formal descriptive operations which have little to
offer and less concern to rebuke sociology[5]. That may well be the
intention. The fact remains that some sociologists read these
operations as rebukes and persist in deriving 'news' for sociology
from them[6]. That fact is an interesting phenomenon in its own right
and one which, at first sight, may have to do with so many ethno-
methodologists being members of the sociological cognitive community.
That membership reveals them as having had available to them 'normal'
practices and activities which they have presumably discarded in
favour of ethnomethodology. Whatever the reason, sociologists are
not indifferent to ethnomethodology and that fact is known by ethno-
methodologists and they in turn are known to possess it. To be
indifferent in those circumstances is to rebuke. It is to refuse an
invitation.

In the case of the research presented in this thesis such a rebuke
would be doubly impolite because the materials we analyse are
sociological arguments. We shall then try to provide some guidelines
for those who wish to hazard what implications for sociology could be
derived from our analyses. Those implications can be approached as a
practical or theoretical problem.

The practical problem is a contemporary one. In the nineteen sixties,
there appeared a number of 'critiques' of sociology as then practised.
There also appeared alternative ways of doing sociology, which were
often read as critiques. Whether they were critiques or not many of
them were radically different from 'normal' sociology, particularly
those stemming from Phenomenological[7], Althusserian[8], and Ethno-
methodological[9] perspectives: to a lesser extent those from Symbolic
Interactionism[10].

How did sociologists react to these critiques of and alternatives to the methods they taught in the classroom and used in research? Some, of course, espoused the 'new' ideas; some satisfied themselves and some others that they were of little worth. In the case of ethno-methodology, there was opposition on the grounds of obscurity, triviality[11], reductionism, limited scope[12], or, as one American servant put it, its identity as 'Hollywood sociology'[13]. There were, then, those who liked it and those who did not. Both, I doubt[14], had some case. There was, however, a third and larger group. It's been argued that there were telling points about their methods in, for example, a theory of measurement[14]; that ethnomethodology should join the other perspectives in the theory and methods courses; that more attention be paid to 'language'[15].

There has been some effect on what is taught by sociologists but the effect on actual research practices has been minimal. The criticisms are accepted in principle and neutralized in practice. In research reports difficulties are hinted at then dispelled with 'despite ...' and 'even though ...' clauses. Occasionally humility is displayed in backcloth prefaces in which the author bemoans the inadequacy of his work 'in the face of ...'. Sometimes the obeisance in claims to 'have taken into account the criticisms of ...' is almost completely spurious. Again, others ritualize that obeisance in an 'adequate' number of responsorial asides and references to the 'criticisms'. The points are taken, acknowledged, genuflected to and the programme goes on as before[16]. All of which is most interesting. So among these schizophrenic sociologists who preserve their methods from the criticisms they accept in principle are the supporters of Popperian models of scientific advance through debate.

These remarks are not intended to be abusive. Rather they raise an intriguing problem. If many sociologists regard the achievement of reliability and validity in sociological research as fraught with awesome problems, how do they go about the practical business of judging each other's work? The issue is not whether such sociologists are obstinate or hypocritical or Popperian apostates, but how the schizophrenic attitude is managed in practice. If the 'textbook' rules do not provide for the actual day-to-day validation procedures of sociologists, what does? The schizophrenic attitude is an extreme which highlights the possibility that sociological judgments in practice may be social, interactional and contextual affairs which are rendered possible by their characteristics as such affairs. Among the social and interactional particulars of these judgments are the social relationship of reader and writer and the use of natural language. In the light of this we may add a second objective developed from the first:

b)   In what ways do the literary features of sociological arguments make possible judgments about the worth of those arguments?

That second practical concern may be redeveloped and restated in a more theoretical way. Our concern shall be with the practical accomplishment of sociological argument in the face of certain troubles. These troubles are partly those touched on by commentators such as Phillips but we shall add some of our own. In particular we seek to explain how arguments are read as 'following', as deriving conclusions from premises and observations, as being reasonable. When sociologists read and evaluate each other's work, they claim to make use of a methodology which provides, amongst other things, for the varying allocation of reliability and validity. That methodology is partly constituted by general rules of inductive and deductive logic: some of it is particular to the social sciences:

some of it to sociology. We shall term this methodology 'scientific'. In methodological texts, judgement and satisfaction are displayed as the outcome of the application of such 'scientific' methodology. Concluding sociological statements are made 'by', 'through', 'after', and 'as a result of' these 'scientific' procedures. Sociological research is pictured as a process with a result 'at the end': the process 'leading to' the result. We shall suggest that while such a methodology may be helpful, it is not conclusive but operates with another hidden methodology. Moreover the 'scientific' method-ology is only available through the other hidden methodology for that methodology is to do with the organization of language. Only when the text has been read can the 'scientific' methodology be operationalised. That reading turns out to depend on a methodology which is not easily separable from issues of arguments. We shall term that hidden methodology 'Rhetorical'[17] and, since we shall concentrate on written argument, sometimes 'Literary'.

We shall use these terms of 'literary' and 'rhetorical' methodology loosely to indicate practices which have to do with written language in sociological argument and practices which are not in the 'scientific' methodology. Such a methodology has numerous practices and we shall examine only four. We shall first address the achieve-ment of argumentative satisfaction through attention to the artful organization of the page, preface, title, chapter, etc. Within those we shall interest ourselves in the organization of categories of activities and actors, of sequence, of contrast and so on. Within the same data we shall investigate the role of reader-writer contracts and author self-displays. We shall then consider the work of citation, of 'borrowing' facts produced by other agencies.

Lastly we shall append some comments on the invocation of common sense through language.

We do not regard the existence of a 'Rhetorical' methodology in sociological argument as a minor, unfortunate and repairable accident or as the result of an oversight. But our programmatic convictions are not a pre-requisite for finding the description of sociological arguments useful. Any reader who feels the ironical imbalance between the massive difficulties in producing one piece of conclusive reliable sociological research on the one hand; and the existence of substantial amounts of vetted sociological wisdom on the other, might find out descriptions, hopefully, interesting. The admission that sociologists use rhetoric need not implicate the reader in disparagement of 'normal' sociology nor the denial of the eventual improveability of 'scientific' methodology. However, if it is held with Sacks[18] that sociological descriptions are in principle inconcludable; or with Tarski[19] that descriptions in natural language cannot achieve scientific truth: then the role of rhetoric becomes a candidate for permanency. Rhetoric ceases to be an unfortunate and intrusive by-product to be eradicated with advances. If it turns out to be a permanent feature of sociology, then that sociology can be recategorized as a literary discipline.

In our first section we shall try to show that the ways in which the 'scientific' methodology falls short of ensuring finality, reliability, unequivocality and comparability are not repairable as long as its work is conducted in natural language. And, as we have said, in the second and longer section we shall try to show how the same natural language becomes a resource for producing the argument satisfaction that it disrupted in the first. We are now in a position to formulate our objective in a third way:

c) To show the practical difficulties caused by use of natural language to the operation of 'scientific' methodologies in research. An to show how the ambiguities and equivocalities produced by such language use in research are repaired by the use of the same natural language in reading written argument.

We have now listed our objectives in three ways; descriptive, practical and theoretical. Different readers with different perspectives may use those objectives to read the text in different ways and we are aware that in trying to provide something for three sorts of readers we may irritate all three.

1.2 Methods

The empirical work reported here took place between 1973 and 1976. It consisted of forty eight tape-recorded interviews of fifteen-year olds and a similar number of both open and closed question-aires to the same group. This provided the data for looking at language in the operation of sociological research and assessing its relationship to 'scientific' methodology. The analysis of sociological arguments was done by the detailed analysis of size texts. That of citation was done on the basis of a similarly detailed examination of social work and probation reports, about thirty reports in all. The examination of commonsense was based on a tape-recorded interview with sixteen-year olds in a group, some participant observation of that age group, and a sociological text.

From this it will be apparent that we do not claim that any 'findings' can be generalized to sociology as a whole, at least not according to the usual canons. However, it will become apparent that, while particular characteristics are specific to the texts examined, the class from which they are derived is, in many cases fairly general,

if not inevitable. For example while an author may choose one way
of identifying and characterizing his hero, and another author
another identification and characterisation; all authors face a
common formal problem of selection from a range of descriptors.
While one author related events in one order of sequence and one in
another; all have to organize sequence. It is in pointing up these
formal practices that the descriptions of the particular data are
generalizeable.

The particular pieces of data were chosen for practical reasons of
access and because they showed in a fairly concise and demonstrable
way characteristics the author had observed more widely in both
other sociological literature and social work and probation reports.
Once a piece of data had been started on, the analysis persisted.
Obviously a more varied picture could have been given by isolated
quotes but we preferred to let, in a very real and exacting sense, the
data control the analysis.

We should have liked to clarify the formal qualities of sociological
arguments more than we have. Our analyses remain at a very descrip-
tive level for the most part. We excuse this on the grounds both
that it is extremely difficult and that, apart from the work of
Dorothy Smith[20], there has been almost no other work in this area.
The topic is then new. Moreover, the wreckage caused by the
theoretical and methodological debates of the nineteen sixties is,
at least for this author, very real. It is a matter, now, of
picking and rooting about the charred remains of once proud methods
to find something still strong enough for at least one operation.
With few and inadequate tools and an unchartered task, we can offer
much more in the way of interest than in the way of certainty. But

we are convinced along with other ethnomethodologists, and for reasons which are well explained by them[21] that such certainties can only be approached through analysis of actual practical achievements at the local level. Only in that way will we be able to separate contextual and formal elements.

It is in the light of these introductory comments that we title this work, 'The Local Organization of Literary and Rhetorical Features in Sociological Arguments'.

1.3 Synopsis and Organization of the Work

Part one shows the sorts of troubles that natural language occasions 'scientific' methodologists. We concern ourselves in this short section, not, obviously with the whole battery of social scientific methodology, and very little with the theory. Our interest is in the practical achievements and troubles of some interviews and questionnaires; troubles which point to some formal, regular and mundane features of those two research tools in general. Some of the troubles and complexities originate in the 'interactional particulars' of such interviews' and questionnaires' administration. One arresting quality of most sociological reporting is that these interactional particulars are not incorporated (perhaps the style of sociological reporting derives from laboratory reports where such particulars are controlled). If, for example, interview talk is significantly the product of the circumstances of the interview, and is capable of several interpretations; if it does not produce unequivocality, then it is impossible to show that, without having (at least) the transcripts of the talk to compare with the sociologist's interpretations. The processes by which sociologists construct tidy, unidirectional accounts out of hours of situated interview talk or participant observation; by which they read

questionnaire returns to be about some thing and not another;
these processes are not routinely available to professional
colleagues who find themselves, therefore, in the Popperian
discussion enterprise with one hand tied.

Faced with such an absence, one solution and that chosen by
Cicourel[22] and Weider[23], is to produce one's own research project
for subsequent scrutiny. We adopt that solution and use a project
on young people's knowledge of space. We concern ourselves only
with some interactional particulars of the questionnaires and
interviews used in that project; particulars which raise problems
quite common in the use of standard methods. The full project is
reported elsewhere[24].

The particular aspects we analyse derive from the situated nature
of 'replies' in both questionnaires and interviews. Formal
sociological practice is to report replies as the belongings of
one person; the producer of the reply. The reply is then seen as
telling us something 'about' the speaker or writer. We shall try
and show that the reply can be seen (in interviews) as the product
of producer and co-locutor, in sequence of talk, in situation,
and we shall claim that what it tells us 'about' is no obvious sort
of matter.

Not only is the reply tied, normally, to producer but to a pre-
categorized producer; it is not reported as, say, Beryl's reply
(except in the odd attempt to 'illustrate' 'dull' scientific
reports) rather it is represented as the reply of the working class,
or the housebound mother or whatever. Further, the reply is held to
be obviously about a topic; what someone is talking about is seen to

be self-evidential. But if Sacks[25] is right in suggesting that
speakers orient to the management, maintenance and orderliness of
the conversation; to speaker change, sequence and turn taking, to
what is noticed as not-being-said (non-trivializable absence)[26],
then topics cease to be obviously available except in a commonsense
way. The consequence of making an unambiguous topic and producer
is, usually, to invite the reader to join sociologist in highly
selective correlations. The matter of interactional particulars
is then pertinent to a central sociological occupation; that of
correlating characteristics (classified topics) with social groups
(pre-categorized speakers). An example might be, 'Identify
formation is ... a major problematic issue during adolescence[27].
We shall term these operations 'attribution exercises'. They occur
obviously, even blatantly as in the quote above, but they are also
traded on surreptitiously in elegant conjunction such as 'The
Counsellor and Alienated Youth' (which we analyse in Part-Two)[28]
or simply in modifications like, 'youth culture'[29] or 'alienated
youth'[30]. In all events they constitute neat statements of few and
unambiguous terms in which characteristic is tied to social group
(West Indian-Identity problems, Proletariat-alienation, Youth-
ambiguity, etc.); the attribution distilled out of situated,
sequential talk between at least two people about things.

As the examples suggest, we have chosen to study the scientific and
rhetorical parts of attributions within the sociology of youth.
This is partly because the project from which we analyse interactional
particulars of questionnaires and interviews was on youth but also
because it is a field where attributional argument is common. Thus
Berger suggests youth culture is not about youth but about a way of

life[31]; Hall et al think it is about class[32], Folk and Fink about

different national school organizations (at least Coleman's version[33])

and so on.

Part one then tries to show the difficulties that scientific

methodology has in justifying moves from interactional talk and

writing to attributional statements about youth. One by-product

of this is to import tortuous methodological questions from general

theory into youth sociology; an area until recently[34] relatively

undisturbed by the current epistemological indigestions of main-

stream theory.

In part two we describe four aspects of the rhetorical achieve-

ment of sociological persuasion: first we see the importance of

the careful sequential and consistent presentation of items in

argument, of situation within a book or journal, of categorizing

items in tied pairs, eg problem-solution, of implication through

lists, or in general, the importance of presentational features.

The empirical material that we use for this anlysis are some

sociological accounts of youth. Drawing on the same material, and

under the heading of presentational features, we explain the work

done b displays in the text of the author as a credible person

with privileged access to social matters. The third aspect involves

the use by sociological reporters of either other credible persons or

organizations' reports, either as reports or, indirectly, as 'facts'

derived from those reports. Our attention is centred on the achieve-

ment of plausibility both in the 'original' report and in the

secondary sociological version by the rhetorical generalization of

facts out of the organizational context in which they were produced.

Our empirical materials for this are social work and probation

reports. Finally sociologists perform similar generalization
operations with the reader's commonsense, inviting him to fill in
missing parts of the presented argument with commonsensical schemes.
The problem of how sociology can produce so many conflicting, but
independently plausible descriptions of the 'same' social event can
be explained, in part, by these invitations. For commonsense is
concerned largely with explaining matters at hand sufficient for
practical purposes, not with the production of coherent consistent
descriptions of abstract categories. To treat a young person as an
adult one minute and a child the next <u>need</u> present members with no
contradiction if they see the occasions as unrelated. Only the
sociological attempt to write accounts in terms of the abstract
'youth' makes the contradiction. Thus the invitation to use common-
sense schemes to fill in presented argument sidesteps issues of
contradictory commonsense formulations and of whether the scheme
invited is about the abstraction at all. The materials we use for
this analysis are drawn from observation, tape recorded discussion,
and a text.

1.4 Traditions

The study of rhetorical lore can be situated in, at least, one
sociological school and one scholastic tradition. These two, ethno-
methodology and rhetoric have interesting affinities. It has long
been recognised, at least by Greek writers through Cicero to the
present, that issues of how persuasion may be accomplished both in
the rational-factual and the literary-artistic modes are of, some-
times, equal importance to issues of how right persuasion should be
accomplished: that rhetoric is a valid enterprise alongside philosophy.
At the moment rhetoric seems subsumed into literary criticism and

isolated fro ' cience'. However a brief acquaintance with some issues of rhetoric shows concern with similar problems to social science. Contemporary methodological dispute has shifted from concerns of reliability and precision to concerns of validity. Especially the phenomenological and Marxist criticisms of the late sixties[35] have directed attention to the question: What is a suitable methodology for the study of social as distinct from natural reality? The Mauriac[36] says that 'there is no such thing as a novel which genuinely portrays the indetermination of human life as we know it', there are many sociologists that would not rate sociology's success higher than literature's. The problems of reporting an indeterminate world are increased when that world is seen as not so much as lacking order but possessing contradictory experiences of order. For Sartre such a world must be reported in its entirety; there must be no 'privileged subjectivity'[37]. In a novel you must tell all or keep quiet; above all, you must not omit or skip anything[38]. You may not ever be allowed the _normal abridgements of dialogue_. There are the further complications of form and structure. As Booth[39] says of writers, 'To some it has seemed unrealistic to show chance at work in a fictional world; to others a careful chain of cause and effect is forbidden, since in real life chance plays an obviously greater role. Some have deplored conclusive endings or soaring climaxes or clear and direct opening expositions, since they are never found in life. Most deprecations of plots are based on the claim that life does not provide plots and literature should be like life.' Surely issues of 'privileged subjectivity', of dialogue abridgement, of presentational structure as related to topic structure, surely these are relevant to sociological reporting. The resolution of these problems is achieved for James[40] by an intense

illusion of reality through, for example, a __foreshortening__ of time
in which successful __dissimulation__ preserves the illusion of reality.
How i. the necessary foreshortening of time treated in, for example,
sociolo ical case histories, and with what results? Another resol-
ution especiall to the Sartre-Mauriac proble is suggested by Jean-
Louis Curtis[41]. Reality of report is produced by a tacit contract
with writer which grants author the right to know what he is talking
about. It is this contract which makes fiction possible. Does it
 lso make sociology possible? If we do not have access to original
research interaction is it not professional trust that form the
basis of, literally, __superficial__ sociological debate?

The problem presented by an indeterminate and variously ordered
world to Mauriac and artre is a parallel to the problem of
sociologica description as seen by Sacks, 'Consider the problem of
co paring proposed descriptions. The features of any description
that it will not only be incomplete but that (a) it coul be
indefinitely extended, and (b) the extension cannot be handled with
any formula for extrapolation, implies that any description can be
read as far from complete r as close to complete as any others'[42].
 acks' subsequent work turns t analyses of how descriptions are
recognised[43] and later to the formal properties of turn taking[44] and
repairs[45]. A central concept in the arlier work is $R_ecipient Design;
the need for co-participants to know each other, the situation and what
each other might be doing in order to make sense of each other's
remarks. This issue of who is talking to whom about what has been
addressed in a differer context by the philosopher Leo trauss[46],
who shows how it is possibl for two readers to read the same book in
a different way, how a correct reading of the writer's intended
message can be __formally__ distinguished by certain texts. The text

can be used subversively and comparably to extract messages which are not in the words. Such devices are of para ount importance in times of restricted speech and totalitarianism. The au ience of a sociological book can be divided into more t an an inner and outer group; how does t e multiplicity of audiences enter into the plausibility process? Certainly the sociological reader is under an obligation to read for what should be there and to read 'figuratively' as St. Augustine[47] terms it. In the case of sociology, figurative reading is of course, not God-determined but professionally so, a reading based on knowledge of normal professional practice to see such practice. A final contact for ethnomethodology and rhetoric is over the action of words. Cicero and St. Augustine and the modern Rhetoricians such as Fish[48], Richards and Booth, together with Sacks[49], Turner[50] and Schegloff[51] all emphasize that the question is not what the words and sentences _are_ in a grammatical sense but what they do[52]. That doing is a collaborative act between reader and writer or co-conversationlists and therefore has a social dimension. One reason for undertaking this project was to explore the social interaction of written sociological reports. Sacks and his colleagues have concentrated largely on conversations[53], the rhetoricians on purely literary devices; or in some cases the psychological effects of poetry[54]. We are attempting then a new and tentative venture; but one that has a tradition and a sociological home.

In fact we trade on the tradition of rhetoric very little except to claim that our enterprise is not wildly idiosyncratic. However we do take for granted as our starting point both basic ethnomethodological programmatics about topic and resource, Et Cetera clauses, Repairs and the like[55]; and some acceptance of the usefulness of the conversational analysis pioneered by Sacks, Schegloff and

Jefferson[55]. As this is an empirical study, we feel it is neither necessary nor informative to summarise the programmatics of ethno-methodology or conversational analysis in this report: They are available elsewhere.

Although we do not make much use of the rhetorical tradition in our analysis, it may be useful to amend two speculations: the first relates to the learning of rhetoric. Various sociologists of education have noted that in addition to issues of whether children learn their 'subjects' at school, there are issues of what they might learn subterraneously. Some suggest they learn to do things such as answer-not-ask questions[57]; that they learn a 'hidden curriculum'[58]. Some Althusserian Marxists focus attention on the school as an 'ideological state apparatus'. I think that despite its absence from the university curriculum, rhetoric is learned at british univer-sities through persuasive practice in the seminar and the exam. The student who persuades in the seminar rarely has time to present all the facts: such institutions may be discussion centres to advance truth; and they may be a forum for rhetoric. The socialization into professional sociology that starts there and continues through research justifications, research grant justifications, writing in the form for journal and conference acceptance involves the learning of rhetorical as well as scientific practices. If so, we will need rhetorical as well as scientific criteria for assessing competence. Those criteria should not be vague notions of articulateness, but their relationship to the scientific features should be explicated.

Secondly, in that explication, we may start to see that a non-natural science based sociology is no woolly political talk, and that there is a possibility of a sociology which admits its roots in

the humanities _and_ the natural sciences; which uses the precision

and skill of literary criticism and rhetoric alongside its

scientific procedures because it is maturely aware of the problems

of hearing, reporting and discussing its topic in natural language.

Notes

1. I use the term 'natural language' following Tarski in A. Tarski, Logic, emantics and Meta-Mathematics, Papers from 1923 to 1938, London, Oxford Press, 1969, p. 153.

2. D. hillips, nowled e from hat' Chicago, and Actally, 1971.

3. For various examples of et nomethodological indifference see Richard J. Hill and Kathleen tones Cuttenden (e s.) Proceedin s of the Purdue ymposiu on ethnomethodology, 1968, Institute for the tudy of Social hange, Depart ent of ociology, Purdue University, Institute onograph eries Number 1.

4. H. acks, various lectur s at the University of California, forthcoming in a selection edited by E.A. Schegloff. In this thesis the acks' lectures are frequently cited. pecific lectures are indicated where t is i relevant but the n ture of the lectures makes more eneral reference the rule.

5. For a recent example, R.J. Anderson, The ocial Organization of the production and mana ement of ifficulties in utual under-stand ng, ... thesis, University of Manchester, 1976, preface and first chapter.

6. The Proceedings of the Purdue ymposiu ..., op. cit.

7. In particular the applications of chutz. chutz, On henomenology and ocial relations, elected ritings, ed. H.R. Wagner, Chica o, Chica o Press, 1971.

8. L. Althusser and . Balibar, eading Capital, trans. . Brewster, New Left Books, London, 1970.

9. . udlow (d.), t dies i ocial Interaction, ew Yor , Tree Press, 1972.

10. H.S. Becker, ociological ork; ethod and ubstance, Lond n, Allen Lane, 1971.

11. For example in Coser's address to the A.S.A. 1976.

12. Some aspects of scope are discussed in H. Mehan and H. Wood, 'The Morality of Ethnomethodology', Theory and Society, Vol. 2, No. 4.

13. P.C. from H. Mehan, ibid, 1976.

14. A.V. Cicourel, Method and Measurement in Sociology, New York Free Press, 1964.

15. A. Giddens, '. . . Conference, 1976.

16. Generalization based on reading the professional journals.

17. The term is used as in literary criticism, not as in symbolic interactionism.

18. H. Sacks, 'Sociological Description', Berkeley Journal of Sociology, Vol. 8, 1963, pp. 1-16.

19. A. Tarski, op. cit.

20. D. Smith, 'K ist geisteskrank. Die Anatomie eines Tatsachenberichtes', in E. Weingarten, F. Sack and J. Schenkein (eds.), Ethnomethodologies, Beiträge zu einer Soziologie des Alltagslebens, Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1976.

21. Succinctly in R.J. Anderson, op. cit.

22. A.V. Cicourel, Theory and Method in the Study of Argentine Fertility, New York and London, J. Wiley, 1974.

23. D.L. Weider, Language and Social Reality. The case of telling the Convict Code, The Hague, Mouton, 1974.

24. R.J. Anderson, Youth: The Social Ascription of an Age Category, D. Phil. Thesis, Brunel University, 1975.

25. H. Sacks, Lectures, University of California and in H. Sacks, E.A. Schegloff and G. Jefferson, 'A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation', Language, Vol. 50, December 1974, pp. 696-735.

26. H. Sacks lectures, op. cit.

27. J. Goodman, 'Adolescent Norms and Behaviour', Merrill Palmer Quarterly, 2969, 15.2, April, pp. 199-211.

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38. Cited in W. Booth, op. cit., p. 52.

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40. W. Booth, ibid, p. 50.

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46. L. Strauss, 'Persecution and the Art of Writing', Social Research, November 1941, pp. 488-504.

47. Cited in S.E. Fish, Self-Consuming Artifacts, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1974, p. 22.

48. S.E. Fish, ibid.

49. H. Sacks, lectures, op. cit.

50. R. Turner, 'Words, Utterances and Activities', in R. Turner, (ed. Ethnomethodology, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1974, pp. 197-215.

51. E.A. Schegloff, 'On some Questions and Ambiguities in Conversations', unpublished m.s.

52. Specifically what they do to the hearer-reader in a cognitive sense not just an emotional sense. See also Fish, op. cit., p. 420 on the 'affective fallacy'.

53. There seems to be more interest in video when I was in southern California, spring 1976.

54. S.E. Fish, op. cit. 413.

55. As encompassed in the Turner reader, R. Turner, op. cit.

56. H. Sacks, E.A. Schegloff and G. Jefferson, 'A Simplest Systematics ...', op. cit.

57. See at least N. Postman and C. Weingarten, Teaching as a Subversive Activity, 1969, Delacorte.

58. The 'hidden curriculum' is suggested by a reading of both the deschoolers and phenomenological sociologists of the curriculum.

CHAPTER TWO

READING AND MAKING SENSE OF QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS

2.1 Introduction

It will be recalled that we are to show natural language as both a
'trouble' for sociological research, but it is for conventional
sociological research a resource for resolving, in
sociological terms, the very 'troubles' in the form of
equivocalities and inconclusivity that it creates in the research.
We do not, of course, assume that sociologists actually recognise
these 'troubles' as such, though some do; nor do we intend that
questionnaire returns are read equivocally. On the contrary, most
readers read returns to be about one thing. We hope to show that
this unequivocal reading cannot be derived from the words of the
responses qua words but is the result of a complicated interactional
and formal process - a process not conventionally analysed and
recorded. Natural language, then, acts as a 'trouble' in two ways:
first, reader readings of indexical responses are not explicated in
research reports, reports which claim to be 'full'; second, the
formal concerns of respondents to answer 'properly' are ignored at
the expense of substantive orientations. In short, the conventional
approach is to regard the situated interaction of a questionnaire
response as telling us about something _other_ than that situated
interaction - about the responding interactant.

We are not in this chapter concerned with the later processing of
responses, their coding into types or classes and analysis of those
classes. Other writers such as Garfinkel have already shown these
operations to be similarly problematic[1]. If we divide the analysis

of response into <u>arbitrary</u> stages, our concern is with the first

stage of reading and making sense of individual responses. That

is not to say that such reading does not involve 'pre' classification

of other responses. While our reading of the responsesmay be

idiosyncratic and the provisions made for the readings far from

conclusive; we hope that the operations we go through to produce

those provisions witness the likely formal generality of our

observations.

It will be remembered that the analyses in this and the next

chapter do not attempt to <u>show</u> exhaustively the problems of

sociological methodology. They are a small part of this thesis

and since such problems are well shown elsewhere, our work is to

<u>remind</u> us of the <u>type</u> of problem - the space does not permit more

vigorous and lengthy analysis.

The questionnaire is usually considered as part of a whole called

'sociological methods'. It can also be considered part of another

whole, 'question-answers'[2]. Certain sorts of troubles can arise

<u>whenever</u> replies are made and interpreted and sociological question-

responses are not immune to such troubles. This chapter considers

three of those possible troubles. The first springs from the

reading of questions and answers as a series and for convenience

we shall refer to it as 'Lists'. The second concerns the

questioner's and respondent's use of their 'knowledge' of each

other and the situation, as a resource to understand what each

other is saying. This, following Sacks[2], we shall term Recipient

Design. The third is the comprehension of 'vague' expressions of

quantity in the questions and answers which we call 'Exactitude'.

A case of all three in a brief and contrived sequence might look

as follows:-

Alan has woken up feeling sick. He has no particular symptoms
but he feels too ill to go to work. So he goes to the doctor
and explains that he is feeling 'rotten'. The doctor, who has
many patients to see, asks if Alan has been sick. Alan says not.
The doctor asks if he has a sore throat. Alan says not. The
doctor asks if there has been loss of appetite. Alan replies
that he has eaten a good breakfast. The doctor asks if Alan has
any aches. Alan says that he 'aches a little'. The interaction
continues.

In fact Alan has no ches and has told a lie. He has done this
for two reasons. He has treated the doctor's questions, not as
individual questions, but as applications of an organizing
principle that has some equivalence to his own declared rotten-
ness. The doctors wants to find a particular symptom not for itself
but to cure the rottenness. Alan has spurned three invitations to
particular illness already. If he does not produce something soon
the doctor may terminate the interaction with a 'If it gets any
worse .....' and a palliative, and Alan wants the interaction to
continue. So he lies to encourage the doctor to continue and find
the truth.

The lie is constrained by his reading of the questions as a series
and his understanding of how many symptoms can be refused when the
waiting room is full. When the interaction continues it becomes
apparent that the doctor has means for understanding 'vague'
quantifications such as a 'little' (ache).

In examination questions and answers, in classrooms, in magistrates

courts, in political debate and wherever questions and answers occur in groups, these features may occur. Since questionnaires are minimally **sets** of questions, they too may contain such features.

The notice of these features is, of course, nothing new. Standard texts on conventional sociological method attach considerable importance to questionnaire design and indeed to question order[4]. However, they treat the features we shall describe as eliminable or at least reducible to insignificance. One way such reduction is 'achieved' is by careful preparation of the questionnaire. Ethnomethodological analysis however concentrates not on what the questions are but on what they do, that is their interactional implications. To find such implications in action involves treating the questions and answers as a topic in their own right and thus produces a complete change of research enterprise. While sociologists such as Becker[5], and Phillips[6], have been concerned to 'expose' the professional practices of sociological research as social interaction and to reveal the richness and complexity of their data, ethnomethodologists are not concerned with the intransigence and complexity of the social world but with the fact that members manage to solve that complexity and with the methods they employ to do so. Their concern is not with indexicality but with its repair. Cicourel's teachers[7], Zimmerman's social workers[8], Atkinson's coroners' officers[9], Garfinkel's S.C staff[10], Heritages' assessors[11], Sacks' policemen[12], Watson's Crisis Counsellors[13], Coulter's MWOs[14] do not see multiple reality nor report indescribability. They have methods for fixing what they see and deciding what they report. Sociologists also have such methods, and so do their respondents. Some of those

methods can be found in the research manual; some relate to the organizational character of the investigating and investigated agency and some are to do with features of communication achievements.

Since the publication of Method and Measurement[15] Cicourel has published studies of deviance[16], demography[17], education[18] and medicine[19]. One way of reading those studies is as massive evidence that practitioners in those fields do have interpretational schemes for tidying and thus losing the messy interaction which provide their data. In them, the author points to the numerous complexities of memory, processing, multi-modality and language that are 'overlooked' in much conventional research. If Cicourel demonstrates that repair is done it is Sacks who has elaborated the machinery for its analysis, and as projected in the essay, '.... of the usability of conversational data'[20], a series of studies on sequencing, adjacency pairs, repair, categorization and turn-taking have emerged by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson[21]. Their recent work[22] suggests that other forms of talk may be variants of conversation and on that suggestion the following analysis which uses methods derived from Sacks for the analysis of written materials, is based.

The data were written responses to two questionnaires on juveniles' spatial knowledge. The respondents were forty eight, fifteen and sixteen-year-old boys: the distribution point a classroom; the distributor myself. Questionnaire 1 contained the following five questions:

    List below what you think are the five most important buildings
        in Bletchley.

List below what you think are **five** important towns near

Bletchley.

You can divide Bletchley into areas and districts. Name some

(if possible **five**) of these.

Is there a part of Bletchley you think is dangerous? Which

one?

How far do you have to go to get out of Bletchley?

Questionnaire II was the single question:

Every day you move about a lot, from work to school, to the

shops and to places where you meet people and so on.

Would you write down all the movements you make on the

following dates ..... I would like to know all movements

you make between places.

The first questionnaire was completed in class; the second at
home. Clearly both had been designed to contain as many indexical
expressions and to necessitate as much interpretive work[23], filling
in[24], and categorization[25] as possible. They were questions to
which there are many 'correct'[26] answers. In at least one question
the answer was implicitly constitutive of the question[27]. Yet
without explanation by myself the boys answered the questionnaire I
with no questions, sighs, tears, abuse, or conventional signs of
confusion.

As mentioned above the analysis that follows uses methods derived
and no doubt twisted from Sacks[28] conversational analysis. The use
of these methods for written material makes for problems deriving
from the unavailability of the sequence in which answers were
written and the lack of rejoinders by other members. These two

problems make it unwarrantable to assert that my readings of the responses contain phenomena oriented to by the respondent. However, I shall try, albeit speculatively, to explicate my readings of those responses. A small compensation with written material is that we avoid the multi-modality problem (if it be a problem) of audio-conversational analysis. As Cicourel writes when talking of two-part conversations: 'The context of inter-action becomes crucial for understanding the role of nonverbal communication. This is not simply a question of context-free expressions presuppose ethnographic details, as articulated in particular settings, but how the idea of social structure requires a model that is not limited by the verbal accounts of members, despite our reliance on such accounts to claim findings. The general problem is how to represent a broader conception of everyday life by recognizing and formalizing nonverbal activities in interaction, while also examining the limitations of verbal accounts for understanding everyday communications. Additional constraints are introduced because of having to speak sequentially while experiencing information from several modalities simultaneously[29].

I am not suggesting that a written answer is understood by the writer or read without recourse to the context but that the multi modality problem is at least reduced in written communication. Certainly one part of that context is the asking of the question and how that work is done. Cicourel suggests in the same article: 'Recent research (Cicourel, et. al. in press) in primary school settings reveals how talk is often misleading because the teacher is engaged in activities of a nonverbal sort that undercuts what she is saying, or makes what she is saying irrelevant because her talk seems to be redundant or marking time while she engages in

other activities. Further, her gestures or touching of children, her glances, communicate information that is not marked clearly in her speech or not marked at all.'[30]. The analysis of written responses does not avoid these problems altogether for question-naires come to respondents by visible or perceived agencies which furnish the respondent with a resource for Recipient construction.

It seems to me that in many circumstances written answers are done under the assumption that the asker will be the recipient/reader thus the whole business of 'asking' involving nonverbal activities is an oriented-to-feature for members when they design responses for an undeclared recipient.

I did not videotape or ever audiotape my asking the boys to fill in the forms so I cannot regrettably look at such features directly, but they may be speculatively deducible from the answers. They will be treated under the heading Recipient Design. It is important to emphasize that we are concerned with the sociologist's reading of the responses not the boys' construction of them. If scenic and recipient features are important it is the sociologist's 'knowledge' of the boys knowledge that is at issue. The boys' knowledge is unavailable.

2.2 Lists and Listing: Some Properties

I do not intend here an exhaustive analysis of the formal properties of lists merely the noting of some characteristics which seem to help in the analysis of the written answers. Although some of the answers[31] are seen as more list-like than others[32], this analysis is intended for both.

Clearly we can talk of lists when we mean that-it-is-a-list is discernible only to analysts or to members or specifically to list

producers or any combination. I am concerned with the last two; that is where the producer or any competent member and of course this analyst understands or can understand it as a list. Turner[33] talks of 'natural lists' that is member-recognised lists such as shopping lists, and 'conjoinables' or things that can properly be strung together such as 'I woke up, got up, went out'. The position is complicated by the fact that while members might baulk at this string of actions being a proper list, I think they would talk readily of the speaker having 'listed' his activities. Sometimes, as in the case of 'all that is built is not a building'[34] or Matza's[35] 'All who thieve are not thieves', members use such verbs to indicate a non-essential or occasional or contextual attribute.

One noticeable property of many lists-in-response-to-questions is that the items of each list are all answers to one and the same question, although not equally so. This does not mean that they are correct answers or even that they are answers to the words of the question. A stream of invective as an answer to an insult is a list of terms in answer to the insulting work of the question, not to its words. The list producer may, in interpreting the work of the question come to the conclusion that it could mean two things and his list may contain side bets. Thus as one answer to question 1 we have:

'Police tation, Sainsbury's, Fire Station, Clinic maternity (hospital), Railway Station.'

We may speculate that although 'Sainsbury's' is a reasonable answer to the question 'List below what you think are the five most important buildings in Bletchley', it does not belong to the same

set as the other four. In this case the list contains an item
that is discordant with the others but still in accordance with
the question.

One of the pieces of work that a list in response to a question
may do is to point to its organizing principle as the real response
to the work of the question. We may have a question where the
respondent concludes that what the questioner is after or should be
after is not a list for its own sake but a list as a guide to, or
display of an organizing principle. Contrast an item-oriented list
(shopping)

> 1 lb apples
>
> 1 lb tomatoes
>
> ½ lb bacon

where the items are intrinsically important in themselves, and a
principle oriented list

> A. 'How was he dressed?'
>
> B. 'Dark suit, white shirt, tie, black shoes'

where the clothing list is heard as saying 'formally' or 'correctly'
or not (depending on context). In the latter the items are examples.
One characteristic of examples is that enough are drawn from a pool
to demonstrate the principle for the practical purposes at hand.
Enough is enough. We say 'he has made his point'. So I think it
would be more harmful to leave out the last item of the shopping
list than the last item on the clothing list. Furthermore it would
not matter whether it was the last or penultimate item that was left
off the clothing list as long as there were enough items to do the

exemplifying work. If bacon were omitted instead of apples, on the other hand, members would comment at breakfast.

In such written requests for lists as some exams, questionnaires and so on, the questioner often is after the principle not the items, but asks for a certain number of items. The respondent may feel he has demonstrated the principle in less than the number of items allotted. He then has a problem of space filling. What I am suggesting is that where we have five items requested and five answers given, we should beware of treating all five as indicative of a member's list even if the member has 'correctly' interpreted the questioner's wish for a principle.

The opposite can, of course, happen; the respondent can run out of exemplar items. He cannot or does not give enough items to display the organizing principle. The obligation to complete the form and give more items may lead to discordance or even the evocation of another principle.

The above all presumes some sort of sequential operation as follows: read the question, work out what principle it is after, then think of five exemplars. At least another sequence is possible, namely: read the question, give one answer then fit the others to it to give a list like consistency. The respondent is constrained by what Sacks calls a consistency rule[36].

When someone is asked a question that calls for a list-type answer, the respondent, if he can evoke the organizing principle in less than the number of items required, can use the remainder to indulge in a variety of activities such as implied question criticism or doing showing off, or doing joking.

Another device within the list of joking, insolence and the
twisting of questions is word repetition.

> A. 'Tell me all the things you did at school today'
>
> B. 'English lessons, French lessons, Maths lessons, Geography
> lessons'

where the repetition of lessons is read as a rebuke to the
questioner 'What d'you think, lots of lessons as usual'. Here the
list like quality is over-accentuated and ironicised by a tying
technique using word repetition[37]. Furthermore the rebuke is an
open rebuke, that is the question is not answered properly and the
respondent 'declares' his intention of not answering properly[38].

These are some of the things that members can and do do with lists
but the crucial feature of a list we have still to examine: the
fact that it is a collection of categories that go together. When
members read the list they detect order; the order of a list
despite the discordances, excesses, limitations, jokes, ironies,
and et ceteras referred to above. In fact such discordances
excesses, limitations, jokes, ironies and et ceteras draw their
discordant, excessive, limited, funny, ironical, or et cetera
features from their contrast with an actual or possible collection
response. The question we address is how do members read order,
that is list order, in lists. It is worth emphasising that this
order is social order and our concern is with the traditional
sociological question of how such order is possible. The list is,
I think, a crucial order-ascribing activity.

2.3 Categorical and Normative Ordering

At this point we may introduce some responses.

'Saints Estate, Counties Estate, Lakes Estate, Castles Estate, Rivers Estate' in response to the question 'You can divide Bletchley up into areas and districts. Name some (if possible five) of these'.

Following the preceding general remarks about lists, I suggest that when we read this response we discern order, particularly list type order. I further suggest that when presented with 'Lakes Estate, Saints Estate, Wimpy Estate, Rivers Estate, Castle Estate' we could talk of the two responses being of the same sort, despite the fact that they are different, that is contain different words. We could read these lists as exemplar lists not item oriented lists and we could discern an organizing principle 'Estates' where estate is a category from the device[39] Spatial Areas of Towns. The same categorical word 'Estate' occurs in many other devices such as Types of Housing. In reading 'Estate' as coming from Spatial Areas of Towns we are reading it as consistent with the question device 'areas and districts'. I suggest that this gives us a reader's rule. <u>When you read a category in an answer that is a member of a device referred to in a question hear it as such despite its being a candidate member of other devices.</u> And we may note in passing how assessors use the question to understand the answer in examination procedures.

Thus identifying the list as an exemplar list and reading its exemplars as categories from the device 'areas' and knowing that such a device has other categories such as compass orientations, we then regard two answers as 'similar' and talk of 'how young people (preferentially) see their town'.

What happens when the items do not display such unanimous

consistency?

'Banks, Court, Conservative Club, Working Mens' Club, Navy Club' in response to the question 'List below what you think are five most important buildings in Bletchley'.

Our reader's first problem is with the question. 'Important' raises a host of problems like important for whom, for doing what, when and in what circumstances. Such problems should, however, alert us to the fact that 'important' is a term members use to evaluate. Buildings as members of the device physical constructs are not usually open to such evaluation (except aesthetically). Proper things to say of such a device include height, cost, constituent materials and so on. But when we introduce the activities and the actors that go with a building 'importance' becomes a relevant sort of issue and judgment.

If we look for order in the list, then we look for similarity of activity. The difficulty is that each category has a variety of activities. The Conservative Club has drinking, talking, politics, power using, and so on; all of which are open to conceptualization under a variety of headings. Which activity do we orient to in classification, in listing? Depending on whether we take recreational establishment or power establishment as our activity device, we will pair Conservative Club with Working Mens' Club or Court. This is the I.Q. test problem. Which, of a variety of correct pairings, is the right one.

Sacks suggests[40] that 'In the sociological and anthropological literature, the focus on norms is on the conditions under which and the extent to which they govern, or can be seen by social scientists

to govern, the relevant actions of those members whose actions they ought to control ...' (we show) '... other importances of norms .... Viewers use norms to provide some of the orderliness and proper orderliness, of the activities they observe. Via some norm two activities may be made observable as a sequentially ordered pair'.

Members' socialized competence is partly a normative competence. We use such competence to separate the proper activities of places from all sorts of other activities that incidentally go on in those places. Thus we know bank clerks joke and chat about the weather and fall in love and court each other in the bank; categories that might be in the device 'recreation' or 'pleasure' but we do not pair Banks with Working Mens' Clubs which also are members of that device because the 'proper' activities of banks make them more pairable with Courts. Now, for our two bank clerk lovers, the bank may indeed be classified within the device 'places we meet' which includes such categories as Wimpy Bars and Parks, or indeed Clubs. Thus the normative ordering is highly contextual and depends on whom we are talking to or writing for and what we think we are doing when we answer the question. In pairing and discerning lists we readers orient to the fact that the writer has designed his response, his selection of proper activity and pairing and listing for reader (possibly us). To the rule 'design your talk to another with an orientation to what you know they know'[41], we can add 'and to what you think they want to know'. This can be termed Orientation to reader or Recipient Design.

2.4 Units and Separability

The above considerations of proper activities offer an insight also into the unit problem. I read the following as a reasonable

answer:

'Banks, Police Station, Court, Library, Shops'

to the question

'List below what you think are the five most important

buildings in Bletchley'.

I, and I think others find it reasonable that Police Station and

Court should be listed separately, and shops as a collective

item to cover greengrocers, butchers, Bakers, etc. I think that

an answer which ran 'municipal buildings, Butcher, Baker, Green-

grocer, Grocer', would be less reasonable. It is a general

feature of the answer to this question that in activity terms,

selling things is described collectively while fire extinguishing,

arresting, hospitalising, etc. are described singly. I cannot

know why this was done and I am not sure why I find it reasonable

and orderly except that I think it is normatively organized for a

real 'official' recipient. Furthermore with examples, enough is

enough: the writer can trade or my accepting that he knows the

different sorts of shops but not necessarily the different

bureaucratic buildings.

7.5 Recipient Design

In conversation speakers orient to what they think hearers know,

wish to know, and should know. In conversations about finding the

way in a town the local frequently asks 'Do you know X' of the

stranger in order to measure the extent of his ignorance of local

commonsense geography.

In written responses writers cannot ask such questions; indeed

sometimes they do not know who the reader will be. We may
formulate the writer's questions as follows:

'How much does the reader already know? In particular what terms
will he understand? What am I justified in expecting him to know?
What sort of replies does he want?'

In the case of my respondents, they had certain resources for
answering such questions: they had the question form, the location
of answering (school), and look at the hander out of questions.
Furthermore there had no doubt been other incidents which they
could classify this questionnaire as 'another one of'.

In conversations members can tease out the knowledge of the
recipient in talk. That talk then furnishes the analyst with a
resource for looking at Recipient Design. This resource is not
present for the analyst of written material nor for the writer so
we cannot say anything about how Recipient Design was done except
in a speculative way making use of some commonsensical imputations.
One such speculation is as follows: the information given by the
answers seems of no 'direct' practical use to anyone. Furthermore
the questions are not the sort of questions that a person with a
practical problem might ask. If we, or I suggest, the writers
scan the list of candidate recipients we can cross off very easily
such items as lost persons seeking to know the way, foreigners
eager to visit the best in Bletchley and so on. The Recipient does
not wish then to use the information in the answer in the way such
candidate members might. Put more positively the questions are
asked to gain information about the writer not the town. They are
for schoolboys categorizable with, perhaps, teachers' or examination
questions. The correct answer for a teacher's question and more so

an examination question is a conventional academic one rather than one to suit the individual teacher. The responses are generalized talk produced for an adult anyone with no practical need. They are designed to display an obedient juvenile writer answering a superordinate adult's questions. The adult in question was, furthermore, a stranger and the responses are I think, hedging play-safe responses.

2.6 Movement Analysis

The list and Recipient Design analysis done above are also, I think, applicable to the writers' accounts of their movements, although here we have a different sort of list.

In response to the request

' veryday you move about a lot, from work to school, to the shops and to places where you meet people and so on. Would you write down the movements you take on the following dates, Thursday 14th February, Saturday 16th February, Sunday 17th February. I would like to know all the movements you make between places.'

one, not atypical, respondent wrote

From:		To:	
	Got up		Did Milk Round
	Milk Round		Paper Round
	Paper Round		Home
	Home		Bed
	Bed		Dinner
	Dinner		Mates house
	Mates house		For a drink
	Drink		Football where I play
	Football		Mates house
	Mates house		My house
	My house		Tea
	Tea		Mates house

Cont'd

From: Mates house   To: Youth club
      Youth club   Home
      home   bed

This list gives us activities as well as places. It is not a
list of addresses. It is sequentially organized and the day is
filled: there are no gaps. Order is extremely important as is
each item. If this list exemplifies it does so as a whole not
successively. If one item were left out we could ask the question
'what did you do then?' but we do not ask that question within
items. To ask 'what did you do at your mates house?' would be to
ask another question or to press for details. The obligation of
the writer is to fill the day, to provide a 'reasonably detailed'
list of activities. The question itself sets the type with its
mention of shops and school. I recognise home, bed, dinner, etc.
as of that type and would agree that what went on at the mate's
house was details, that is not of that type. I recognise this as
an orderly list in answer to the question its items being
appropriately conjoined. How?

First we may notice that the activities at the mate's house are
not constituted as 'details' because I have to ask for them again
with another question. A list like that above with a lot of infor-
mation about activities/movements at the mate's house would provoke
the comment 'why do you go into such detail there' This suggests
that in such a list, it is usual for each item to have similar
amounts of 'detail'. 'Details' are either necessary or unnecessary
and lists should not go into 'unnecessary detail'. 'Details' about
the activities at the mate's house are either unnecessary or evoke

a request for explanation as to why 'detail' is given here rather than there. What constitutes detail? It would seem that it is usually either 'unnecessary' or held as necessary by only one of the speaker/hearer reader/writer pair who then explains the need for it to the other. Thus a list which does not give details but is not too short or rude or whatever is a list which writer and recipient agree or as offering sufficient information for a conventional recipient's practical purposes. Now whatever my real purposes in asking the question I recognise the answer as offering sufficient information to a generalized recipient. I would only expect more if the writer knew more of the uses to which a recipient would put that information. Put crudely, to give more information would have been to risk irrelevance, or to have to insert an explanation given the writer's ignorance of the recipient. To have given less would have been to risk adult censure for unco-operativeness.

If we take two features minimal detail and no gaps then we see that the writer has a problem: his day is a mass of details that he cannot relate yet he must leave no gaps. He solves this by choosing not movements, nor activities but organizing headings as items. We do not do 'at a mate's house' nor 'bed' nor 'drink': These are highly conventionalised headings for a variety of activities which are details or personal and private and so on. He relies on the recipient's membership of a similar cognitive and speech community to provide for that recipient information about the sort of things organized under these headings. In this case the writer knows little of the recipient's background and competence and thus his headings are designed for an adult anyone. I use 'anyone' rather loosely however for it is clear that we do

know something of the intended recipient. He understands English, is literate, conversant with a commonsense geographical terminology, etc., or at least he ought to be. Often we design talk for what recipients should be like or what we may 'fairly' expect them to be like. Recipient design only goes so far; the recipient has conversational obligations as well.

2.7 Exactitude

In answer to the question 'How far do you have to go from the town centre to get out of Bletchley ', modifiers of exact expressions were quite frequently used:

'At least $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles'	(No. 3)
'About one mile'	(No. 7)
'About 2 to 3 miles'	(No. 13)
'Less than half a mile'	(No. 19)
'About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles'	(No. 21)
' bout 1 mile'	(No. 29)
'About 1 mile to 2 miles'	(No. 37)
'About $\frac{3}{4}$ mile'	(No. 39)
'About 2 miles'	(No. 42)
'About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles'	(No. 44)

I want to look at two matters that these sorts of answers bring up. First why is the exact distance given at all? After all it is quite common for a lost traveller to be told after being given some directions, that 'it's not far'. The knowledgeable local here gives no exact measurement in miles. Furthermore 'not far' is not a deviant but often an acceptable sometimes an understandable meaningful answer.

Sacks points out that by using certain numbers in certain contexts members may achieve 'being precise'. He further notes that 'one of the things you can look to with respect to the issue of, say,

the fit between a question and an answer, is the order of object
an 'answer' is, and try then to take the given answer, consider
it as a care of some sort of class, consider other sorts of
classes that have more or less obvious relations; 'Tuesday' and
November eleventh nineteen sixty seven' have obvious relations;
and see whether they're routinely alternatively usable. If
they're not, but that in one place one is usable and in another
place another is usable, you begin to go somewhere, and somewhere
which deals in particular with, e.g., the fit between a question
and an answer, but also gives you a really direct intuitive sense
of the tremendous amount of regulation that's just unavailable in
the first instance. but once you see it, it's like two computers
talking to each other. It just doesn't fail. And the failing,
when it happens, is very very shocking[42].

Can the sorts of measurement given in the answer be seen as an
equivalence satisfaction to some term or class of terms in the
question? In this case the question is extremely vague and does
not call for precision openly. however we may note that the **vague**
'_how far_' in a maths lesson calls for the precise '1.726 cm'
because it is asked in a maths lesson, and, suggests that orien-
tation to the context of the question leads the respondent to **give**
'precise' terms. e also remarked in the section Recipient Design
that some questions are read as seeking knowledge of the respondent
not knowledge of the answer. The questioner already knows the
answer and is trying to find out if the respondent does. I think
this question seen in context with the others is likely to be read
that way. If it is read thus, then the conventional '2 miles'
displays a 'better' knowledge of local geography and a respect for

the national/societal conventions of measurement as taught by
the school than 'not far'.

The second interesting matter concerning ' bout two miles' is the
analysts' understanding of 'about'. Hesitantly, I propose that
'About two miles' is routinely understood as one, two, three,
possibly four not more miles'. I would venture similar comments
about the other modifiers for example 'Less than half a mile' is
read as 'less than half a mile but certainly more than 100 yards
or so. 'At least $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles' is read as 'at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles but
certainly not more than two, three or four miles'. How is this
understanding accomplished? It is important to note that it is
accomplished and widely so. Similar devices operate with time and
money. That they are routinely used may be observed in that
attention is focussed on their misuse. I noticed a case where a
person who had an appointment at 'about nine-thirty' and arrived
at 9.55 was considered late and blamed. This particular case however
was slightly different because as Sacks[43] suggests there are precise
(9.29) and imprecise (9.30) numbers. Although there is only one
minute's difference between 9.29 and nine-thirty, there is a
considerable difference in that 9.30 can have an 'about' of some
ten minutes: it belongs to a class of times 9.30, 10.00, 10.30 and
in my example the man was blamed because he should have known that
the end limits of 9.30's imprecision are where 10.00 o'clock's
imprecision starts. The numbers in the Bletchley responses were
not of this type. They were $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, 1, $1\frac{1}{2}$, 2 and 3. The similar
type of nine-thirty in distance is the 5, 50, 500 type.

I emphasise that our problem is with the reader's understanding of
'about 2 miles' not the writer's intention. One way into this may

be to talk of the reader's knowledge of alternatively available candidate measurements. As readers we may say that the respondent who writes 'at least 1½ miles' would have used 'at least two miles' if he had meant over two and thus establish some sort of range answer. We argue, in this case, that the 0.5 precision category is a subcategory of the unit category and if it is available then presumably the unit category was so, and was discarded. This sort of reasoning is not possible with 'about two miles'. We can conceive of many contours radiating out from two and at first sight all are justifiable interpretations as long as two is mid point, for example, 1½ - 2½, 1 - 3, ½ - 3½.

'About twelve (not 'a dozen') and 'about twenty-two' or 'about thirty-two' have more possible contours. Twelve has eleven - thirteen, ten - fourteen, nine - fifteen, eight - sixteen, six - eighteen and so on. This is because the range is not zero bounded as is the case with 'two'. Yet I find eight - sixteen unreasonable because six and eight are precise numbers and if 'about' is indicating such a wide range I would have expected an alternative formulation such as 'I'm really not sure; all I can say is that it's somewhere between five and twenty; you'd better ask someone else'.

Now two is not such a precise number as twelve or twenty-two certainly in such formulations as 'one or two' yet it is more precise than the ten, twenty, thirty or the five, ten, fifty series. Routinely, not always, but routinely, an answer is taken to indicate knowledge; a failure to answer to indicate ignorance. An answer 'about two miles' indicates knowledge of the distance. 'Two' is fairly precise. 'About' is read to modify 'two' only to

a range consistent with the reader's estimation of the writer's knowledge. The range of 'about' is then fixed by two factors: first the alternative formulations the reader sees as having been actually or conventionally available yet unused and second the extent of knowledge the reader thinks the category of writer routinely possesses. 'About two miles' from the policeman is read as a narrower range than 'about two miles' from the eight year old. The second factor also includes other understandings of the reader like how helpful the category of writer was being and the response location. In short members read words like 'about' by reference to their knowledge of the writer and his writer's resources or their reading of his words.

2.8 Conclusion

That we have sought to describe are various methods that members use to repair the indexicality of expressions. Such expressions are found not only in natural conversations but in research conversations and in written questionnaires and responses, even and inevitably in questionnaires constructed to minimize 'ambiguity'. The sociologists who read and interpret those questionnaire responses do so through the use of repair systems some of which we have described. To draw attention to this is not to criticize sociological method. How else could it proceed. Nor is it to suggest improvements although individual points made in this and other studies can be used as 'one more danger to beware of'. It is evident that sociologists like the police, social workers and others referred to in the introduction, do make sense of their observations for their practical purposes. The end of that sense making process is then offered for the meticulous

attentions of 'scientific' methodology perhaps in the form of attribution statements. The process itself is obscure if not totally unreported. Even if it were reported it is difficult to see what standard methodology could do to it unless it were prepared to acknowledge the process as a communication achievement and a topic and thus divert the original research enterprise and, in studying that achievement, cease to be recognisable as standard methodology.

Furthermore, the type of analysis we have done, shows that answers may be heavily constrained by their formal interactional duties in a setting as well as by this 'message'. That demonstration makes problematic assumptions that answers tell us about answerers as individual people. There are then problems in ascribing qualities to people as states on the basis of formally constrained situated and interactional events.

Those problems emerge even more forcefully in the interpretation of interviews[44].

Notes

1. H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall, 1967.

2. Indeed question - answers can be viewed as variants of adjacency pairs as discussed by Sacks in H. Sacks Lectures 1972 No. 1 and No. 2 unpublished (Sacks' lectures are in the process of being prepared for publication).

3. H. Sacks Lectures, op. cit.

4. For example C. A. Moser and G. Kalton, Survey Methods in Social Investigation, Heinmann 1971.

5. H. S. Becker, Sociological Work Method and Substance, London Allen Lane 1971.

6. D. Phillips, Knowledge from what., Chicago, Rand Mcnally, 1971.

7. A.V. Cicourel, et. al., Language use and School Performance, New York, Academic Press, 1974.

8. D.H. Zimmerman, 'Tasks and Troubles': the Practical Bases of work Activities in a Public Assistance Organization; in . . hansen (ed.), Explorations in Sociology and Counselling, Houghton Mifflin 1969.

9. J.M. Atkinson, Ph.D. thesis, University of Manchester.

10. H. Garfinkel 'Suicide for all Practical Purposes', in H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, op. cit.

11. J. heritage 'Assessing People' in Nigel Armistead (ed.), Reconstructing Social Psychology, Penguin, 1974.

12. H. Sacks, 'Notes on police assessment of moral character', in D. Sudnow (ed.) Studies in Social Interaction, Free Press 1972.

13. R. Watson, Formulating Moral Profiles, unpublished MS., University of Manchester.

14. J. Coulter, 'Perceptual Accounts', Sociology Vol. 9, No. 3, Sept. 1975, pp. 385-396.

15. A.V. Cicourel, Method and Measurement in Sociology, Free Press, 1964.

16. A.V. Cicourel, The Social Organization of Juvenile Justice, Wiley 1968.

17. A.V. Cicourel, Theory and Method in a Study of Argentine Fertility, New York and London, John Wiley, 1974.

18. A.V. Cicourel, et. al., Language Use and School Performance, op. cit.

19. A.V. Cicourel, Study of doctors' reports, forthcoming.

20. H. Sacks, 'An initial investigation of the usability of conversational data for doing sociology', in D. Sudnow (ed.), Studies in Social Interaction, op. cit.

21. To some extent a summary of the conversational work is represented in H. Sacks, E.A. Schegloff and G. Jefferson, 'A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn Taking for Conversation', Language, Vol. 50, December 1974, pp. 696-735. A paper which summarizes recent work on repairs by the same authors is forthcoming.

22. H. Sacks, E.A. Schegloff and G. Jefferson, 'A Simplest Systematics ...', op. cit.

23. H. Garfinkel, Studies ... op. cit.

24. W. Labov, 'The logic of Non-Standard English' in F. Williams (ed.), Language and Poverty, Markham Publishing Co., 1970.

25. H. Sacks, 'On the Analysability of Stories by Children' in J.J. Gumperz and D. Hymes, Directions in Sociolinguistics, the Ethnography of Communication, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1974.

26. E. Schegloff, 'Notes on a Conversational Practice, Formulating Place', in D. Sudnow, Studies in Social Interaction, New York Free Press, 1969.

27. Question 5, Questionnaire 1 'Bletchley'.

28. H. Sacks, op. cit. and U.C.L.A. Lectures 1967 and 1971 (unpublished), H. Sacks, 'The search for help; No-one to turn to', in E.S. Schneidman (ed.), Essays in self-destruction, Science House Inc., 1967. H. Sacks, 'An Initial Investigation of the Usability of Conversational Analysis for doing Sociology', in D. Sudrow, op. cit.

29. A.V. Cicourel, Gestural Sign Language and the Study of Non-Verbal communication, p. 38, to be published.

30. A.V. Cicourel, ibid, p. 41.

31. Questions one, two and three of Questionnaire 1.

32. Questionnaire II.

33. R. Turner, personal communication 4.8.74.

34. I noted for example the lack of car parks in the buildings answers.

35. D. Matza, Becoming Deviant, Prentice Hall, New York, 1969.

36. H. Sacks unpublished lectures 1967, 1972, and On the Analyzability of Stories by Children, op. cit.

37. H. Sacks unpublished lectures 1967.

38. H. Sacks lectures 1972 lect. iv.

39. These terms are taken from H. Sacks, On the Analyzability of Stories by Children, op. cit.

40. H. Sacks ibid.

41. H. Sacks unpublished lectures 1971 lect. v.

42. H. Sacks unpublished lectures 1967 No. 14.

43. H. Sacks ibid.

44. The questionnaires reported and the interviews reported
    in the next chapter are part of the author's M.Phil thesis:
    D.C. Anderson, Youth: The Social ascription of an Age
    Category, Brunel University, 1975. They are used differently
    here and submitted in accordance with the Post-Graduate
    regulations.

CHAPTER THREE

HEARING AND MAKING SENSE OF INTERVIEW TALK

3.1 Introduction

The interview in sociological research, like the questionnaire

return, is an event which is presented as coming 'before' the

explicit work of tabulating, classifying, analysing and

theorizing on findings. But these findings are themselves the

product of the processes of listening to, following, and

recalling the interview. That listening is possible reflexively

through a formal tabulating and through classifying that are norm-

ally 'hidden' in research. Once again language can act as a

'trouble' for conventional methodology in that such methodology

does not report the 'hidden' practices nor recognise their

formal constraints or the talk which it treats so substantively.

The usefulness of the 'later' 'open' tabulation and analysis

turns then on the 'hidden' and 'earlier' analysis. That hidden

analysis is in the work that interviewer and interviewee do together

to make the interview recognisable and reportable as such and

sustain it to its end.

The minimal feature of interviews, that we have at least two

people talking to each other, encourages us to analyse the inter-

view as an unnatural variant of conversation by applying methods

of conversational analysis. Such methods enable us to provide for

a reading of what participants hear each other as doing in their

talk and hopefully of their methods for producing such hearings

as formal properties.

Frequently it is suggested that if the interviewer plans his talk

carefully, selects vocabulary 'suitable' for the interviewee,

uses 'relevant' sentence length, avoids ambiguity and vagueness,
attends to the sequential order of questions, listens carefully
to the interviewee, acquaints himself wit' the interviewee's
culture and so on that co-comprehension and mutual knowledge of
that co-comprehension should routinely follow: further that the
comprehended talk may be about pre-decided topics framed in the
interviewer's questions. Leaving aside difficulties in applying
such general exhortations to specific instances of research we
may note that such recommendations rely on a view of words and
sentences as signs of varying degrees of accuracy and suitability
and have a concern that co-participants are speaking about the
same thing.

.hat follows is an attempt to demonstrate that in at least forty-
eight cases, this is not what an interview is like nd speculatively
to imply that the assumptions about language written into the
'accuracy' view are at least naive, while tentatively proposing
some other properties of interviews without in any sense claiming
a new total characterization.

A group of fifteen year old boys had been iven a questionnaire
designed to elicit their version of some spatial characteristics
of their town. Following the questionnaire's return, they were
individually interviewed an the interviews audio-recorded.

Originally I had intended the interviews to be used as a probe
into the 'reasons' for the respondents' answers to the question-
naires discussed in the previous chapter. In line with some
ongoing work I expected a display of lay positivism. Thus I hoped

that in reply to questions such as 'Why did you put that down?'
I would get answers like 'Because that's how it is'. Possibly
paradoxically, I also hoped for some declaration of the contextual
nature of youth replies, in particular recipient design, with such
statements as 'I thought that is what you wanted' or 'I thought
that was what we were meant to put'. Both types of statements
are present on the tapes for example:

2   ... We didn't know whether what you meant is, areas like um,
      um ( ) say down town that area -

A   ⌠Yeah
      ⌡

2   ⌠The area over there or whi did you meant you know states -

A   ⌠Yeah
      ⌡
      ⌠'n areas like that, we thought you meant (the) ( ) like the

      Castles ⌠or
             ⌡
                  ⌠Yeah
                  ⌡
2   ⌠Lakes
      ⌡
A   ⌠Yeah

2   Estate[1]

This excerpt could be said to show some abiding interest on the **part**
of the interviewee, for recipient design whereas such excerpts as:

6   ... thas the way Bletchley is divided up you see

could be held to display lay positivism. This particular excerpt
goes immediately on to say:

6   'n I fought you wanted Bletchley -
                                       ⌠
A   ⌠Yeah

which could be held to illustrate nicely the paradox above.

Such interpretation would be very dubious. First it is, of course, highly selective, and a judicious picking of other transcript excerpts could be held to show a wide range of other qualities. Secondly, it fails to account for how it is that I hear such excerpts as displaying Recipient Design or Lay Positivism. Thirdly it makes unwarrantable suggestions as to what was really going on and in particular what the speaker really meant. Fourthly it ignores the complexities of interview analysis. The second objection is simply a heading for a whole list of problems addressed by ethnomethodologists, including literal descriptions[2], topic/resource[3], indexicality[4], and data/generalisation separation[5]. Such problems have been extensively dealt with elsewhere[6]. Suffice it to say that ethnomethodologists show the vast amount and complexity of the work done in understanding utterances and explaining to others what went on. They suggest that it is as a member that I understand such matters and point out that if I neglect to explicate any, or possible, procedures for hearing things 'that' way then my explanations remain unexplicated members' formulations. The crucial question then is 'Can I provide for hearing the tapes in a particular way?' not 'what can I hear'.

The fourth problem has been recently analysed by Cicourel[7]. I am not sure of Cicourel's present position as to whether he is looking for procedures to work out 'what went on' in an interview or is merely noting members' difficulties in summarising 'what went on'. For our purposes the articles can demonstrate the latter,

3.2 Problems in Interview Analysis

Cicourel views the interview as a 'negotiated'[8] affair. Following this concept I see the interview as a cumulative negotiated interactional achievement where past utterances and signs become resources for participants to hear present exchanges. The interview is thus used by participants to understand what is wanted and happening at the interview. It is a reflexive accomplishment, in which interview is used to understand and create interview. It is grossly important to note that this is not a simple matter of past utterances being used to interpret present utterances and thus create future utterances. Sacks[9] has remarked on the possible completion of sentences after next speaker and also on several tying techniques and the use of tags. The import of these devices is that present is also used as a resource to reformulate past utterances. Nor are such devices always conversational or indeed linguistic. Such complexities mean that the understanding of a real to a question as what someone really meant is inordinately difficult. However such a difficulty may be a resource since we can derive from it a rule that analysts should work with the whole interview as a unit if they are to unravel the tying techniques and retrospective reformulations involved. The obligation, stressed by Sacks[10], on participants to listen to stretches of prior and post talk is an obligation on the analyst also.

However we may also note that co-participants necessarily selectively orient to certain features of the interview either through interest or the contingencies of information processing. We also have the problem of not orienting to that which co-participants don't orient to and the graver problem of distinguishing such

features. We also know, as members, that participants remark what is not said or non-trivializable absence[11]. Cicourel discusses the selectivity constraint.

"A basic problem is to decide how much and what types of information we can receive and generate, given the limitations of processing many items of information, and where each item is limited by the number of elements it may contain (Miller 1956). The kinds of syntactic structures used may place constraints on what information can be processed if the utterances used are long and contain embedded relative clauses that require extra effort to link agent to action to object. The contingencies of information processing are like a moving target. The 'parsers' and emergent meanings used by the questioner and respondent cannot be assumed to be passive aspects of how each will understand the questions and answers."[12]

Part of such selectivity is the paraphrase problem:

A recent paper by Norman (in press) suggests several relation-ships between memory and the answering of questions. He notes that the question may be phrased differently from the storage format needed for retrieving the necessary information (called the 'para-phrase problem'). The 'best' answer to a question may prove to be a question by the respondent to pinpoint what is intended by the original question. Norman is concerned with the pre-processing that occurs before an answer to a question is provided. Hence we need to know something about how people store information, how they combine general information they possess and link it to what is addressed by the question. The reasons or explanations that

respondents add to their answers provide some clues about how the question was understood.

"Of general interest here is the fact that no simple algorithm can be identified that would specify a sequence of instructions or steps or actions leading to a direct question-answer solution (Norman, in press). Norman suggests that the retrieval process is a construction by the respondent because of the paraphrase problem. Short-term memory limitations may influence the retrieval process indirectly because respondents may not be able to parse instructions or questions that are too long and complicated.

The question-answer interview situation can be influenced by such factors as syntactic information, general knowledge of people and of the world, the format in which original experiences are stored, selective attention and memory limitations at the time of receiving the question, dialect differences, and non-verbal information. This list should also include the participants' reflexive monitoring of their own activities, and the emergent and changing atmosphere of the setting."[13]

Apart from any interview problems there are transcription problems:

"Trying to represent the dialogue as I think I heard it after five, ten and fifteen replays of the recorder is difficult. I am constrained by the sequential ordering that is a built-in feature of our way of writing. If we seek to use a linguistic model constrained by ideal-normative model sentences with an NP VP construction, we would have to create grammatical sentences or face serious obstacles to an analysis. My analysis is influenced by the way I transcribe the tape and by tacit reliance on my

native competence as a speaker-hearer. There is the additional problem: my careful listening alerts me to details that the participants may have ignored as irrelevant. But then I could ignore detail the participants viewed as basic to their understanding of the exchange. Various aspects of their speech habits are a normal part of their repertoire and may not be designed to communicate anything special in the present setting. The researcher invariably exaggerates the significance of the dialogue by the way he or she represents its content in some organised sequential form, and by the way he or she focusses on particular features of the dialogue."[14]

Lastly Cicourel[15] notes the multi-modality problem and the difficulty in reflecting the equivocality of a transcript. It is also remarkable that we can hear and inseparably hear-uncertainly, whereas transcription uncertainty is appended or notated.

The burden of this discussion so far is the awesome difficulty in trying to say what someone meant by a response. I say difficulty but also realise that there are considerably philosophical and methodological hazards in such an attempt.

What follows then is quite definitely not such an exercise. I use the following procedure

a) to note several features of what I, as a member, hear the co-participants to be saying and doing

b) to try to provide for how such a hearing is possible

c) in doing so to describe some procedures in practical interview reasoning

while

d) claiming that such features are not only analysts' constructs
but hearable as member-oriented-to-features.

The starting points for such an analysis are provided by such
analysts of natural conversations as Harvey Sacks, Gail Jefferson
and Emanuel Schegloff[17] and my analysis turns on the resemblances
and distinctions between natural conversations and interviews.

It should be noted that the generalizable features discussed
hereafter are not generalizable to interviews as such. What
members recognize as an interview includes many different
exercises from counselling to work appointment. One notable
feature of the interviews discussed here is the lack of practical
orientation: the interviewer is not wise to use the answer for
itself but as a guide to the interviewee nor is the accuracy of
correspondence of the answers at issue. I cannot assume that
such features were recognized by interviewees before the demonstr-
ation which follows but the important point is that 'interview' is
used hereafter to mean this sort of interview.

I recognise as a reasonable response to some odd questions the
following:

A   If I was, going to the, centre of Bletchley (3.0) or - to the
     town centre,

4   Yer
     ◞

A   How would I know when I was, there

4   (2.0) ((nervous laugh)) well ((nervous laugh)) till the (lo a er)
     stops (yer) know, tha's ⌈how
                             ⌊
A   ⌊Yer

4   (If you're new) that's one way you could really recognise

    it (2.5)

A   Yeah (3.0) that's a load

4   Pardon

    that's a load, cos I mean there are some towns which you've

    got a sort, one load of shops and (then) another load of

    shops

A   yeah

    but only one of the load of shops is the centre

4   well 'bout three dozen i s'pose i dunno how many there is

    shops there is in Bletchley –

    (er)

A   i the centre.

I am interested in the use of 'Pardon'. It is important to note
that A's utterance immediately preceding 'Pardon' is neither
quiet nor audibly indistinct. I do not hear 'pardon' as saying
'I didn't hear': more importantly neither does A. A does not,
for example, repeat the phrase 'Yeah (3.0) that's a load' more
loudly or more distinctly: he expands on it. Rather he hears
'Pardon' as 'I don't understand'. In one sense it is quite clear
that four does understand, at least clear to A who does not
explain the meaning of 'load' by, for example, a list of synonyms.
Four then hears 'that's a load' clearly and understands the words.
His 'Pardon' is heard by A to relate to the context of, or reason
for the question.

Four has formulated the centre of the town correctly or at least
necessarily as having a load of shops. A questions such a
formulation in 'that's a load' more precisely he requests details

or expansion or sufficiency. 'Pardon' is used to ask for more specific details of the direction of such an expansion. A explains 'cos i mean there are some towns which you've got a sort, one load of shops and (then) another load of shops'. He points out that Four's formulation is ambiguous; it has failed to formulate adequately or _sufficiently_ the town centre.

The Question-Answer sequence (QA) is a class like Greetings exchanges or Offer acceptance/refusal, of Adjacency Pairs[18]. Questions are routinely followed by answers. One device open to the respondent is to start an Insertion sequence which questions the questioner thus (Q(qa)A). This may be a delaying device and is typically used when the first pair part has been 'sprung' on the respondent. To avoid the consequences of such 'springing' one can prepare the ground for the first pair parts. In the case of 'pardon', the 'lot's a load' is sprung to the extent that Four has difficulty in relating it to a past sentence. 'Pardon' initiates an Insertion sentence, the second pair part of which awaits the 'sprung' characteristic of 'lot's a load' by its amplification of the question. The main first pair part is then answered. The interesting thing here is that A knows what is meant by pardon and that knowledge is available to him through his understanding not of the respondent nor of 'pardon' but of the 'sprung' nature of his own question. Sacks[19] suggests that the insertion sequence puts the onus back onto the original questioner to answer (Q(qa)A) before he can be answered. I suggest that in many cases the original questioner uses this device to get back speaker's rights. The first question was never a 'real' question at all merely a lip service to the

conversational for.at. I have frequently noticed this device

used by teachers when they wish to talk and yet have pupil

participation. Thus in this sequence it is not only the case

that A is deriving his understanding of 'pardon' from the

structure of the seq encing and his knowledge of the spring

nature of his question but that he uses such a whole collabor-

atively with our to produce 'pardon'. Thus Insertion sequences

should not only be viewed as devices used by respondents but by

questioners. In one sense they may be no insertion at all nor a

separate sequence. I think this is important generally in

conversational sequencing that present speaker may with next

speaker's likely collaboration, not select himself as next-

speaker-but-one for this is unnecessary in a two party conver-

sation[20], but insert considers to influence in the transition

point in the next speaker's utterance.

If this is so, it may be a lead into how questioners structure

and direct interviews. Most interviewers wish to see their

interviews leading in a certain direction, even producing certain

results. In fairly open interviews, there are certain problems

with achieving this and still allowing 'free' answers. The inter-

viewer wants to achieve an interview that is not a series of

separate and unconnected questions but some sort of conversational

flow, yet he wishes to control the direction of that flow[21].

3.3 Interview Orchestrated Flow

I use the term Interview Orchestrated Flow to emphasize that I am

concerned not with the Interviewer's attempts to get the 'right'

answers although this occurs[22] but with his control of the ordering

pairing, sequencing, direction of the interview, i.e. those

properties which make it possible for him to attempt to get the

'right' answer. For an conversation to be achieved requires

the co-operation of the co-participants. To bring off a

Interview as described above requires orchestration by the

Interviewer. It is still a collaborative achievement in that

the interviewee has to fit that orchestration.

In practical terms an enquirer with previous such as who

know the, for how long, to what question. Such devices work

in context. 'Yeah', for example, has to be seen as not

so this interviewee has 'permission' and this is not always so:

we are not interested in the word but in the order in which a

given utterance.

member recognise interviews as interviews. Furthermore, if

someone starts questioning in a certain way during 'natural'

conversation we may well be asked 'what do you think you're doing,

conducting an interview'. The 'certain way' of questioning

that helps to distinguish the interview is not to do, primarily,

with the type of question asked nor the type of answering.

So in looking at interview transcripts now we are not looking

for any characteristics of interviews but at something that members

use to see the interview as an interview, and, reflexively, use

collaboratively, to produce the interview. It is not in one

sense interviewer-orchestrated but jointly orchestrated by inter-

viewer and interviewee to see it as interview because it is heard

as interview. Thus if, for example, we read 'Yeah' as 'carry

on', that is, as a direction, it is a direction routinely <u>taken</u>

as well as given.   hat we are to look for ther is the

collaborative work t e Interviewer and Interviewee do to

recog ize-and-reflexively-produce the interview.

4.4 Interview roduction

12   ... like the mbulance — tra'(p)

        Yeah

1   ' lre ou out hen ou're ll on the oters (?)

        (?)

12   'n he he people' one has s though it — t ey us comi ing

        after hen they e' l t 'n the

        (?)

1   . t ou' tra' s e he ost importer t

In thi sequence the interviewer akes hree utterances, none
of which are ra tical questions. Thr shout the other
tw   oints he interviewer routinely says 'Yeah', ' ell', and
so on   a repetition. t first si t on the t anscripts I
saw t se as interruptions sin e hey occurred i h t I
construed as one utterance. I reasoned t t here the interviewer
was usin interviewer' ri ht be ause, ter, thexe is what was
bein   id. n listening to the tapes, however, I heard t at
the re rks id not actually overlap with the respondent's talk.
I sumed the occurred in what idn't have been a gap if the
re rks d not been 'inserted'. In ct there is a slight
pause ('.) between 'tra'' or 'Yeah', 'doctor's' and 'ri ht' nd
the second 'th'' and 'Y ah'. This is less t an a second but it
makes it ifficult to construe the interviewer's remarks as
interruptions. There is also a rising intonation at 'ambulance'

and 'doctors' and 'thought'. This might indicate that far from
being interruptions, the interviewer's remarks are allowed for
by the respondent. We might suggest that the interviewee is
seeking encourage ent, confirmation, etc. of the type of reply
he is offering. However, what is more interesting is the
mechanism he uses. By making frequent pauses with rising
intonation he provides frequent transition relevant places at
which the interviewer can start to speak again. After those
pauses the int rviewee can <u>continue</u> his sentence or line of
talk to produce the superficial effect of an interrupted flow
of conversation. This solves the interviewer's central problem.
There are only two speakers so there is no doubt he will speak
next but he needs to have frequent points at which he may start
to speak. These are provided for him by the interviewee[23]. At
this point we may notice that $I_n$terviewer's pauses are not seen
in the same way but as pauses <u>within</u> his speech.

In all these tapes this device is very, very general and despite
the frequency of the interviewer's directions there are **very few**
occasions of overlapping talk.

Throughout this discussion is the implication that co-participants
in an interview orient to the form as well as the content of the
interview: that particularly the interviewee must avoid digression
in form since extended digression in content can only occur with
significant digression in form. In the section Interview
Orchestrated Flow I casually suggested that 'Yeah'[24] may be read
as 'Carry on'. We are now in a position to see that 'Yeah' is at

least ambiguous: it may be a reflection on the content of the last speaker's utterance or it may mean 'Carry on talking, I return speaker's rights to you'. It may indicate interviewer's approval of the successful conclusion of the content of the previous answer or his permission to talk, his waiving of his own speaker's rights. There is a third possibility and for the interviewee another problem, namely how to know when to restart speaking. Is the interviewer going to append anything to 'Yeah' as in Interview Nine 'Yeah, where's that?'. How does Nine know that A has not finished after 'Yeah'? Together with orientation to context, intonation, and stress, the interviewee can attend the _locus_ of the interviewer's remark to solve the first problem. In the case of waiving the speaker's rights it is difficult to tie 'Yeah' to anything in particular. Contrast:

A   Satellite tha's

9   Tha's the pub

A   Yeah

9   You know ...

and

A   ... How would I know when I'd got there

9   (2.0) 'ow would you know?

A   Yeah

9   Well 's the only place where there's y'l'load of shop um

In the second 'extract' ''ow would you know' asks for confirmation that Nine has understood the question. Except when

insertion sequences are started, answers routinely follow
questions more precisely answers to questions follow those ques-
tions to which they are answers thus 'Yeah' is tied to the
preceding remark as a second pair part. It is understandable in
terms of that remark that is like many second pair parts we must
go to the first pair part to understand it. It says 'You have
correctly understood my question'. Nine does not then 'carry on'
with what he was saying but answers A's question.

In the first extract A has just remarked that Nine has listed
the 'Satellite'. He wishes to know why Nine has listed the
Satellite as an important building and starts ' atellite tha's?'.
Nine starts: 'tha's the pub' A says 'Yeah'. 'Yeah' is heard
next to the last remark but it is difficult to tie it except in
a vague 'So far so good, carry on' sense; an indication that the
interviewee is talking to subject. The hearer's rule for 'Yeah'
in these cases seems to be that if you can tie it meaningfully
to the preceding remark, do so, and that will indicate what you
might say next. If you can't tie it then carry on with what you
were saying. Another way of looking at this is to note that to
move 'Yeah', in the first extract, back two words would make
little difference. To move 'Yeah' in the second extract would
change its work nd necessitate another 'yeah', or something
doing similar work, in the original locus.

3.5 Restarting

The interviewee and interviewer collaborate to bring off or
produce the interview as an interview. One device for this is
the pausing device described during the section Interview
Production. The interviewer (when he wishes) uses pauses

provided in the Interviewee's speech to change or confirm the flow of the interview. Because it is an Interview he has some sort of right to do this. The Interviewee does not have such rights and to be a good interviewee must not 'interrupt' the interviewer. One thing he must be careful to do then is to know when to speak. This involves two constraints: first not speaking before the Interviewer has finished and speaking fairly soon after the interviewer has spoken. The first of these constraints may present recognition problems: the interviewer sometimes says a word, sometimes a sentence, sometimes several sentences; he chooses to 'take up' certain points and neglect others; often he pauses in his talk but he has not finished. How does the interviewee avoid producing overlapping talk?

Of course frequently there is a pause after the interviewer has 'finished' and it may be that the pause when prolonged helps the interviewee to know to restart. Crucially however we see that pause as his silence and thus it does not explain the routine knowledge of utterance conclusion.

Often in interviews both we and the interviewer can view the interviewee's silence not so much as silence but as doing thinking. We use the location of the silence after a question to hear it as 'thinking' thus in play scripts '... thinks 'Yes'' is read as silence ... 'yes'. It is open to the interviewee to use the silence not to 'think' about his reply but to think about whether to reply at that time. The pause is thus a more tolerated and less dangerous device in interview than in for example three party 'natural' conversations where someone else may start

talking. To be safe; to be sure not to interrupt, the inter-
viewee ay use a pause. Other devices a e open to him. In
general he is required to speak only to questions or indications
to continue although ever statements by the interviewer may be
turned into questions by tags. Many questions signal their
closing at the beginning by the 'Wh' words, When, Why, What,
Where. And participants may use the Adjacency pair structure
to present their reply to the first pair part at the earliest
transition relevance place[25].

A   '... Where is that

3   Just up Whaddon Way

A signal that the Interviewer has not finished may be intonation
thus in 'Yeah where's that (Interview Nine) the intonation on
'Yeah' is different from that on a solitary 'yeah'. Sometimes,
too, if the Interviewer wants to tag another question on to his
first or rephrase his first question he speeds up past the trans-
ition relevance place as in Interview Four:

A   ... why wasn't Leighton Buzzard considered, why didn't _you_

     think it was an important town

4   (2.0) Dunno ...

There is a rising intonation on 'con' falling on 'sidered' and a
rush into the second part.

Clearly the interviewer has the right to deny the Interviewee's
starting at the transition relevance pl ce but his action and the
right emphasize the joint answers of that place. Thus we may sum
up the interviewee's rule as 'reply at the first transition

relevance place unless you are 'told' not to'[26]. It is incumbent on the interviewer to do the work of telling not to by intonation, speed or syntax.

The discussion above suggests that the successful interview in formal terms is a collaborative achievement with interviewer and interviewee working together to bring off such matters as turn-taking. In particular we have seen how the interviewer can, with his interviewee's collaboration, organise 'in advance' to get back speaker's rights and also how the interviewee provides frequent transition relevance places for the interviewer to restart. The interviewer can make use of these frequent places to orchestrate the interview. We have already seen one use: that of concluding sequences and inviting continuance with 'Yeah'. He can also control time spent on questions by building or not building on the original question:

A   ... I asked you to list below what you thought were the most—five most important buildings in Bletchley—you put down Police Station, Fire Station Ambulance—Station Railway Station—'n Pictures why d'you put down those

15   (2.0) ('ell) coz there ('aim) places n't they

A   The main? places

15   'eah

A   In what way coz theres lots of im ₍port

15   ₍'ll protection safety—

A   Yeah

15   Fire n'everything else en it really? ₍Its

A   ₍Yeah

15   obvious en' it really

A   No factories down there though

15   (2.0) 'll there not exactly important uz places (3)

    f<u>ac</u>tories

A   They're not important? ⌈( )

15   ⌊( ) not really

A   'chool? No?

15   (laugh) You'll be ⌈lucky

A   ⌊(laugh)

15   school?

A   O.K. fair enough (2.00) um——list below what ....:

We could gloss this as follows:

A poses a general fairly open question '... why d'you put down
those.'. Fifteen gives his answer. A asks for confirmation
that he has heard 'main' correctly by rising intonation. Having
received confirmation he initiates a new sequence with 'In what
...' and instructs Fifteen to continue with 'yeah' and again
with 'yeah'. He invites a justification with 'No factories
...,' more expansion with his repetition of 'they're not impor-
tant', another justification with '.chool? No? and concludes
the section with 'O.k. ...'. Through his potential monopoliz-
ation of the first pair part of the adjacency pair and Fifteen's
collaboration in providing him with frequent transition relevant
places he can orchestrate the flow of the interview and direct
its course.

3.6 What to do next

In the foregoing discussion we have used the notion that
Adjacency Pairs constitute a device that, used in a particular

way, can produce 'interview'. One routine feature of such
Pairs is that the second pair part is paired _formally_ to the
first pair part: return of greetings follows greetings, answer
follows question and so on. In interviews, then the interviewee
has not only to work out what the interviewer is 'really saying'
and what answer is appropriate but also he must identify the
form of the interviewer's remark to find its sequential
implicativeness for his own. This is not an obvious sort of
exercise because, for example, many putative questions do not
obviously follow question form. The interviewee's problem is
what to do next and he finds that by what was done last and
then before. Consider, from the last extract:

A   No f_actories down there though

15   (2.0) 'll they're not exactly important uz places ( )
      f_actories

Fifteen's problem is: what should follow A's utterance? Fifteen
does not hear this as a question asking if there are or are not
factories down there: he does not reply yes or no. He does not
hear it as a comment that calls for no comment. He does not
hear it in many other 'possible' (to analysts) ways. He hears
it as 'Justify your omission of factories. It is pointing out
oddity and calls for explanation. In a previous interview a
superficially similar exchange had a quite different outcome
(Fourteen):

A F_actories aren't important?

14 (2.0) year er por( )—yeah

A (1.0) but you (p) didn't put those down

14 No

The point of interest is not whether Fourteen or Fifteen agreed or not about factories' possible inclusion but what sort of statement they construed A's utterance to be and what they deemed to be an appropriate 'reply'.

Let us address several problems raised by the excerpt from interview Fifteen. The hearing of a 'justify' demand is not explicable in terms of the words of the utterance. 'No factories down there though'. However not only does Fifteen hear 'justify' but his reply shows that he hears 'Justify your omission of factory in the question about buildings. He does not hear change-of-topic of interviewer-privileged-aside. This understanding seems difficult to derive from the pronoun 'there' which has no previously stated noun. How does Fifteen repair 'there's indexically'?

Fifteen can be seen as still speaking to the question several utterances previous '... why d'you put down those'. This question has been heard as a call for justification. He has been doing justifying and he continues until the end of the section. I suggest that A's 'original' question starting 'I asked ...' is a different order of question from 'main? places' and the others. It is understood not only as a question but a topic setter which says 'speak to this until further notice'. It is not a clear topic setter like 'I'm going to make ten points', or, of a joke, 'Listen to this one'. But like those its conclusion is suggested in its statement. It tells Fifteen to speak to it, to justify until he hears a conclusion or topic changer, 'O.K. fair enough (2.00)um—list below what ...'. Hearing 'No factories down there though' as a subclass of the 'original' question rather than the

utterance after 'obvious' en't really' enables Fifteen to tie
'there' to what is 'listed below' which in turn enables him to
see 'no factories ...' as that sub-class. The orderly procedure
aids and is aided by 'factories' being hearable as at least a
candidate member of the category important buildings and
certainly a member of the class buildings.

This does not mean that everything between a topic setter and
its conclusion is talk to that topic. As we have seen either
party may start an insertion sequence but it may, in an interview
be a tricky exercise as we saw in interview Four with 'Pardon'.
Folk knowled e also tells us to beware of interviewer's insertion
sequences in, for example, job interview, for they may be <u>part of</u>
the interview.

This leaves us with the question of how topic setters are recog-
nised as such and thus produced-and-recognised. In this case the
topic setter is recognisable because of its relationship with an
earlier questionnaire and the relationship of the speaker with
the distributor of such a questionnaire. The respondent 'knows'
what the interview is about before it starts and can thus recog-
nise it as being about what he knows by such topic setters and
recognise them by his 'knowledge' of it. Thus Recipient Design
returns as a major device for making sense of the structure of
interviews. It is through the respondent's 'knowledge' of the
recipient and the recipient's exercise or 'what-we-are-doing'[27]
that the interviewee can start to distinguish topic setters,
asides and insertion sequences. It is through his knowledge of
conversational and orderly interviewing procedures such as topic

setters, asides, insertion sequences, transition relevance place[28], etc., and their disruption that he can cumulatively 'know' his recipient and his exercises.

3.7 Conclusion

We have endeavoured to show some properties of the social event we call an interview. While these do not amount in any sense to a description they fundamentally contradict the traditional view referred to in the introduction. Though the restricted scope of these properties does not justify recommendations as to the use of the interview in sociological research, we can identify several ways in which they may be troublesome for the conventional methodologist.

Our consideration of reading questionnaire returns and hearing interviews are simply treatments of research interactions as problematic communications.

Standard methodology does not often classify research as a sub-division of communication but rather of scientific procedures. When it does raise communicational issues it tends to use linguistic theories which emphasize the meaning rather than the action of remarks. This is in keeping with an ideology of precision and reliability.

If questions of what remarks do, of what to do next, of how to follow and take turns, to open and conclude, to transfer topic to display competence and co-operation, to recipient design, to retrieve referents and tie tags, to back down, and so on are member oriented features ofcommunication events: if, in brief the work of Sacks and his colleagues is right; then communication events can no longer be held to be simply and obviously about

analyst perceived referents. Further if such events are seen
as organized and collaborative, remarks cannot be taken
unproblematically to tell us about their speaker/writer owner.
In short the attributive exercise of recognising and categorizing
topic, translating it into social and general characteristic and
tying it to speaker-owner as his characteristic and then to that
class of speaker as its characteristic is threatened at its
inception - at the very recognition of topic and discrimination
of speaker/writer.

In both the case of questionnaires and interviews, the <u>reply</u> and
its rightful <u>owner</u> are not obvious matters. The research
techniques produced equivocal and inconcludable 'results'.

Moreover since the equivocality springs from such matters as the
interplay of formal and substantive orientations the <u>joint work</u>
of questioner-respondent and the categorizing repairs of hearer-
readers confronted with inevitably indexical questions; it is
likely to be a persistent and ubiquitous trouble wherever <u>recog-
nisable</u> questionnaires and interviews are conducted.

<u>N_otes</u>

1. The transcript notation system is a reduced version of that used by Sacks, Jefferson and Schegloff although my use of it is considerably more casual:

(a)	underline	- emphasis
(b)	:	- preceding syllable prolonged
(c)	—	- brief pause
(d)	(p)	- longer pause
(e)	(2.00)	- pause of two seconds
(f)	?	- rising intonation
(g)	{	- overlapping talk
(h)	words in parenthesis	- that is what the transcriber thinks was done.
(j)	( )	- something said but indistinguishable
(k)	,	- continuing intonation
(l)	-	- cut off
(m)	(( ))	- enclose description of what was heard not transcription

In these excerpts A is the interviewer; the number is the interviewee.

2. H. Sacks 'Sociological Description', Berkeley Journal of Sociology, vol. 8, 1963, pp. 1-16.

3. D.H. Zimmerman and M. Pollner, 'The Everyday World as a Phenomenon', in J. Douglas (ed.), Understanding Everyday Life, Aldine Press, 1970.

4. H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, Englewood Cliffs,

    Prentice Hall, 1967, pp. 4-7 and H. Garfinkel and H. Sacks,

    'On Formal Structures of Practical Actions', in J.C.

    McKinney and ".A. Tirykian (eds.), Theoretical Sociology:

    Perspectives and Development, New York, Appleton Century

    Crofts, 1970.

5. J.M. Atkinson and R. Watson (eds.) Ethnographics; Studies

    in Ethnomethodology, Introduction, forthcoming.

6. As cited above, notes 2, 3, 4 and 5.

7. A.V. Cicourel, Interviewing and Memory, mimeo.

8. Ibid, p. 4.

9. H. Sacks, discussion on drag racing in Chapter Three,

    unpublished, untiltled, and tying techniques and tags in

    unpublished lectures, 1967, 1972.

10. H. Sacks, Lecture 11 1967.

11. H. Sacks, Chapter Two, unpublished.

12. A.V. Cicourel, op. cit. p. 9.

13. Ibid, p. 7.

14. Ibid, p. 13.

15. Ibid, p. 22.

16. Ibid, p. 21.

17. Most 'recently' H. Sacks, E.A. Schegloff and G. Jefferson,

    A Simplistic Systematics for the Organization of Turn-

    Taking for Conversation Language, Vol. 90, December, 1974,

    pp. 696-735.

18. This analysis of Adjacency Pairs is from H. Sacks, U.C.L.A.

    unpublished lecture 1 April, 1972. The suggested use of

    insertion sequences by original speaker is mine.

19. H. Sacks, ibid.

20. This relates to interviews not necessarily to 'natural' conversations although there is some confusion as to whether interviews are or are not 'natural'. For a discussion see (eds.) Richard J. Hill and Kathleen Stones Cuttenden, Proceedings of the Purdue Symposium on Ethnomethodology, Institute for the Study of Social Change, Depa tment of Sociology, Purdue University, Institute Monograph Series Number I, pp. 170-174.

21. Many other people have the same problems: I suggest that teachers and lawyers often display their respondents as talking naturally yet try to control direction.

22. Too extended a sequence to include here.

23. I think these points are fairly general for a certain sort of interview more precisely one with the direction/ conversation mix as in mine. The frequency of transition relevance places is of course relative and negotiated during the interview.

24. There is no suggestion that I am detailing the only readings of 'yeah' in the tapes.

25. The use of Adjacency Pairs for minimising gap and avoiding overlap is suggested in H. Sacks unpublished lectures Spring 1972, Lecture I.

26. For a thorough discussion of transition relevance place see H. Sacks, E.A. Schegloff and G. Jefferson 'A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation, op. cit.

27. Several of the 'Studies in Ethnomethodology' illustrate this far better than I could do but especially 'Common Sense Knowledge of Social Structures: The documentary method of interpretation in lay and professional fact finding', Studies in Ethnomethodology, H. Garfinkel, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall, 1967.

28. If it is Garfinkel who demonstrates indexical repair and recipient design, it is H. Sacks who furnishes us with the conversational analysis to hear-and-produce them. References to Sacks have been specifically made in this chapter but his influence is pervasive.

PART TWO

NATURAL LANGUAGE AS A

RESOURCE IN SOCIOLOGICAL

ARGUMENT

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTROLLED TEXTUAL PLAUSIBILITY

4.1 Introductory Remarks

Natural language acts as a 'trouble' for conventional sociological
aims and methods in research. It produces unwelcome incon-
clusivity and equivocality. That same natural language can
banish that same inconclusivity and equivocality in sociological
argument. It can help to produce plausbility. By that we mean
not that arguments are believed but that they are recognised as
believable arguments.

In those researches glossed in section 1, we have presented the
problems of sociological description as persistent and
ubiquitous. When we 'found' people doing things, there were
always plural ways to categorize what they were doing, who they
were and how the actors related to the act. To think about the
people and the circumstances of the research, to make sense of
interview talk and questionnaire return, and to write any
account, all involved ordering those people, circumstances,
responses and talk. The phenomena of the social world are not
naturally classified. To name them is to collect them; to under-
stand talk is to categorize and collect it, to recognise items is
to taxonomise them. At every stage of the research enterprise
before any analysis is explicitly claimed to be under way, lay
sociological description is being done. There are two sociologies
and two attribution practices in the research: the explicit,
sociological attempt to pair an attribute with a social owner, and
the implicit pairing of all the other attributes and owners that
are the terms of the text or its repairs. Each item we 'recognise'
involves doing sociological description: Each description is

only one of plural possibles and is inconcludable: each inter-
action sequence and each page is massively populated with
items. That is the extent of the problem of sociological
description[1].

This problem is not only persistent and ubiquitous but in
principle irresoluble. It was not that the researcher needed
more time, or more expertise, or more facilities, or a larger
research grant, or more data to find out how adolescents see
space. But to look for a conclusive description in the items
of data and conclusion as being about adolescents or space is
to look for a mirage. We could not show that any item was
conclusively what we said it was[2]; we found that our explicit
sociologising traded on a much more extensive but non-explicated
sociologising, that is, we used topic as resource[3]; that
description was part of what it described[4]; we found that the
statements were not statements about things but about things
and for people that is Recipient Designed[5]. In short we find
that our research was a practical affair and a situated affair,
an interactional affair and a communicational affair. It
exhibited those characteristics of practical situated reasoning
pointed up by Garfinkel[6], Pollner[7], Sacks[8], and Schwartz[9], and
those of communication achievements so elegantly described by
Sacks[10], Schegloff[11], Jefferson[12], Schenkein[13], and the conver-
sation analysts.

I have provided the above description of our problems and the
references to detailed discussion of them by 'others' because I
wish to stress the routine and 'normal' nature of such problems.

The particular subject (youth) apart, sociologists are massively engaged in attribution practices tying activities such as sociolisation, controlling, mobility, conflict to discriminated collections of classes, age groups, communities, races, occupational groups and so on. Their enterprise bears at least this _formal_ resemblance to the one accounted in Section I. Further the work of the ethnomethodologists cited above stresses the ubiquity, the routine nature and sometimes the invariance of aspects of practical reasoning and communication.

If, then, sociological accounts are communicational events of practical reasoning, they should contain any of the problems we have encountered. If they do, then one question we might ask is how do they derive any plausibility they have? If they consist of problematic descriptions, how are they believed? Since in practice we often assess individual pieces of sociology, how is a piece found plausible? Above we have spoken of descriptions as if the important matter was their truth or accuracy. Descriptions are also important in that they allow us to do recognising work and to understand and do interactional work, e.g. offer a rival description. The work of Schwartz[14] on Reflexive Coupling and Sacks[15] on the interactional import of formulations suggests that what is plausible, what is recognisable and what is orderly may be enmeshed. We will then be concerned with plausibility in an int ractional sense as some sort of necessary condition and may again re-phrase our question: Given the problematic status of individual sociological descriptions, how is a collection of those descriptions read through sequentially as an orderly whole-that-might-be-believed? How is _continued_ credible reading possible?

In Sacks' formulation[16] the Et.Cetera feature of sociological
description is a problem since he is talking of sociologists'
attempts to acquire a natural scientific method. In Garfinkel's
discussion[17], members do not find the principled incomplet-
ability of descriptions a problem. They terminate with an
Et.Cetera clause. That clause can be repaired through what the
interactants know of each other and the situation. In
communications the orderly sequence of talk and co-orientation
to category and collection rules also repairs elliptical
description. I think that the sociological article, book, and
report is repaired in much the same way through use of the
indexical particulars: that its orderliness and plausibility
rest on a collaboration of writer and reader, an interactional
event. The reader for his part uses the indexical particulars
of lines and headings and pages to constitute the orderly and
plausible sociological product. He produces plausibility through
his reading of presentational and situated features, not through
decontextualised tests of description-free, page-free raw logical
material.

At this stage we introduce two restrictions. First we are to
concern ourselves only with the written production of plausibility
and ignore other interactional settings such as lectures,
addresses, seminars, and conferences. Secondly, we shall concern
ourselvesfor topic continuity, largely with the production of
plausible age-oriented accounts, in particular with the reading
of a piece as 'about youth'. We will see however that age
orientation may be both topic and resource. In passing it may

be noted that youth is a topic recognised in traditional
sociology to raise certain topic problems. And arguments are
frequent about whether the doings of young people can be said
to 'tell us' anything about youth or whether they are 'really
to do with' deviance or urban decay or the family or class. A
witness to such a lapse into categorical indecision is the
small and erratic coverage of youth in sociology textbooks[18].

e have a reason for treating the attribution practices as
central to the order producing practices of presented sociology:
we often speak as if we read a text then judge it or use it.
However who should judge and use it and by what standards it
should be judged and for what purposes used turns on knowing
what it is; and what a piece of writing is turns largely on what
it is about. The production then that an article is about a
topic is a matter of considerable and basic interactional import
for the way it will be read, judged, used and reflexively
decided-to-be-about. Do not artful sociologists re-title
articles to make them 'about' things that λ journal prints.

We are to look at written sociology to find what part its written
context plays in its plausibility. At least two other occasions
on which people look at written sociology are the literature
search or review, and the book criticism. We claim neither the
total scope of the former nor the moral, improving, repairing
position of the latter. We thus hope to restrict our own
critical interactional future. In fact, we could not criticize
even if we would. The ethnomethodological indifference to
constructivist sociology is not a chosen but an inevitable

position. Simply, the sociologist has no alternative but to speak, write and categorize his phenomena. To blame him for what he would understand to be 'selective categorization' would be like some of the criticisms of the police for selective suspicion and labelling[19]. They are inevitable parts of the work, although for different reasons. We hope to show that plausibility is situated and presented plausibility. The sociologist cannot produce a context free account and we cannot criticize him for proceeding in the way he must.

4.2 Methodological Orientation

Most of the ensuing pages are taken up with analysis and there will be little separate theorizing or methodological discussion. Ethnomethodological programmatics have been extensively and well done elsewhere by Garfinkel and Sacks[20] and Pollner[21] although even their programmatic contributions are empirically situated. Their work on practical reasoning, accounts and description, together with that of Weider[21], Schwartz[23] and Zimmerman[24] is the basis for the characterization of sociological reasoning in the foregoing lines, as incomplete, situated reflexive, topic-resource confounded, accomplished, etc. But in looking for a method to analyse the presentational features of written sociology we turn to the conversation analysts above all Harvey Sacks[25] and also Schegloff[26], Jefferson[27], Turner[28], Schenkein[29], and Sacks' students[30]. It was Sacks' achievement to turn the ethnomethodology of programmatics and demonstrations and experiments into a highly sophisticated analytical procedure. The work of these analysts is almost exclusively on naturally occurring conversations. We are to adapt it for written work. Some of the conversational analysis procedures

car be so adapted with little trouble but there is (at least)

one significant difficulty. In making a provision for a

reading of a conversational utterance as an act, the analyst

can point to the rejoining and subsequent utterances of

co-conversationalists as acts in keeping with that reading

e.g. I read A's remark 'Oh'... as doing greeting. I can

provide for such a reading as follows ... I can also note that

immediately subsequently _ says 'ello' which I take to be

greeting returned. It will be obvious that in written

communication it is not as easy to claim that analysts'

features may be member-oriented-to-features[31]. Further the

obligation that acts stresses is on co-conversationalists to

listen to 'prior' stretches of talk[32] and follow sequence in

order to find next speaker and transition relevance place[33];

these interactional constraints are not on reader who can, it

appears, read in many ways he likes. In fact, he is under

different constraints but it remains the case that analyst's

readings are more problematic to claim co-orientation for that

analyst's hearings. Here is a small complication which is a

little compensation. The unit of analysis in conversation is

the-utterance-in-the-conversation. Those utterances typically

consist of two, ten, twenty and more words. The articles we

are to consider consist of thousands. It is then more likely

that following will become an issue. The writer too must count

on the readers all reading in one way so that they can follow to

the next 'bit'. Continued reading does not guarantee

co-comprehension but it restricts the range of idiosyncratic

analysis. Setting aside the co-orientation problem for we cannot

do anything else with it, we can turn conversational analysis

procedures into some crude[34] suggestions as follows: look not to

what phrases say but to what they do in the piece[35]: look to the importance of sequence[36]: look to the operations of pairs[37]; look to the organization of described phenomena into categories and collections with category-bound activities[38]: look to the textual repair of writer-reader understandings of what they are doing[39].

These suggestions relate to orientations that have been operative in conversational analysis. Dorothy Smith[40] is one of the few analysts to have worked on written materials and from that source we might add: look to cutting out devices[41], to contrast structures[42] and to ways in which story is 'worked up'[43]. From some work in Section I, there was a suggestion to look to the operation of lists[44]. Lastly, we are generally disposed to treat the text as some sort of interactional event so that it is 'about' writer and reader centrally and through them about topic.

We have said that the conversational analysts talk of what they hear rather than what is 'there', although they claim some member orientation is likely. We have also said that our claim to member orientation is weaker: it follows that wherever we talk of the writer 'putting, saying, claiming or arguing this, that or the other' we are intending 'what we read the writer ... as doing'. We note this with emphasis. We will not making explicit reference at each and every reading that it is reading.

4.3 Data

An initial consideration related to how much data should be

nalysed. In practice this was a question of how many
articles or books should have presented analyses and
obviously relates to the level and type of analysis. Had this
been a thesis on the operation of problem-solution pairs[45] in
arguments in which a fairly exhaustive provision of their
workings were made then the analysis would have been more
detailed and the data shorter. Had it been intended to
describe argument in sociology then the analysis would have
been more general and the data wider. The actual aims centre
round showing that presentational features are involved in the
plausibility process. It is not a direct concern to show _how_
they are so except in so far as it demonstrates _that_ they are
so. Bearing in mind that aim, and the innovatory nature of
written analysis, we kept our data wider than some conversational
analysts would like and consequently our provisions less adequate[46]
but on the other hand the data was narrower than most conven-
tional sociologists would like. After reading most of the
publications in the sociology of youth, six were selected for
presented analysis. The criteria for their selection was as
follows: they were fairly typical of recent contributions to
sociology of youth in their topic; they exhibited formal and
presentational features that analysis of other publications
suggested were fairly general; they exhibited those character-
istics in a succinct and clear way; they were all bona fide social
science in that they were published in bona fide sources. Lastly,
since the features of presentations are extremely reflexive, the
analyst often finds difficulty 'getting in' in much the same way
as in participant observation. These pieces were all found to

the imperative is that there was some choice or at this point.

It will be remembered that our main interest is in how these pieces present themselves as about topics. It will be manifest that we cannot decide what they are about before analysis. It would consequently be paradoxical to call for a representative sample of pieces as the construction of population and frame would anticipate analysis. In a common sense way, however, these pieces represent some of the current trends both in youth studies and in sociology especially those by Hall et al. and Parker. One further aspect of this and other ethnomethodological work that disturbs some is the apparently cavalier fashion in which small items of utterances are selected for attention. This is especially noticeable in Sacks' work e.g. One thing here that looks interesting is ... Why should choice of items not be more systematic? The answer has to do with the indeterminate status of items before analysis and the choice of generative material but there is another aspect: Sacks answered a similar objection as follows: 'I recall it was perhaps J.L. Austin who said that if in Biology they discover another fifty-thousand types of beetle nobody gets surprised, but if in philosophy there are eighteen types of performatives everybody is figuring out that there will be an infinite number. I don't figure that there will be an infinite number, I'd be happy with a hundred thousand types. I take it as perfectly reasonable that there could be that a -- people are kind of busy talking ... The question of what an explanation would be for sociology is the kind of thing that examinations of pieces of material ought

to control us in deciding. That is the position 1 would

adopt for now, but I am perfectly content to have five

thousand a, you know I don't have anything like/types of/

pairs of utterance types or something like that. But 1 mean

it wouldn't suprise me, it would give a lot of people a lot

of things to do'[47].

Conceptualised in this way as a field of a thousand explorable

features which are not necessarily reducible to a few types,

focussing on a few interesting and generative matters seems,

far from being haphazard, to be the start of a long operation.

The analyses that follow can most suitably be read as tentative

beginnings and humbler ones at that. Moreover they vary in

depth; some being reasonably fully provided for, some merely

more than hints. The important point is that they be enough

to demonstrate the presentational features in plausibility

production.

4.4 Guidelines

As different operations are shown in different texts and some

that are glossed in the analysis of one text are more adequately

treated in another, it may be helpful to have some guide to the

matters that originally aroused our interest. Also to clarify

and amplify the questions raised we can represent them as

follows:[48]

A central concern of many authors can be negatively expressed as

avoidance of such 'criticism' as: 'it's not about (youth) at

all' or 'that section is a digression' or 'I don't see the

relevance of that' or 'I don't see what that has to do with it'.
Positively we may represent this as a concern for staying
on subject for a TOPIC FLOW . Interactionally the achieve-
ment of topic relevance raises such questions as:

How is the text read to be about its subject?

Particularly, given that we as members 'know' something
about subject, how do we recognise 'instances' and
'examples' of it in the text?

If we invoke what we already 'know' about the subject,
what devices in the text instruct us to invoke such know-
ledge And to what use in further reading is such
invoked knowledge put? e.g. an orientation to look to
the relevance of the discussed population' age.

Once we know what a text is about, what does it had to
do to stay on subject or digress?

Given the multi-categorizability of social phenomena and
the plurability of reasons for, and consequences of
mentioning a thing, how are alternative and non-relevant
readings of mentioned things 'cut out'?

How do 'different' sections achieve their 'difference'
yet remain in one argument and about one thing?

A second concern of authors is the achievement of what we call
SEQUENTIAL FLOWS . Not only is the text to be read as about
the same things, but each thing should 'follow' from previous
things. Texts should not be 'disjointed' or even 'aphoristic'

but joined up. If they are not, they may even be unreadable
and members will complain that they cannot follow. The
achievement of sequence relevance raises such questions as:

ow are phrases read differently according to sequential
position?

ow is one piece read as the 'lo ical' next sta e to a
former piece

ow is consistency managed?

ow i the chronology of events' occurrence related to
the chronology of their mention'.

What part is played by divisions into 'different' sections,
beginnings, middles, ends, chapters, conclusions, etc.?

That work is done by headings in instructing how to read
what follows?

Since most sociological texts are not only sequentially organized
but their sequence is argumentative in character, the well
presented text is one that displays a recognisable and orderly
argument. There is then a concern for ARGUMENT RELEVANCE.
Failure to achieve such Argument Relevance may result in nice
but pejorative remarks about, 'not enough evidence', 'unreliable
evidence', irrelevant evidence', biased evidence' or even 'I
don't see what he is getting at'. The achievement of Argument
Relevance raises such issues as:

Given that we read some phrases as propositions, some as
data, some as conclusions and some as side-issues, how do

we allocate these different argumentative statuses:

How do we decide that this phrase is doing the work of
'explaining' this phrase?

ow do we decide when enough evidence has been shown?

What is the relationship between evidence shown and
evidence thought to be available to author?

How do disclosures of author categorizations in the text
effect reader ideas about 'shown' and 'known' evidence?

o is evidence displayed as fair?

How is evidence presented in units so that it may be
quantified?

How does presented orientation to topic affect readings of
fair and adequate evidence?

How does the reader's knowledge that this is a sociological
argument alter his tolerances and criticisms of portions
of that argument?

These questions could be multiplied and we do not construct them
with the intention of answering all of them or of assessing them
according to the three types. Rather they are examples of ways
in which texts may be seen as presentational achievements. They
show the awesome work done in such texts and point to at least
three ways of sub-dividing such work into the achievement of
Topic, Sequential and Argumentative Relevance. We list these

questions, then, to show that there is a sizeable and
intricate case to answer, we shall see that the intricacy
is such that few pieces of text can be looked at under one
reading alone.

However, we have tried to abstract from the various texts'
features that which each shows most clearly:

4.5 Data I

In the analysis of Data , we lay stress on the glossing
practices involved in reading bits of a text each of which are
only understandable by reading other bits. The accomplishment
of these glossing practices[49] is partially to do with the use of
operational understandings held pro-tem until expressions can
be retrospectively repaired. Understanding and plausibility
are constructed partly out of this refining definition in which,
as more understanding is made the further we read, only one
understanding becomes possible for even further reading. The
ties that help to produce and constrain this narrowing
directional flow are available through artful organization of
categorizations. The organization produces a consistency of
topic which is facilitated by a division into beginning, middle
and end that instructs us how to read each piece relevantly.
We also find in this data use of a pair device whereby
categorization of events as a first pair part (problem) enables
sequentially apt discussion of solutions and unambiguous
categorization of 'ambiguous' events as solutions.

4.6 Data II

In Data II we see the establishment of a social group. The

discussed population is successfully categorized as youthful
and that category fixed and held as a stable referential
resource. Once again there is an orientation to categorical
consistency, items categorized for maximum mutual repair. We
also point out the use of elliptical lists, in which the reader
is invited to complete the list through reference to his member's
knowledge, to make his own data to support writer's argument.
We see some nice work with sociological generalization levels
to hold and unfix categories so that _one_ social group can be
seen as having _many_ and _conflicting_ attributes. This work is
assisted through appropriate presentational placement.

4.7 Data III

Before we read the main body of a piece of writing we usually
have some idea what we are to read. That knowledge can become
an interactional resource: it can tell us how we are to read
and what we are to find in what follows. In Data III we look
briefly at the work of titles and prefaces in alerting reader
to topic. We return to that work in Data VI, and in Data III
concern ourselves with the effects of such alerts. It seems
that once reader is successfully alerted to topic he will
produce those activities bound to topic to complete elliptical
argument so that the knowledge that the discussed population is
more than incidentally youthful encourages reader to make growing
up explanations of their behaviour; explanations that reinforce
the author's developmental approach to the subjects' deviance.
There is a hint of the importance of hidden headings to separate
prose into 'different' sections to be read in different ways.

We consider the reader's classification of the author as someone

with privileged access to the subjects and as the technical
manager of the argument; the only one who knows where it is
to 'go'. This classification produces a deference that
explicates some of the glossing wait-and-see procedures
described in Data I, and is further discussed especially in
Data VI. Such deference is useful in plausibility production,
closing the gap between shown evidence and argued claim with
writer credit and good will. There is some discussion of fair-
ness and adequacy in argument, in particular of their generation
through deference to author as someone who knows more than he
can present.

4.8 Data IV

Our analysis in this section is concerned with the working of
pairs and lists. We look at the organization and organization
of phenomena into problems and problems of a certain level,
whereby discussion of other phenomena as solutions, mis-solutions
and solutions at the wrong level, becomes both sequentially apt
and argumentatively plausible.

We return to consideration of the elliptical list but concentrate
not on its work in invoking self-completed reader argument but in
its 'cutting out' achievement. The list can be so constructed
that only one organizing principle emerges on reader's completion
of reading as possible. We also append some considerations on
the interactional effect of the unavailability of raw and
'unworked up' data. That unavailability also assists in the
cutting out of alternative 'explanations' since the phenomena
out of which they could be constructed are not available[51].

4.9   Data V

In this section we leave off study of individual devices to attempt to analyse the argument as the production of a story, or rather a tale with a moral. In particular we find that the beginning of a story can be a way of providing both a chronological start and of restricting discussion to events after that beginning thus acting as a cutting out tool. In any story there are important events and trivialities and in data V we look at the allocation of phenomena into elements, accidents and essences. This discussion recalls the one in data   about holding and splitting categories and anticipates one in data   on controversial and non-controversial items. Here is a fine example of a contrast structure[52] and within that of the use of overarching organizing collections to monopolise total reference to cited items, in much the same way as the list in data IV. We draw attention to the incorporation of the moral (conclusion) within the tale (data as an instance of working up that adds to our thinking on the un vailability of raw data (ata IV) and partially answers the question about recognition of evidential and conclusive phrases. The discussion of author status started in Data III is continued with a section on the practice of quoting.

Sociology is concerned with finding order and pattern. Making behaviour orderly and thus intelligible often does the work of portraying its actors as sensible. One such rescue operation is to be found in Data V.

4.10   Data VI

In this analysis we confine ourselves to the first page and

mostly to the title and abstract to see the work done by a
beginning. We centre on the production of topic and, linking
with the discussion of Data II, III and IV of the cutting out
of non topic and the construction of stable referential
resources (fixing), in this case 'youth'. Data VI contains
ele ant writer self-categorization which raises previous issues
of reference to author and the distribution of entitle ents in
reading. In showing writer's presented access we contrast
reader's presented lack of access to raw materi l as mentioned
in ata V and I. a continue he discussion of ordering and
sensibilising techniques started in Data IV and V. In the case
of I, this is achieved largely through pairs.

ith a re inder of our disclaimer to any criticism au of the
innovatory and hence humble and tentative status of ur analysis,
we turn to the texts.

Notes

1. The discussion of sociological description is derived
   from Sacks: H. Sacks, 'Sociological Description', Berkeley
   Journal of Sociology, Vol. 8, 1963, p. 10. The explicit
   claim that sociologipsts have two sorts of description
   problems; those when they are doing overt description and
   those when they use any referential term is not made in
   that article.

2. The problem is not that we could not pursue conclusive
   description but that we could not do so in a situation
   where there were rival (incomplete) descriptions. See H.
   Sacks, 'Sociological Description', idem.

3. For a fuller account of topic-resource problems see ethno-
   methodological programmatics such as J... Douglas,
   Understanding Everyday Life, Aldine Press, 1970, particularly
   the article D.P. Zimmerman and M. Pollner, 'The Everyday
   World as a Phenomenon'.

4. The most recent contribution to the discussion of descrip-
   tions as part of what they describe is in Howard Schwartz,
   'Data Who Needs it ', unpublished ms. pp. 20-21.

5. The fact that accounts are not produced for archives but
   for a recipient, and the consequences of that fact in 'under-
   standing' accounts is explored both by Garfinkel and Sacks;
   for example in H. Garfinkel, ''Good' Organizational reasons
   for 'Bad' Clinic Records' in H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethno-
   methodology, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall, 1967; in
   H. Sacks, unpublished lectures, University of California,
   1967-1974. The most succinct statement is possibly by
   Emanuel Schegloff in E.A. Schegloff, 'Notes on a Conver-
   sational Practice: Formulating Place', in D. Sudnow (ed.)

tudies in Social Interaction, Free Press, 1969.

6. H. Garfinkel, Studies ... op. cit. and H. Garfinkel and
   H. Sacks, 'On the Formal Structures of Practical Actions',
   in J.C. McKinney and E.A. Tiryakian (eds., Theoretical
   Sociology: Perspectives and Development, New York,
   Appleton Century Crofts, 1970.

7. D. Zimmerman and D.L. Wieder, op. cit. and M. Pollner,
   'Natures of Reality Disjunctures and their Resolution',
   paper presented at the Canadian Sociological and Anthro-
   pological Association Meetings, Montreal, Quebec, May, 1972.

8. H. Sacks, 'Sociological Description, op. cit.

9. H. Schwartz, 'Data, Who Needs it.' op. cit. and 'Towards
   a Phenomenology of Projection Errors, unpublished ms. and
   'Mental Disorder and the Study of Subjective Experience:
   The use of each to Elucidate Other', unpublished Ph.D.
   Thesis, Harvard, 1975, and 'The Logic of First Impressions',
   read at A.S.A. Convention, 1974.

10. H. Sacks, unpublished lectures, op. cit. and 'On the
    Analysability of Stories by Children', in J.J. Gumperz
    and D. Hymes, (eds.) Directions in Sociolinguistics: The
    Ethnography of Communication, N.Y. Rinehart and Winston,
    1974, and H. Sacks, G. Jefferson and E.A. Schegloff, 'A
    Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking
    for Conversation', Language, Vol. 50, December, 1974, pp.
    696-735.

11. E.A. Schegloff, with H. Sacks and G. Jefferson, 'A Simplest
    Systematics ...' op. cit. and E.A. Schegloff, 'Sequencing
    in Conversational Openings', American Anthropologist, Vol.
    70, No. 6, December, 1968.

12. G. Jefferson, with H. Sacks and E. Schegloff, 'A Simplest
     Systematics ...' op. cit. and 'Side Sequences', in D.
     Sudnow (ed.), Studies in Interaction', op. cit.

13. A. Weingarten, F. Sack and J.N. Schenkein (eds.), Ethno-
     methologies, Beitrage zu einer Soziologie des
     Alltagslebens, Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1976.

14. H. Schwartz, 'Data, Who Needs It ', op. cit. p. 25.

15. H. Sacks, Discussions on 'Sequential Implicativeness' in
     lectures, op. cit.

16. H. Sacks, 'Sociological Description', op. cit., p. 13.

17. H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, op. cit.

18. Some textbooks make little or no reference to youth, e.g.
     P. Worsley (ed.) Introducing Sociology, London, Penguin,
     1970. Others classify 'it' under the family, deviance or
     education.

19. For example, I. Piliavin and J. Briar, 'Police Encounters
     with Juveniles', American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 38,
     Sept. 1964, pp. 206-14.

20. H. Garfinkel and H. Sacks, 'On the Formal Structures ...'
     op. cit.

21. D. Zollner and D.H. Zimmerman, 'The Everyday World ...',
     op. cit.

22. D. Weider, Language and Social Reality: the case of telling
     the convict code. The Hague, Mouton, 1974.

23. H. Schwartz, 'Data, Who Needs It ', op. cit.

24. D.H. Zimmerman and D.L. Weider, 'Ethnomethodology and the
     Problem of Order: Comment on Denzin', in J.D. Douglas (ed.)
     Understanding Everyday Life, op. cit., pp. 285-295.

25. H. Sacks, Lectures, op. cit.

26. E.A. Schegloff with H. Sacks, 'Opening up closings',
Semiotica, Vol. 8, pp. 289-327.

27. G. Jefferson, for example, 'Some notes on Pseudonyms,
unpublished ms. University of Pensylvannia.

28. R. Turner, 'Words, Utterances and Activities', in J.D.
Douglas, Understanding everyday life, op. cit. pp. 169-187
and 'Talk about Mental Illness, unpublished paper presented
at the annual meetings of the Canadian Sociology and
Anthropology Association, Winnepeg, Manitoba.

29. J. Schenkein, 'Towards an analysis of natural conversation
and the sense of 'heheh'', Semiotica, Vol. 6, 1972, pp.
344-77.

30. For example, quite may Pommerantz, 'A study of some features
of agreements/Disagreements', unpublished Ph.D. Thesis.

31. H. Sacks, projected book, unpublished, chapter 2.

32. H. Sacks, Lectures, op. cit.

33. H. Sacks, E.A. Schegloff and G. Jefferson, 'A Simplest
Systematics ...', op. cit.

34. I mean that my adaptations are working crudities not that
the conversational analyses are crude.

35. R. Turner, 'Words, Utterances and Activities', op. cit.

36. H. Sacks, Lectures, op. cit.

37. Ibid.

38. H. Sacks, 'On the analysability ...', op. cit.

39. H. Sacks, Lectures, op. cit.

40. especially D. Smith, 'K ist geisteskrank. Die Anatomie
eines Tatsachenberichtes', in E. Weingarten, F. Sack and
J.N. Schenkein (eds.), op. cit.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. D. Smith 'The Social Construction of Documentary Reality',
     unpublished ms., University of British Columbia.

44. D.C. Anderson, 'Youth: the Social Description of an Age
     Category', unpublished M.Phil. Thesis, Brunel University,
     chapter 6.

45. See for example Cicourel and Kitsuse, 'A study ...', op.
     cit.

46. adequacy judged by some test of reproducibility.

47. H. Sacks, Lecture, University of California, Santa Barbara,
     21.2.66.

48. This is not a list of questions we attempt to answer; our
     problematic is to explain and provide for readings of
     particular pieces of data not abstracted questions.
     However, these questions seem typical of the sorts of
     problems that arise and also give some idea of the extent
     of the accomplishment in presenting sociology.

49. H. Garfinkel and H. Sacks, 'On the formal structures ...',
     op. cit.

50. D. Smith, 'The Social Construction of Documentary Reality',
     op. cit.

51. except through some unexplicated operation of what-anyone-
     knows.

52. D. Smith, 'K ist geisteskrank ...', op. cit.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF DATA I, II AND III

5.1 Data I: tying terms into a theme or

How did an argument get taken where it went?

Professional sociologists when they write are bound by the
conventions of the medium. One such convention is to make
arguments of points rather than listing these points in no
immediately discernible order. In any sequence that could-
have-been otherwise, that was done to make how it is, it becomes
relevant to ask how the sequencing is achieved, to demand 'what
is it that makes this a sequence'. In any argument there are
categorizations and these are inter-related as being one theme
or in special terms in the same collection or following a
consistency rule[1]. So we can also ask 'how is classifiable
categorization achieved and what is the nature of the consistency
rule being followed. I propose to look at a section in 'The
science of society'[2] with a special orientation to sequence and
categorization. For analytic clarity I will temporarily neglect
the issue of recipient design where that it is a textbook
enables us to repair its expressions and to note that 'enough
is enough' for the recipient reader. Thus in this section
sociological questions of how sufficient should arguments be
for a textbook are not addressed.

In paragraphs one and two (p. 210) an argument is made, broadly
as follows:

  i) Young people have problems.

 ii) of ambiguous status.

iii) which are accentuated rather than resolved by school.

iv) so they join an identity giving group.

Further sections go on to analyse the culture of such groups (the chapter is 'on' culture). Paragraphs one and two are thus sequentially and logically crucial. Sequentially it looks as follows: We are talking about culture, we start a section on age, we talk about youth, we say they have problems which can be solved by a e groups which may or may not have cultures so we are talking about cultures.

Paragraphs one and two thus make what follows not only 'lo ical' but 'relevant'. They start as follows:

5.2 Age groups and youth culture

(1) 'One further social basis for the development of distinctive beliefs (2) is a e. Young people have particular problems, generated by the (3) transitional and ambiguous nature of their role in industrial (4) societies, hovering uncertainly between childhood and adult status. (5) Whereas for the child in the family, status is ascribed, in the (6) adult society it is achieved, and judged by universalistic criteria, (7) mainly performance. There is, that is to say, a sharp discontinuity (8) between the emotionally secure world of children and the im- (9) personal world of adults. The school, however, does little to bridge (10) this gap. It reflects rather the achievement-oriented, universalistic, (11) affectively neutral values of adult society. The emphasis is on the (12) instrumental activities of mastering educational skills. Moreover, (13) the great difference in power and authority between teacher and

(14) pupil still further emphasizes the discontinuities between the world (15) of the child and that of the adult. Furthermore, the extension of (16) education delays social maturity until well beyond the attainment (17) of sexual and physiological maturity, generating fresh problems (18) for the older adolescent. (19) It is under such conditions that young people develop a need to (20) join youth groups'.

I wish to start by looking at these lines to show how the reasoning is achieved by artful categorization and sequential organization and constant appeal to commonsense understanding. Before we list details it may be helpful to suggest the character of these phrases which I will term 'wait-I-have-not-finished-yet.' As each term is introduced we can as members gloss its meaning but to repair it in full we must wait until we are told more so that each phrase both depends on and is depended upon by the previous.

So in L. 1 we can gloss 'distinctive' at least sufficiently to carry on reading, but must wait until L. 4/5 to find what it is distinctive from and those terms are themselves tied to that distinction. The terms of 'distinction', and 'particular' depend on the categorization into childhood, youth and adult-hood suggested by 'young' in L. 2 and reinforced by 'childhood' and 'adult status' in L. 4/5. In the absence of explicit definitions of such terms we must use our members' knowledge to gloss them but 'wait-till-he-has-finished' to understand how 'he' is using them. They can then be 'altered' retrospectively.

First we move from 'age' (title) to 'young' L. 2. Although we

may as sociologists reserve our judgment about this move, as members we 'follow' it, since youth is at least a sub-category of the age device. 'Particular' reinforces 'distinctive' and again we must 'wait' to see how it is particular while using our member's knowledge to gloss it. 'Problems' is the most important category (if the writer had written 'characteristics' then the argument would have been different indeed). In this case a 'problem' is a troublesome characteristic and whereas we 'have' a characteristic we can 'solve' a problem thus the stage is set for the introduction of a 'solution' as at least consistent with a problem (paragraph three). It is now sequentially apt to introduce the terms of negation ('ambiguity', 'hovering' and later 'gap' and 'discontinuity'). These terms at once tell us what sort of problem we have and are rendered apt by it being one. If we look for the origin of problem we find that it is simultaneously a defining and subsidiary category of youth. We find similarly with 'ambiguity' and 'transition' that they both 'explain' what sort of problem it is and are rendered apt by it being a problem (consider the effect of other formulations such as 'Youth is a time of freedom and flexibility'). Again, 'hovering between' both 'explains' 'ambiguous' and with its invocation of fixed boundaries provides for it. Such boundaries are then fleshed out as 'childhood' and 'adult status' where their fixedness rests on 'hovering' and 'ambiguity'. Perhaps we can (selectively) systematise this as follows: (The attached table does not of course explain all possible linkages. Nor does it suggest that terms duplicate each other as in a circular argument but that they reflexively fill out each other in one crucial respect).

To understand, or repair the indexicality of the terms use
first the Prospective then the Retrospective definer:

Terms in order of mention

Prospective definer		Retrospective definer
The chapter (Age is one of several bases of belief/culture thus is relevant here)	Age	Youth (a sense of which youth is a member and is thus a relevant example)
Age (Youth is a sub category of age and thus relevant)	Youth	Particular Problems (that which has particular problems)
Youth (The problems are youth problems thus particular)	Particular Problems	Ambiguity, transition hovering (Troublesome character- istics because of their ambiguity, etc.)
Particular problems (Ambiguity is one sort of problem)	Ambiguity, etc.	Childhood and adult status (Ambiguity, etc. is existence between two fixed points of child- hood and adult status)
Ambiguity (Fixed points which hovered between)	Childhood and Adult Status	Age (Terms in an age classif- ication of which youth is a member)

Thus if Age be (a), Youth (b), Particular Problems (c),
Ambiguity (d), Childhood (e)

Then to define or understand any term in the text:
for (a), use sequential position in section, chapter and book
plus commonsensical understanding to gloss then refine such
gloss by retrospective use of (b) (with tied categories)
for (b) use (a) (with tied categories), plus commonsensical
understanding plus sequential position to gloss then refine
such gloss by retrospective use of (c) (with tied categories)
for (c), etc.

Several points need emphasis here; we have suggested that
each new term acts to re-order our understanding of the
previous term but not being identical with it adds something
which is itself redefined by the next. The effect is
cu ⎯⎺⎺ative t. 3, re-ordering t. 1 through t. 2. Obviously our
understanding of t. 1 cannot be re-ordered anyhow, the specifying
refining effects of later terms should not 'contradict' each
other or put more positively they should be consistent with each
other. Thus the crucial question is what consistency rule is
being followed given the cumulative and thus changing under-
standing of terms? In this case the terms are read so as to
limit the scope of the previous one. Thus the specifying work
of t. 3 must be within the limits of t. 2 and so on. The
plausibility of the argument rests on such consistency. Since,
however, there exists a range of specification which could be
made within those limits plausibility should not be confounded
with accuracy, truth or any similar notion. The artful
sociological argument follows the consistency rule working

within those limits to the points of contact with the next argument (in Cotgrove's case about culture). Thus it is not only the title of the chapter that is a resource for plausible sociology but the end.

The general implications here are that sociological reasoning should not be conceived of as a logical process but as a situated 'logical' process where (in this case) the situation is the textbook, the page, the chapter, the line, etc. Arguments are not thought then written identically to the thought. The reading/writing is an interactional achievement of its own with its own rules and procedures.

This is frequently demonstrated in interaction by the sociologist's reply to a question about what has been said 'But if you read on you will see I go on to say' where the question is made to constitute an 'interruption'. It is not simply that there is more to come, but that it will change what has been said.

The second point we may note is that for the lines to be progressively 'read' the terms must be partially understood (glossed) before they are retrospectively defined. Such defining is typically not a counter definition but a refinement (the concepts of ordinary speech are not 'fine' or detailed enough for scientists). In what direction are the refinements made, or which (given the possibility of various correct or at least consistent versions) refinements are made? This is tied up with the number that are made. Sociologists talk of developed and underdeveloped arguments, of adequate and superficial accounts and presumably have systematic Recipient Design

expectations of textbooks, theses, etc. and methods for quantifying arguments. Clearly to write a lot is not the same as to write enough. Enough is about the same thing. So the textbook writer may not write a book of four line aphorisms like Wittgenstein lest he be thought an aphorist. Thus he must write a reasonable amount on the same thing and it must be joined up. What I would wish to emphasise is that it does not join itself up nor 'run out': it is joined and finished. The textbook writer is then a joiner of lines, of references, of theories, of examples, and of observations. By skillful use of his choices within the consistency rule he makes line 'follow' line until he has 'finished'. A 'subject' that can be 'finished' (for-all-practical-purposes) has to be started; we can divide textbook sections into beginnings, ends and middles. This supremely trivial fact has the important consequences that we read the lines differently according to whether they are beginning, end or middle.

Let us return to the beginning: it being the beginning we are particularly alert to the 'wait-I-have-not-finished-yet' injunction and readily see 1, 5, 6 and 7, and to a lesser extent 8 - 18, as explanation, refinement and extension of previous terms. Again, it is the extension/refinement combination that allows simultaneous redefinition of past terms and apt movement 'forward'. The fixed points that youth 'hovers between' are refined as 'the child in the family' whose status is 'ascribed' and the adult society where it is 'achieved'. 'Whereas' sets the two points (ascription, achievement) as vague opposites and as points or categories. The points are further refined as the

'emotionally secure world of children' and the 'impersonal world of adults'. We know we are talking about the **same** two, since this is the only opposition, polarity scheme to tie to. Throughout, from the first mention of childhood and adults' status, a commonsense categorization (that of childhood and adulthood) has been traded on while being increasingly reified, refined and polarised so that the 'discontinuity' is 'sharp' indeed. There is one more move before we have a 'problem'. Despite the negative terms that have been clustered about it, the categorical ambiguity of youth will still be retrieved by an unco-operative reader into a positive category of release, liberty and flexibility (some argument like Katza's[3]: the very position that gives dependence gives liberty ... 'ameliorated dependence'). Line 9 dashes any hope of that: 'does little to' is routinely used to do deprecating work (we '<u>do little to</u> help' but '<u>don't do much</u> harm'): its use renders 'bridging the gap' a necessary, unambiguously beneficial but neglected activity, and those in the gap in unmitigated need. The school (which the ascribed 5-year old also attends but which fact, if we are following the consistency rule to understand, we miss) is seen not as youth or child-oriented but adult-oriented 'explaining' the sharpness of the discontinuity. By this stage, acceptance of the argument is a condition for the comprehension of its more indexical expressions so if anyone were to ask why the teacher-pupil relation emphasizes the child-adult discontinuity we, like Cotgrove, would categorize and subsume teacher into adult and pupil into child ... it need no longer even be said. Our acceptance of the discontinuity of childhood-adulthood allows for our comprehension of 'discontinuities'.

Lines 15-18 are most interesting. We could make sense of
'extension' in a number of ways (more hours per day, more
education and less other activities, etc.). But we read it as
the raising of the school leaving age (14-15 and 15-16) because
it is tied to the notion of social maturity in an argument
about childhood and adulthood for which we have commonsensical
time schemes. So when we wish to repair 'well beyond', we can
comprehend it as a year or so more than previously, not for
example, a few weeks. Now that we have childhood and adult-
hood as clear categories where 'between' is a source of problems,
any mixing of category attributes will constitute problems
rather than characteristics thus the uneven status passage of
adolescents, their sexual maturity before their social, is a
problem and because we are talking about youth it is not a
problem for adults but for youth and since they already have a
few as we, as members, know it is 'fresh'.

The argument is 'begun'. Paragraph one not only forms the
'logical' basis for paragraph two and its sequential referent
but also furnishes the reader with mechanisms for indexical
repair in paragraph two. It now constitutes 'such conditions'.
To repair 'such' more precisely we must link 'need' (L. 19) to
'problems' (L. 17) and 'fresh' (L. 17) to previous problems (not
explicit but reflexively repairable as discontinuity, hovering,
etc.). The whole has immediate plausibility since the (stale?)
problems have been tied to 'not belonging' so that joining is
readily seeable as a solution. The young have a 'need to join
... groups'.

So far we have seen how paragraph two (groups) is connected to

paragraph one (caps). Any competent sociologist given the
time should be able to see how by artful category and
sequential work a different paragraph two could be logically
and aptly and readably tied onto paragraph one. Talk of youth
status is theoretically sequentially indeterminate.

But Cotgrove's presentation of youth status is sequentially
implicative of his treatment of groups. Similar features are
found in the rest of the account which treats the following
subjects: groups, culture, contra-culture, mass media, radical
youth, summary. Another equally 'logical' development might be
groups-gangs-deviance-homo/heterogeneity of youth, sub-groups
(class, sex, race, etc.) of youth-summary. Again other
sociologists might have wanted to make more of the youth/
education link. There are a lot of plausible possibilities.
There are too many plausible possibilities, even given that
no-one expects textbooks to be the repository of ultimate
truth[4,5]. The methodological issue is a development of the
Et Cetera[6] problem: not only are sociological versions of reality
incomplete and thus incomeasurable but sequences of sociological
statements are incomplete and incomeasurable. We reiterate that
such sequences are not written as strings of disorderly state-
ments but that they are collaboratively read and written in an
orderly way as if there were a proper sequence.

Such collaboration and orderliness are only possible because of
the co-comprehension of the presentational features of such
accounts. The plausibility rests on such presentation as well
as any claimed correspondence of the version and the 'object' of
study. It is important to reiterate that our concern is not

with bias and propaganda nor with criticisms of constructivist
sociology but with the study by the devices used of such
sociology in its socially situated accounts to render those
accounts plausible. The prospective retrogressive definition,
the artful use of sequence and the unexplicated trading on
commonsense are three of those devices. The Reasonableness
rests on the Readability.

5.3 Data II: Creating a Social Group

We now turn to a different text, that of 'Human Societies'[7],
in particular the four extracts as follows:

The youth culture
(1) To understand why 13-20 is the peak age for
(2) crime we need to look at the situation of the teen-
(3) ager in industrial society. The word teenager is a
(4) new one, coined to designate the member of a
(5) new social group. In non-industrial societies, the
(6) terms child and adult are adequate for referring
(7) to two distinct age roles; the transition from a
(8) dependent, incompetent and subordinate child-
(9) hood to full adulthood is usually clear cut and
(10) may even be marked by an initiation ceremony.
(11) In industrial societies, on the other hand, the
(12) transition takes many years; in Britain there is a
(13) series of formal stages from the age of criminal
(14) responsibility at ten to the age of majority at
(15) eighteen. The main reason for this lies in the
(16) complexity of the adult roles that have to be
(17) learned ...
(18) So there has emerged a new, distinct period of

(19) life which is neither adulthood nor childhood;

(20) and teenagers have little in common with either

(21) adults or children. They form a social group

(22) whose distinctness is enhanced by the develop-

(23) ment of a separate 'youth culture' centering round

(24) taste in entertainment - particularly music - and

(25) in clothes ...

(26) The emergence of a youth culture, however, is

(27) only half the picture. The teenager is also in an

(28) ambiguous position. There are a number of aspects

(29) to this. First there is a good deal of disagreement

(30) about how teenagers should be treated: how much

(31) pocket money? How late should they come home?

(32) Should their parents know where they have been

(33) and with whom? Second, some of the demands

(34) made of the teenager are contradictory: he is

(35) expected to be responsible, yet is not given

(36) responsibility; he is sexually mature - indeed at

(37) his most potent - yet he is apparently expected to

(38) to be chaste; and so on ...

(39) Conflict is not the whole story of adult-youth

(40) relations but it is an important element of them.

(41) Delinquent behaviour among teenagers and the

(42) adult reaction to it are one of the forms that this

(43) conflict takes.

In the Hurd book such explicit systematic reference to youth
is made in the chapter on Crime, under the heading 'Explan-
ation of Crime and its Distribution', under the sub-heading

'Youth Culture'. As readers then we expect to be taken from this 'new' discussion on Youth Culture back to our mainstream discussion on crime. The writer's work is to take us there. Once again we make it clear that the line of argument could go in many directions if not anywhere. The point is noted by the author whose first lines (1-3) can be glossed 'We are going to talk about youth but wait a bit and we will show you it is about crime'. A remarkable feature of the first two sections is the creation of the social group Youth. The sub-heading 'Youth Culture' is some sort of instruction on what to find below; the main heading 'The xplanation of ...' on what to do with it when you have found it.

McIntosh sets up a contrast between growing up in two 'societies' called 'non-industrial' and 'industrial'. As members we recog-nize the l tier as a device of which our own society is a member and the former as a device we <u>know</u> that we do <u>not know</u> about by its negative (non-industrial) formulation. In the discussion of non-industrial society, she sets up two clear, (usually) distinct categories of childhood characterized by dependence, incompetence and subordination, and adulthood characterized by 'full' (repaired as extreme opposite i.e. independence, competence, superordination by use of a relevance rules). In the discussion on 'industrial' societies she imports the polarised categories but contrasts the transitive process. The rest of the section trades on the fixedness of those categories despite the fact that they have been unfixed, unpackaged and differentiated to do the sociology in the rest of the book. There seems to be some sort of experimental rule

of laboratory control by fiat where all variables except the
central concern are taken as given. But in this situation they
are given in commonsense knowledge and the rule is strictly
implicit. The writer directs the flow by artful choice of the
time and place for unpacking and unfixing commonsense concepts,
and for fixing others to hold for the time being. It must be
emphasized that it is not a rebuke - how else can natural
language proceed? However the control of such timing and
placing gives the writer a resource for 'developing his argu-
ment' and ignoring others.

In this case the argument is that because youth is a protracted
period neither in childhood (still presumably in its non-
industrial definition` nor in adulthood, it is a distinct group.
The exclusive definition is the basis of an inclusive (implicit)
definition - they 'form a social group' by a mixture of fiat and
identity/inclusive confusion. The plausibility that ensues is
reinforced by a consistency through other terms where the
distinctness of youth is 'enhanced' by a 'separate' (where
separate does not mean that no adults like youth pursuits but
they are not the owners of such pursuits[8]) 'youth culture
centering round taste in entertainment - particularly music -
and in clothes'. Once again reflexive features are dominant
thus 'separate' depends on an inclusive notion of 'group' and
helps to define by 'enhanced' that group as 'inclusive'.
'Enhanced' itself is read as 'more of the same thing' where what
the thing is and more of it is is problematic until we know what
it is enhanced by. In this situation the reader fastens on the
member recognized items of clothes and pop music to read an

argued consistency into what proceeds them. ..ithout extensive
trading both on commonsense concepts and lay theories of youth
and their reflexive deployment (suggested by sequencing) the
argument would be not only implausible but unintelligible.
'music' and 'Clothes' are read as items on a list which coul.
have been continued. Some such lists are given to point as
eikons to an organizing set of principles. In this case the
set is only half argued by the author who relies on members'
theories of youth to make sense of the juxtaposition of youth
and the truncated list. It is for the reader to find the
version by using what facts he 'knows' and choosing what facts
he knows to fill out the putative consistency of the argument.
His guidelines are these elliptical eikons, his knowledge of
what may reasonably be expected in such circumstances (reading
textbooks) and such instructions as are constituted by titles,
headings, endings, and so on. Small wonder he helps in
producing plausibility.

5.4 Keeping Contradiction Apart

Having produced a group by trading on what we-know-as-members
are its characteristics, McIntosh, like Cotgrove, refines the
definition. The social group is characterized by an 'ambiguity'
which has a number of aspects - differential treatment, contra-
dictory demands and confusion. There would seem to be a
writer's problem here deriving out of having made an inclusive
out of an exclusive category since attributing ambiguity,
differential treatment, contradiction and confusion, potentially
threatens the homogeneity of the group. More precisely it seems
unlikely in this context that we should read any particular

father disagrees with himself as to pocket money rates or even with his wife - that would give us a matrimonial problem and we are talking about youth. But if McIntosh is read as saying different youths receive different allowances this threatens the homogeneity of youth which she and the reader have worked so hard to establish. After all other sociologists not a hundred pages distant have built a whole stratification system or differential reward. Similarly with 'responsibility', teen-agers are not 'expected to behave responsibly'. They may some-times be told to 'be responsible' but they manage (or if they do not it is member remarkable) to repair such indexical orders by formal and situational resources to find exactly what behaviour they are supposed to do. So they 'know' that they are 'really' being told to perhaps 'stop talking at the next transition relevance place and give priority to an adult speaker'. Once we situate adult commands they are often not contradictory. On the other hand if it is read as two adults arguing over what may be expected from youth then we have either an adult problem or role conflict. If, as is most likely, it is read as different youths having different demands then it threatens homogeneity. In brief members do not simply experience contradictions, they have arguments. Except to the most reflexive member what-it-is-that-makes-it-contradictory is seeable or invokable as a practical matter, in one situation but McIntosh's contradiction is that of different demands across situations. As such it is problematic to say it is a teenager's contradiction.

How then is the passage rendered plausible? We have already

hinted at the answer. In the previous paragraph we produced youth as a social group, as a generalisation. A substitution of 'Alfred' for 'teenager' in the subsequent section will show that it is by artful use of the reified, generalised and extra-situational 'teenager' that the ambiguity argument is brought off. This section contains phrases that follow colons and can be read as examples of the principle 'First there is a good deal of disagreement ...'. Further that they are at least extra information on the same subject is read by their juxta-position between 'First' and 'Second'. In fact they do more work than mere exemplifying. They are themselves principled collections in which events like deciding on and giving pocket money or being told to 'be responsible' are deprived of those contextual particulars that would make them examples so that they act as minor principles consistent with the leader state-ment 'First ...'. But simply, perhaps simplistically, the writer trades on our acceptance of sociology as a generalizing discipline. Thus, far from threatening the homogeneity, generalization of youth, the ambiguity-attribution depends on it, and depends on it having been done first and in a separate paragraph/argument; the whole well distanced from the social stratification section. A simple reshuffle of those paragraphs and sections would destroy plausibility. We reiterate that the expressions in the argument are indexical and that to repair them we look to see what we are reading (heading and sequence so far) and where we are going (next section and preface work and heading); but that this sequence is itself unintelligible unless we use lay categorizations consistent with the argument. The two devices sequencing and categorization work together inter-

actionally and reflexively both explicated by social expec-
tations of textbooks and consistency to produce themselves.
Since the argument in one sense _is_ the sequence and categories,
the reader must work with his appropriate lay understanding to
accept the argument and to follow it. The reader and writer
produce the plausibility. It may be objected that having
accepted/understood the argument, the reader can reject it as
illogical or not true to the facts or whatever. He in turn
however can always be confronted with the inevitable fact that
he is criticising only his reading of the argument since it
does not exist independent of collaborative work.

We may tidy our account by noticing that McIntosh like Cotgrove
presents the 'interim' position of youth as a trouble, and that
as with Cotgrove this is for the practical end of producing a
sequentially relevant section. In Cotgrove's case this was the
'solution' of the peer group; in McIntosh's case it is the move
to troublesome ambiguity through a series of identity-inclusions
to 'conflict' and 'one form' of conflict, delinquency. As with
Cotgrove, we note that any talk of youth is not sequentially
implicative of peer groups or crime any more than drugs or
student revolt but this particular account is implicative.
Beginnings are beginnings of middles which are before ends.

5.5 Interim Summary and Note

It is difficult to summarize what is essentially a selective
description of some of the devices by which plausibility is
produced in sociology. Briefly we can note that at least three
'foreign' factors seem to impinge on sociological reasoning.
First, the context of expression in this case the writer's and

reader's understandings of what it is they are writing and
reading and what it ought to be: second the writer's artful
use of the many potential devices of sequencing, prefacing,
presenting, categorising and so on, open to him; third the
unexplicated and reflexive use of the reader's lay categories
and theories. In short reading and writing a textbook is a
complex and _social_ interaction, largely ignored by routine
educational and sociological talk of 'transmission of ideas'
and writing 'lucidly'[9].

It may be objected that these texts are _only_ textbooks. It
may be asked what is to be expected from a textbook. We hope
to have given a partial answer, It remains to be seen if
these devices are operated in research sociology. However we
may note here a matter addressed later in more detail: that it
appears to be problematic to talk of a 'real' or 'pure'
sociology either 'behind' or 'before' presented knowledge. A
different but no less intractable set of problems arises when
textbooks are regarded as lesser sociology or sociology-for-
junior-members of the sociological community rather than mere
presentational forms. We do not wish to address this matter
here: we merely wish to assert that it is not an easy or
obvious retort to the matters discussed so far to assert that
they are textbook matters and not proper sociology where
proper sociology is so characterized as to exclude textbook
sociology.

5.6 Data III: View from the Boys[10]. Using commonsensical
categorizations of Youth to produce plausible Sociology
In the section 'The Fieldwork Approach' Parker suggests that

'the sorts of doubts cast by the precision demanded by
.chutz and the American ethnomethodologists ... would
demolish the validity of this little book with ease[11]. As
Garfinkel[12] has repeatedly emphasized, his attitude to
constructivist sociology is not doubt or demolition but
indifference. It is no more doubtful than any other practical
reasoning. Parker himself talks of the 'political'[13] nature
of sociology in such a way as to imply its practicality.
Although indifferent to the accuracy of Parker's work the
ethnomethodologist may be interested in its construction. In
this case, we are concerned with how a variety of observations
by a 'participant' are selectively and systematically made
into a plausible and relevant story. As is the case with text-
books, a collection of observations without a theme is neither
readable nor writable apart from being unconventional. In
order for the participant to categorize instances of behaviour
as instances of that behaviour he must invoke (implicitly) a
scheme of categorization an relevance. For the reader to
'follow' a text, and repair the indexicality of its expressions,
he must know what it is that he is reading before he has read
it. Both for its construction and comprehension Parker's book
trades on his and our working knowledge of what it is 'about'
and what is 'relevant'. Philosophical considerations aside,
members have the practical jobs of allocating the book a place
in a library classification system, of putting it on one
reading list rather than another. By invoking some of the
theories that are explored in the book, theories which tie
youth, adolescence and urban decay, a preliminary classification
of the book can be derived from the cover, the title, the sub-

title (A Sociology of Down Town Adolescents)[14], the cover
picture and the blurb. Such theories not only prepare us
for the book to be about adolescents and down town, and the
deviance tied to both categories but to look for their inter-
relatedness to be oriented to as a matter of some consequence.
So when juvenile delinquency and social problems are mentioned
in the preface without their relevancebeing justified we are
not puzzled. I do not wish to address the reasons for this in
detail but to look at one matter that is of some interest to
our study of age. The title and sub-title help the reader to
decide what the subsequent text is all about and to establish
some procedures for relevance[15]. This is particularly
important in participant observation studies where 'what it is
about' may not be established before study. Consider, for
example, the sequential and categorization implications of
alternative titles such as: 'Urine and Urban Decay', 'Family
and Community Structures in a Northern City', or 'Patterns and
Persistence in Peer Groups and Gangs'. All of these titles
perform the work of inviting the reader to activate and orient
to certain categorization, relevance and explanatory schemes
and (equally important) to ignore others. Thus the knowledge
that age grouping is of importance permits us to see Parker's
mention of school and work-starting and young marriage as
relevant (whether we regard it as a good explanation is a
different matter). It also encourages us to repair the
indexicality of Parker's references to the Boys by our
'knowledge' of youth-in-general. In this sense, despite
protestations to the contrary, participant observation work is

generalized work. It trades on members' use of generalized

categories for indexical repair to see relevance. The

invitation to use age is not restricted to the title and sub-

title which themselves make relevant the frequent formulation

of the boys as 'adolescents'. Indeed where the boys are not

formulated as such or by forename, adolescents is the most

frequent term used. We emphasize that, as is the case with

most sociological categorization, this formulation is not

wrong but selective. Further that selectivity has consequences

for a selective construction and comprehension of argument by

writer and reader. To look at these processes in detail we

analyse the arguments in the section 'The Tiddlers'[16].

One argument contained in this section runs: The delinquency

of adolescence develops qualitatively and quantitatively with

age, it becomes more serious and more instrumental. The

deviant groups are characterized as follows:

	Year one	Year Two	Year Three
The Tiddlers	Naughty	Small begin-ings and petty theft	Joyriding
	8-10 yr.	9-11 yr.	10-12 yr.
The Fitz	Petty theft	Further Instrumental delinquency	Catseye Kids
	13-14 yr.	14-15 yr.	15-16 yr.
The boys	Instrumental delinquency	Catseye Kids	Partial withdrawal
	15-17 yr.	16-18 yr.	17-19 yr.

Here we have a situation where the participant observer sees some actions and some people and groups both into schemes. He chooses to use age as one categorization device and pettiness-fun/serious-instrumental as the other. Some other passages are:

(Of young Tiddlers, 'This ... was simply expressive and experimental - though such affairs also act as apprenticeships for later more serious and dangerous operations'[17].

'For the Tiddlers it simply adds to the fun'[18].

'The Tiddlers would appear with things of no obvious value to them which ... will always provide amusement'[19].

If all age reference had been omitted and we have been shown two groups from different geographical areas, there would have been (at least) two consequences: First we should want to know **why** Parker thought one group did it for fun and the other instrumentally; secondly, if Parker had not oriented to the age of the groups he would not have had some of the original formulations open to him (without additional explanation). To categorize an activity as ''giving cheek' to adults'[20] and 'chasing chickens'[21] is to eschew alternative categorizations in favour of one that stresses the playful non-instrumental character of the actions. Playfulness is category[22] bound to the incumbent children thus the aged grouping at once permits the child-tied formulations 'giving cheek to adults', 'seen as extra excitement', 'naughtiness', and renders any explanation of why one group does these things and the other does not,

unnecessary. The fact that Parker can quote the older boys as saying, 'They all recall the same naughtiness, adventures and freedom in early childhood that the Tiddlers enjoyed'[23] merely hints at how early adult commonsense understandings of children are formed. What Parker is doing here is inviting us to use our lay sociology of childhood (in this case the idea that play precedes instrumental relationships with the world and that childhood is concerned with the little and the petty, adulthood with the big and important) so that we can see the movement from one 'sort' of delinquency to another as a natural development which requires no explanation, and the categorization of activities as different sorts as obvious and appropriate. By tying the delinquency to age Parker invites us to provide an explanation of how chasing chickens can logically develop into screwing cars. The transition is consistent with the age incumbency of the delinquents once the activities are categorized as aged activities (giving check, etc.) and our orientation to age (in the scheme above Tiddlers 8-10, etc.) provides for our acceptance of Parker's aged formulation of those activities. The mechanism for the transition is ageing which 'everybody knows' involves developing and learning ('apprenticeship'). Parker's argument about the development of deviance is rendered possible by a categorization of ambiguous acts into an aged linked scheme. Once the reader is aware of that scheme and there are numerous instructions to be prepared for it, he introduces commonsense notions of age development that make the argument. Once the argument is accepted, conflicting (potentially) data is seen as something

else thus the hedonistic acts of older deviants are a
'.uestion of .tyle' (Chapter heading).

The section which deals with the trivial-fun/serious-
instrumental dichotomy is oranizationally removed from a
chapter on 'Style' in which certain hedonistic leisure
patterns contrast sharply with the logic of such a scheme.
P rker himself quotes the pleasure principle in this section
on drinks, pot and fights for fun. Despite the possibility
of classifying these acts as deviant (. and ., possession,
affray) the author trivializes them so as to make reasonable
his claim that the boys spend most of the time as 'straight
guys sleeping, eating, playing', etc. Yet the simple removal
of them to another section of the book seems to work to isolate
them from challenging the earlier dichotomy. hy should
presentational divorce so strongly influence logical divorce.
At first inspection this has to do with his readers' use of
presentational position to know how to read contents; thus the
importance of discrete and artful allocation of material to
follow certain headings. Our Wittgenstein emphasis on 'language
in use' plus the Sacks injunctions to look to see what utter-
ances do[24] alert us to search for phrases that do the work of
headings without the grammatical and spatial rhetoric of a
heading. One such example might be:

'Street life and life around the Block is full of potential
excitement'[25].

This is not a new paragraph but does announce a (Member recog-
nized) new subject and indeed is followed by a sort of list

One favourite activity ... Smoking is also ... etc.

Such hidden headings instruct us on how to read what follows: they also 'justify' the characteristization of what follows (in this case into naughtiness). What this all amounts to is pretty important.

Despite many claims by participant observers to '<u>describe</u>' rather than '<u>explain</u>' social interaction (Parker himself talks of the difficulty of aetiology and his desire to get 'near' the boys): The features of their presentations, especially their twinning of categorization in schemes, their invocations of lay aetiologies and their artful use of sequence to direct readings amount to a system of subterranean aetiology whose proportions rival its complicated reflexivity.

5.7 Recipient Design

I use the term Recipient Design as a gloss to cover those procedures employed by the reader to repair indexicality which concern his orientation to who-has-written-this, who-did-they-write-it-for and for-what-purposes-was-it-written[26]. Along with the sequence and the Membership Categorization Device, it is a crucial repair tool. Its distinction from them is primarily analytical: the features is describes are, I think, member-oriented or can be provided for as such. I say 'I think' because I obviously do not know what the reader thought of the writer nor do I have an interaction with member responses (as in a conversation) to refer to. Throughout I must trade on my own readership while explicating it. Recipient Design is a <u>necessary principle</u> in writing and reading accounts[27]. What follows is a demonstration of that principle. It is given lest

the gloss referred to above be thought to be excessive and evasive[28].

We have said that authors are constrained to join up their statements into arguments and stories. An at least congruent obligation is on the reader in that he must realise that the author is not making 'isolated remarks', that such remarks form 'part' of a 'whole'. They are for instance not to be taken 'out of context'. Thus queries, criticisms, boos and applause must wait until that author has reached certain stages at which points certain 'bits' are said to be 'finished'. This obligation to wait-till-he-has-finished can be seen to derive in part from a reader's view of the writer as someone who has more to say and who knows what it will be. (Notice the difference here to verbal argument.) We 'know' that the author has finished before we have started. Furthermore the category of author-in-sociology is often tied to that of empirical or textual researcher thus we also 'know' that the author may have unrevealed or privileged knowledge and 'good reasons'. Like Angela[29] in the Dorothy Smith study Parker was there and we were not.

Thus we may defer to the author and appropriately wait-till-he-has-finished because of what we 'know' of authors and of sociology-authors. We also defer to the author more specifically as technical manager of the argument.

5.8 The Author as Technical Manager of the Argument

The author's statements have to lead somewhere and when they

get there, they can retrospectively be seen to have led

there. 'There' can then be a 'basis' for the next section.

Each 'there' is a sort of conclusion to the statements that

precede it in that it is the end and a result of them yet

curiously constitutes them as a section and as roads to itself.

If we examine the words and syntax of a conclusion we see that

its conclusiveness in no way derives from them but rather from

its claimed relationship with the preceding statements. Such

claims may be effected through claiming words such as 'and so'

or 'therefore', or through sequencing for example tying to

title[30] and pairing to problem[31]. By effectiveness I do not

mean valid or justified but interactionally effective that is

recognizable to claims.

As we have suggested, any one statement can do concluding work

to the previous section and basic statement work to the next.

Such complexities make data/conclusion separation extremely

problematic. Further some authors manage to restrict and

qualify their endorsement of its first work while trading on

its second. Such provisional endorsement may be seen either

as 'a working hypothesis' or as 'having cakes'. These devices

are easily open to the textbooks writer because we 'know' him

to be a sort of advocate (sometimes) who speaks of and for his

fellow sociologists and also a transcriber and abstractor.

His authorship, then, of any particular statement is persist-

ently problematic. Participant Observers are in a similar

position with the reported utterances of their subjects.

One thing all this amounts to is that there are points in the

argument where it is 'all supposed to make sense', where the

interconnections 'become' apparent so that **we 'can see <u>it</u>
now'**, where '<u>it</u>' was not collected until 'now'. Similarly
'here are times at which it will not 'yet make sense'.
During these sections we must wait and see. We must suspend
disbelief until the 'end'.

In order to follow the argument we must orient to these
features of the structure or written arguments, as they can
be found in the sequence and categories. But it is because
of our knowledge of the retroactive character of sociology
authors and their distinction from unrevised, verbal
discussers and discussants, and others that we do so orient.
Such knowledge is reflexively gained from reading with such
orientations.

5.9 Recipient Design and the Adequacy of Reasons:

when evidence becomes enough

If we continue to see arguments as consisting of at least
reasons and conclusions then we can return to a problem
mentioned earlier: how many reasons are needed to make a
conclusion? When we have 'waited' until the 'end' of section
and can thus see it not only as a section but as a reasoning
section; how much reasoning must it have done before it can be
concluded? This is largely a Recipient Design issue. Members'
use of adequacy and 'enough' is routinely circumscribed by
notions of 'circumstances' in which something is adequate and
'purposes' for which it is adequate. To establish adequacy
involves establishing circumstances and purposes both of which
are initially assessable through our 'knowledge' of the author

and the reader. Setting aside the actual standards that
members expect of any work, we address the application of
those standards. Before a reason can be counted to see if
enough have been given it must fulfil certain conditions.
For example, Dorothy Smith[32] suggests that one condition is
fairness. This may be established by formulating the reasons
as being separately arrived at to show several different people
all saying the same thing; their difference being their lack of
contact (amongst other things). It is enough if enough
different people say it. Textbook writers have it as avail-
able to them to present different sociologists as separately
coming to the same conclusions and usually no questions are
asked despite current genuflections to Kuhn and ideas of
cognitive communities. Where contact can be established, then
schools can be talked of and several pieces of information or
reasons can become one. Adequacy also involves establishing an
incorrigible route to the conclusion. As we say with both
Cotgrove and McIntosi, it is most important to rule out alter-
native combinations of reasons by an exclusive exercise of
consistency where the consistency rule is findable in that which
it binds. Once the route is established most members will
obligingly conclude it. Other aspects of arguments we cannot
address here include being 'developed', 'full' and with 'all
the implications worked out'. However none of these matters
touch on the central concern of how reasons are counted.

If we try counting reasons or data in sociology books we find
that they must not only be correct but relevant, and that the

relevancing work that most presented data is **exemplification.**

They do more than they say. They are in fact classic Et Cetera[33] clauses which the reader repairs through his co-comprehension ofcategories[34], his knowledge that authors cannot write all they know, his recognition of principled lists[35], and his sensitivity to devices like contrast structures[36,37]. e know there is more than can reasonably be included. These devices enable us to get some idea of the extent and type of the omitted material. Good presented data is that which is literally _generative._ Enough reasons have been given when the reader is able to produce enough reasons himself by repairing the writer's reasons.

e have been arguing as if there existed two arguments and sets of data: the one presented, the other unseen but available through the for er and known in its entirety to the author of both. Side-stepping the issue of whether such unseen knowledge is in principle an illusion, we can note that its refined status as knowledge which is related in a systematic way to the presented knowledge (where the system is inclusion) is deeply problematic.

Frequent exhortations are made by sociologists that more sociology should be done and less talked about[38]. Sociologists themselves often indicate their annoyance with teaching, writing articles and books and listening to conferences because these activities prevent them getting on with real sociology. The articles are not real because 'it' has to be shortened and directed to the readership or editor; the lectures are not 'it'

because they are (like textbooks) for novitiates. As an

activity there is no such things as 'it' (pure sociology)

except perhaps in work in progress and that is not 'it' yet!

In particular, the studies of Garfinkel suggest that it is

impossible to construct accounts for archives[39].

It is critical for the writer and the reader that the latter

believe such pure sociology exists and that the writer owns

some of it[40]. If this were not the case then the argument

could only be judged for its internal logic or as a moral tale.

More importantly it would not be readable.

Thus the plausibility of such 'sociological' reasoning resides

in the plausibility of the pure world invoked by the examples

in the impure. And that plausibility rests on the devices

which bridge the two worlds and our acceptance of the author

as having some privileged access to that world in his own

'subject'.

5.10 The Reader

At the beginning of this section, we included as Recipient

Design the reader's 'knowledge' of the reader. When the reader

uses his knowledge of what it is he is reading (a textbook, or

research report) to instruct himself on how to read it, one

thing he may use is the purpose (an activity tied by the writer

to the reader) of the book. He asks 'what is it meant for?'.

Without any reading he can start to answer this himself. Like

most books it is not intended solely for him. Thus it is

possible and only to be expected that he will find parts boring

or facile or incomprehensible. In one sense no one reader has

a right to all the book. It is written for a typical or ideal type reader. Sometimes the author makes this explicit[41]. Sometimes the author by using categories that the reader does not understand implies it[42]. The reader's view of himself as at least potentially incompetent in certain sections encourages the wait-till-i-have-finished procedures noted so far. The problems of sorting out sections into irrelevances, tolerable incomprehensions and 'this i do know something about's' are immense for any reader who is not using the book in a closed and strategic way.

An option for the reader is to claim to speak for all readers or to have access to their character (frequently a position less plausible than the argument), and to repair the argument by his claimed 'knowledge' of the reader. An immediate problem he will face turns on the ambiguity inherent in an 'ideal' reader. The assertion 'this is not plausible because the typical reader, etc. (where some understanding or evaluating activity is mentioned), is often countered by a reference to what the Ideal reader should be. Understanding and thus plausibility are contractual. The writer writes for a reasonable audience. Thus, for example, if Parker's book were rejected by youth workers as implausible; a counter claim that the particular workers were not proper workers (they are not detached, or do not know the city, etc.) may be made.

Notes

1. For the reference to collections, categories and consistency
   see the work of H. Sacks most succinctly in H. Sacks, 'On
   the Analyzability of Stories by Children', in J.J. Gumperz
   and D. Hymes, Directions in Sociolinguistics, the Ethno-
   graphy of Communication. N.H. Rinehart and Winston, 1974.

2. . Cotgrove, The Science of Society, Allen and Unwin,
   London, 1975, pp. 210-214 (Third Edition).

3. C. Matza, 'Position and Behaviour Patterns of Youth', in
   R.E.L. Faris (ed.) Handbook of Modern Sociology, Chicago,
   Rand McNally and Co. 1964.

4. This is the issue of Recipient Design.

5. This raises the question of the truth capabilities of
   natural language statements. See A. Tarski, Logic,
   Semantics and Metamathematics, Papers from 1923 to 1938,
   London, Oxford University Press, 1956, p. 153.

6. The principled incorrigibility of description.

7. C. Hurd, et al., Human Societies, An Introduction to
   Sociology, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973. Section
   on Crime by M. McIntosh, pp. 211-2.

8. W.W. Sharrock, 'On Owning Knowledge', in . Turner, Ethno-
   methodology, Penguin, 1975.

9. J. Horsley,

10. H.J. Parker, View from the Boys, London, David and Charles,
    1974.

11. Ibid, p. 222.

12. For examples at the Purdue Symposium see R.J. Hill and
    K. Stones Crittenden (eds.), Proceedings of the Purdue
    Symposium on Ethnomethodology, Institute Monograph Series

No. 1, Institute for the study of Social Change, Purdue University, 1968.

13. F.J. Parker, View from the Boys, op. cit., p. 222.

14. Ibid, p. 3.

15. H. Sacks, Remarks on prefaces in unpublished lectures, University of California, 196 -1974, and projected book.

16. F.J. Parker, op. cit., p. 47.

17. Ibid, p. 49.

1F. Ibid, p. 49.

19. Ibid, p. 50.

20. Ibid, p. 50.

21. Ibid, p. 50.

22. See Note 1.

23. F.J. Parker, op. cit.

24. H. Sacks, lectures, op. cit.

25. F.J. Parker, op. cit. p. 47.

26. Succinctly demonstrated in E.A. Schegloff, 'Notes on a Conversational Practice: Formulating Place', in D. Sudnow (ed.) Studies in Social Interaction, Free Press, 1969.

27. H. Garfinkel, 'Good' Organizational Reasons for 'Bad' Clinic Records, in H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, Prentice Hall, 1967.

28. We return to the matter of Recipient Design in analysis of author categorization in Data. 6.

29. D. Smith, 'K ist geisteskrank: Die Anatomie eines Tatsachenberichtes; in E. Weingarten, F. Sack and J.N. Schenkein, Ethnomethodologies, Beitrage zu einer Soziologies des Ajltagslebens, Frankfurt, Surkramp, 1976.

30. As in the analysis of Parker above.

31. See the analysis of problem in Data I.

32. D. Smith, 'K istgeisteskrank ...', op. cit.

33. H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, op. cit.

34. H. Sacks, 'On the analyzability ...', op. cit.

35. D.C. Anderson, Youth: the Social Ascription of an Age Category, Unpublished M.Phil. Thesis, ch. 6.

36. D. Smith, 'K ist giesteskrank ...', op. cit.

37. These devices are analytically rather than interactionally distinct.

38. Usually in critical reviews.

39. H. Garfinkel, 'Good' organizational reasons ...', op. cit.

40. On 'owning' see, W.W. Sharrock, 'On Owning Knowledge' in R. Turner (ed.) Ethnomethodology, Penguin, 1974.

41. W.J. Parker, op. cit., p. 7.

42. Ibid, p. 221.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA IV AND V: ARGUMENT THROUGH LINKS AND LISTS

6.1 Data IV: Introduction

In the last section we isolated some devices during the reading
of sociological arguments about youth that seemed to contribute
to the plausibility of those arguments. In this section we
look at two of those devices in more detail.

Before we do so, it may be helpful to summarize some thoughts
so far. Our starting point is that sociological arguments are
inevitably presented arguments, whether the presentational
context be a seminar or a book; further that such presentations
are social events that can be described in terms of rules and
procedures. Given the intractibility of social phenomena to
single or conclusive description, I argue that the plausibility
of sociological argument rests at least in part and inevitably
on the artful accomplishment of conflated readability and
plausibility in orderly argument.

There are many ways to read a book deriving from the sort of
organized object that a book is. What a reader gets out of a
book depends, amongst other things, on how and why he reads it.
I also suggested that there are rules of 'fair play' in that
if a book has been read in one way then the reader is entitled
and not entitled to say certain things about it. Legitimation
of critical rights rests on 'proper' reading where the propriety
derives from a reading to find and follow the argument that is
there. Thus although much academic reading is what we might
term strategic, where the reader is looking for something,

such reading restricts the reader's critical rights. My analysis is based on reading in a 'proper' way because i am concerned with the plausibility of arguments. This does not imply that most readings are or ought to be 'from beginning to end to find and to follow'. My procedure is as follows: to read the piece from beginning to end, to note that i hear the piece as arguing, then to try to isolate the presentational devices that contribute to that reading. I have argued that the plausibility of an argument is meshed in i do not claim that it is exhaustively provided for by its orderly readability. When i read these texts, i do not find them chaotic, irrelevant, disjointed, aproblematic, methodological, obscure and unreadable. Though i may disagree with the argument, my disagreement is contingent on my finding and 'following' that argument. I re-emphasize that it is not that 'following' procedures are direct 'believing' procedures. Orderliness is tied in with plausibility. But plausibility is produced at least partly by presentational devices, two of which we now analyse in some detail: pairs and lists.

6.2 Pairs

Much of the early work of the late Harvey Sacks was concerned with three areas: recipient design, collections and categorizations, and adjacency pairs. The first concerned the understanding of speaker and co-conversationalist of who they were talking to and why and so on, the second concerned the collection of possible referents into systematic orders, the third was concerned with things like greetings — return of

greetings, question-answer, insult-return of insult and so
on. Although the application of the first two in written
material is enormous, the third seems confined to communic-
ation interactions where we have available the utterances of
at least two parties. However, this restriction only operates
if we take as the unit for analysis the utterance and search
for its equivalent in written communication. In our analysis
of the hot rove piece we saw how the introduction of a
'problem' at paragraph level provided for the sequential and
logical relevance of a 'solution' in the 'next' paragraph.
The use of such a pair can be much more important than this to
the extent of becoming the pivot of a 'whole' argument. It
certainly is of major importance in the article by Hall et al
in Youth Culture[1]. Then after a few preliminary remarks about
the work of pairs it is that text we examine.

A pair device shares certain common characteristics with two
others that we have encountered; the story and the development.
The story provides for each next section as an unfolding of
what happened next, the development organizes the next section
around what because of X: the problem device also provides for
the sequential and logical reading of what follows as solutions
or non-solutions. The articulation of a 'problem' is read as
an instruction to read what follows not as anything happening
next but in the 'light' of that problem: as an attempted,
achieved or failed solution, or an evasion, compromise, illusion,
inspiring, blocking, false consciousness, sublimation, or
adaptation. The categorization of socially ambiguous events as
any of these 'solutions' is achieved through their logico-

sequential position 'after' the problem. The successful introduction of problem permits the relevant introductions of other categorizations; it may also provide for talk of 'getting' to the bottom of it, of signs, symptoms and superficialities, of immediate, proximate last straws, and the deeper historical fundamental, basic, underlying, essential, root causes. Its use in sociology is widespread and it can take its place with other pairs that do similar sorts of organizational work; stimulus-response, conflict-reconciliation, contradiction-resolution, opportunity-initiative. The commonsensical workings of the problem-solution pair on which such sociologists trade, also has a normative component where problems not only can be faced, evaded, solved and sublimated but they ought to be faced and solved rather than evaded and sublimated. In the text we address, the specific problem is derived from Marxist theory together with Marxist interpretation and categorization of selected post war phenomena.

Theory is often used like this to remove the lead categorizer from the argument (remove youth and substitute class) but that is not our interest, rather our concern is with the technical achievement of problem presentation and the commonsense schemes that such an achievement permits. The problem device is not a Marxist but a commonsensical one.

We shall briefly and thus unfairly summarize the Hall argument as follows:

1) Youth Culture is a sub-culture of the main class cultures.
2) These are plural.

3) Therefore Youth (henceforward called) sub-culture should
   be seen in the light of class culture.

4) These are plural because widespread affluence,
   embourgeoisement and consensus have not occurred.

5) They rest on a myth that class has withered away.

6) The forces referred to by 'affluence', etc. are in fact
   more complicated in their workings and the major changes
   in industrial organization, urban redevelopment and
   occupational structure have present a working class youth
   with contradictions which they attempt to resolve by sub-
   culture.

7) Such sub-cultural responses may win space and may upset
   hegemony but they do not change the underlying contra-
   dictions (usually referred to in the text as 'class
   problematic').

8) Youth sub-culture is not reducible to class culture because
   youth encounter the general class problematic in 'gener-
   ationally specific' (p. 49) milieux and states.

9) It is at the intersection between the located parent
   (working class) culture and the mediating institutions
   (police, school, social work, of the dominant (hegemonic)
   culture that youth sub-cultures arise', (p. 53).

There is a final section on middle class youth (sub-) culture
which I shall ignore.

One conclusion of all this I read as f llows: if we are to
make a proper study of youth (sub-) culture it should be in
its class context and although it may look to an ethnographer
(and to the youths as if they are doing so) an informed,

historically contexted analysis shows they are doing Y.
Subsidiary conclusions are that Y will not solve the problem
and (one that readers are asked to complete for themselves) a
proper solution would be ... Of course a proper solution
would be one that paired symmetrically with the problem.

There is also a curious twist; the categorization of problem
permits the reading of (sub-) cultural behaviour as solution/
non-solution out it also serves to re-categorize the data on
which the problem is partly based since simple youth culture
becomes an unobservable (Lines 27-52 p. 47 and 48).

A focus on two excerpts to see how the argument works in
detail: pages 31-32, lines 1-98 and pages 47-48, lines 1-52.

(1) Redevelopment, in the shape now of the (2) new East End
estates, exacerbated the effects on working-class (3) family
and neighbourhood:

> (4) The first effect of the high-density, high rise schemes
>
> was (5) to destroy the function of the street, the local
>
> pub, the (6) cornershop, as articulations of communal
>
> space. Instead there (7) was only the privatised space
>
> of the family unit, stacked one on (8) top of each other,
>
> in total isolation, juxtaposed with the totally (9) public
>
> space which surrounded it, and which lacked any of the
>
> (10) informal social controls generated by the neighbour-
>
> hood.

(Cohen, 1972, 16)

(11) Alongside this was the drastic reconstruction of the
local (12) economy - the dying of small craft industries,

their replacement (13) by the larger concerns often situated outside the area, the (14) decline of the family business and the corner shop. The labour (15) force was gradually polarised into two groups: the "tightly (16) specialised, skilled and well-paid jobs associated with the new (17) technology and the routine, dead-end, low-paid unskilled jobs (18) associated with the labour-intensive sections, especially the (19) service industries. Cohen argues that the effects of these (20) changes were most difficult for the respectable part of the (21) ... at ... working class, who found themselves caught and pulled (22) apart' by two opposing types of social mobility: upwards into (23) the ranks of the new suburban working class elite or downwards (24) into the 'lumpen'.

(25) Perhaps the most significant aspect of this part of Cohen's (26) analysis is the way in which he picks up and redefines certain (27) key themes in the affluence-consensus-embourgeoisement thesis: (28) he discards their spectacular and ideological framework, relocates (29) them within the specific historical relations and situation of (30) the working class of a particular area, and arrives at a 'thesis', (31) not about the disappearance or 'embourgeoisement' of a class, but (32) rather about how wider socio-economic change can fragment, (33) undermine and dislocate its intricate mechanisms and references. (34) The idea of the 'disappearance of the class as a whole' is (35) replaced by the more complex and differentiated picture of (36) how the different sectors and strata of a class are driven into (37) different courses and options by their determining socio- (38) economic circumstances.

This analysis stems from the impact on (39) the different working-class strata of fundamental economic (40) forces, **but** it immediately widens into their social, familial (41) and cultural consequences.

(42) The changes Cohen discusses had an impact upon <u>both</u> **the** (43) adult and the young members of the east and working-class communi- (44) ty. Though the response was different according to age, position (45) in the generational cycle **and** experience, the basic material and (46) social situation **which** confronted them – the class problematic – (47) was the same, for older men and women, for young workers and their (48) families, and for the working class teenagers. Cohen traces the (49) impact of economic and occupational changes on the young:

> (50) Looking for opportunities in their fathers' trades, and lacking (51) the qualification for the new industries, they were relegated (52) to jobs as van boys, office **boys**, packers, warehousemen, etc., (53) and long spells out **of** work. More and more people, young and (54) old, have **to** travel out of the community to their jobs, and some (55) eventually moved out to live elsewhere, where suitable work was (56) to be found. The local economy as a whole contracted, and (57) became less diverse.
>
> (Cohen, 1972: 19)

(58) He also follows this analysis through to the changed situation of (59) the young in the family, kinship and neighbourhood situations.

(60) For Cohen, the working class teenager experienced these

(61) shifts and fragmentations in direct, material, social,

economic (62) and cultural forms. But they also experienced,

and attempted (63) to 'resolve' them on the ideological plane.

And it is primarily (6 to this attempted 'ideological

solution', that he attributes both (6   the rise of, and the

differentiation between, the different '6) working class

'youth sub-cultures' of the period:

> (67) The latent function of subculture is this – to
>
> express and (6) resolve, albeit magically', the contra-
>
> dictions which remain (69) hidden or unresolved in the
>
> parent culture. The succession of (70) subcultures which
>
> this parent culture generated can thus all be (71) consid-
>
> ered as so many variations on a central them – the (72)
>
> contradiction at an ideological level, between traditional
>
> working (7) class puritanism, and the new ideology of
>
> consumption; at an (74) economic level between a part of
>
> the socially mobil lite, or (75) a part of the new
>
> lumpen. Teds, parkers, skinheads, crombies, (76) all
>
> represent in their different ways, an attempt to retrieve
>
> (77) some of the socially cohesive elements destroyed in
>
> the parent (78) culture, and to combine these with
>
> elements selected from other (79) class fractions,
>
> symbolising one or other of the options confront- (90) ing
>
> it.

                                            (Cohen, 1972: 23)

(81) To give one example of how this complex process works –

(82) Cohen explains the rise of mods in the following manner:

(83) ..... the original mod style could be interpreted

as an attempt (84) to realise, but in an imaginary

relation the conditions of (85) existence of the socially

mobile white collar workers. While (86) their argot and

ritual forms stressed many of the traditional (87) values

of their parent culture, their dress and music reflected

(88) the hedonistic image of the affluent consumer.

(1) Though not 'ideological', sub-cultures have an ideological

(2) dimension: and, in the problematic situation of the post-

war (3) period, this ideological component became more

prominent. In (4) addressing the 'class problematic' of the

particular strata from (5) which they were drawn, the different

sub-cultures provided for (6) a section of working-class youth

(mainly boys) one strategy for (7) negotiating their collective

existence. But their highly (8) ritualised and stylised form

suggests that they were also attempts (9) at a solution to that

problematic experience: a resolution which, (10) because pitched

largely at the symbolic level, was fated to fail. (11) The

problematic of a subordinate class experience can be 'lived

(12) through', negotiated or resisted: but it cannot be resolved

at (13) that level or by those means. There is no 'sub-cultural

career' (14) for the working-class lad, no 'solution' in the

sub-cultural (15) milieu, for problems posed by the key

structuring experiences (16) of the class.

(17) There is no 'subcultural solution' to working-class youth

(18) unemployment, educational disadvantage, compulsory

miseducation, (19) dead end jobs, the routinization and

specialization of labour, (20) low pay and the loss of skills.

Sub-cultural strategies cannot (31) match, meet or answer the strcturing dimensions emerging in (22) this period for the class as a whole. So, when the post-war (23) sub-cultures address the problematics of their class experience, (24) they often do so in ways which reproduce the gaps and discrep- (25) ancies between real negotiations and symbolically displaced (26) 'resolutions'. They 'solve', but in an imaginary way, problems (27) which at the concrete material level remain unresolved. Thus (28) the 'Teddy Boy' expropriation of an upper class style of dress (29) 'covers' the gap between largely manual, unskilled, near-lumpen (30) real careers and life-chances, and the 'all-dressed-up-and- (31) nowhere-to-go' experience of Saturday evening. Thus, in the (32) expropriation and fetish- isation of consumption and style tiself, (33) the 'Mods' cover for the gap between the never-end-weekend (34) and Monday's resumption of boring, dead-end work. Thus, in (35) the resur- rection of an archetypal and 'symbolic' (but, in fact, (36) anachronistic) form of working-class dress, in the displaced (37) focussing on the football match and the 'occupation' of the (38) football 'ends', Skinheads reassert, but 'imaginarily', the (39) values of a class, the essence of a style, a kind of 'fan-ship' (40) to which few working-class adults any longer subscribe: they (41) 're-present' a sense of territory and locality which the planners (42) and speculators are rapidly destroying: they 'declare' as alive (43) and well a game which is being commercialised, professionalised (44) and spectacular- ised. "Skins Rule, OK". OK? But "in ideology, (45) men do indeed express, not the real relation between them and (46) their conditions of existence, but <u>the way</u> they live the

relation (47) between them and the conditions of their exist-
ence: this pre- (48) supposes both a real and an '_imaginary_'
'_lived_' relation. (49) Ideology then, is ... the (over deter-
mined) unit of the real (50) relation and the imaginary relation
... that expresses a will ... (51) a hope, or a nostalgia,
rather than describing a reality" (52) (Althusser, 1969: 233-
234).

We have already mentioned that the proper thing to do to a
problem is to solve it (if possible). Members recognise that
problems are routinely bad and in principle soluble. To bring
off a reading of the youth situation as problematic the writer
has to characterise it minimally in these two ways. The
categorizing of various events and circumstances as 'problems'
and 'problematic' repairs and is mutually repaired by the terms
of negation and misery: 'exacerbate ... drastic ... dying ...
decline ... fragment ... unhinge ... dislocate'. (L. 2, 11, 12,
14, 32, 33, 33, p. 31). It is important to 'cut out' readings
that the situation is permanent and inevitable and that it is
soluble at individual level thus the problems are not categorized
as inevitable consequences of biological growth or as inter-
actional or moral problems. The problems are those things that
politicians are always talking of solving and we all agree some-
thing must be done about and they are things that happen to
largish groups of people: 'R$_e$development ... exacerbated the
effects on working class family and neighbourhood ... drastic
reconstruction of the local economy ... dying of small craft
industries ... decline of the family business ... wider socio-
economic change ... different sectors and stratas ... driven ...

determining socio-economic conditions'. (L. 1, 2-3, 11-12, 12, 14, 32, 36, 36, 37-38 p. 31). Page 31 acts as an unnumbered, untitled and unannounced list of items whose organizing principle is large scale, structural and economically based problem. The achievement of problem is to cut out the alternatives such as: the situation of youth is one of change, experiment, vacuum, opportunity, irritation, irrelevance or confusion. If any of these had been chosen as the hidden organizing principle, then the list would have been different accordingly. In characterizing the situation as problematic the authors provide for the intelligibility of their later formulations of youthful behaviour as 'imaginings' and 'sub-cultural solutions' (p. 32, L. 84: p. 47 L. 17). In short, when we are shown an 'answer' on page 47, we readily see it as an answer to the problem previously announced to be owned by the same group. The sequential organization of problem and answer produces a reading of answer to problem. We have some minor variant of the acks rule to see categories together if possible.

Faced with the multitudes of things one could say about youth, the authors have a) characterized it as problem time not opportunity or experiment time; and b) characterized it as one problem time, that problem being the organizational principle of their list. This provides for the readability of page 47 and for those who find it plausible, its plausibility. It is the presentational juxtaposition of the problem-solution pair that is the pivot of the argument. Those who do not find it plausible are in a difficult position for they have no raw data

to use, that is data not enmeshed in the categorical problem-solution scheme. The authors have one more piece of work to do. Having established the problem and connected the youth behaviour to it they must cut out any reading that the youth culture answer is the 'solution' of the problem. They have tried to link the youth culture and the problem lest we read the youth culture to be just-any-behaviour or a 'logical' solution to another problem, or a socially approved reaction to another situation (having fun before family responsibility). If they have achieved their link, they have yet to fault it as a solution. This is done by showing its unsuitability as a second pair part. Proper reactions to problems consist in tackling the cause which has here been categorized in such a way that sub-cultural responses cannot solve it therefore they are imaginings therefore they are not proper solutions. They are 'fated to fail'. (L. 10 p. 47). Not only are they a poor second pair but they really belong with another first pair: they can achieve the responses of 'living through', of negotiation and of resistance but these in turn are pairable with different situations. Such situations are not mentioned in the text because we can as members, invoke them. They might look like this:

A brief time of difficulty that will pass and which we all have or which cannot be altered ... Appropriate response - Live through it.

A time when misunderstandings occur between adults and youth. These are no-one's fault and if only we can improve communications ... Appropriate response - negotiate,

An attack that can be halted and concessions rung ... Appropriate response - resist.

These commonsensical logico-normative schemes, the obvious thing that any sensible person would and should do in circumstances like 'these', also carry their non-appropriate reactions; respectively, impatience, refusal to talk sensibly and cowardice. If the youth situation had been categorized by any situation of these schemes then the appropriate and non-appropriate responses could have been oriented to. Thus we 'know' the responses of symbolic resistance to be doubly inappropriate: it does not pair properly with problem and particularly this problem and it rightfully belongs with another situation.

6.3 Listing Devices

We have already remarked on the use of one listing device, that on page 31 where terms scattered about the page have a common hidden organizing principle. A more compact example is to be found on page 47: '... working class youth employment, educational disadvantage, compulsory miseducation, dead-end jobs, routinization and specialization of labour, low pay and the loss of skills'. These are the things that there 'is no sub-cultural solution to'. Briefly, I wish to look at the effect that their being strung together achieves. As readers we are concerned to relate each section that we read to the pre and succeeding sections. Several things provide for this being read as examples of and details of conclusions presented in the previous section: i) the sentence starts with the same words as the previous one. 'There is no 'sub-cultural' ....', ii) there

is no examination of individual items on the 'list' in
subsequent sections therefore it is not doing titling or
announcing what is to come, iii) the individual items do not
tie to the 'current' discussion individually, iv) I could
remove any one item from the list without altering my reading
of the whole section. In short the authors do not provide any
other relevance for it. They do however make it readable as a
list: all the items are sub-classifiable by any competent
sociologist under contemporary 'subordinate class experience'.
This links with the discussion in the previous paragraph. I
am suggesting that the reader in his need for relevance (to
accomplish continued reading) must himself complete the work
of invoking the hidden principle 'implied' by the items. But
why should the authors wish the reader to collaborate in
producing a repetition of what they have explicitly stated
before. I suggest that the argument is rendered more plausible
by the listing device. The list does implicitly repeat the
principle, but it also does other work: lists contain count-
able items; such pluralisation of 'one conclusion' a) displays
'knowledge of details', b) since items are both <u>parts</u> of a
whole category and the <u>reasons</u> for its justifiable invocation,
they do some justifying work, c) they give the sceptic the work
of refuting several 'conclusions', d) the items referred to have
individual plausibility for a non-Marxist reader, e) the first
item and type setter is currently and universally acknowledged
by all men of sense and conscience to be a serious problem, a
countable problem, a real problem (youth unemployment). It can
be noted (whether or not it is of relevance here depends on
individual readings) that the practice of stating conclusions

twice, the second bein a list, makes extremely difficult
not refutation, but alternative formulations which explain as
much and the same thing: sceptics are easily categorizable as
'negative' in that they have nothing to put in the place of
some of the ite s, or as arguing about details if they do
deal with the principle as a principle and if they do as being
'theoretical and unhistorical'. If they concentrate on the
list as items they will be faced with an et cetera clause that
it 'means things like that'. 'If they refute items individually
they will be categorizable as 'unsystematic''.

The individual list items also serve to cut out alternative
formulations by implicitly invoking incumbents that can only
have these sorts of problems: because it is a list the various
problems are shared (owned) by one group: the only possible
grouping that could have all these problems is 'working class
youth'. Formulations dividing pre and post-school are cut out
as are girl/boy, black/white and countless others. Also cut
out are individual item groups such as employed/unemployed.
If these thin s are problems then they are the sub-problems of
a sub-grouping.

The list then is a sort of one way device whereby the writer
can use interactional, ethnographic, sub-sub-group (Teddy Boys,
Mods, etc., p. 48) for evidence, reasons and explanations of
his conclusions without the reader being free to read the
individual items as items or data. Further difficulties for
the sceptic reader stem from the categorization of data within
the scheme of the conclusion. Yet how else could it be? The

most faithful of ethnographers must singly categorize the
plurally categorizable events he 'observes' in order to have a
'data' study. There is no raw data behind the classifications.

6.4 Summary

We have looked at two devices that can be seen as making for
readability and maybe plausibility. Within an ethnomethod-
ological frame that is all we can say: although for shorthand
we may have talked as if these were devices actually used by
the writer or reader that is obviously an unavailable phenomenon.
The devicesare initially provisions for my readings. There is
however no reason why their general applicability should not be
expressed in a rule or procedure like way. Even bearing in
mind the importance of context we could say:

If you want to write readable and plausible sociology two
things you might think of doing are:

1) Structure your argument on a pair basis where the second
section is repairable and comprehensible on the reading of the
first. The fact that it can be read that way gives it a fair
chance of being read that way. If you can closely interlock
your categorizations of persons and events within the pair
scheme, you can safely leave the commonsensical working of the
pair mechanism to the reader. Do be alert to the importance of
cutting out any other categorizations and formulations, These
should be cut out formally not just nor necessarily substan-
tially. Your task is so to categorize systematically within
the pair scheme that only one reading is possible. Other
formulations will then be either 'not about the same thing' or

literally nonsense.

2) In a 'Generalizing' subject like sociology, there is
enormous scope for the artful manipulation of 'level'. You
may wish to use data from many 'levels', but conduct your
argument at one level on a pair basis the second pair being
on the same level as the first. The list is one device to
enable you to control the traffic between levels.

We have tried to isolate two particular devices. Inevitably
we have come across others, prominently hidden headings and
categorical incumbencies. More important we have seen that
the two devices only work if the consistency rule has been
followed in the categorization of materials. The working of
the devices within the rule allow the authors to bypass most
of the topic relevance problems. It gets and stays on topic
by subsuming youth into the organizing categorical scheme at
least partly through the use of pairs and lists.

6.5 Data V: Assembling Chronology: Some presentational work
in the production of a Sociological Moral

A frequent feature of arguments is the example. One textbook
rule for examples is that they should illustrate, not
substitute for, logical argument. In practice this rule may
not be adhered to by readers: indeed examples and arguments may
not be separable. We shall look at one sort of 'example'
particularly prone to such difficulty - the extended narrative
or case study.

The article, 'Toward an Understanding of the Industrial Attitudes
and behaviour of Young Semi-Skilled Workers'[2] is a work of

sociological generalization which incorporates a case study device. It also makes an argument. Our analysis will focus on providing for a reading of the case study and argument as a moral tale. This and other case studies routinely make use of 'quotes' and we append some considerations on this practice.

We preface our remarks by insisting that we are not criticizing the style or argument of the piece nor are we suggesting that the stories of John and Paul are defective or untrue. Ashton learned several 'facts' about John and Paul and assembled these into orderly stories that are necessarily capable of being recognised and read as such. He also used the stories to clarify and demonstrate an argument about youth and work. Such assembling work results in the 'cutting out'[3] both of other tales (assemblies) and their morals: its resultant presented tale and moral not only permit but demand the categorization of component 'events' to be consistent with the whole tale and readable as constituting it. In our analysis we try to show the extent, type and production management of such assembling; that is in providing for the assembly we read. It would obviously be an advantage in such an endeavour to be able to show how one could assemble the bits of 'data' into different stories with different morals but we do not have such 'data' available to us in a raw uncategorized form, unordered by the whole tale. Nor, we would argue, could we ever have any such items that meant anything independent of some presentational context. To illustrate our argument we may from time to time guess at them but such guesses are members' guesses informed by another member's tale. Briefly I organize the article as follows:

Lines

4-5   Instructions on how to read what follows.

6-47   John's story.

         contrasted with

48-49   Paul's story.

90-115   The stories read as attitudes.

116-151 Plausible 'implications of the attitudes.

152-260 Social factors which account for these attitudes

         <u>and others like them.</u>

216-282 Industrial constraints on holders of such attitudes.

282-329 The effect of constraints on attitudes.

330-373 Justifications and notes.

As we are mainly concerned with the assembling of stories and of their 'consequent' generalized morals, we concern ourselves very little with anything after line 226; by that stage the work of generalizing the moral is technically if not substantially complete. (Lines 1-226 can be found at the end of this analysis.)

6.6 John's Story

The preface tells us to find[4] two case studies and when we have 'John' as the first word of the text (L. 6), followed by his 'family' (L. 6) and his upbringing ('brought up' L. 7) we read the ensuing lines as consistent with it being such a study for we 'know' such hero development to be the stuff of such studies.

We minimally expect other things from case studies; like detective stories they should contain solutions except that

the solution is in the form of a moral; and also like detective stories enough details should be presented in the story for the reader to solve the problem on his own. In this sense we speak of the moral coming 'out' of the story. Once we read line 6 and on as a case study it is read not only as the beginning of Ashton's piece but of John's story. One sort of work such beginnings can and do do is to cut out other possible beginnings 'occurring' before, after, or independently of the one cited. Thus 'John was one of a family ... <u>had</u> been brought up' (L. 6-7, my italics) sets a limit to regressive search, a limit which presentationally solves for-all-practical-purposes the problem of multiple proximate and removed (candidate) causes. In this example we are instructed not to orient to matters, for instance, before John's birth. For although the story must be hero centered, hero significated others can be introduced even before hero's birth, e.g. 'John came from a long line of ... his grandfather ...' or 'The town where John was born was a town of the industrial revolution'. Other beginnings like 'was born in the depression' or 'was born to a sick and unwilling mother' or some sort of genealogy, all instruct us to organize a search for appropriate tying in the text that we bind to the depression or unwilling mothers or that family's history or whatever. In their absence we may conclude that such items of date of birth, place of birth, etc. are just face-sheet data. In John's story some ties can be made: 'John was one of a family of five whose father was also a semi-skilled factory operative' instructs us to look for the possible use and relevance of such a remark in the work of explaining juvenile industrial attitudes in the light of the

text that follows. Before we find such ties we also remark
that status remarks ('was one of') rather than event remarks
('was born') are candidates for the class 'basic and under-
lying causes' displayed but not exhaustively provided for by the
past or present eternal tense. The lay remarks 'That's not the
real Tom, he's just tired today' or 'She may do X but she is
basically a kind person', display an elegant distinction
between essences, attributes and accidents where accidents are
of passing interest; activities of instrumental interest (to
derive and fill in essences), and essences of ultimate interest
at least in a moral tale. John's status is grammatically and
situationally eternal; he remains 'one of a family' throughout
the tale. It is only commonsense that we should refer to the
state he is in and was in to explain the events that happen to
him. Theoretically I am suggesting that although highly
reflexive, categories are basic to category bound activities
in lay theorizing nd not vice-versa[5]. Specifically in this
text we can read bringing up (brought up L. 7) as category
bound to family (interestingly schools educate and teach and
look after but do not bring up children) and 'one of a family'
thus provides for 'brought up' both sequentially and logically.
Families are one of those devices termed duplicative[6] one
characteristic of which is they share some individual members'
attributes so that the characterization of John's father as
semi-skilled is read as telling us something about the family.
Once we have John's state as a member of a large poor semi-
skilled family we find activities and situations that as
members and sociologists we tie to such states thus residential
status and educational performance, etc. Lines 6 to 11 tell a

consistent category-derived story but they do more than that.
If the activities are tied to the category both are subsum-
able under the sociological heading poor working class. As
members and sociologists we know other things go with poor
working class membership or are at least candidates whose
membership is relevantly arguable. So later in the piece the
author can introduce other matters whose importance we may
dispute but whose relevance has been provided for. In
invoking a general classification of John, the author can
'relevantly' talk of John as representative of that classification
and can divide the juvenile population into two generalized
categories rather than millions of Johns and Pauls and Harrys
and so on.

The author has a twin concern to present a consistent tale with
no unexplained cul de sac and no unprepared surprises: quite
apart from conforming to the presentational constraints of a
tale he is to tie John unequivocally to a generalized device
(as an 'example') and he is to provide a history that John can
have a coherent attitude to. John's attitude is acceptance of
(L. 328) and 'expecting relatively little from work' (L. 99);
the work is 'dead-end' (L. 14). Put together this amounts to
the acceptance of the less than satisfactory situation that
cannot be altered, some sort of fatalism. The categorical
organization of the events in John's story is to demonstrate
the reasonable acceptance of a bad situation. If the situation
can be categorized to be bad and unalterable then acceptance
will be reasonable.

John's tale is indeed a sequence of irreparable bad news. He
is one of a family of five. At first sight it would appear
that this comes from the statistical device which includes:
one of a family of one, two, three, four, five, six, etc.
This however is not a statistical story but one of social
import (L. 4-5). I read the characterization as from a
sociological device 'family size of social consequence' which
includes large family, divided family, one parent family,
childless couple, only child and so on. This device contrast-
ively pairs with the normal family. This is the only way that
I can read 'one of ...' which provides for its relevance. If
we accept this reading John's family is a potential source of
social troubles and being parentally produced is outside John's
control. It is further tiable to working class. Similarly
I do not read that John's father is semi rather than unskilled
out rather than skilled (in contrast to Paul's father) (L. 7-51).
Skill structures are commonsensically hierarchical, and in every-
day language John's father is 'worse off', so through duplicative
organization is the family and its member John. Again it is not
a matter that John can do anything about since it is a second
hand attribute. The third bit of bad news is residence; John
lived in a 'poor working class part of the inner city'. This
is not only suitable since his father is a semi-skilled, but
is a situation rendered explicable by reference to occupation and
category bound income. Over John's father cannot change the
category bound location without the category; certainly John
himself is impotent in the face of another second hand and
directly intractable problem. The miserable events of John's

schooling take place in a 'run down neighbourhood school' tiable to the 'poor working class part of the inner city' and through a member's scheme causally derived. Lest the reader have any illusions concerning its quality or compulsion John was 'confined' (L. 9) to the lower streams. Large family, semi-skilled father, poor neighbourhood, run-down school, lower streams, all chronologically read to present leaving 'school without any qualifications' (L. 11) as inevitable. Clearly 'without' tools work as contrast pairs invoking their opposite 'with'. There are lots of ways to leave school (having male friends, expelled, illiterate, without a recommendation, etc.) the pair device restricts our orientation to possessing qualifications or not. Further the qualifications that John does not have are later repairable as the ones that Paul has. Once again John's situation is bad and irredeemable. Finally the careers officer does not get John 'fixed up' (L. 17): more bad news especially since this not fixing 'happened' at the time of leaving (L. 16).

All the above are not just several unpleasant things that chance to happen to the hero: they are systematic in two senses: first they are inter-connected chronologically. It is this inter-connection that defies any effort that John might make. The inter-connection takes us back to the 'state' that John cannot alter. The connected events work as an option reducing mechanism to produce John's attitude as a coherent historical-logical product. Yet our reader's knowledge of the sociologist writer tells us that he knew much more than he wrote. Indeed he claims so himself (L. 352-4). Further we know that case

studies contain the details in enough amounts for a solution
and not much more. Both bits of knowledge instruct us to
subsume the given details into an over-arching collection
(poor working class) and fill in the other categories of the
collection for ourselves. 'Poor' is the worse of the 'poor-
rich' pair, 'working class' is the lowest worse off class.
Poverty and class are shared in families and not repairable
by juveniles. Thus not only the details and their inter-
connections are intractable but juvenile John's 'basic
condition' is unalterable bad news. The basic condition is
membership of the poor working class family, a membership
which John shares with millions of others. Throughout the
circumstances of John's life have been categorized in such a
way as to tie to that collection. The main work of general-
ization is done in the story not in the moral. In orthodox
terms the argument is in the data and provides for the
presented argument which is better categorized as tidying up.

Not only does the artful categorization of items in a tale
produce a story: it cuts out other stories. Readings of John's
problems that might start from the negligence of the careers
officer or the influence of peer groups are cut out not by
omission of such incidents but by their reduction to incidents
and effects in the presented order. Not only are they listed
and presented as part of a whole but the whole is used reflex-
ively to categorize them. John's father does not work, for
example, 'at the new factory', or 'a distant factory that
involves a lot of travel' or a 'factory full of younger men'.
These categorizations, novelty-age, distance-nearness, age
homo-heterogeneity are not 'relevant' because of the concerns

tied by members to the overarching collection. The fact that the object of the study is a constituent part of the collection that is invoked to present it simply shows what is meant by characterization of sociology as an unflective member's enterprise. The author's selective categorization[7] of the school 'run down neighbourhood' cuts out interest in pupil numbers, teaching methods, pupil satisfaction or anything else. Each category provides for the relevance of contrast categories, the invocation of collections which provide for their cited and non-cited member categories' relevance and readability, and the cutting out of 'non relevant' matters. All this takes place within and because of an instructed orientation (title and preface) and the consequent consistent sequential organization of the story. Just as this occurs within paragraph one so we can see the same argument management between 'relevant parts' (sometimes paragraphs) e.g. the 'apt' discussion of socialisation (L. 52-181).

John's attitude produced in the story is consistent with its theme. He was not 'really bothered which work' he took (L. 12); he nips into a factory to see if there are any vacancies (L. 23); later he drops (dropping, L. 33) into another. He makes 'the best of it' (L. 43). These and other responses are presented as responses to the problem situation and are easily tied into the collection of soft fatalism which is consistent with the story through the scheme 'bad news which is unalterable is best accepted'. Once we tie the 'attitude' to the situation as produced by the story, it is logical, sequentially apt and normatively sensible. Soft fatalism is itself categorically

tied to the overarching poor working class collection in many sociological schemes. So strong is the presentational organization that I found reading the text for the first time, that I could 'guess' the end of John's story by line 23. Such projectable completion is possible because of the preface instructions and the elegant organization of the story to produce its own end. Since the story is generalized from a very early stage I guessed the moral as well.

6.7 Paul's Story

We have already referred to what Dorothy Smith calls 'Contrast Structures': the categorizing of an event in the light of an invoked opposite or contrast. Smith's concern is largely with structures in which the object of study is contrasted with something else 'brought in' to make the contrast but of no sequential or argumentative interest itself[8]. In our passage the contrast is reflexive, Paul's story repairing John's and vice-versa. Both the meaning-for-the-moral (What does it mean or imply?) and the sequential relevance (What is this mentioned here for?) derive from the structured contrast of the stories. For example: being 'one of two children' is not a sociological mentionable under the troublesome family rubric. It is some-times used to establish normality, sometimes to provide for the relevant introduction of a sibling actor later in the story, and sometimes to do 'giving background information'[8]. In this case (L. 51), I read it as a twofold contrast to John in that Paul is categorized as belonging to a non-problem, manageable (L. 68), or good family in contrast to John's; and further that such small families are characteristics liable to middle or

upper and aspiring working class membership in contrast to

John's poor working class membership. Paul's other presented

characteristics work in the same way: the structure instructs

us to read 'skilled worker' (L. 51) as skilled rather than

semi-skilled therefore socially advantageous and lower middle

upper working class. Paul lives as befits his class in an

'affluent part of the city' (L. 52). He consequently goes to

a 'good secondary modern school' and thanks to his good home

and good school he 'performed reasonably well' in 'higher

streams'. This reading of Paul's story is possible through

the reader's articulation of some sociological and members'

schemes which link class, ducational performance, residence,

etc. But the instructions to activate such a scheme are

readable in the search for sequential and argumentative

relevance in the text. If we ask 'what are all these details

of Paul's life doing here together?' or 'what do they add up

to?' then one subsuming category is lower middle upper working

class. Another is that they are all nice experiences. We can

read them as nice experiences by contrasting them with John's.

We also know it is nicer to be affluent working class than

poor working class. I accept the reading of lower middle upper

working class as well as that of nice experiences because these

are not any nice experiences but nice experiences that are

tiable through commonsense together in a causal way as I have

done above. They are presented systematically as class nice

experiences. The contrast is at once produced by such a reading

and is used to produce it. Once we orient to such a reading of

Paul's story we will expect him to think about work in the way

we 'know' boys from fortunate, reasonably well off, organized,
homes and good schools should. Paul's story contrastively
characterizes him so as to produce his attitude and behaviour
as consistent. In displaying the pleasant background as a
systematically pleasant one it also provides for a reading
of 'Paul and others in the same position where the position is
defined contrastively'. The effect of such a definition is
the creation of two 'social groups' to which we can assign many
school leavers to, near or in between. The story also accom-
plishes generalization. We reiterate that Paul is not simply
in contrast to John; it is the contrast structure that enables
us to produce him in contrast thus 'given some thought' can be
read as a lot or a little. But when Paul gives 'some thought'
to job choice (L. 55) it is repaired as a lot in contrast to
John and itself acts to produce the contrast that made its
reading possible.

Paul's story is good experiences, and high hopes. He consis-
tently takes 'a job as an apprentice pattern maker' (L. 69).
Were we to follow this by noting that 'he left and entered
the army' (L. 75), which he also left after a few months
without another job to go to, then switched amongst several
dead-end jobs (L. 75-87) and close the story, it would be a
very bad story indeed. It would be bad because Paul's job
changing activities would not be bindable to his earlier
categorization. Of course heroes are permitted to 'act out of
character' but only if the story teller makes provision for
such behaviour's intelligibility. Such provisions include the
fatal flaw device in which a possible trouble is minutely

mentioned in the early story then resurrected to explain

change, and the bewitched device where the person is held not

to know what they are doing and the behaviour consequently

untied: what McHugh calls theoreticity[9] and the constraint

device that McHugh calls conventionality[10]. It is the

constraint device that is operated in Paul's case. Briefly his

job changing is presented as springing not from weakness of

character or poor upbringing both of which would destroy the

story (the first because there is no earlier provision; the

second because there is a provision to the contrary) but from

industrial constraints. How is this worked up?

As members we see frequent job change and job dissatisfaction

among the young as regrettable and therefore demanding an

explanation. As readers we also demand a provision for Paul's

apparent character violation or we would do if the story had

been written as I have done above. Ashton organizes the story

(that is I read it that way) so this violation does not happen.

If there is lack of congruity between Paul and work resulting

in problems then one could seek to tie the problems to the work

or Paul. In short, the story works indirectly by untying the

problem source from Paul it leaves the industrial organization

as the only other recipient. This is only producible because

the problem has been presented as an incompatibility or

incongruity one confining the actors and options (that is the

actors in the story which become generalized explanatory options

in the moral) to Paul and the jobs. The cutting out of other

candidate actors and options such as the careers officer is

produced by the story organization. How does Ashton untie Paul

from his industrial behaviour?

One normative distinction that members sometimes make is between 'just doing' something and 'doing it for a good reason'. Ashton presents John as just doing things and Paul as reflective. Another member's rule in some circumstances is that if people have a reason for doing something you should hear it before judging their actions. In both stories we are given characterisations of the heroes as reactor and reflector respectively before they encounter work (John L. 11-12: Paul L. 54-62). Industrial behaviour which otherwise might have looked similar can now be seen to be differently motivated and therefore different. Further since John accepts work there is little to recount where Paul's reflections need systematic exposure (L. 54-62). John's behaviour is then read in the light of his fatalism: he 'nips' and drops. Paul's is given more detail: he has a 'first choice' (L. 63). His choice is presented then as first of several in an order. 'First' also instructs us to read any subsequent 'choices' as constrained, not his first choice. It will be noticed that Paul's working life starts with a job he would have liked to but did not do. Presumably there are some things that all leavers would like to do and cannot. Their absence is trivial[11]. In John's case there is no mention of them at all. But in Paul's case such a literal non-event has considerable implications for what follows. Together with the story so far, and its following sentence showing the reflective Paul, it displays Paul as thwarted before he starts work thus other 'real' work experiences become candidates for a class already established independently of them.

Paul's determination (L. 67) by reference to his previous

characterization is read as thoughtful vocationalism not

filial obstinacy. The 'this' of 'this concern' (L. 70) has no

single retrievable referent and I read it as retrospectively

categorizing the attitude of Paul so far as 'concerned'. The

concern is for 'good' training thus introducing the pair good-

bad as well as some-none for he could not reasonably leave an

apprenticeship because there was no training. The 'good'

therefore provides for a reasoned departure on the grounds of

poor training. His condemnation of the training is categorized

as not 'correct' rather than dislike or impatience, identific-

ation of correctness being a logico-reflective activity tied to

his characterization. Further he is provided with a consistent

'reason' unlike John who 'just nips' (my italics). This

reflection plus the attitude of his bosses 'led' him to leave.

The consistent characterization of Paul throughout the story

makes it increasingly difficult to tie the bad work experiences

to him. His expectations which are categorically and

sequentially worked into his story also appear fairly inevitable.

It is the contrived presentation of two contrasting stories

each internally categorially consistent that provides the frame-

work for the chronological production of John and Paul's

attitudes as readable-plausible. Once those attitudes are avail-

able and oriented to by the reader, the author can proceed. We

follow him no further; our peculiar interest in the particular

sort of categorization work produced in sociological moral tales

terminates here with the end of Paul's story.

I think we have found (at least) two interesting and inter-

connected points: that morals are not reflections on tales
but provided for in tales and that any generalization in the
moral must be provided in the tale.

6.8 Quoting

Many case studies and participant observation studies contain
quotes. The Ashton study is no exception and we devote a
few lines to the sort of work that quoting can do.

Phillips[12] claims that most sociology is not about what people
do but about what they say they do. Of course it is about what
sociologists say they hear people saying that they do. It
concerns (at least) doubly reported events. There are times
however when authors claim to report the actual words of
people about what they do. I say claim because these reports
are not usually verbatim transcripts further there are times
when this is done without claims. By 'quote' I understand the
self announced use of the subjects words as the subject's
words. Such self announcing may be through grammatical
markers, e.g. '...' in writing or through tonal markers such
as voice change in speaking or through artful placement so as
not-to-be-part-of-what-i-am-saying or through provided tier to
other speakers. Ethnomethodological interest is in what such
utterances do and we characterize quotes minimally as invoking
other speaker: speaking and writing as activities are assign-
able to authors who are routinely and in principle answerable
for what they say and write. Exceptions are made with children
and foreigners and some others usually under McHugh's headings
of theoreticity and conventionality. If those two conditions

are fulfilled completely and that fulfilment is agreed by
those involved then not only is producer of remark responsible
but no-one else is. There are exceptions for example in
duplicatively organized devices in which a member speaks on
behalf of others who are bound by his utterances but even
then responsibility is sometimes exacted within the organ-
ization. The minimum work of a quote is to display the
producer as other than the speaker writer and thus excuse the
speaker/writer from answerability for the quote (although not
for its quotation).

In this sense we speak of quoting when this is the work done
whether question marks and voice change are used or not.
Saying the same words as someone else:

    A. 'Hello'.

    B. 'Hello'.

is not quoting unless its original formulation is oriented to
as the 'original formulation'. And for members, a quote does
not have to be the same word as long as it does the same
thing. In our analysis then quoting is a social act involved
in assembling logical and normative order.

When a sociologist quotes he cannot then be taken to task for
what he has quoted although he can be asked why he quoted it.
Other sociologists can also expose inconsistencies between
two quotes from the same source, supply rival quotes or a
context for the quote that neutralizes it, e.g. lying to an
interviewer because in legal trouble. Such criticisms are less
plausible than the quotes they address because of the quoter's

privileged access to the formulator and context of formulation.
The main danger that the quoter has to guard against is the
attack on the competence of the original formulator to talk
of such things. The authority of the quoted remark derives
from the authority of the formulator on the topic of the remark
as well as the local organization of the remark. If the
formulator can be characterized as incompetent or untrust-
worthy in general or on this particular topic then the quote
loses its warrant. Correspondingly the work of the quoter is
to display his formulators as competent and trustworthy, or
organize that competence and trustworthiness are not oriented
to matters. I do not wish to address the trust matter here
except to note that sociologists routinely do trust their
informants and appear to concern themselves little with this
matter beyond consistency. Data which indicates that lying is
necessary for the maintenance of some conversations receives
very little attention[13]. There are various ways to portray
formulators as incompetent such as delusion ascription[14],
membership denial (foreigners), competence denial (children)
or recategorizing the formulator to make him deluded,
incompetent, or a member of some 'other' group. Thus:

'I think he was having you on he is a great practical joker'.

or at another level the notion of false consciousness where
members' desires are discountable as incompetent[15].

Some members' competence is routinely in doubt, e.g. lunatics,
children[16] and drunks. Some others are held to be competent
over only some topics. We can then give some vague instruc-

tions to the sociologist who wishes to use quotes as follows:

Categorize the formulator so that he is displayed as a
competent member in the topic you quote.

There are some elegant examples of this in the Ashton piece.
Before we address them we should note that although our
advice is brief it will involve the quoter in doing some **lay**
sociology to 'find' who is considered competent on what[17].

A fairly complex quote is 'I wasn't really bothered about
which work I took' (L. 11-12).

Members are generally thought to know their own bothers[18] **and**
the quote has some authority. Had John been characterized **as**
forgetful or deeply disappointed with work then we could
perhaps have challenged its authority. In the text there **are**
neither instructions or resources to scrutinize John's
candidacy as a competent member to talk of his own bothers.
If we have no other inconsistent quotes and no resources **to**
discount the formulators' authority then the remark is believable
through author's privileged access. This only holds if the
remark is about personal states; likes, recollections, etc. **and**
of course feelings. John's remarks are of this sort: recollected
events (L. 2), likes (L. 27), reported conversations (. 14).
If Ashton had quoted John on the industrial future locally **there**
would obviously be less plausibility. One of Paul's remarks
looks, at first sight, a little like this:

'You need the training ... else' (L. 56-58). Grammatically
this is a factual quote, the 'you' being used to generalize **a**

position to 'me and people like me'.

But in order to provide for its relevance we look to the
preceding return and context. Our orientation to 'what-we-
[...]-we-are-doing'[19] and the subsequent repairs (L. 58-62)
enable us to read it as '(I feel) you need ... else' or also
as a personal state report. A quote may derive its authority
from the original formulation but that it 'may' is alterable
in the quoter's use of sequence.

The quote also enables the quoter to do things with words in
the text which would be difficult in other circumstances. In
a short piece like this he can double or triple instances: I
mean that by tying an item in the text to one or two in the
quote an including e.g. .[20] can be invoked to do other work.
As in the Paul story Lines 58-62, while 'commenting on Paul's
forms (L. 55-58), also act with them to activate an embracing
collection which in turn is used to characterize Paul.
A other use is to point to the author as possessor of this and
therefore other quots: as members we know quotes are bits of
conversations. They self characterize as the presented
minority of an available but unable-to-be-represented 'whole'.

I shall return to the issue of quotes in the chapters on
citation and commonsense.

(-4) PEOPLE AS THE MEMBERS OF THE

(-3) INDUSTRIAL ATTITUDES TO BEHAVIOUR OF

(-2) YOUNG SEMI-SKILLED WORKERS

(-1) Norman Ashton

(0) Norman Ashton is a lecturer in the Department of Sociology

at the University of Leicester.

(1) The purpose of this paper is to provide a brief intro-
duction to what we believe are some of the main elements
involved in (2) understanding the attitudes and behaviour
of certain young workers. While it is based on research
that has been conducted (3) over the last decade it is only
a very brief statement of the problem which has been fully
elsewhere. The (4) discussion will be centred
round the following two case studies of young people working
in semi-skilled jobs, but who differ (5) significantly in
terms of their attitude to semi-skilled work and the meaning
they attach to work generally.

(6) John was one of a family of five whose father was also a
(7) semi-skilled factory operative. He had been brought up
in (8) one of the poorer working class parts of the inner
city, (9) where his experience of education had been confined
to the (10) lower streams of a run-down neighbourhood school.
He left (11) school without any qualifications and as he says,
'I wasn't (12) really bothered about which work I took'.
While still at school (13) he said that he did not want to go
to work into a shoe (14) factory as 'the lads said it was a
dead end job'. His father (15) also told him to avoid 'shoes'
and suggested he get an (16) apprenticeship, but when it came
to leaving and the careers (17) officer had not got him fixed
up elsewhere, John found that (18) most of his friends were
already working in 'shoes'. 'I (19) wanted to find out what
it would be like in the shoe (20) factories, my mates said the
money is alright and when you (21) have been there so long

they ... ... these work'. The (2?) result was that in
the last few ... at school, 'he ... (23) ... just
... into this ... factory to ... if there were (2?) any
vacancies ... he got a job straight away'.

(25) Once at work he found it agreeable but nothing to get
(26) excited about. He had a job in the pressroom performing
(27) one simple operation. 'I liked the work, they didn't
rush (28) you a lot, it was steady, no short time'. He
enjoyed the (29) freedom and independence it gave him after
his enforced (30) confinement at school but found that he
became bored (31) performing the one operation all the time.
This boredom (32) and the fact that he did not, as his mates
had led him to (33) expect, get put on piece work, resulted
in his dropping (34) into another shoe factory which he happened
to pass one (35) ... on his way to the hospital. The job he
obtained was, (36) like the first, semi-skilled, but this one
was much more (37) varied as he had to perform a number of
different oper- (38) tions. The only ... with this job
was the money which (39) he thought could be better. During
his early work exper- (40) ience John encountered no difficulty
in adjusting to work, (41) apart from getting up early in the
morning. ... the same- (42) thing which he recognised that
he had to do and which he (43) made the best of. As for the
future, he felt that he would (44) definitely change his job
but was not sure what he would (45) do; although having spent
two years in factories he felt (46) that he should try an
outdoor job as, 'it seems cleaner, the (47) fresh air and that'.

(48) In contrast to John, Paul had experienced considerable
(49) difficulty in adjusting to work and had worked in six
(50) different jobs at the time of the interview. His father
was a (51) skilled worker, and he was one of two children.
The family (52) lived in the affluent part of the city and
Paul had gone to a (53) 'good' secondary modern school, where
he performed (54) reasonably well in the higher streams. At
school he had (55) given some thought to the problem of job
choice and was (56) determined to obtain a trade. 'You need
the training to get (57) to know the job inside out and you
are always secure and (58) get a job before anyone else'.
For Paul work was not just (59) something which you had to do,
it was primarily a means (60) of achieving mastery of a set
of skills which would then (61) lead to other benefits in the
future such as job security. In (62) this sense he valued
work highly as an area of activity.

(63) His first choice was that of motor cycle mechanic. 'I'd
(64) had four bikes and I knew that I could do the job'.
However, (65) his father did not think that the trade was good
enough and (66) was determined that his son should not enter
it. While his (67) father's wish prevailed, Paul was equally
determined that he (68) would not enter the trade his father
was trying to push him (69) into and took a job as an appren-
tice pattern maker. It was (70) this concern over the impor-
tance of obtaining a good (71) training at work that contributed
to the problems he (72) experienced with his first job. He
felt that he was not (73) getting the correct training as he
spent most of his time (74) working metal and in addition the

attitude of his bosses, (75) 'always having a go', led him
to leave and enter the army (76) where he hoped he would
receive training as a motor (77) mechanic. After a number
of months, this training did not (78) materialise so he left.
However, on leaving he found it (79) impossible to obtain
entry into a trade and was forced to (80) take a job as a
road cleaner. Unlike the case of John, he (81) found it
difficult to adjust to an i-skilled work because in (82) his
view it was a 'dead end' job that prevented him from
(83) making anything of himself. He became disillusioned
with (84) it and decided that he would 'take anything for the
money'. (85) This search for more money, itself a product of
his (86) discontent, led him through three different jobs as
packer, (87) type fitter and labourer in the space of a few
months. In (88) his spare time he was studying engineering,
in what was so (89) far, a vain attempt to acquire 'a better
job with prospects'.

(90) These two cases illustrate what we believe are the two
(91) most important elements involved in an understanding of
the (92) attitudes and behaviour of young people as they
enter work. (93) The first of these is the necessity to
appreciate the rationale (94) behind the young person's way of
looking at work and the (95) second is the importance of the
constraints that the different (96) work situations, and the
rewards they offer, impose on the (97) young workers. Let us
take first the question of the (98) differences in their ways
of looking at work. In the case of (99) John it is clear that
he expected relatively little from work, (100) it was some-
thing that had to be done, and which on leaving (101) school

was seen by him as attractive because of its novelty (102) and the freedom and independence it provided. Once into (103) work, the major rewards sought were the immediate owning (104) of money and relief from boredom. Apart from this work (105) was not regarded as a meaningful source of activity. In (106) other words, **work was valued not for itself but for the (107) money and freedom is provided**. Paul had very different (108) expectations for he thought that work should provide him (109) with the chance to develop skills and a means through (110) which he could 'get on in life'. Thus, unlike John, his initial (111) concern was not with the immediate rewards that came in (112) the form of a weekly wage and increased independence but (113) with obtaining a stable and secure form of income in the (114) future. The fact that he was unsuccessful in this respect was (115) the major cause of his problem.

(116) These different ways of looking at work, also have (117) implications for the ways in which the young people view (118) themselves. To regard work as a means of obtaining certain (119) skills implies that the young person sees himself or herself (120) as having the ability to master the skills, while the desire (121) to advance through one's work implies that success there is (122) highly valued. To regard work only as something that has to (123) be done and **just** as a means of income often implies that (124) other areas of activity are regarded as more meaningful (125) areas, and that performance at work is not an important (126) source of self-evaluation. These different ways of looking at (127) oneself

and the world we have termed frames of reference (128) or

perspectives to draw attention to the way in which the

(129) attitudes that people have with regard to their work

and the (130) image they hold of themselves are organised to

create a (131) more or less coherent view of the world. We

suggest that as (132) a result of these different perspec-

tives young people (133) experience themselves and their

worlds in significantly (134) different ways. Thus in the

case of John, his perspective is (135) typical of that

acquired by many young people who enter (136) unskilled and

semi-skilled work. It is one that is dominated (137) by a

concern with the here and now and with the immediate (138)

rewards and costs that are derived from activities. It is

this (139) concern with the immediate rewards that governs

their (140) relationships with others, including their

employers, so that (141) if in times of full employment, they

become bored with a (142) job or if they find a job offering

high or similar wage, they (143) leave, for there can be no

other considerations involved. Paul (144) on the other hand

has a perspective that is typically found (145) among those

people who succeed in following a trade. It (146) is one that

is dominated by a concern for short term future (147) rewards.

These young workers value the future rewards of (148) security

and possible promotion more than the immediate (149) rewards

associated with the size of their wages. They see (150) them-

selves as having certain abilities which can be realised

(151) through their work.

(152) These different perspectives we see as primarily a

product (153) of the past experiences of the young people.
For some time (154) research findings have indicated that
people in different (155) groups in our society hold
different perspectives and (156) experience their world in
significantly different ways, and (157) that these different
perspectives are transmitted to the next (158) generation
through the family. Young people brought up in (159) these
different groups will experience similar family circum-
(160) stances, and be exposed to similar forms of parental
control. (161) They will thus develop similar responses to
situations in (162) which they find themselves, and similar
ways of viewing the (163) world. For example in the case of
young people such as (164) John born into the poorer class
families, relationships (165) between members of the family
are likely to be dominated (166) by a concern with immediate
problems. The low level and (167) insecurity of the parents'
income and the larger number of (168) family members, means
that resources are always stretched (169) as they barely
cover the minimal day to day needs of the (170) family.
Against a background of a large number of children (171) to
care for and the constant financial worries, the exercise
(172) of discipline within the family is often arbitrary and
(173) inconsistently applied. In these circumstances the
children (174) learn to relate to others in terms of the demands
of the (175) immediate situation, and they do not gain much
experience (176) in relating to others in terms of more
abstract principles of (177) behaviour which are applied over
a range of situations. In (178) such situations the children
like their parents operate (179) primarily in terms of the

constraints of the here and now (180) for they do not have
the opportunity to take into considera- (181) tion the longer
term consequences of their actions.

(182) hat our analysis indicates is that for many young
people (183) their school experience reinforces the perspec-
tive the child (184) acquires in the family. In the case of
these children from (185) poorer working class families their
upbringing mitigates (186) against an effective performance
at school. This together (187) with other differences between
these children and their (188) teachers, such as the value
placed on education and the (189) standards of behaviour and
appearance adopted tend to (190) result in these children
becoming labelled as 'thick'. One (191) consequence of this
is their subsequent placement in the (192) lower streams or in
other ways being denied the chance of (193) obtaining the more
prestigious academic qualifications. (194) From the childrens'
point of view they learn to see them- (195) selves as having
limited academic ability and as no good at (196) school
subjects. They are never given the chance to obtain (197) these
qualifications that would enable them to realistically
(198) consider anything other than semi-skilled manual work
and (199) so in the absence of any future rewards for their
perform- (200) ance, school has little to offer them. The only
source of (201) interest and reward that they can obtain from
their school (202) activities is that which can be derived
from the here and (203) now. For these young people their
school activities provide (204) little chance for them to
develop a sense of achievement (205) and so for many the only

area where this can be obtained (206) is in their non-school
activities and frequently in fields (207) of delinquent
behaviour.

(208) When it comes to entering work these past experiences
(209) tend to push them in the direction of semi-skilled work
in a (210) numbers of ways. In the first place their concern
with the (211) here and now and with immediate rewards makes
the (212) relatively high earnings that some semi-skilled
jobs offer (213) attractive, as, in times of full employment,
does the ease (214) with which they can leave these jobs if
they find that they (215) do not like them. Another factor
which tends to push them (216) in the direction of these jobs
is the image they hold of (217) themselves. As they see them-
selves as having limited (218) academic ability and having never
developed a sense of (219) achievement in their school
activities they tend to consider (220) those jobs that require
some such ability as beyond them. (221) For some, semi-
skilled jobs may be the only ones they feel (222) competent to
handle. Finally, and of equal importance, these (223) 'subjec-
tive' factors are reinforced by the 'objective' fact (224) that
because of their poor school record, these young people
(225) are barred in many cases from entering anything other
than (226) semi-skilled or unskilled work.

Notes

1. S. Hall, et al, Theoretical review, Cultural studies, n.d., Resistances through Rituals, ..., 1975.

2. ... arton, 'Towards an understanding of the .ppositi.nl attitudes and behaviour of young semi-skilled workers', Youth and Society, Sept/Oct. 1975, no. 15. The relevant section is at the end of this chapter.

3. Concept from D. Smith, 'K ist geisteskrank ... .', in R. Weingarten, F. .c. and .... Schenkein (eds. Ethnotheologie, Beiträge aus einer Soziologie des Alltagshandelns, Frankfurt, ..., 1976.

4. For work instructions to find see H. Sacks, lectures unpublished, University of California, 1960-74.

5. The concept of category bound activities is succinctly explained in H. Sacks, 'On the analyzability of stories by children', in J.J. Gumpertz and D. Hymes (eds.), Directions in socio-linguistics; the ethnography of Communication, Holt, Rhinehart and Winton, 1972, pp. 329-45.

6. The concept duplicative organization is from H. Sacks, ibid.

7. The necessary selectivity of characterization is argued in E.A. Schegloff, 'Notes on a Conversational Practice: Formulating Place', in D. Sudnow (ed.) Studies in Social Interaction, Free Press, 1972.

8. See D. Smith, 'K ist geistes krank ...', op. cit.

9. P. McHugh, 'A Commonsense Perception of Deviance', in H.P. Dreitzel (ed.), Recent Sociology, Vol. 2, Macmillan Co., 1970.

10. Ibid.

11. The concept of non-trivilizable absence is in H. Sacks projected unpublished book.

12. D. Phillips, Knowledge from What?, Chicago, Rand McNally, 1971.

13. H. Sacks, Everyone has to lie, lectures, Spring, 1967.

14. See J. Coulter, Approaches to Insanity, London, Martin Robertson, 1974.

15. See our analysis of Data IV.

16. M. Speier, 'The Child as Conversationalist: Some Culture Contact features of Conversational Interactions between Adults and Children. Unpublished ms. University of British Columbia.

17. D. Watson, 'Fixing Down Misunderstandings and Other Interactional Uses of Pro-Terms, unpublished ms. University of Manchester.

18. H. Sacks, Everyone has to lie, op. cit.

19. E. A. Schegloff, 'Notes on a Conversational Practice ...', op. cit.

20. H. Sacks, 'On the Analyzability ...', op. cit.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DATA VI: THE COUNSELLOR AND ALIENATED YOUTH:

THE STORY OF A THREE-CARD TRICK

7.1 Introduction

This article, 'The Counsellor and Alienated Youth'[1] starts
with a title and abstract which display several interesting
features. I wish to isolate three of these:

When we have read the abstract we are prepared for a piece
on youth. We are ready to see the discussed population as
more-than-incidentally youthful, so that we might say 'I read
something on youth' and as academics suggest that students on
youth courses look at the article. I shall refer to this as
orientation; populating a line.

The article is to some extent plausible. I think that the
plausibility rests in part on the categorization of the writer.
That categorization I refer to as _Author Authority_.

Third, part of the argument follows a pattern quite common in
youth studies[2] and in naturalistic and radical deviancy
theory, a mockery of which could be, 'That behaviour looks
silly, wrong, and pointless at first sight; follow me and I'll
show you it's really sensible, fair and purposeful'. I call
this work _Investing Purpose_.

In our analysis of these three exercises it will become
apparent that they are all in part categorization exercises;
the categorization of the population as youthful, their
behaviour as reasonable and their author and his argument as

credible. Consequently the general analytic device is the
Membership Categorization Device derived from Harvey Sacks[4],
and adapted for written material.

7.2 Age Orientation: Populating a Page

It is manifest that the 'same' fact can be used in two different
or even opposing arguments. It is also obvious that both the
words and phrases in those arguments and their referents appear
in different subjects so that 'what-we-are-talking-about' is a
crucial resource for repairing those individual words and
phrases[5]. We have certain guidelines available to us then
before we reach each phrase in order to read it sensibly.
Such guidelines, or as Sacks puts it 'instructions on how to
read what follows' are proto-typical in titles. If we read
the current title as instructions we will read for youth rather
than alienation. We shall read about alienation but for youth,
subsuming alienation as a characteristic of youth. My reading
is that 'Alienated Youth' is a sub-type of Youth whereas
Youthful Alienation is a sub-type of alienation. This issue is
far from trivial in organized sociology since one consequence
of deciding that a piece is a study of youth rather than
alienation is to place it within sub-disciplines for comparison,
criticism, and publication. Fair comment is restricted to
'what-it-is'. 'I say above that my reading is impressionistic
and I am far from sure why I read 'Alienated Youth' to be
about youth. There is, of course some sort of grammatical
rule that in series of modifiers the particular should precede
the general thus 'naughty little boy' where 'naughty' is the
matter to attend to at the moment. Superficially this resembles

our problem in that it seems to provide a mechanism for
distinguishing what is to be discussed and criticised at the
moment and what allowed to pass[6]. However both in verbal and
written communication there are many cases where participants
do not follow the rule yet still make sense; that is, they
co-orient to one descriptor out of several:- the several
taken as non-problematic. Further there are good reasons for
thinking that grammar is only one resource for such work and
not the most basic at that[7]. Ethnomethodology alerts us to
interactional context and sequence as such a basic resource.
It also stresses that the same local interactional task can
be performed by two 'different' grammatical items and two
'different' tasks by the 'same'[8]. Its orientation is then to
what items do rather than what they are[9]. Its focus of
concern is the social co-ordination of participants in the
interactional management of the local system rather than any
de-contextualised 'linguistic' rules[10,11]. In this case we
are dealing grammatically with a modifier and a substantive.
Again at first sight, it seems that if writer characterizes
people with two descriptions the first a modifier, the second
a substantive, he is exerting some sort of control over
criticism thus:

    A. It's a black cat

    B. No, it isn't.

The negation here is of the colour not the taxonomy. To
criticise taxonomy it would be necessary to say something like:

    B. It's not a cat at all.

B. is effectively doing a topic change which in his inter-
actional position is a fairly radical thing to do as he says
in 'at all'. He can do this perhaps because he has actually
seen the cat/dog/whatever. Now in written sociology the
materials for reconstructing topics are not made available
to reader and in any search for 'similar' materials the
similarity will be topic influenced. We return to this matter
of access to material later. Grammatically then, it seems
that the substantifying of a population descriptor may have
some important consequences in putting such a description out
of critical reach.

Unfortunately matters are not so clear in interaction. Thus
if two people wish to meet at a cafe called The Black Cat,
they can say 'The Cat' and still preserve interactional sense.
This is because (for reasons unknown) there are not cafes
called The Tabby Cat, The Marmalade Cat, etc. 'Black' then
does no work in isolating the rendezvous cafe and is dispen-
sible. Or again in the sequence:

          A. What's that over there?

          B. It's a black cat.

          A. It isn't.

A. is denying taxonomy and speaking to topic, a topic already
played down by himself.

These examples are not designed to prove but to demonstrat
that matters of speakers' rights, topic change and participants'
shared knowledge are additional resources to grammar.

Orienting to interactional context, the title is 'The
Counsellor and Alienated Youth'. The two substantives repair
each other in a way totally unprovided for by the grammatical
understanding of conjunction. And in one sense 'Alienated'
modifies 'Counsellor' more than it does 'Youth'. 'Alienation
is a problem and a trouble as we all know: counsellors are in
the problem business in that people with problems do and
should go to counsellors. Youth can also be troublesome but
is not so necessarily or totally. Further, counsellors are
routinely accredited people for deciding that others are
alienated but not for ageing them. The juxtaposition of
alienation and counsellor produces an orientation to the
diagnosis and/or solution of alienation as the matter at hand.
The youth of the people is not <u>brought</u> into question. Titles
such as these are not sentences and may make no grammatical
sense. But they abound. Readers do make sense of them by
finding the conjunctive link. They then use that link as a
topic guide.

That link is exclusive. It mot only instructs reader to look
for matters and interpret matters and criticize matters to do
with alienation. It cuts out orientation to age interaction-
ally, while maintaining it's non-problematic frame. That
frame is heavily traded on not least to populate the page with
teenagers. The examples are of teenagers because the piece
is about youth. And when we have read about all those teen-
agers we have learned something about youth. We do not say
'what are all these teenagers doing on these pages?'. The
title has provided for that. And when we have learned about

those teenagers, we have learned something properly subsumed
into 'Youth Studies'. In summary one piece of work the title
contributes to is the discrimination of two orientations into
controversial, discussable and open to criticism and
pre-existent, non-problematic and shielded from criticism.
Such a discrimination then 'permits' the author to provide
data-for-disagreement only on the controversial topic
'alienation'.

The title is not the only contributor to this work. If we are
to accept the piece as unproblematically about youth, then the
population must act like youth. It must do things that youths
routinely do, preferably, that _only_ youths do. Presentation-
ally this will involve the categorization of the population's
activities as category bound to youth. Not all the doings
need be so categorized: it is sufficient that youth be seen
as the only possible possessor of _all_ of the doings. For that
it must be the necessary owner of _some_.

The first thing I notice is that many of the activities
summarized[11] in the abstract are only problems when possessed
by the young. Since the orientation through counsellor-
alienation is to problems, the invocation of age is necessary
in order that the reader can see the items as mentionables.

Here we must be more precise. The characteristics, for
example, of 'rejection of the ethnic of hard work, an open or
thinly-disguised contempt for respectability and the common
virtues' may be problems for many but they are problems-to-be-
counselled for the young[12]. Thus our orientation to topic[13]

instructs us to look for items that would provide for the mention of these characteristics as problems and we find such an item in title '... Youth'. In this particular case the interplay between controversial and non-controversial descriptors is more involved since the state of alienation is established through the recounting of a series of troubles which gain their troublesome status from their youthful possessors whose age is non-controversial.

The above characteristics are only problems when possessed by youth. Some of the activities are youth monopolies them-selves. Thus 'rejecting the values of home and school' (L. 5) is particular to young people. Such phrases as:

These old people)
)
These wives   )   rejected the values of home and school
)
These babies   )

have obvious and different incongruities. In the cited formu-lation the activity is age specific.

We may first note that we (I at any rate) read the phrase as 'rejected the values of <u>their</u> home and their school' and possibly 'and others like them'. This reading is provided for by the rule of categories and collections[14], in part, but there is another aspect to it: rejecting is a second pair part to some sort of offering. As a second pair part it can only be done if the offer has been made and crucially if the offer has been made to the rejector. Thus only family members can reject family values. Routinely the offer is made by one and rejected by another. In nuclear families the father and

mother constitute the family in such a way that they cannot
(unless special provision is made and some wives try and make
it) 'reject' its values. They can of course do other things
like 'take no interest in the home (husbands). They can
'differ' and 'argue'. To reject then is an activity that is
bound to a particular sort of membership which in the case of
nuclear families is routinely monopolised by the offspring[15].

In a more reflexive sense the rejection of 'the values ...
of the school' is also a juvenile privilege. In the case of
values of an organization it is only members that are offered
and can reject. It is said that radical teachers reject the
values of the school. But in this case neither the values nor
the rejection are the same. The subject that is the rejector
instructs us to look to see what sorts of values might have
been 'offered' within the category bound activities of that
subject. These are different for pupils and teachers. Further
if any member were asked to fill in what a teacher and a youth,
each rejecting the values of school would look like, what sort
of things they would be doing and saying, he would describe
different things and use different norms to assess them. This
is well captured in the phrase:

'It's one thing for the pupils to ... it's quite a different
matter for the staff'.

It appears then that what a social activity is depends on who
does it. It also appears that by recategorizing a subject
one can alter an activity and by using two 'different' subjects
contrast two activities. Indeed it was such principled
ambiguity that made possible the work done in the title.

7.3 Author Authority and Privileged Access

We remarked above that the reader is presented with a topic categorized and worked up in the article; that he does not have access to a raw thing that the article is 'about'. It is consequently a very radical and difficult exercise for him to reconstruct topic and criticism is routinely within topic. One way that plausibility may be enhanced is by presentationally displaying the disproportionate levels of access of writer and reader to 'raw' topic thus producing author authority.

In the title and abstract we find the lines populated with various people: 'The Counsellor (L. 1) ... Alienated Youth (L. 1) ... the writer (L. 4)... intelligent young men (L. 4) ... themselves (L. 6) ... outsider (L. 7) ... individuals (L. 8) ... oneself (L. 10). These grammatically produced actors are not the entire cast. I can use the cited activities to produce their bound categories thus from 'argued' (L. 6) I have an arguer and from 'experiences' (L. 4) an experiencer. If we draw up an incomplete list of the personages oriented to as distinct from grammatically produced[16], we can subdivide such a list into three basic interactional parts; 'him' (author) characters, 'us' (reader) characters, and 'them' (subject) characters. I shall endeavour to explain why these sub-divisions are basic rather than arbitrary later. These lists might look as follows:

HIM (Author)

Counsellor (L. 1)

D.H. Hamblin (L. 2)

(member of the) Department of Education, University College of
Swansea (L. 3)

(Possessor of a knowledge that is great enough for this article
to be) based on (L. 4)

Writer (L. 4)

Experiencer (L. 4)

Arguer (L. 6)

By contrast structure through 'outsider' (L. 7) a person able
to go beyond appearances[17]

Provier of accounts (L. 10)[18]

The production of 'us' is largely through Recipient Design
that is as readers of the British Journal of Guidance and
Counselling and through contrast with 'him'. It is this latter
aspect that will concern us most.

'US' (Reader)

Reader of B.J.G.C.

Adult through allocation of subject (youth) to 'them'

Possibly an outsider (L. 7)

Not a writer, experiencer, etc. of these boys

'THEM'(subject)

Alienated Youth (L. 1)

(people) experienced by the writer (L. 4)

Intelligent young men aged from 16 to 19 who rejected the
values of home and school and disassociated themselves for
contemporary society (L. 4-6)

(Owners of) behaviour which appears to be self-destructive
to the outsider (L. 6-7)

These individuals (L. 8)

(Them) their (L. 8)

(Owners of) alienated behaviour ... oneself (L. 8-10)

These categories are members of wider collections, for example,
knowledge of what we are doing orients us to collect
University College of Swansea into legitimate, bona-fide,
reputable institutions of Higher Education and we infer some-
thing nice about author's qualification. The categories are
tied to other categories cited and invoked in the text, to
activities and to contrasts. Some pair with others like
'counsellor' with young people who are alienated that is, who
have problems seeable as Counsellor relevant. Not only do
some things 'go with' other things but they are, in two
senses at least, normatively organized: some things ought to
go with others and some things are/are not entitled to go with
others[19].

I shall argue that some of these categories are tied to others
involving activities, expectations and entitlements that are
themselves collectable as cognitive access. This in turn is
part of displaying plausibility: and that such access is
displayed unevenly as between writer and reader.

One way we might look to establishing the plausibility of an
argument is by seeing that the writer knows what he is talking
about. That is not enough to produce plausibility but it is a
start. Some relevant matters to consider in assessing that
he knows what he is talking about and is saying what he knows
are: that he has access to knowledge, that the knowledge is
truthful and accurate, that it is relevant and that what he
tells us is the same as or part of the accurate relevant know-
ledge he has found out. He should have a way in to his subjects,
check what they say for relevance, truth and accuracy then tell

us truthfully what he has found out. Thus

Source scrutiny

Honesty of author

Relevance to topic

A_ccess to knowledge

should be _seen_ to be done that authority may be accredited.

One question a writer may ask faced with the practical

problem of producing plausibility is 'How much source

scrutiny, honesty, relevance and access do I have to display?

An answer would involve orientation to the purposes at hand

and the topic interaction so far, for example, amounts in

'opposing versions'. But at least the amount should be more

than the reader's amount. In speaking of the reader's amount

we may seem to be speaking of pre-interactional quantity. In

fact, it is open to writer to decide literally what shall

count towards the amount. The writer then, should notice

that for reader to say of a piece 'I learned nothing new' or

'surprise me' is a criticism. The reader wants an inbalance

between his and the writer's knowledge and that inbalance can

be displayed either by presenting writer as possessing more

than reader or reader as possessing less than writer. Some of

the components of authority are more amenable to writer-

increasing and some to reader-diminishing techniques, thus it

is easier to establish author honesty than reader dishonesty.

B_efore we look at the article in the light of the above

discussions, we provide two caveats: first we have dealt with

the matter of relevance elsewhere[20], and honesty is not often

impugned thus easily established in sociology; this despite

the member-obvious fact that lying is ubiquitous and Sacks'

observation that it is interactionally necessary[21], further

the matter of access would seem to be frequently a pre-

condition for source scrutiny (and honesty and relevance);

and so we devote most of our attention to demonstrating

access. Secondly, we said that the division into 'him',

'Us' and 'Them' parts was not arbitrary. In conversations

there is a sense in which nouns stand instead of pronouns and

not as the grammarians would have it, vice-versa. Both

Emanuel Schegloff and Harvey Sacks have devoted attention to

this and I only remind the reader that pro-term distribution

is an interactional matter to do with who is speaking to whom

and that conversationalists are most concerned to tie referents

to speakers (I, You, etc.). Similarly in written communication

there is considerable reader concern with the interactional

participants. The author, the writer, the producer, the

arguer, and scores of other formulations, all stand instead

of the interactional term 'Him' (the other party). Their

indexicality is repairable through orientation to participants,

It is not that we _can_ allocate the different categorizations

to different pro-terms 'Him', 'Us' and 'Them' but that we

necessarily do. In fiction we often talk about stories telling

themselves and authors not being obtrusive. Sartre[22] even

talks of preserving the freedom of the characters. It is

curious that Ethnographers and sociological phenomenologists

are currently surprised at such intricacies. In general the

allocation of categories into interactional terms is simpler

in sociology than in fiction. And in particular this article
presents few problems to the member who wishes to produce
author. Hamblin's reader references are minimal however and
can be provided for, largely through contrast with writer
and the very absence of reference.

A writer sketch would suggest that honesty is displayed
through the reputation of the journal, the university and
the professional sociological community and the counselling
fraternity: membership of these being displayed through
allocation to 'Him' of 'Counsellor', 'Department of ...', and
so on, also through the language style.

Knowledge is tied to the social scientist status as well as
to that of academic, experiencer, counsellor, etc.

While access to relevant knowledge is through counsellor of
youth, and experiencer 'with intelligent young men ... who
... society'.

Source scrutiny is only superficially provided for through
social scientist.

The reader is diminished by contrast and lack of reference as
non-experiencer, unaware of these particular boys, and while
possibly a counsellor or youth worker, or social scientist,
or academic, less possibly (unlike the author) all of these.
He may also be an 'outsider' and a person who can only observe
'appearances'.

I will try and fill out this impressionistic sketch when we

come across 'them' people in sociological pages, we can link
them to those categories of people who routinely have access
to them. We can similarly see people who either do not have
such access or whose access is not invoked. Access to 'them'
is one source of first-hand data. It is then a relevant task
for the reader to search the personalia for access candidacy.

'Writer' and 'arguer' have access to 'experiencer' (and later
to 'anthropologist') through interactional identity also
displayed as in 'writer's experience' (L. 4). The formulation
enables the writer to claim dual identity. Further he has
access to more information than is presented in the article
which is 'based on the experiences. He also has access to
'counsellor'. Apart from interactional considerations we can
establish such access as follows: writer does not explicitly
claim counsellor identity in the abstract. However 'Counsel-
lor' is in the title and titles contain mentionables. I then
search for the abstract for mention of counsellor as subject
of the piece ('Them') or reader ('Us'). I do not find any
such mention. Counsellor is tiable to the activities and
other categories of the author. I cannot tie it to anything
else and I can to that so I do rather than assume the title
to be a joke or a mystery or whatever.

The very ties that bind writer and the data categories mean
that reader's access to that data is only through writer.
Even his access to similar data is through writer's data, that
he might find what other data should look like to be 'similar'[23].
The counsellor is a particular one with a particular group of

young people who are irrevocably inaccessible to reader.
Because social science is a generalizing business the reader
may be able to refer to other counselling accounts, youth
studies and so on. He can then compare, contrast, and
criticize that such science may advance along its Popperian
path. But the degree of generalizability, the points at
which it may be done, its boundaries and so on are largely a
matter of writer's discretion. By reformulating the referents
in more or less particular ways, by categorizing so that bits
can be collected but one collection never subsume all the
categories, by varyingly invoking controversial and non-
controversial classifications and revoking them (as we saw
with 'youth') the writer can organize for a persistently
tangential and partial relationship to be presented between
any one else's generalizations and his materials. He can
literally preserve the uniqueness of human action within a
generalized social science. All social accounts are liable
to the Et Cetera problem. They are incomplete[24]. But writer
can display so that his account is less incomplete (through
privileged access) and directly rather than lopsidedly
incomplete. For the path of his access constitutes the subject
at its end. For illustration; the title could have particular-
ized 'A Counselling Problem' or 'Pupils and Alienation'. The
reference to Berlin (L. 13) invokes a wide generality
immediately restricted through the elaborations of the next
two paragraphs and to the end of the article. The 'appearances'
(L. 7) that confront the eternal and ubiquitous 'outsider'
could have dismayed, say, three teachers or whatever his
concealed interactional origins was.

The reader who treats the 'generalized' formulations as
some sort of Et Cetera clause (these and others like them)
giving instructions on where he might find other similars,
finds that the writer has circumscribed that 'similarity' so
as to make it persistently problematic. Not only are there
the difficulties glossed above but the instructions are
frequently formulated as summaries and interpretational
summaries at that, so that it is uncertain what others should
be similar to. Thus the activities that are referred to as
'disassociating (L. 5-6) are (inevitably) only partly filled
out in the article. Not only are there blank spaces, that is
constitutive examples of the generalization of which the
reader is ignorant, but that ignorance is an oriented to
feature as we saw in our discussion of 'based'. The writer's
access is only explicated in part.

The writer then has privileged access both to 'them' and to
other categories that have access to 'them'. The position is
complicated by the sort of information that they have access
to: first the information at least partly concerns what we can
call felt alienation and the legitimate discloser of feelings
is the possessor[25]. Only, then, those who have interactional
access to such possessors have full access. Secondly such
feelings and personal states are sometimes thought to be avail-
able to specialised others, particularly if their owner's
competence has been impugned by ascriptions of insanity,
intoxication, age or the discriminatory activities of the
alleged state[26]. People who are mad are not fit people to know
if they are mad. In a commonsensical contest for effective

knowledge of person states between a young alienated owner,
and an educated experienced social scientist and counsellor,
it is the counsellor who wins. He is then doubly qualified
in his meeting with the owner and his professional categor-
izations. So he has a warrant for claiming to see through
appearance into intuition (L. 8).

Through his access the writer is displayed as a person with
relevant knowledge. His honesty derives, as we have said
from his displayed incumbency of the categories counsellor,
writer-in-a-respected-publication, and membership of the
university. Membership of such categories not only enables
reader to find bound activities but to do normative work;
statements from universities and academic journals being
accorded different amounts of trust to those from political
parties and sales brochures. But it is not simply a question
of amount. The Garfinkel experiment[27] suggests the necessity
for trust in interaction in order for the interaction to
proceed. Sacks points out that utterances can be altered
retrospectively[28] for example 'statements' can be altered into
'questions' by tags. What any statement is, in the sense of
the interactional work it does in an argument, can only be
seen by listening to the whole of whatever unit it is (retro-
spectively) revealed to be in. This wait-until-I-have-
finished rule in written argument permits the author to decide
when he has finished and is better called a 'wait-until-I-
announce-that-I-have-finished rule. To follow to that 'finish'
seems to require, even in an advertisement, some sort of
Johnsonian 'suspension' of disbelief. 'When we re-activate

disbelief we disbelieve the statements from the different

bodies in different ways: the salesman has _misled_ us, the

politician _exaggerated_, the conjuror _tricked_, the crook

swindled, the practical joker _had us on_, the sociologist _not_

convinced us[29]. Thus the categorization of the author is an

instruction to do one and not another sort of disbelieving

operation. The oddity is that the categorization of the author

is often a self-categorization, and part of the tale we

'disbelieve'. Thus in the same way that we saw 'subjects'

could be ruled out of play, categorizations of author can be

ruled out of play. The reader cannot totally disbelieve without

removing the object of his disbelief. The writer then cannot

only set generalization-particularization boundaries to circum-

scribe criticism and comparison, write the critical menu, and

determine what is 'off'; and inbalance the access levels of

reader and writer but he can also control for the type of

criticism[30].

We will look briefly at one familiar feature of sociological

accounts where self-categorization plays an important role in

displaying privileged access through 'extra' access. When I

read this account I get the idea that Hamblin does a lot of

this sort of thing; a lot of counselling and work with youth.

He displays himself as a professional not an amateur, an old

hand not a novice, an essential not an accidental performer.

It may be the case that we _should_ judge an article on its

contents, and only on its contents, but the understanding of

each content item _is_ an exercise in indexical repair for which

a crucial resource is knowledge of writer and his non-expressed

knowledge. The links of the providing chain are so reflexively intertwined that any picture is a distortion, but a simplified abstraction might look as follows:

1) **In assessing a presented argument only count what is there presented.**

2) But to determine what is presented reader must orient to his knowledge of author nd his bound entitlements, activities and trusts.

3) Knowledge of ho to classify the author is partly attained through a reading of the article and author's self-categorizations.

4) These self-categorizations may tell us that author knows more than he is saying.

5) Thus an author's display of himself as knowing more than he is saying influences even a reading which concentrates on presented material.

6) Such author self displays as 'knowing ...' are achieved
   a) Through explicit claims, for example 'based' (L. 4) or 'The individuals I have been privileged to work with during the last four years ...' (L. 23).
   b) Through repeatedly doing classifications of materials that 'could' only be done by a someone who had extra knowledge (unless we are to attribute characteristics out of keeping with trust) for example 'such individuals ...' (L. 20-22).

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c) Through grammatical classification of self into
'eternal'[31] states like counsellor rather than
incidental activities 'some conversations I remember'.

d) Through privileged access to 'person' states both of
others (L. 8-10) but more crucially here to self 'a
sense of inadequacy and insecurity _in him_ (L. 22) (my
emphasis).

These displays work to produce an author with extra knowledge
in the sub-categories of: knowledge of more instances; more
occasions; more depth; more regularity; and more theoreticity.
They depend on granting honesty and increase that grant re-
flexively.

7) But they also depend on the author establishing that all
his bits of knowledge are about the same thing. If we are
to see him as having deep and regular access into a
series, he must display seriality. He must present the
studied population as a discriminated one and not _some_
people. He must display the events as containing the same
ingredient, in this case, the same problem (alienation).
This is a matter that we discuss elsewhere; indeed it is
our overall concern. We also discussed earlier in this
piece: how things are made to be about one thing rather
than another. A sketch might be;

8) Homogeneity is achieved through:
a) Reader's sympathetic sociological orientation to
generalization (finding like).

b) Lack of any resources for reader to trade persistent divergence; this 'lack' produced by anonymysing work[32].

c) Making subject-splitting a radical topic change (as

d) Conflation of referent and characterization-of-the-referent.

e) Activation of lay schemes of commonality, for example 'Intelligent males aged from 16 to 19 ... at school' (L. 24). Here a simple contrast structure shows they are all the 'same' as male-not-female, pupils-not-workers, intelligent-not-stupid, (and through a sub-set) late teens-not-early teens.

f) A normative and wider contrast structure (and I am unsure about this) in which the sub-set of youth 'Alienated Youth' announced in the title is used to produce a 'they-rather-than-the-rest-of-youth' orientation, a collection through shared non-incumbency of the normal. Certainly such an orientation is traced on repeatedly to produce attribute-owners 'who' (l. 5) 'they' and 'their' and 'these' (passim), whose joint ownership is never clarified into shares so that the reader reads similar shares of rejection, alienation, contempt and so on.

Of course, discrimination work within a category, apportioning shares, would be 'fine' work indeed, for which one would need a 'fine' knowledge, through

considerable access.

7.4 Investing Purposes

The third feature of the text I called investing a purpose.
It consist in showing apparently purposeless behaviour to be
'really purposeful. It is a popular device for at least two
reasons: first sociology is concerned with patterns and order,
eschewing idiosyncracy and chaos; and one way of ordering
phenomena is through an ends-means (purpose) arrange..ent.
Secondly, purposeless people are widely regarded as deplor-
able and many sociologists do not like classifications of
deplorability. Thus much deviancy-Marxist work can be seen
as rescuing the deplored through investiture of an inter-
actional purpose (available) to the analyst through natural-
istic methods of ethnography) or group (class) purpose-in-
history available through historical and theoretical study[33].

The main recategorization work occurs later in the text, but
there are some interesting glimpses on the first page. The
boys are categorized as 'intelligent' (L. 4 and 24). This is
not a categorization that is routinely available for any
population, for example, 'the writer's experiences with intel-
ligent women' strikes at least two odd notes. It is available
here, I suggest, because intelligence measurement is routinely
done to the young both in and out of school in contexts avail-
able to counsellors. A youth's intelligence can without
breach of etiquette, be formulated by many adults (in 'relevant'
contexts). Hamblin, as counsellor, adult, member of the
Education Department is an entitled and informed person to
produce such a formulation. When the youths have been categorized

as intelligent, they are shown to possess certain character-
istics which sit uneasily with such a categorization. Later
they have some activities attributed to them (L. 24-30) which
are not usually bound to 'intelligent young men' who are a
'privilege' 'to work with' (L. 33). The author has produced
discrepancy. Since we know the task of sociology to include
discrepancy eradication into order, we orient to that as
topic. In some decontextualised sense, it might appear that
we could expect <u>either</u> a recategorization of incumbent (as
silly or some such) <u>or</u> of activity. Could not we be shown
that the young were intelligent butimmature or self-obsessed
or inexperienced? Could not 'intelligent' be retrospectively
refined into precocious brightness? Then it would be compatible
with the activities. Interactionally this would be at least
difficult for several reasons: first 'intelligence' is
formulated with no regard to its retrospective amendment (see
later the contrast with the activities); second, the author
would have to be very careful, for although intelligence is
sometimes the opposite of silly, etc., and may be contrasted
with characterizations which do not amount to stupidity
attribution, it may be taken as such as if it is, it will have
unfortunate interactional consequences. In brief stupidity
attribution is often used as a topic closer, an invitation
to change topic because there is nothing further to discuss.
Third, there are courtesy rules about separating act and actor
which make deprecation of the former generally preferable.
Sociology seems to follow such rules about indirect insults.
Fourth, there is no provision for seeing the boys as stupid,

no resources for constructing such a story. Fifth, the intelligence categorization is prior to the activity categorization. Of these reasons the interactionally most implicative is the second which constitutes the gravest danger since we are alert to starting a topic at the beginning of an article and dismissive formulations or ones that could be construed as dismissive, would be most odd. But perhaps the most likely reason is the first. Certainly we can see the work of its contrast in the actual argument, as follows:

We now attend the recategorization of the activities and characteristics to fit in with their uncharged intelligent owners. One device for achieving this, and a Marxist favourite, is to set the discrepant behaviour in a wider context, to find some sort of problematic historical situation that the 'silly' behaviour could be seen to be a sensible answer to[34]. Then, since the 'silly'behaviour is not the normal or politically correct answer, to use some device of dislocated connection such as some notions of false consciousness, 'projection', and displaced symbolisation provide. Hamblin does not use the 'wider context' device but the 'less of two evils'. 'This behaviour looks silly to you, but when I show you what the absent, discarded alternative was, you will see the silly behaviour is the better of the two and the discrimination between the two shows intelligence'. To bring off this work involves some very nice formulations: in particular there is a dual-sided pivot; behaviour that at first sight looks discrepant with its actors

but later can be seen to be bound to them. In the case
here the dual-sided pivot is:

rejection of the values of home and school

disassociation from ... society

alienated behaviour

rejection of the ethic of hard work ...

contempt for respectability ...

etc.

The 'intelligent' categorization coming first provides for
a reading of all this as thoughtful rejection; and the
decency of the boys (through 'privilege to work with') makes
the rejection (later) not malicious. Thus when we are shown
the 'reasons' for the behaviour in the article the pivot has
been constructed so as to be additionally recategorizable to:

rejection of the values of home and school IN

FAVOUR OF THOSE ...

disassociation from ... society IN FAVOUR OF ...

alienation from others IN FAVOUR OF ...

rejection of the ethic of hard work IN FAVOUR OF ...

contempt for respectability IN FAVOUR OF ...

It is then most important that the 'discrepant' activities
should be so formulated as to be now-discrepant, now-
consistent. The device here is addition of 'detail', so
that we have a 'fuller' understanding of the boys' attitudes
after reading through. It is obvious that some formulations
are more easily reversed by addition than others and the

nice work lies in the original formulation.

At this point we conclude our analysis of this text and with
it our analysis of the first two rhetorical features of
sociological argument.

7.5 Summary

It may be helpful at this point to summarize our findings
from the six texts we have regarded. However, to do so is
not easy; descriptions do not lend themselves to summary in
the way that arguments do and a large part of our work has
been descriptive. Furthermore, our observations vary in
their particular-- and contextuality.

We have found a large array of items in these arguments.
Some of these are:

1. Prospective and Retrospective Repairs through ties which
   narrow consistency into conclusive argument.

2. Persuasive coupling through the use of Pairs in which
   certain second pair parts are looked to and for as
   expected and proper to the exclusion of 'possible' rivals.

3. The organization of materials into controversials and non-
   controversials, matters at hand and by the way, through
   positioning under headings and titles and through juxta-
   positions.

4. The use of reader to complete arguments
   generative lists and through invocation of commonsense.

5. The cutting out of rival versions consistent with 'raw' evidence by the absence of raw evidence, and by exclusive collections such as lists and narrowing ties of sequentially ordered categorizations.

6. The cutting out of such rivals by the organization of materials into different positions such as beginning, middle and end and narratively organized argument.

7. The creation of 'logical development' through artful manipulation of levels of generality in categorizing actors, actions and aggregates.

8. The establishment of important and 'basic' points through categorization of materials into different 'temporal' terms such as states and events.

9. Reader completions through searches for overarching collections which help reader to make sense and read on: the particular instructions for such searches being given by headings, pairs, lists, etc.

10. The ascription of motives, particularly in rescue operations in which characters are endowed with intelligence, through categorical pairing of situations and responses.

11. Reader concessions to author on the grounds that he has privileged access to data as researcher, or to understanding as e.g. counsellor. That privilege is displayed in the text through categorization of the author and work so that they go together and by indications of reader's lack of either access or suitable candidacy for under-

standing the work as categorized. Reader concessions
are also granted on the grounds that author cannot say
all he knows, that he knows undisclosed matter, that the
disclosed matter is thus seeable as summary or example.
Further interactional concessions are made on the under-
standing that all cannot be said at once and that we
must wait and see, and on the particular 'restrictions'
inherent in the form of communication, e.g. a textbook,
article, etc.

This array of items provokes several considerations. First,
all these can be subsumed, if loosely under four headings:
pairs, sequence, categorization and Recipient Design. These
headings are not, obviously, mutually exclusive. A pair
functions as such, as much by its sequential organization in
the text, as by its categorical pairability. Indeed that
example suggests the possible restriction of headings to
three. We can talk, then, of three general but formal
features of these texts.

1. They are read in an order and sequence. That order or
   sequence is not the exhaustive consequence of the status
   of the 'facts' which the text reports.

2. The actors, actions and groups of actors and actions are
   read according to their interlinked categorization.
   Neither the individual categorizations, nor the links
   between them are provided for exhaustively by the status
   of the 'facts' which they 'describe'.

3. Reading books and articl s is a soci l activity const-
rained by expectations nd concessions. Neither those
expectations nor those concessions are produced
exhaustively by social science methodology.

Far from being the 'resul s' of scientific methodology, these
features are part and parcel of reading and communication
procedures. They are literary/communicational. Further, we
have tried to show that they are not separate from but
enmeshed with the 'argument'. Expressed in its weakest form,
our contention is that such literary features make possible
the presented argument and may give it at least initial
credibility. Any attempt to unpack argument from literary
expression and context will; first, be such a lengthy
procedure as to divert sociology fro its original purposes
into something like textual analysis; second, result in the
raising of criticisms to the original argument which will them-
selves be criticized s 'not being about the same thing' and;
third, such criticisms of the original argument will them-
selves conflate literary and scientific features, as long as
they are in natural language.

Expressed in its strongest form our contention is that natural
language sociology cannot be divested of the characteristics of
natural language and red ced to scientific argument. Indeed
that it is misleading even to separate the argument and the
words, for they are enmeshed.

It is for these reasons that we term these literary devices
rhetorical. The three features of sequence, categorization

and Recipient Design noted above are not optional but
necessary aspects of natural language descriptions. In the
very general sense that actors must have names; reports
must start and end; and readers know what is expected of
them; these features are ubiquitous. To the extent that they
are an influential part of the argument that they 'contain'
they are rhetorical. We thus justify our description of
sociological argument as literary and rhetorical.

It is, of course, a different matter as to whether each and
every one of the devices which we have 'found' ie widespread
or obligatory. Most of them have not been formalised so as to
be candidates for generality or invariance. We offer them as
'demonstrations' of the various ways in which the formal and
invariant features of communications may be worked out at
the local level.

DATA VI

(1) The Counsellor and Alienated Youth

(2) D.H. Hamblin

(3) Department of Education, University College of Swansea

(4) This article is based on the writer's experiences with
intelligent young men (5) aged from 16 to 19 who rejected the
values of home and school and dis- (6) associated themselves
from contemporary society. It is argued that behaviour
(7) which appears to be self-destructive to the outsider, serves
important func- (8) tions for these individuals. Their
alienated behaviour masked an intuitive (9) attempt to avoid
the most damaging form of alienation - alienation from (10)

oneself. Some account is provided of the processes which occur when this is (11) the case and the strategies used in creating satisfying identities.

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(12) The problem

(13) Berlin (1972) has illustrated the dilemma created for the middle-aged liberal (14) by the presence of groups of young people who survey the society in which (15) they live and find it distasteful. Their feeling of revulsion is so extreme that (16) they believe the only valid reaction to society is to destroy it, sweeping away (17) the whole edifice. If they are asked what they intend to put in its place, they (18) dismiss the question as meaningless, perceiving the questioner as foolish or (19) reactionary. To them, the set of destruction is seen as the essential condition (20) for the mergence of a just and creative society. Such individuals can present (21) the counsellor with a stimulating challenge an a rewarding experience, but (22) also possess the capacity to arouse a sense of inadequacy and insecurity in him.

(23) The individuals I have been privileged to work with during the last four years (24) were intelligent males aged from 16 to 19. They were all at school and had (25) caused considerable anxiety in their teachers. Their overt behaviour was marked (26) by a rejection of the ethic of hard work, an open or thinly-disguised contempt (27) for respectability and the commonplace virtues, and - perhaps most crucially (28) from the standpoint of the school - a steady

resistance to anything which (29) they interpreted as

coercion and to any attempt to influence them which (30)

emanated from their parents or teachers.

<u>Notes</u>

1. D.H. Hamblin, 'The Counsellor and Alienated Youth',
    British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, Vol. 2, No.
    1, January, 1974. Relevant extract (Lines 1 - 30) is at
    the end of this chapter.

2. e.g. H.J. Parker, View from the Boys, London, David and
    Charles, 1974.

3. For example the work of H. Sacks or the Deviancy
    Symposium.

4. H. Sacks, 'An Initial Investigation of the Usability of
    Conversational Data for doing Sociology', in D. Sudnow
    (ed.), studies in Social Interaction, Free Press, 1972.

5. E.A. Schegloff, 'Notes on a Conversational Practice:
    Formulating Place' in D. Sudnow, op. cit.

6. 'What is Pass' in H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology,
    Prentice Hall, 1967.

7. E.A. Schegloff, 'On some questions and ambiguities in
    Conversations', unpublished ms. prepared for the Rutgers
    University Conference on Linguistics and Language
    Education, April, 1972.

8. Ibid.

9. R. Turner, 'Words, Utterances and Activities' in D.
    Sudnow, op. cit.

10. Of course youth is not a grammatical modifier.

11. I refer the reader to lines 26-30 for once outside the
    preface.

12. There are no social service provisions in these areas
    for normal adults.

13. H. Sacks, Lecture on Topicality, UCLA, April, 1968.

14. H. Sacks, 'On the Analyzability of Stories by Children', in J.J. Gumperz and D. Hymes, Directions in Sociolinguistics: the Ethnography of Communication, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1972.

15. When adults reject family they are doing a different thing.

16. A device used by H.S. Becker — see Open University film of H.S. Becker in Sociological Perspectives.

17. D. Smith 'K ist geisteskrank. Die Anatomie eines Tatsachenberichtes', in E. Weingarten, F. Sack and J. Schenkein (eds.), Ethnomethodologies, Beiträge zu einer Soziologie des Alltagslebens, Frankfurt, Surkramp, 1976.

18. This list is incomplete and unprovided for at this stage.

19. H. Sacks, On the Analyzability ...' op. cit.

20. See Chapter Five on McIntosh.

21. H. Sacks, ' veryone has to lie', Lectures, Spring 1967, University of California.

22. J-P. Sartre, 'M. Francois Mauriac et la liberté', Situations 1, Paris. Gallimard, 1947.

23. It is an implicit claim of some constructivist sociologists to provide untreated data which they separate from 'analysis'.

24. H. Sacks, 'Sociological Description', Berkeley Journal of Sociology, Vol. 8, 1963.

25. H. Sacks, on 'Person States' in, Everyone has to lie, op. cit.

26. J. Coulter, Approaches to Insanity, London, Martin Robertson, 1974.

27. H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall, 1967.

28. H. Sacks, Lectures, unpublished 1966-74, University of California.

29. The context is crucial but those 'artificial' examples make a demonstration point.

30. Some would argue that 'University' and 'Journal' have ensured honesty.

31. See N. Postman and C. Weingartner, Teaching as a Subversive Activity, London, Penguin, 1971.

32. See for example, criticism of census figures usage in R.K. Kelsall, Population, Longmans, 1970.

33. See Chapter Six, section on Hall et al.

34. Ibid.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ABSTRACTION AND CONTEXT: THE PRACTICE OF BORROWING FACTS

8.1 Introduction

Many sociological texts can be read as containing 'facts'
which are derived from other sources. A frequent case is
the use of 'official statistics'. Obvious examples of the
practice may be observed in both Ashton's[1] and Hall's[2] work
both analyzed in earlier chapters. We shall term this
practice 'borrowing other people's facts'. It occurs notice-
ably as follows: the reader becomes aware that some categor-
ization or attribution is being made where there is no
justification in the text and for which some justification
might be expected. Helped by an explicit source claim or, in
its absence, by the topic of the attribution, he sees the fact
as derived or borrowed. That claim or topic may further help
him to find the source. It is necessary to introduce this
cumbersome description because not many borrowed facts are
quotations. We might treat borrowed facts, then, as operating
through a claim to be saying the same as the source in
different words. It is not our current intention to describe
how members realize that a citation is being done nor how
they find exactly what is being cited. Nor, again do we imply
that citation is one practice. We start from the assumption
that readers do recognize citations as such and turn our
interest to the implications of such recognition for argument
satisfaction. As we saw in our study of quotes, the citation
enables the sociologist-writer to decline responsibility for
the fact while accepting responsibility for its apt quotation.

He is not responsible because it is not his. He has simply copied it. His operation is presented as a simple copy or transfer even although it is frequently in different words. He might, if explicit, talk of 'taking it from the X report', or 'finding' it in the Y papers, where 'it' was not the words he uses but the attribution or categorization done by some other words in the original, which he reproduces in his own words.

When I say that the operation is presented as a simple transfer or copy, I infer the claimed simplicity from the lack of attention given to the transfer and from the usual form of the note and citation operations in British and American journals[3]. The sorts of attributions that can be borrowed are, as we have already mentioned[4], not limited to correlations or grammatical complements. They may include modified substantives and conjoined substantives and other forms. Further, they are not confined to facts essential for the argument. Many sociological arguments are presented with 'background' material that may also be borrowed. I and, I think, other readers may drop standards of rigour for background material because it is held to be separable from the argument. At issue here, as we have tried to show in the chapters on presentation is what one piece of text does to the reading of another. An effective background can change our perception, e.g. of the hero's action. Borrowings may also be acknowledged or not. There is a limit to the number of acknowledgements that can be made. Even when acknowledgement is made the scope of its denotation is persistently problematic

for the sort of copy we call a citation is frequently a
precis.

Briefly, we shall claim that when we read texts of source
reports, we find lots of features in which the 'facts' are
embedded, if they are discernible at all as separate 'facts',
and in consequence we shall argue that the borrowing is not a
simple transfer. The attributions in the sociology argument
are not copies of those in the source report and thus their
legitimization cannot be transferred without problems. We
can then represent the current practice of largely unexplicated
borrowing as an abstractive practice of the highest convenience
in the production of telling argument. This is not to claim
that sociologists intentionally abuse citations: on the
contrary some work hard to explicate their citation practices.
Rather we assert that there are technical problems in the
importation of facts; that these problems are obstinate and
that their solution, if it were possible, would divert the
original enterprise of the citing text. The facts come to the
citing text covered in contextual dirt. The lazy sociologist
presents them as clean: the conscientious one tries to
describe the dirt but is compelled to cut short his descrip-
tion or deviate from his original task.

9.2. Transfers

We attempted to show, in the section on sociological texts,
that the readable orderliness and successful argument of items
derives from, among other things, the various categorizations,
sequential placement, prefaces, lists, headings, contrasts
with other items, and so on together with reader-writer

co-comprehension of what-they-are-doing. To remove an item
from its orderly placement and from its read-writer under-
standing is a radical act. In the transfer of item from
source report to sociological report, there is a transfer
from one rhetorical domain to another. The item will find
itself on a new page, under a new heading, contrasted with
new 'opposites', in a new sequence, in a new argument doing
new persuasive work for a new master, being read and written
through new contractual terms.

We have concerned ourselves in the chapters on sociology
texts with the management of that environment and contract.
At issue in this chapter is the loss of the old environment
and contract. The item has lost its former presentational
and contractual context, its 'dirt'. Through that loss it
has shed its equivocal, organization-specific, tentative,
literary, pageful character and become a generalized fact
whose facticity and generality both hardens and is hardened
by their new sociological domain. The loss is a managed
omission.

That loss or managed omission can be divided into two aspects.
There is loss of organizational context and of literary
context. The facts thatemerge from D.H.S.S. and D.E.S., for
example, are organizational products. Studies by Garfinkel[5],
Sacks[6], Mehan[7], Sudnow[8], Zimmerman[9], Cicourel[10], Elliot[11],
Atkinson[12], and Coulter[13] have shown that Hospital staff,
Policemen, Teachers, Doctors, Social Workers, those dealing
with juveniles, scientists, Coroners' Officers, and M.W.O.S,
respectively, produce categorizations that are intimate

products of organizational reasonings and practices. It is
not that the facts that they produce are not ready for
decontextualisation and transfer to another rhetorical
domain, but that they are not available as facts for trans-
fer: they have to be constituted not cleaned up. We shall
not deal with the organizational context of reports directly
or in detail but refer the reader to the studies cited above.
We say 'directly' because we shall approach the matter via
the second aspect of source reports, the literary context,
which, especially in issues of reader-writer co-understandings
overlaps considerably with organizational concerns.

We shall limit our concern to the analysis of Social Work
and probation reports as literary products and even then we
shall note only a few features of their literary character.
We shall not address the matter of how they are transferred
finally to the sociological page nor the adventures that
befall them on the way, except for one note: The level of
our analysis is the individual report within an organization.
Once the report is produced it rarely goes direct to the
sociologist. Sometimes if a source agency is regarded as
unbiased and efficient, or as having a knowledge monopoly,
the route from producer to consumer-sociologist is fairly
direct but it is more usual for the report to be combined
and processed in a variety of ways which we can term distil-
lation. It may be subject to <u>seriality</u> for example,
individual teachers' report are combined in a series of
reports and are often read as such. Reading serials can
produce cumulation or averaging. (We note this with no great

conviction, simply to indicate the sort of _formal_ effects

distillation procedures can have.) It may be subject to

prospective or retrospective amendment, as is the case when

individual teachers' reports are repaired by higher status

reports, e.g. they may be read according to the introductions

and prefaces of a headmaster's report. The report may be

subject to amalgamation where one report is made out of many.

This is the case with some police reports. It may be subject

to selective plunder by another or higher agency. It may be

quoted, It may be competitively distilled as, proto-typically

in court cases with juveniles. No doubt many other things can

happen to a report, but we would emphasize the nature of the

distillation process. First it effects the report _formally_.

Second it is an organized and organizational activity hence

akin to the producers studied by many ethnomethodologists.

Third it involves, often, the re-writing or reading of one

or many reports in a new rhetorical domain. Whether one hard

report emerges as is often the case with medicine where plural

diagnosis or competitive diagnosis is unconventional and the

report is presented as scientific within the scope of

scientific knowledge: whether there are conflicting or alter-

native reports or whatever; neither the serial, nor the

amalgamational, nor the retrospective, nor the competitive

distillation processes can be assumed to be accurate filters,

free from organizational and literary taint, which refine

facts delivered by local producers into a state suitable for

transfer to sociology without extensive explanation as

copies. Members' warranting practices tell us about members'

warranting practices: they do not provide warrants.

As far as this study is concerned: although we shall analyse the production of facts in the report at a local level, there is no reason to assume that the organizational and literary character of such reports is ironed out, neutralized, tested, validated, balanced or in any other way 'improved' at subsequent stages in its life history. Indeed these subsequent stages might well add to its complexity as an organizational and literary product. In any event the distillation/production separation rested on a division between reports produced by individuals and multi-party produced reports. Since there is every reason to view the individual's report as an organizational produce, it is itself a distilled product and the distinction between individual and distilled largely redundant except to indicate different temporal stages in the life history of the report.

8.3 Embarrassing Literary Features of Reports

We have no interest in criticising the writers of source reports, e.g. social workers or in legislating on how sociologists should use those reports. Our concern is to show how current borrowing practices are not usefully seen as copying practices. If there is any implied criticism of sociologists it is to the effect that they seem curiously conveniently forgetful of the nature of reports and that this managed omission removes nuisances to their factual arguments. In brief, the source report and the transfer procedure are frequently implicitly misrepresented by omission.

It is most important that our categorization of source reports as organizational and literary products should not be taken as criticism. Criticism implies that matters could be otherwise[14]: for as long as such reports are produced within social organizations and in natural language, for that long at least, they cannot be otherwise. It is not so much unfair and carping to criticize as nonsense. Melvin Pollner[15] has neatly highlighted the conceptual contradiction for some such criticism in the use of a notion of false labels which predicate an unlabelled real situation. The pre-existence of raw social reality to social interaction is, of course, denied by labelling theorists. These theorists vary in the openness of their criticism of labellers and labelled. Some make use of notions of false, inaccurate, one-sided, or amplified labels[16]. There can be no doubt to any reader of 'Becoming Deviant'[17] or 'The Education Decision Makers'[18] as to whose side the author is on: Becker states so more explicitly in the essay of the same name[19]. Other writers push back the blame to the state or the processes of history[20] but here again there can be little doubt that the situation is represented as blameworthy, inaccurate or at least unfortunate. Whether the label is conceived as the produce of individual actors, organizations or the crisis in contemporary capitalism, it is represented as unsatisfactory. One way its unsatisfactory quality is displayed is through a presented disjuncture between it and the behaviour or situation that it is said to refer to. Ethnographic work can ridicule labels by showing the richness of the situation

that the report violates[21]. Marxist criticism can ridicule
the level of the report as inadequate for its task. Indeed
that is the ideology of much 'Radical' social work[22].

These presented disjunctures between report and fact work
off a view of the report as essentially or importantly, a
report of facts, true or more usually untrue. This is, of
course the same view implied by the general sociological
opinion of reports as implicit in citation practices, and
discussed above.

A brief consideration will show that it is frequently restric-
tive, highly selective, and often naive view of what a report
is or does. We can note that restriction and simplification
work to make facts transferrable. A preliminary alert,
without phenomenological indulgence, should be sounded by an
observation that few organizations producing reports ~~
concerned with truth as an exhaustive criterion. Some may
expect a report to contain truth, others to be true enough
to do its work but even these have notions of reasonable
truth which are far from simplistic. To oversimplify and
distort, we can say that reports contain other things than
truths, that the relationship between those things and truths
are such that truths cannot be simply extricated from them,
and that members expect these things to be there. They
expect there to be a beginning and an end, often a story.
They may expect some courtesies or some implied subsequent
action or some display of agency efficiency or whatever is
normal for that report. It is not our concern to claim that

reports are routinely good not bad, but that practical good-
ness involves far more than truthfulness and that these other
qualities are not readily separable from goodness.

We thus do not accept the view implied by some sociological
writing practices and specifically by labelling practice, that
reports are simply referential or that they ought to be. We
also take issue with those, contemporarily, Althusserians, who
might regard the report as an ideological product. Whether a
case history is held to start with conception (for Freudians),
community migration (for community workers), current situation
(for Reality therapists), or the accumulation of capital (for
some Marxists), it not only has to have a start but that start
has to be read as such. Writers and readers of such reports
thus share at least one common orientation which has little
to do with truth or ideology, but derives from the member
obvious literary character of reports.

Without anticipating our analyses of particular reports, we
can, on the basis of   the presentation chapters,
hazard some features of Social Work and Probation reports
that may be issues attended to by some readers. We will note
where these issues impinge on the truths that sociologists
search for.

8.4 Affection Allocation

Many readers feel as they read a report, different affections
and sympathies for the characters. As characters become
established, actions become seeable as in or out of character.
Twists and surprises, changes, become readable; inexorable

processes can be conceptualised as one track continuations
of past categorizations. In that light workers 'can be seen
to have done all they could'. Effective characterization
can invite reader to complete information given in
summarized or list form since same action can be differ-
ently read according to who is the actor, characterization
of personnae and distribution of sympathy can provide for
repairs of various actions and events.

8.5 The Unities

The reader does not expect even those of the classical
unities which could be, to be observed. He is prepared for
radical reconstructions of time, place and action. Events
will be read not only in a different sequence to their
occurence but also in a different sequence to their notific-
ation to the office and coming to the attention of the
reporter. Long periods may be compressed by relevance rules.
Short periods e.g. remarks may be reported at great length
in indirect speech. Characters 'actually' off-stage may be
indistinguishable from those on stage. Reader expects writer
to use hindsight without elaborate declaration. In short he
expects a collection of events and characters which serves
the purpose of the diagnostic frame of the agency (not just the
reporter, since others are involved).

The methods for writing and reading such a collection have
little to do with copying.

Readers can or at least like to be able to extract the 'nitty
gritty' of a report. Bits of a report are read as 'nitty-

gritty' others as platitude, background, already knowns or irrelevancies. The report which is itself a selective and reordering collection is divided and selected and reordered. Parts of it are, as it were collected 'around' the nitty-gritty. That nitty-gritty/platitude distinction may result in pillages of context for items that are diagnostically implicative.

Characters are not expected to tell their own stories. More important, the author is expected to attribute qualities, intentions and meanings and to tie present to future events in ways __unavailable__ to the characters[23]. Whether it be good fiction or no, a good report demands author intrusion[24]; author must in Sartre's words 'play God'[25].

In all these precising, reordering, constituting procedures the report derives its character as an illusion. If it is to be a faithful illusion it has to recapture the intensity lost through such procedures. The reader, to take James[26] example, who reads suffering to have gone on for as long as the social worker noticed it to have gone on, owes that impression to the management of illusion in the service of a faithful reality reproduction. How else can the worker communicate the intensity of personal observation in two pages?

8.6 Implications for Action

The communication of intensity is no aesthetic luxury but one method of achieving another reader concern. Reader may distinguish the urgent from the not urgent, the grave from

the trivial, the attractive from the distasteful, the
organizationally or personally perilous from the safe.
Reader may look for what to do next with what speed, care,
anticipation, reluctance, or foreboding. To precise what
sort of action to do next, he may be able to sort the report
into organizational or ideological types that it can be read
as a 'case of'. These types have a purity in that certain
mixes do not work. The grammars of Freudianism, Community
work and Marxism as well as the grammars of Statute are
matched systems of categories (need-response, problem-
solution, infraction-penalty, etc.) to an extent that impure
reporting and categorization makes not a bad report but an
unintelligible one.

Accounting Features

Some readers read for accountability. They find bets hedged
or diagnoses 'stood by'. They read for a 'full' report with
no gaps, each event serially, sometimes chronologically
leading to the 'next' with no omissions. They look for
competence display. One way they may find it is in matched
pairs where the story is worked up into certain needs or
problems to which the activities of the worker can be seen as
equivalent[27] solutions. Reader may read to cut out ambiguity,
muddle, vagueness, uncertainty, imprecision and all the other
troubles of social work. For some readers it is possible to
discern a sequential chain that culminates in an end that
could not have been otherwise. Within that chain he can
discern facts from other things without their facticity being
explicitly claimed. He can read categorizations of the unique

case which make comparison possible with other cases and indeed conversion into statistics, trends and generalizations beloved of sociology.

These and other similar features derive from the status of the report as a literary, sometime narrative product of an accountable and case transferring organization. Whether the reader be another social worker or a superior or a sociologist, he approaches the case through the written word and in the writing find these features. It is in the sense that they are found that we talk of them being contents of the report not in the sense that they are put there by writer. The sociologists claiming to find facts in the report may not find these things but he confronts the fact that others do. We shall endeavour to make provisions for the reading of features like these so that we may represent their neglect by sociological reports as more than accidental. If we can show them, we also will try to show their character, the embeddedness of the facts in them. The sociologist represents the source report (implicitly) as facts and frills. He claims to copy the facts and leave the frills. He does not use (often) the words of the report so he might term the transfer a 'copy'. We would term it a paraphrase at the best. Paraphrases, unlike copies, are creative acts for which the paraphraser is obliged to take responsibility. The implicit representation of a paraphrase as a copy enables the paraphraser to trade off imported materials as if they were legitimated materials. The importation process itself is not in practice open to inspection without the risk of consider-

'digression'. The paraphraser thus remains unaccountable for his creature. In this sense and to this extent the importation is a rhetorical practice.

Notes

1. M. Ashton, 'Toward an Understanding of the Industrial Attitudes and Behaviour of Young Semi-Skilled Workers', Youth in Society No. 13, September/October, 1975.

2. S. Hall, et al. Resistance through Rituals, No. 7/8 Cultural Studies, Summer 1975.

3. E.g. Sociology and the American Sociological Review.

4. See the remarks on 'quoting' in the analysis of Ashton's piece.

5. H. Garfinkel, '"Good" Organizational Reasons for "Bad" Clinic Records', in H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethno-methodology, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1967.

6. H. Sacks, 'Notes on police assessment of moral character', in D. Sudnow (ed.), Studies in Social Interaction, Free Press, 1972.

7. H. Mehan et al, Sequencing in the Classroom Mimeo.

8. D. Sudnow, Passing On: The Social Organization of Dying, Prentice-Hall, 1967.

9. D.H. Zimmerman, 'Tasks and Troubles: the practical bases of work activities in a public assistance organization', in D.A. Hansen (ed.), Exploration in Sociology and Counselling, Houghton Mifflin, 1969.

10. A.V. Cicourel, The Social Organization of Juvenile Justice, Wiley, 1968.

11. M.C. Elliott, Similarities and Differences between Science and Common Sense, in R. Turner (ed.), Ethnomethodology, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1974.

12. J.M. Atkinson, Suicide: The Social Organization of Sudden Death, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Essex, 1973.

13. J. Coulter, Perceptual Accounts and Interpretive Assymetries', in Sociology, Vol. 9, No. 3, September, 1975, pp. 385-396.

14. Or at least the criticism that the author is not doing, so implies!

15. M. Pollner, 'Sociological and Common Sense Models of the Labelling Process' in R. Turner (ed.), Ethnomethodology, op. cit.

16. J. Young,'The Role of the Police as Amplifiers of Deviancy, Negotiations of Reality and Translators of Fantasy', in S. Cohen (ed.), Images of Deviance, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1971.

17. D. Matza, Becoming Deviant, New York, Prentice-Hall, 1969.

18. A.V. Cicourel and J. Kitsuse, The Educational Decision Makers, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1964.

19. H. Becker, 'Whose Side are we on?' in Sociological Work: Method and Substance, London, Allen Lane, 1971.

20. See for example the later work of the National Deviancy Symposium.

21. J. Young, 'The Role of the Police ...', op. cit.

22. See the magazine 'Case Con'.

23. This is discussed in W.C. Booth, 'Telling and Showing', The Rhetoric of Fiction', Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1961.

24. The Literary consensus seems to be that such intrusion is necessary in literature as well but should be ordered.

25.   J-P. Sartre review of 'La Fin de la nuit', Nouvelle Revue Francaise, February, 1939.

26. See the discussion in W.C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, op. cit., p. 42.

27. The notion of pairs is derived from H. Sacks. See in particular: H. Sacks, Lecture 1, April 4th, Spring 1972, U.C. Irvine.

CHAPTER NINE

PRODUCING RECOMMENDATIONS OUT OF DESCRIPTIONS:

THE CASE OF PROBATION REPORTS

9.1 Introductory Remarks

Our concern is show that Social Work and Probation reports
do not present identifiable 'facts' free of literary and
organizational context and ready for transfer into other
rhetorical domains. We shall in this chapter concern our-
selves with Probation reports, particularly Social Inquiry
Reports. After describing what we read the reports as saying,
we shall try to point to aspects of the text or of our common-
sense knowledge of probation circumstances that provide for
those readings as more than speculation. Standard methods
of Content Analysis[1] and more recent attempts to construct
story grammars[2] would seem to treat the items of the story
as available prior to analysis[3]. Content Analysis would then
discuss their frequency: story grammar their organization.
Radically different is the approach of Fish[4] who, by stressing
the role of interpretive practices in reading, makes the 'text
disappear'[5]. While accepting Fish's emphasis on the act of
reading, on what reading does to the reader rather than what
any phrase means or says; and thus also accepting the notions
of numerous correct readings, we would wish to suggest,
following Sacks'[6] analysis of conversation that there is a
core of formal practices common to reading acts in Western
culture. Bluntly; what it means may be variable; how we
attribute meaning may be common.

As we have apologised before; both the inadequacies of current

knowledge and techniques and of the author, do not permit
us to identify those common formal practices with any
persuasive certainty. What we do offer are descriptions of
readings that point to certain reader concerns and tech-
niques as worth investigation. In our view, such descrip-
tions constitute a case to answer in their depiction of
reports as not containing available 'facts' and that is our
central concern. We hope to show that reports are not what
some sociologists tactly accept them to be. If we can hint
at what they might be; then we shall be more than content.
Our claim is to have taken _literary_ sources seriously.

At this point we would add that at least another exercise
is possible. Some writers, notably Cicourel[7], have focussed
on the relationship between reports (doctors') and the inter-
action (consultings) that they 'claim' to report. He studies
the summarisation and elicitation procedures involved[8].
Contrastively, _we_ focus on the reading of the report as an
orderly literary product.

Initially, our attention is on Probation reports, particularly
S.I.Rs. These are written by a probation officer for
magistrates. Practices vary in different offices but in the
case of most reports that made up our data, they were _not_
scrutinized by senior officers and although read out in court,
magistrates had copies. We treat these reports then as
Recipient Designed at least for the magistrates. In
consequence some of the points we made in the previous section
(e.g. communicating urgency) may not be relevant here.
Further, the officer scarcely features as an explicit actor

in the reports, and his work is not of direct interest as
is the case in Social Work reports. It is of considerable
indirect interest, however, as we shall see.

The nature of these reports prevents their reproduction here
in forms that might aid their identification, reconstruction
and location. The reader will only be presented then with
short exerpts: which colossally restricts the sort of
analysis we can do. Any intricate sequential work is
unpresentable.

9.2 Initial Interests

C.I.As at first glance seem concerned with:

1. Describing a problem.
2. Offering a recommended solution.
3. Linking 1. and 2.

Sensible recommendations may have the feature that they can
be seen as implicated by, derived from or at least consistent
with the description of the problem. Further, the recom-
mendation is to enable someone to decide what to do next.
The law, in instances, provides instructions on how to derive
a decision from a described problem. But in the cases we are
to consider, the derivations possible are numerous and the
probation officer has both to help categorize the problem
and recommend within the range of possible derivations. The
point is that there are no unequivocal instructions on how
to categorize problems or on how to derive one solution. The
range of possible categorizations is bounded by a competitive
narrative situation (CNS), in which others, e.g. the police

will offer other versions of the 'same' story. The range
of the solutions is bounded by the law relating to the
categorized problem.

Despite these range restrictions, the probation officer is
being asked to derive a recommendation from a description.
His court appearances are then regular invitations to commit
the naturalistic fallacy; to derive an 'ought' from an 'is'.
A substantial body of philosphical opinion finds this task
impossible but probation officers' standards (and presumably
magnistrates') are not philosophical but practical. They
centre on notions of 'the sensible thing' and 'what we ought
to do under the circumstances'. With proof and recommendations,
'enough is enough'[9].

We will note without comment that probation reports are
expected to precis life histories, of a central person. A
picture adequate for our purposes of the moment is that an
S.I.R. is -

1) Some sort of a moral tale:

2) Which is hero centred and in which hero is characterized;

3) In which, as in all good tales, character should be
    consistent with narrative;

4) and moral with both characterization and narrative;

5) Which is told in a competitive narrative situation (CNS);

6) By a legitimated narrator;

7) To help with what to do next.

8) The whole is subject to notions of 'enough' evidence,
    fairness and courtesy where (we may speculate) enough is

more than other competitive narrators'.

(Enough may well involve increasing one's own or diminishing
a competitor's evidence, fairness, etc. In the impossibility
of philosophical solution of the naturalistic fallacy it may
well involve exercises in plausible consistency.)

While a '<u>situation</u>' cannot logically implicate an action: a
<u>described situation</u> often does in practice (to members). But
the probation officer is not able to describe the <u>offence</u>
situation in any way he chooses that might implicate a recom-
mendation because of the C.F., at least not directly. However
he can describe the <u>offender</u> so as to implicate certain recom-
mendations and even change the implication of the offence
thereby (this obviously pertains in state of mind cases and
in juvenile cases). Sometimes characterization of the hero
will not be simple as when there is a series of past offences.
However some moves open to the probation officer who wishes to
overcome the naturalistic fallacy for all practical purposes
may be:

1) Temporalise the story into a 'Then' period (which may be
when the offence was committed, etc.) and a 'Now' period.
Talk of the defendant's character now as meriting such and
such a decision. Then-and-Now transition may be organized
through maturation and growth concepts or through notions of
clear breaks in life ex.

'... there are indications of change, perhaps best described
as greater maturity ... since his arrest ... During his last
period in custody ...' R15.

or,

'during the months that followed the events outlined above
... during this period ... since he was released.' R7.

The offence in these reports is acknowledged but contrasted
with what the defendant is like now. We might term this
'_true but dated_'.

2) Characterize the offender as a consistent and sympathetic
character. By sympathetic I do not intend pleasant but some-
one we can feel for as real. 'Macbeth's suffering conscience,
dramatized at length, speaks a stronger message than is
carried by his undramatized crimes ... suppo e he ('the poet)
wants 'is audience to pity what looks to any external view to
be a wicked man, or to love, as in 'mma, what looks to any
external view to be a vain and meddling woman - what then?
very resource of style, of transformed sequence, of
manipulated inside views, and of _commentary_ if need be -
will be called in aid'[10]. The incident is made irrelevant.
Or again if the events will take it, characterize the hero
so that his usual, routine essential state is contrasted
with an unusual, isolated, accidental incident, as for
example in, 'The commission of this offence seems totally out
of character for David'. R9

The offence in these reports is acknowledged but displayed
as irrelevant or incidental. It is _true but of little_
importance.

3. Motive is of course a link between actor and act. By

recategorizing actor and motive, act can be recategorized.
Work may be done to the end of reducing theoreticity or
conventionality[11] (he did not know what he was doing or, he
could not help it). Such work may focus directly on the act
or more indirectly attribute low scores of conventionality
and theoreticity to the offender in general, for example:

'He insists that he was an unwilling participant in this
escapade.' (particular). R13, and

'Alan saw this as a minor incident and was surprised that it
led to a court appearance.' (particular)R.14, or

'Barnes is of a rather immature personality and has some
difficulty in coping with the normal demands of life and in
understanding the effects of his actions both on himself and
others ... he cannot read or write.' R24 (general), and

'Stewart appears a fairly bright and lively person on the
surface but in conversation it becomes apparent that he is of
limited intellectual capacity and has some difficulty coping
with the demands made on him.' (general) R4

Motive categorization works through severing normal actor-
act links. In the case of general categorizations, these are
not achieved, as our quotes might suggest, by a line but by
consistent categorization of offender in terms that reduce
his theoreticity, or conventionality, or both, in general and
thus in the particular case. The quotes we make are 'summaries'
of previous work then.

A technique that seems, superficially, to bear some resemb-

lance to motive work is Remorse. Speculatively, remorse-displays work in several ways: they may sever the actor-act link retrospectively and open the way to temporalising work as in Move (1).

'Clive discussed the offences with me openly and, I think, honestly. He now realises very clearly that these are very serious, but does not appear to have thought of them in this light at the time.' (my italics). R8. Here we have a contemporary acknowledgment of the gravity of the office with an implication of repudiation, a putting (temporarily) behind one. An acknowledgment with a more explicit repudiation is,

'... but recognised nonetheless that he committed an offence. He clearly regrets having become involved and has promised his parents that he will not get into further trouble.' R.13 (my italics). The last sentence here contains another remorse element which is 'resolution not to sin again'. This is frequent

'Brown has a strong desire to lead a normal, quiet life and now realises ...' R.17, or,

'He has expressed his good intention for the future ...' R.4. Yet another possible component of remorse may be sorrow,

'He appears to be genuinely sorry and regrets ...' R.8, and another would involve desire to make amends to repay victim,

'He is eager to repay the National Westminster Bank at a realistic rate.' R.7

In short it would appear that we have mistitled the work
'remorse' as all the classical elements of the liturgy of
confession seem to be present: acknowledgment of sin,
acknowledgmentof the gravity of sin, repudiation of sin,
sorrow for sin, desire to lead a new life and to repay where
possible. Some confession formularies involve requests for
advice and support (the counsel of the confessor and prayers)
and without surprise we find, 'He has shown himself willing
to discuss relevant experiences and attitudes'. R.2.
Conversely failure to avail oneself of advice prejudices the
efficacity of the confession and is a mentionable,

'... He constantly made excuses for non-attendance' (of super-
vision) R.15. I think it is possible without treating the
court proceedings as liturgy, to suggest that there are common-
sense understandings of links between acknowledgment,
repudiation, sorrow, renewed intention, advice, support, and
repayment that make up a remorseful attitude and that the
pair to that attitude is routinely penance and forgiveness,
and perhaps support.

The remarks we cite have some face value as evidence of this,
but the categorization of offender as acknowledging, sorry,
eager to repay, etc. is achieved through the narrative and
hero characterization not through isolated sentences.

In all events, the attitude of the offender to the offence is
superimposed on the offence and a suitable response to that
attitude requested as sentence. He did it but he is remorse-
ful.

4) We have just seen that a sentence has multiple potential relevancies. Should it fit the crime or the present attitude of the criminal? e.g. remorse. Another possible relevance is consequence, especially consequence on existing action. The probation officer may suggest that existing supervision, or whatever, is working well; or if he wishes to commit himself less, shows signs of beginning to work well, and that it would be unwise to sentence so as to destroy good work and good relationship,

'However, with a more firmly established relationship, Watson is now beginning to make better use of probation.' R.24, or,

'his constructive attitude to probation'. R.7.

He did it but when choosing a solution, bear in mind that an existing solution is beginning to work therefore do a continuation.

5. There is a move open to the reporting officer which short-cuts the work detailed above. Grounds for accepting an officer's recommendation may be not that it is implicated by the narrative directly but that the recommending officer is a competent recommender. The officer can then use the report to display his general competence, his professional competence and his special knowledge of the individual case. That competence may be displayed in a variety of forms. First impressions of the reports are that there are few expressions of professional diagnostic anxiety, even fewer overstatements of gravity, hardly any source acknowledgements and no indications of urgency. The officer does not often write that

he is unsure, nor that X is very worrying, nor does he acknowledge source: nearly all the probation officer's statements are reports of other peoples' statements yet only in a few selected instances does he write 'Mrs. X says she suffered from ...'. The problems of second or Nth hand reporting are routinely disguised and on those rare occasions when source is acknowledged, it is to the end of doing distancing or some other citation work rather than in proclaiming the ambiguous foundations of probation knowledge.

In cases where competence is appealed to in justification of the recommendation, that competence is worked up throughout the narrative and the appeal is implicit therefore we cannot cite one sentence examples but we shall return to the issue later.

Two other techniques which seem to be present but which rarely are successful on their own are:

6) To distribute sympathy and pity for the defendant in such quantities and type that they outweigh guilt. The hard luck story through pity. This would seem to be a variant of conventionality reduction.

7) To simply cut out all other alternatives to the recommendation offered: that is to take the 'range' and leave only one possible solution,

'In the circumstances I do not think that any alternative supervision is likely to have any more beneficial effect.'
R.28.

There are of course other ways that recommendations are pulled out of narratives and characterizations. Certainly there are lots of 'in the circumstances' type devices. However the point at issue is how they are read and in the absence of any clear logical link or detailed rhetorical link, that is, where recommendations are 'just made' or only stylistically linked, the reader has an interest in trying to make links between narrative and recommendation, or between author competence and narrative and recommendation. Thus whether there are clear indications of the operations I suggest or not, the reader who wishes to assess the adequacy of the narrative or the adequacy of the officer, has the narrative as a resource for so doing.

The above 'Moves' then are some ways in which he might link narrative and recommendation and they constitute practical explosions of the naturalistic fallacy. Crucially what makes them possible is the literary nature of reports, the multiple ways to categorize things, the use of sequence, of author intrusion, of characterization and so on. We now turn to the depiction of aspects of that literary nature.

9.3 Facts and Frills

A favoured distinction for report readers is that of facts and frills. Of course many of the things in these reports that the officers would regard as facts, others would not. Facts and frills are not the same for sociologists, magistrates, defendants, probation officers and so on. By frills I understand insights, helpful comments, background sketches, courtesies and so on. The various readers do however share

the belief that facts can be got at. They can be disen-
tangled from frills. Sidestepping issues of the nature of
facts, I do not wish to do the usual derogating operation by
showing a fact to be really a frill. Instead I wish to show
that facts do more than is factual: they do frilly work.
Facts are never just facts. In the particular instance we
analyse, the fact does characterizing work, background work
and with some other 'facts' conventionality and theoreticity
reduction of the general sort, so that a general character-
ization may be given, i.e. 'Collins is of an immature person-
ality and has difficulty in coping with the normal demands of
life and in understanding the effects of his actions both on
himself and others.'. Such a 'fact' can be found in the
opening of the report:

'Collins lives with his family in a modern, well-kept council
house. Material standards are high, Mrs. Collins having used
a legacy from her father in the home. Collins' father came
to live at home, on his release from prison, at the end of
May (date of report 13.7.-), but left again last week. HIS
WHEREABOUTS ARE NOT KNOWN.' R.28 (my caps). The fact is that
Collins' father's whereabouts are unknown.

Intermediate grammar books tell us to use passives when
'object' is more important than 'subject' and frown on
Passive by agent constructions. Report writers favour
passives partly as a way of achieving impersonality. The
author can be made to disappear. In practice however the
reader can fill in missing subject by a number of devices.
The nature of the report and the reporter, Mr. Collins' recent

departure from prison and the official terminology 'Whereabouts unknown' encourage us to see author as probation officer stating police categorization or some other official categorization of Mr. Collins. Whether or not that is the case, there is another aspect of interest. The fact that the police and probation ask wives, amongst others, in order to establish husbands as being categorizable as whereabouts unknown; the fact that husbands are usually accountable to wives for location (indeed that is why police ask them), the fact that Mr. Collins is not just 'whereabouts unknown' but 'came home ... at the end of May', the incorporation of the information that he is 'whereabouts unknown' in a paragraph on family, all indicate that whether first or second hand Mrs. Collins does not, or says she does not, know where he is. And also that he is not just absent, that is in a state of absence, but that he has produced that state by _leaving_ (in the last six weeks).

There are, all over the western world, wives whose husbands work in varying locations, prototypically, commercial travellers. They leave in the morning or whatever and their wives do not know where they are. Furthermore there are probation officers who have clients who may be in dozens of different places, some unknown. However, such remarks as:

Caught in passing
'Can I speak to Mr. Talbot please?' (visitor to wife)
'... I'm sorry he is at work at the moment - uh he'll be back about six if you can call again.'

show that at least in some circumstances having one's where-

abouts unknown may not be sufficient reason for a wife
declaring that she does not know where one is. The reason
she answers as she does is that knowledge of location is
established not as a scientific category but a practical
one. It then varies with practical intent. For example
in the above case the wife did not know which of several
places the husband was in - but interpreted the question
as a request for access in the near future and offered the
evening. Only if the visitor had asked to see hsuband
immediately would she reply that she did not where he is.
That is, visitors asking where people are, may be seen as
desiring to locate them soon in which case temporary absence
does not become an issue. As Sacks[12] has pointed out absence
can be trivializable or not. Similarly lack of knowledge
(whereabouts unknown) only becomes oriented to and mention-
able under certain circumstances. The issue here has further
implications insofar as the total lack of qualifiers of
whereabouts unknown indicate that date of return is unknown.
The availability to most wives of qualifying formulations such
as 'he will be back around six ...' derives from at least two
possible sources. Either there is a leave-return pattern: if
he catches the 8.43 then he returns on the 5.36, or Wednesday
is his early night, etc.; that is a routine. Or he has said
when he will return that evening. So when we say that Mr.
Collins has left, we do not intend that he has left for an
explicit or implicit somewhere. Mr. Collins has left his wife.
He hasleft without saying if or when he will be back, or where
he is going, without discussion. There is leaving and leaving
just as there is not knowing where someone is and not knowing
where someone is. Leaving and absence are not factual terms

of physical separation but are given their particular sense
through the social circumstances in which they occur-circum-
stances expressed in words subject to similar contextual
constraint.

Husbands who leave their wives in the way mr. Collins has
done are certainly candidates for 'bad husband' and 'bad
father' and their corollary duplicative category is poor son
and poor wife. Thus the lines do serious (provisional) moral
and pejorative and pitying work. Further having one's where-
abouts unknown deprives the authorities of other face sheet
data (current job etc.), a deprivation which itself does
pejorative work.

Lastly the phrase in context provides for and is reinforced
by a later phrase, 'Mr. Collins ... has spent many periods
away from home.'. I suggest that we do not read these
subsequently mentioned but previously occurring absences as
residential training courses or conjugally agreed holidays but
as more leavings. That is provided for by (at least) 'left
again last week'.

The above discussion is not an adequate discussion of the
notion of mentionability, leaving-returning pairs or of the
particular text. But it is adequate to establish that 'where-
abouts unknown' does some sort of frilly sympathising,
characterizing work; certainly that it is not a geographical
or legal fact read for transfer.

9.4 Displaying Reporter Competence

Because of the fact that S.I.Rs are routinely a couple of pages long[13]; and whatever linking technique used, demonstrations of author competence are desirable. The brevity necessitates short cutting operations to point to more competence than is 'shown' in the report and thus legitimate any other linking operation. Casually put; if the report has the right controlled, cool competent tone, then that will both support other links and the recommendations themselves. What are the components of cool professional tone?

Reading through the reports, there are many items which seem quite reasonable to mention but whose relevance for the recommendation is difficult to understand.

'Collins has had a disturbed background. As a baby he suffered from fits and, at the age of four, he contracted poliomyelitis, spending twelve months in hospital. He has suffered from asthma ever since then ... to go into hospital with meningitis ... Mrs. Collins a diabetic and suffers from chronic ill health.' R.28.

If we were to substitute bronchitis for meningitis, there would be minimal effect. The actual illness is irrelevant; although we should not substitute say self-inflicted for 'caught' or inherited diseases as these do different moral work. That apart the disease is irrelevant. However, if we substituted 'was ill' for the particular illness, we should lose something. That something is literally particularity, being precise[14]. Precision may be a component of competence.

Obviously any precision will not do, it must refer to
relevancies (illness-deprived childhood-offence) although
its own precision need not be relevant. Readers can of
course discover author in comment. They can also discover
the activities that produce the comment and tie those to
author in generalized form thus I read the above as
displaying access to medical records. $I_n$terestingly,
officers do not often seem to feel obliged to explicate the
relevance of their remarks. That work is left to the reader.
Again in the above, it is I, not the writer that read and
constitute the first sentence, 'Collins has a disturbed
background', as a title of a list that follows. I do that in
my efforts to put the paragraph together as being a thing and
to find relevance. It is I that read the illnesses as a
History or list of illnesses not as separate facts but I so
read them because of their elegant positioning and common
relevant denominator. The list makes sense as justifying and
explaining the first sentence and in looking for its relevance
I take things that might help me in forming moral judgments
about Collins. To the question 'what does this list of ill-
nesses tell me, or how can I read this list so as to help in
the   moral exercise at hand?' I can at least answer that
unpleasant things happen to Collins that are none of his
fault. Given the orientation to character and the list like
quality of the illnesses I can further see that Collins is the
sort of person to whom unpleasant things happen. Also through
the list I can see that the probation officer may know more
unpleasant things which he cannot cite through lack of space.

Later characterizations of Collins as 'immature' and
illiterate re¹nforce and justify that reading. The
probation officer's recommendation is based on a final claim
to reduced particular theoreticity due to reduced general
theoreticity. Collins has been categorized as inadequate,
'Due to his state of confusion ...', etc.

The paragraph which shows Collins to have a history of
unpleasant illness through none of his own fault is I feel
essential to the eventual categorization of the hero. Further
as with the Booth quotation of Macbeth, it dramatizes hero.
Thus we have a deeper picture of the sort of inadequate that
hero is, a consistent portrayal of hero, and a 'precise'
portrayal of hero, all of which displays officer as knowing
hero deeply, precisely and fully, and therefore links
indirectly as well as directly with recommendation.

Enhanced Narrative (consistent, precise, etc.)

Plausible
Recommen-
dation

Enhanced Author (consistent, precise, etc.)

Reader knows that author cannot put in all 'the facts'. He
does not expect them. His trust of author leads to trust of
text and his increased trust of text to increased trust of
author. Reader and writer have a contract. This holds only
if writer can provide reader with enough material to read
the report as a competent author's report. And so we return
to our concern with adequacy. If displayed precision is one

component of adequacy, what are others. We suggest fullness,
no loose ends, no dualism.

How can a precis be read as a full account? Leaving aside
issues of what a full account looks like and whether it is
achievable, we merely note that members do expect precis
to be reasonably full. One aspect of narrative biographical
fullness is temporal, i.e. that there should be no gaps in
hero's life. There should be no years of which it could be
asked, 'What happened between 1966 and 1968?'. In Jamesian
terms, we ask how the illusion of temporal fullness is
achieved.

Most of the reports use some form of episodic heading system-
matically organized around address change, education and job
change, pre and post convictions change, or character
development. The biography is converted from a string of
unknown years into **officer organized episodes**, for example

'Dawson was born in Yorkshire, one of two children. He moved
to Wales when his parents' marriage broke up and lived there
with his mother ... until he left school ... embarked on a
career in catering and progressed steadily until he set up
his own business as a cafe proprietor in Suffolk. This venture
failed and he was ... bankrupt in November 1971, having amassed
debts of £4,000.

Over the next two years Mr. Dawson held two jobs ... until
January 1973 when he appeared for the first time before a
criminal court.

... Since January 1973 ... has secured a new job ...

... Mr. Dawson became increasingly disillusioned with his new
job ...

... The offences for which Mr. Dawson is before the court
today were committed during the month that followed ...

His behaviour during that period ...

..ince he was released on bail ...' R.7.

This exerpt illustrates most of the change devices well,
except character. It is not so much that some officers divide
lives into character phases, but that they divide them by
actions (usually of significant others and especially of the
family) that might be plausibly linked with character change,

'His mother died when he was thirteen years old ... a year
later his father was hospitalized following attempted suicide
... R.15.

These headings provide for a system of reference that we
might term, 'During the time' when he was living in Yorkshire/
Wales/before/after his parents' marriage broke up/before/after
he left school, etc. Some of the headings of these episodes
seem restricted to episodic and retrieval work. Others are
topic organized in terms which encourage us to see them as
candidate explanations, e.g. R.15. We may note in passing
that episodes have affinities with states and that states are
candidate social and psychological offender characterizations.
Further the organization of episodes by events e.g. death of

mother (R. 15) is an opportunity for the officer to import favoured significant events into narrative on a stylistic-sequential rather than a logical-aetiological count. The origin of their importation does not, of course, restrict their possible reading as explanations.

Our concern is with the episodic work that contributes to full precis. The first feature of episodic organization in the reports is that there are few gaps. Each new episode starts at the conclusion, sometimes overlap, of a previous. An explicit example in R.7 is 'until January 1973 ... Since January 1973.' In one sense there appears to be no gap, for episodes end and begin with the same boundary. The full quotation reveals some intricacies however: especially with regard to the post January 1973 episode. 'Since January 1973, however, Mr. Dawson rebuilt much of his life and by the spring of last year (1974) he had re-established contact with his ex-wife and and son and had secured a job as a representative, leaving his previous employment as a fitter.' Since can be read at least three ways:

> From the instant when,
>
> Starting at some time after,
>
> Because.

The first and third have strong links through commonsensical post hoc ergo propter hoc. The second would present a gap. The events that occur 'within' the episode are process terminations (by the spring ... had re-established contact with his ex-wife and son and had secured a job as ...' (my italics)). They point to unmentioned beginnin s and given the

nature of the processes, unmentioned dispositions and intentions of the actor. Mr. Dawson has pulled himself together and initiated contact with his wife and son and applied for jobs and attended interviews, etc. the culmination, termination and consequence of which processes are the mentioned 're-established ...', etc. If these processes started and these intentions were conceived subsequent to January 1973, then the second (gap) reading of 'since' is correct. But in the absence of any starting dates other than the mentioned January 1973 and because that date was that of the court appearance which is seeable as a reason and thus start (propter hoc ergo post hoc!) to pulling oneself together it is read as the start and there is no gap. The closure of the gap then is not achieved solely by author; it is a collaborative reflexive act of reader and writer; the reader searching for gap closers; the writer providing them. It is this collaborative quality that makes possible nit-picking criticism of reports as containing omissions and the possibility of distinguishing between a precis with omissions (fair criticism) and a precis where omissions can be found (nit-picking, unfair criticism). The above discussion also points up the complex inter-relationships between the episodic and aetiological organization of reports.

A second aspect of episodic organization concerns retrieval and questioning. If another wishes to ask about something in the report, one way he can locate it is by making use of the officer's episodic organization. I would see that episodic organization <u>in the court</u> as an invitation. Any questioning

that does not use it would then be doing some sort of
rejecting. This happens. Receivers of reports can make
themselves awkward by ignoring the reporter's organization
and referring to calendar dates, substituting their own
organization or (most annoying) asking reporter to precis
the precis. But if the receiver uses the report's episodic
organization any further information will tend to be
'further' that is details. 'Could you tell us some more
about X during the period ...'. Details of course are not
the stuff of precis. Therefore the episodic organization
of reports is a technique for subsuming omissions into
details insofar as temporal completeness is concerned. It
is a contribution to the full precis.

We might add that the episode-state link and the probability
that receivers will take on reporter's episodic organization
for common reference, may mean that topic omissions can also
be presented as details and developments of mentioned states.

Before concluding comment on episodic organization, we would
emphasize its retrospective accomplishment. Subsequent
information can be used to reinterpret prior events and see
them into episodes. Episodes can be linked logically and
sequentially to minimize ambiguity and surprise. Episodes
can be dramatized and brought to life or backclothed by
depriving them of any readable use except as face sheet data
and gap fillers. The contrast effected between the two is
one resource for controlling and confining controversy. Apart
from obligations to provide for a gap filling reading, to
contain similar points of references to others in the CNS and

to subsume relevant events, the probation officer has

considerable autonomy in episodic organization. That

autonomy certainly helps him to produce a full account and

thus increase his displayed competence; provides a resource

for consistent argument to the same end and may ever control

the parameters of that argument.

5.5 Character Consistency: Walk-on Parts

The S.I.R. is hero centred and the characterization of hero

in a consistent way is of considerable dramatic importance.

Contrastively, other characters are not in the dock and are

walked on and off at reporter's pleasure. While staple

mention is made of parents and others, their points of entry

and speaking lines are manipulable as are their characters.

Whole populations known to hero are annihilated in there

reports. Those who are seen have only those characteristics

which pair with those of hero that are brought out.

The CRS produces a situation where hero will be seen to have

done both good and bad things. Whether the officer wishes to

rescue hero or not, he has an interest in producing a believ-

able characterization and that means the resolution of

discrepant dualism. The resolution involves controlling the

traffic of judgments from act to actor. The offender has done

at least one blameworthy thing, the offence, and that blame

must either be diverted to others or parked.

One use of walk-on characters is to share the blame.

'At this time he financed himself and his brother as market

traders but, after two months, they were both in custody and

all the money was lost.' R.7.

In this report, hero's poor brother is silent for the rest
of the drama except for one small part.

'Both the offences ... were committed with his brother who,
unhappily, has a bad record.' R.7.

In other reports we find,

'He blames his b d association with squatters for his direc-
tionless way of life.' R.15.

'He insists that he was an unwilling participant in this
escapade.' R.13.

The presence of others either conjoined in the same sentence
or conjoinable from other parts of the story: others who may
divert some blame, is of course only one way of reducing
hero's culpability and not all that frequent compared to the
conventionality and theoreticity reducing techniques discussed
previously. The interesting point is that diversions,
excuses, and others are almost never introduced when hero
does something good. The only exception being, notably, the
probation officer. Offenders pass exams, get jobs, settle
down, etc. with no mentioned credit to friends, officials,
teachers, etc. or at least never any mention that might reduce
the hero's credit.

Issues of rightful ownership are just not raised in praise
procedures in the same way as in blame procedures. Further
the author does not present resources for reader to raise

then. This feature together with the reporter's ability
to introduce topics as episode markers enables reporter to
multiply credits and alter balance.

If such multiplication can be done in the extreme: and if
the negative balance is confined to one offence or so: then
reporter may be able to present offence as odd, isolated and
out of character.

One way events in reports may be read is to derive hero's
character. In this case the reader has a collecting interest.
He will search mentioned events for common, serial or
cumulative characterization of hero. That search can help
reader repair indexicality. One of the reports contains the
following:

'Timothy lives with his parents in a two-bedroomed council
pre-fab, which they have occupied for fourteen years. The
house is in good decorative order and is clean and comfortably
furnished ... Relationships between Timothy and his parents
appear to be very good. Both Mr. and Mrs. White are quiet,
rather anxious people who have never known any trouble with
the police before, and are very upset by this incident. They
have now placed restrictions on Timothy's activities and he
accepts these as being reasonable under the circumstances ...
Timothy is a very pleasant and intelligent boy who is able to
express himself clearly. He is able to take responsibility
and use his initiative. ... His academic standards are above
average ... position of responsibility ... well-liked ...
visits his maternal grandmother most week-days and his paternal

grandmother at weekends ... He rarely goes far from home

... genuinely sorry ... regrets the effect it has had on his

parents... The commission of this offence (taking a

conveyance) seems to be totally out of character for Timothy

... an isolated incident.' A.9.

In this account there are a number of descriptions of and

events attributable to Timothy.   Then there are cases of

several descriptions we can repair one by the others.

Consequently, although people do visit their grandparents to

ensure their inheritance that reading is unlikely here

because there is no provision for it by relevance and

recipient design or by other terms. Numbers of descriptions

(of activities or actors) may be collectively used to repair

each other by amendment, refinement or addition.

Superficially, in,

'Clive is a pleasant, friendly boy of average intelligence.

However he is immature for his age and appears to be very

insecure.' K.18. 'friendly' seems to add to 'pleasant'

while 'immature' amends 'intelligence', whereas in 'a friendly

and useful relationship', useful refines friendly.

What this amounts to is that there is no reason why we

should add Timothy's descriptors to produce an angel. We

might contrast them or more likely use them to refine the

picture of what sort of angel Timothy is. That is, there is

no reason in principle. In practice, there are no resources

for contrast work; no 'buts' and 'howevers'. We have the

resources to do refining work but we do not do it because
we do not need to. The amalgamation of the descriptors is
not to produce a character for Timothy but to make appropr-
iate a magistrate's reaction to wit: is he the sort of
person who merits leniency? One could remove almost any
of the descriptors of Timothy and leave his report similar
but weakened. If you remove descriptors from contrast work
balance is upset; if they are removed from refinement, the
final description is crude. Neither happens in this case.
It would seem that if an officer can find enough descriptors
collectable as person-who-merits-leniency without upsetting
the GU he can isolate offence. It is noteworthy that the
officer does not provide instructions to add descriptors, it
is the reader who does so in the absence of instructions to
the contrary and with orientation to juxtaposition and
sequence. It is as if the reader had a credit debit score
car with a space at the bottom for complications. In the
absence of **reporter** directed complications and with the card
formally laid out, reader distills the multitude of descrip-
tors into credits and debits. In the case of Yes/No
decisions with minor time variations, refinements are
redundant.

9.0 Conclusion

While we have produced neither enough data nor enough analysis
to attempt an extensive description of S.I.R's, we have done
enough to claim that these S.I.Rs show **resemblances**, as we
might expect, to the sociological texts analysed previously.
They are organizational and literary products which are

interactionally, argumentatively, sequentially and
narratively ordered and whole products. Their facts are
deerly embedded in the interaction, argument, sequence and
narrative and are not ready for transfer without, at least,
massive cleaning, if at all. The standard citation
practices of sociology do no more than rinse the facts
and are thus potentially rhetorical and persuasive.

Notes

1. Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities,
    O.R. Holsti, Addison Wesley, Phillipines, 1969.

2. "Notes on a Scheme for Stories', D. Rummelhart, in
    D. Bobrow and A. Collins (eds.), Representation and
    Understanding: Studies in Cognitive Science, New York,
    Academic Press.

3. I am unsure about this in the case of story grammar.

4. S.E. Fish, 'Interpreting the Variorum', in Critical
    Inquiry, Spring 1976, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 465-485.

5. Ibid, p. 485.

6. H. Sacks, Lectures, University of California, forthcoming.

7. A.V. Cicourel, 'Interviewing and Memory', in C. Cherry
    (ed.), Pragmatic Aspects of Human Communication, pp.
    51-82, D. Reidel, Dordrecht-Holland, 1974.

8. A.V. Cicourel, Discourse and Text: Cognitive and Linguis-
    tic Processes in Studies of Social Structure, to appear
    in Versus.

9. H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, Prentice Hall,
    1967.

10. W. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, Chicago Press,
    Chicago, 1961, pp. 115-116.

11. J. Kitsuse, 'A Commonsense Perception of Deviance', in
    H.P. Dreitzel, Recent Sociology, Vol. 2, Macmillan and
    Co. 1970.

12. H. Sacks, projected book of second stories.

13. The Et Cetera problem as Garfinkel has pointed out, would
    not be solved even if the officer had 100 pages, but the
    particular problem here is the member awareness of precis.

14. H. Sacks, lectures, op. cit., and D.C. Anderson,
    Interpreting Questionnaire Returns, unpublished M.S.
    A version of this is included in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

CHAPTER TEN

SOCIAL WORK REPORTS: A GRAMMAR OF VALIDATION AND SELECTION

10.1 Introduction

In this chapter we show that the validation and selection mechanisms of source report writers may be important factors in establishing the transferability of facts contained in their reports. In particular the orientation to the reports' initiation and organizational implication involves operations of validating client states and selecting case events. States, events, validation and selection are each and all reflexively enmeshed.

The social work reports[1] considered were written largely for other social workers. While such reports as Probation Social Inquiry[2] Reports for magistrates, and teachers' reports for parents, can be considered as reports for readers outside the producing organization; social work reports typically within the producing organization. This is not always so; and the distinction is very rough. We make it because we wish to study some consequences of a report being produced within an organization for that organization. Two immediate consequences are that, unlike S.I.Rs there is no competitive narrative situation at least not from another competing agency. There is no other agency producing an alternative report for a third agency to adjudicate. Secondly the intra-organizational reporter can count on some degree of shared professional reparative knowledge in his reader (which this author only minimally possesses!).

Our concern is with the Social Work report and its products

e.g. statistics of Social Welfare, as sociological sources.

If there are problems in the simple use of Probation facts,

problems which derive from the attempt to persuade an

adjudicator in a c.r..., there are also problems in using a

report that is organizationally confined. Some of these

reports are written to implicate certain organizational

reactions.

The selection of item for reporting the juxtaposition and

sequence of items and the sense that such items make, are

governed by a range of organizational reactio as well as

the range of any observed facts. We do not wish to detail

those reaction from a study of the organizations. This is

already available both programmatically[3] and in particular

empirical studies[4], instead we wish to observe that these

reports cannot be read meaningfully without a 'grammar of

organizational reaction'. They can, of course, be read

trivially without such a grammar, certain sentences being

seen as just there[5]. But any further reporter, e.g. a

sociologist, who wishes to use the details and facts of such

social work reports must either use such a grammar or produce

a reading of such eclectic abstraction that it borders on

fiction. Whether the grammar merely produces a different

fiction is another matter.

The two attributes of this grammar that concern us are: that

it is a grammar of practice, more, of organizational practice;

and that it is used to work up[6] the report. It is practical

in the sense that the report is concerned with what the
organization or its member(s) should do next. It is worked
up in the sense that the writer attends to the practical
implication of his report in its writing[7]. It is then read-
able as a worked up implication of an organizational
reaction not a theoretical[8] assessment of facts.

10.2 A Grammar of Organizational Reaction

We do not wish to circumscribe the many and various ways
that one report can be read. We do wish to maintain that
certain social work reports cannot be read in one particular
way without anomalies. Some social work reports might be
readable as 'about' the diagnosis and solution of a problem.
The ones that we read were read as 'about' an organizational
diagnosis and cure of a problem. Some were also read as
'about' the allowal or disallowal of a complaint, request,
invitation or application. The interviews that the reports
document were not gratuitous but were responses to the
initiatives of clients, other agencies, lay people, etc.
The reports were displays of appropriate response and guides
to future organizational response in the light of the
'original' initiative. Certain responses pair with certain
initiatives: request for money with granting, refusing,
passing to the relevant (money) agency, e.g. Social security:
request to see an official with granting, refusing, referring,
etc. One possible response is to re-categorize the state of
the initiator or client so as to implicate a different
organizational reaction. Consequently these reports may be
read as having one, or another or both of two concerns: to

present the state of the client as organized by possible
organizational response, and to present client/initiator's
initiative as reasonable or whatever. While these overlap,
they may occasion different work.

The report may be concerned with whether the 'problem' is
one of a type that the organization deals with. It will
probably consider whether the problem is occasional or
regular, serial or not, cumulative or not, getting worse or
not, temporary or permanent, isolated or typical, trivial or
important, a lot or a little. It will usually consider
whether the problem as referred is 'true' or not. When
these are done in the light of certain organizational cate-
gories or options such as; increase/reduce the number/
frequency of visits, refer to X, Y or Z, such categories and
options can be read as implicated. Matters which are not
categorizable within those terms may well be passed over;
it is noticeable how few 'loose ends' the reports contain.
However much more important for the citing sociologist is
that all this work involves a methodology. That methodology
provides a means for establishing that an event or character-
istic is frequent, occasional, regular, trivial or whatever.
Sometimes that methodology is anyman's: often it is derived
from organizational options. We address the matter of this
methodology in more detail later with regard to quantities
('often', 'more', etc.). But the methodology also seems to
include validating practices. The import for the sociologist
is that the facts and events that he imports may have been
selected, categorized, validated and counted by a system of

which he is, at least, partly aware.

10.3 Therapeutic Validation

In a recent paper[9], Schwartz addresses the problem of how
therapists, confronted with patients' claims to have done,
seen, heard things, etc., decide during the course of inter-
action that such claims are valid and true or not. He
suggests that these therapists are not well-equipped to
validate their patients' claims empirically nor are they
particularly interested in so doing. They do however have
a central concern with motive and the current 'situation' as
a resource. They proceed, _ideally_, as follows:

1) Let X be some proposition about the world.

2) Skip to a metalinguistic level and consider 'X' as a
   conversational object.

3) Find some verbal activity which is done by the statement
   'X'. (For example various remarks of the patient may be
   heard not for 'content', but for 'Is he being co-operative,
   secretive, etc.' Author)

5) Evaluate that motive as healthy, normal, or pathological,
   etc.

6) If the motive is found to be invalid or inauthentic, the
   statement 'X' is false. Do not believe the statement[10].

I think that certain characteristics of the social work task,
its vetting function, its concern with the individual, its
ties with psychiatry, make it likely that social workers will

use a similar procedure. Indeed it may be that anyone who has to make instant decisions of credibility _during_ an interview is obliged to use such procedures in order to find what to do next. If social workers do such work, their items will be validated on grounds which are in principle strange to sociological method. Such validation will also render particular things mentionable in the light of the validation. Yet another possible 'trouble' for the sociologist is that these practices are largely obscured in reports such as the ones we are to look at; which are far from transcripts. However we can try to follow the progress of such procedures into reports.

First we can note that accounts which pass the credibility test contain little or no account of the test. Only when the report contains grounds for doubt are such matters raised. Secondly, we may note that it is rare for step 6 to be explicitly announced in a report. Clients are not accused of specific deceit or mistake very often. Instead the motives are collected into a personality or character which is sketched out in the report and constitutes instructions on how to read _any_ remark by that person. Third, when motive is attributed it is done within the action and not as a comment.

'Mr. D took advantage of a ring at the door to leave the conversation'. K.32.

If a report scrutinizes through motive; that motive work is neither restricted to particular doubted statements nor is it separable from the action that the statements report. We may

then add the following steps to Schwartz' procedure.

7) Collect the inauthentic statements and the unhealthy
   motives to characterize the speaker.

8) Exemplify that character is one or two phrases not
   necessarily those which occasioned doubt.

9) Work them into the action.

The reader is then confronted with remarks in the report
that add nothing to his understanding of the case but
considerably to his picture of the client and can use that
picture to do appropriate work on the reported statements of
the client.

'Mr. B ... mild manner ... first remark was 'We have always
had a high standard of living' ... Although he spoke
fluently ... I felt they were going through a performance.
I had to use pressure to get him to talk about ... curiously
his resistance ...' p.32.

When we are told four paragraphs later that this man said
that 'All our problems would be solved if ... 'we are ready
to doubt some of what he says.

There are other resources for assessing the credibility of
reported statements massively present in the reports. One
consists in descriptions of the clients' behaviour during the
interview:

'Susan was ...agitated sitting right on the edge of the chair.'
(Susan).

Another consists in descriptions of background: tidiness of
the home, etc. Such matters constitute one type of reason
for finding the above argument plausible: that there are
extensive sections of the reports and styles in the reports
that need accounting for unless they are to be dismissed as
trivia. Secondly and correspondingly the reader needs
resources to find how to read the statements of the client
since there are rarely specific instructions attached to each
particular sentence.

The social worker uses these resources with the reader to
report that such and such is the situation. Given the
concerns of social work, this validating procedure will
nearly always provide a case for the organization to answer
once the interview stage is reached. Matching the client's
talk of trouble with his actions (including the action of
his talk) produces either compatibility in which case client
has a problem; or incompatibility in which case it becomes
possible to investigate the incompatability as a problem (the
notion of presenting problem). It could also present a non-
organization problem but then that would implicate a referral
reaction. Two further steps have at least to be taken before
the organization can take the case. First it should be shown
in the report that the problem is big enough as well as true.
This raises issues of frequency, regularity, size, urgency,
etc. The answers to these questions turn out to be
organizationally produced in that the categories of measure-
ment should fit the options of organizational response:

Is it serious enough to take up?

Does it need a weekly or monthly visit?

How quickly must we send someone?

etc.

Secondly, in the case of, particularly, a first report, the

initiative must be seen to be answered. The report should

not only inspect the problem but should do so in the light

of the reason for referral. The person or agency who

initiated the case and the topic of the case as referred

must be answered in that he has made a request, application,

complaint, etc. That work may be done by the validation of

the situation as above but the initiative may itself be

inspected. Frequently initiatives can be faulted as improper

initiatives without inspection of the problem. Thus a

complaint was seen to be improper when substantial time had

elapsed between the occurrence of the problem and the making

of the complaint.

'But two other problems presented as pressing are in fact of

longstanding'. 5.32.

Complaints to one agency which should be directly to another,

where the complainant knows this, are also suspect;

'Neither he nor she has spoken to the home help organizer ...

though Mr. P. knew her name and had met her.' 5.32.

Similarly awareness of problem and seeking help should be

joined unless there are extenuating circumstances:

... had been visiting or visiting a psychiatrist for
several months' (then why did she not do so... author).
However she felt her parents would not approve. (Exten-
uating circumstances. Author, (Susan's story.)

We are not saying that if an initiative is found to be
invalid then the organization has no case. As mentioned
before, such discrepancy may be traded on to produce a case.
What we are saying is that the report is not a report of a
problem but a report of an initiated problem for an organ-
ization that could later be involved in that problem in one
of several known ways, and a report which has a deal with
al orient to that initiative.

In producing orientations to initiative and implication,
the reporter has both certain events and alleged client
states as resources. In both orientations the state is useful
for validating and selecting events.

In assessing initiative and considering implication or-
ganizational reaction, the reporter has an interest in client's
state. The state of the client can influence such matters
as whether he or she can be seen as potentially lying to or
manipulating the referrer, if other than self, and the
agency if referrer is self. In particular, clients are known
to engage in such activities as seeking illicit benefits,
manipulating workers and seeking attention. These activities
are tied through M.J.'s to recognizable _types_ of clients
and clients in certain _states_. In assessing an initiative,
the alleged state of the client is matched with the alleged

events of the case. But the noticeability of events and their mentionability are reflexively effected by the alleged state and type of client. The validating and selecting operations are enmeshed in each other.

Further, many specified social work reactions are second pair parts to states and conditions. A story of events will have little implication without hero characterization. The report then, has an interest in assembling events into states; in validating perhaps by the Schwartz procedure such states and using the states to select and categorize more events and to recategorize retrospectively those events which produced the state. This reflective mix of validation and selection, state characterization and event mentionability is demonstrable in Suson's story.

10.4 Susan's Story

Referred by: Self (Susan Morris (15 years)

Problem as referred: Felt confused and mixed up. Asked
                            to talk to a psychiatrist.

Dates of interview: 18th and 24th May, 1976

Summary

1. Susan referred herself, having visited the education welfare office. She asked to talk to a psychiatrist and was given our address.

2. She had increasingly felt confused and had been thinking of finding a psychiatrist for several months. However she felt her parents would not approve.

3. She describes her anxieties as developing over the last year but as becoming more hopeless since the beginning of this year.

4. Susan has become apprehensive about school. She has 'truanted' frequently, for example was absent for nearly 3 weeks before coming here, but her absences were not followed up. She has tummy pains and headaches in the morning and its more difficult after holidays and absences ?'school refusal'.

5. She is screwed up about her physical size (which is well developed but not unduly large) she has slimming tablets from the G.P. She took an overdose of these in January after persistent teasing at school. She was very sick for a day in hospital, but this was not followed up.

6. Throughout both interviews Susan talked about her relationships with boys. To some extent her interest appeared normal for adolescents but her persistence concerned me. She is especially antagonistic towards her father for thwarting all her relationships with boys. She complains of her parents strictness and her lack of independence.

7. At the first interview Susan was very apprehensive and agitated sitting throughout right on the edge of the chair and desperate to talk to someone. She talked with some intensity and drama first of school, then of her family and eventually of her internal fears and anxieties.

8. At the second interview Susan was depressed. She was
lethargic, apathetic and dreamy. She described the
'improvements' at school and home without enthusiasm
and with no corresponding subjective improvement. She
felt just as confused and hopeless. The school makes her
feel a dunce, and she just feels she does not belong and
that no-one understands. She made me feel very maternal
towards her, as though she were fragile and isolated - a
girl just trying to hang on until the next appointment.

9. Although at first considering how much she is seeking
attention I now feel her depression, isolation and sexual
tensions require an assessment and skilled response that
her parents and school have not been able to provide.

Clients do not <u>come</u> to the attention of Social Workers; cases
are initiated or 'referred'. The referral may be viewed as
an event i.e. an occurrence on a specific date. But it
provides a candidate categorization of the client and, a
categorization that typically occurs and is reported <u>before</u>
the events of the case. Susan comes in a state. The referral
process is itself accountable and reasons have to be given.
We then <u>start</u> to read with a candidate categorization. Face
sheet data, e.g. age (15), sex (through name - female)
provide additional resources for reading Susan. We are also
told that she referred herself. The words of the form,
'Referred by' constitute, technically, an open question, but
any correct familial or Christian name would not provide a
right answer. An answer such as 'Harry' or 'Mrs. Taylor' or

D.E.J. would not be right where as 'Self' or 'Mrs. Morris' or 'E.W.O.' would be acceptable. The difference between these two sets of answers is superficially that the second set is more locatable than the first and locatability is of some concern in accountable matters and in cases where 'good communications' are idealised. Presumably Season's address is given somewhere which might give clues as to which E.W.O. office was involved. The search for collectable categories encourages us to read Susan Morris and Mrs. Morris as belonging to the same family and thus, probably to the same address. The locatability is argumentative as well as geographical however. An answer that read 'a certain Mrs. Taylor of 54 Queens Street' would provide for locatability but provoke the further question 'Who's she?'. A suitable answer to that would not be any description e.g. 'a keen gardener' but one that explicated her possible link with Susan and the state, e.g. 'a neighbour who comes in to look after the children when mother is working late.'. The categorization of the referrer enables us to read the referral act. It may also facilitate other operations. Discrepancy between referrer and state as categorized especially in three areas

1) that the referrer is not in the collection that knows about the collection of which the state is a member, e.g. lay people ascribing complaints in technical terminology,

2) that the lay person has no right to statements about that collection,

3) that the referrer is a member of some other problematic

collection can occasion the doubting of the alleged

state on the respective grounds

a) that the reporter does not know what she is talking

about

b) that she has no right to say such things

c) that she is well known as a complainant, neurotic

person, etc.

Where referrer is self, (1) and (3) are still at issue and

on occasions (2). In this particular case, there is little

doubt that persons credited with knowing that they are

confused include self and that 15 year olds can be credited

with the technical competence to formulate 'feeling confused'.

Indeed as Sacks[11] and Watson[12] have pointed out self may have

at least the initial (prior to psychiatrist) claim to person

state knowledge. The social worker can then report 'problem'

as 'feeling' rather than being confused. Certain states,

e.g. intoxication and delusion provide grounds for doubting

self's competence. In this case (Susan's) the minimal doubt

is attributable to a combination of other information which

provide for seeing Susan as a possible member of another

collection 'Persons seeking attention' (paragraph 9). We

suggest that the categorization of the perpetrators of events

e.g. Self as Referrer and Education Welfare Office as 'giver

of our address' (paragraph 1), is a crucial resource for

repairing the event. Further that categorization is organized

around the concerns of the social worker, predominantly the

state of the client.

A second way in which events can be seen as state organized

occurs when a state provides the relevance for subsequently

listed events. The fact that Susan's state is 'confused and

mixed up', and that it is self attributed by a non-

professional encourages us to read it broadly, i.e. non-

professionally and to include apprehension (paragraph 4) and

being screwed up (paragraph 5), persistance and antagonism

(paragraph 6) as manifestations of it. Anyway there is no

announced topic change and our concern is with Susan. Matters

then like truancy which could have quite different implications

are then read as justifications of the alleged state or as

examples. In the absence of any other tiable category, the

tummy pains and headaches are readable as proof of the

apprehension. It will be noted that these justifications are

interpretations of events into a series, the pains being

different occurrences of the _same_ pain, the truancies being

absences for the _same_ reason. This seriality is made possible

by the collecting of the events into homogeneous collections

(the pains and the truancies). The subsequent quantification

and the implicit co-occurrence: 'in the morning', e.g. before

school; 'more difficult after holidays and absences' enable

us to repair the lost referrent of 'its' through some lay

version of the law of concomitant variation. The items are

so worked up into an orientation to a state rather than to

events that the material to construct other versions is

scarcely available. For example in another report we read:

'The current home help is unsatisfactory, She comes late,

does not keep proper times, lets strangers in and mumbles

to herself. They have had her nine months. The previous

home help had been much better and more of a mother, e.g.
she got the little ones off to school and took their clothes
home to wash. Allison is increasingly having to take over a
mother's role. She stays in from school ...'R.32.

Although the items here have the character of historical
events and repeated actions if we ask what they are all _doing_
in the paragraph _together_ we find that we have an explicit
list of the current home help's attributes and an implicit
list, through a contrast structure of her failings, which
justifies her status as unsatisfactory. Any 'single' event
could be left out without changing the reading of the para-
graph. While it may seem likely that home helps who do these
things are unsatisfactory, the state (unsatisfactory)
organization of the list directs our attention to this lack
of satisfaction as the _sole_ consequence of all the listed
items. A similar device works in Susan's story over para-
graphs. Susan is the only common actor across the paragraphs
and the situations that their organized events display.
Despite our knowledge that many 15 year olds truant, that
fat girls get teased and the possibility of casting the
parents as problematic, Susan remains as the central problem.
The manner of constructing the story around hero's state
tends to produce a casting where hero is the only one present
on all occasions and in all the 'different' situations. It
can't be all of them, it's not a conspiracy, it must be her.

10.5 The Quantification of Events into States Over Time

An important step in assessing states and implicated actions
may be the extent of particulars. Frequently events and states

are quantified in these reports. We have already noticed

the sort of work that precise quantifications[13] can do.

These reports contain precise terms, e.g. 'They have had her

nine months' and 'vague' terms, e.g. 'The previous home help

had been much better'. I shall concern myself with the more

imprecise terms, although the distinction does not turn out

to be particularly important. Specifically, I am concerned

with comparatives. But in general I am concerned with

repairs of such expressions as 'truanted frequently', 'not

unduly large', and 'more difficult?' (paragraphs 4 and 5 of

Susan's story). The first paragraph of R.36 is as follows:

'The family have been pretty stable for the last month. Mrs.

Santa was quite joyful and relaxed. She had taken more care

of her appearance and looked more attractive. The sitting

room is considerably improved now she has curtains. For the

first time Mrs. Santa has repeated what I have said in

earlier interviews, and has obviously been thinking about

things. She more actively and coherently anticipated in the

interview. She has now, I think, found the interviews quite

helpful'. (I have underlined some quantifications.)

It is tempting to regard such imprecise quantifications

simply as less precise than the precise ones. After some

deliberation however I decided there was a more important

distinction: the imprecise terms do different work.

When someone is a social work client in a report, certain

things that would not usually become mentionables except in

their absence, become mentionables. Many reports talk, for

instance, of tidy homes. The potentially abnormal status of clients makes mentionable normal attributes. Clients are not usually, or hopefully, compared to any norm but to the one suitable for the circumstances of their state. The reader can use the face sheet data of age, sex and class to do some lay sociology and picture a normal Mrs. Santa. Social work is more than incidentally concerned with this since it is concerned with the return to normality. If we envisage the successful social work involvement as starting with a state which may get worse and then mends and finally is normalised, it looks as if social workers might wish to compare states within this process, and the events within those states. To do this involves at least two tools: a better/worse comparative and an allocation into episodes. Frequently this allocation is done by visits. The topics that are reported, typically appearance and communicational competence in this sort of report are largely available to and reportable by <u>interactants</u> and so we read last month as last visit. The mention of these particular things with temporal reference, produces a contrast so that we can see Mrs. S_anta as being not so joyful, relaxed and attractive <u>before</u>. Although more is a comparative so that 'more' attractive means attractive plus; the combination of the comparative with a contrast structure and the special rules of mentionability for abnormals enables us to read the 'mores' in this text not as more attractive, etc. but as <u>less</u> <u>unattractive</u>. That these are all good things (attractiveness, improved sitting rooms, etc.) enables us to read the

comparisons as saying that Mrs. Santa is not as bad as she
was. Each modifier is working not on the stated quality
but on its implied antithesis. This then leaves Mrs. Santa
somewhere between last visit's low state and normality. The
improvement is reported on a visit-time scale and it is
consequently not difficult to see it as the consequence of
the visits. This retrospectively oriented success tied to
reporter's visit is implicit of a suitable reaction for those,
who like social workers, want to know what to do next. That
is: things seem to be getting better with your visits, so
continue. Had the reporter wished to indicate that visits
should be increased in frequency (or reduced) then a
description of changing pace of the change would be necessary,
probably invoking more episodes for comparison. Yet other
reactions, such as refer-to-another-agency, close the case,
etc. would call for other descriptions. The state that Mrs.
Santa is left in may be quantitatively imprecise but it is
reaction precise. The reporter has quantified the client
along a simple scale no improvement-wait and see, improvement-
continue, etc., and the use of that scale is accurate.
Problems will of course arise if someone reads those terms
off as less adequate versions of another scale. They are
organization reaction specific. We also note that the events were
only readable on that social work scale by predicating the state
of the client.

Fish, talking of ambiguity[14], notes that where a reading
produces ambiguity, then that ambiguity should be seen as the
product of the lines and not resolved. I read Mrs. Santa's

positioning vis a vis 'cure' and 'normality' to be so
ambiguous. Mrs. Santa is much better but ... and the but
is not filled out. It does not have to be. The quantification
is organized by a grammar of organizational reactions.

Not only are the quantifications agency specific but the
quantified terms are also tied to the quantification.
Although the introduction of curtains may seem to be an
epistemologically simple event, the curtains may be mentioned
to exemplify the quantification which is not. Neither the
quantificationsnor the terms quantified are patently ready
for transfer to another rhetorical domain.

A similar situation occurs in another report where a tug of
war girl is described as owning school work which is 'not
good'. If instead of asking 'How bad is not good?', we look
to see the presented particulars, we find; that the school-
work problem involves the social worker who is to see the
school staff; that the girl is isolated; that there is a two
fathers/no father situation. In brief the characters
involved instruct us to see by virtue of their proper concerns
and activities both the character and the amount of the bad-
ness. The cost of the reports have category bound activities
and a scale of bound possible reactions. These are bound
both to the actors and their state. In most of these reports
the quantifications turn out to be tied to the narrated and
reactive opportunities of the different agencies involved and
their 'current' states. It is by reading the report as a
report by and of those organizations, and using their presence
in it, that we can read quantified events intelligibly, or as

intelligible.

A final excerpt that points up both quantity issues and Schwartz's error procedures is in from another report (R.32).

Under the heading 'Presenting Problem' the social worker writes that the home help is unsatisfactory. '.he comes late, she does not k.ep proper times, lets strangers in and mumbles to herself'. The report is on a family of father and several children (aged 14 down). A second problem that the family mention is the house. Mr. Phillips mentions some others. It becomes clear that the Social worker is not in agreement with their/his diagnosis. As Schwartz points out, he does not search for evidence that the home help really is satisfactory. After all, the evidence is strong and shared that she is not. He sees the issue as a complaint about a problem and then questions the sincerity of the complaint by showing a bad fit with the problem. In particular he suggests thatit is late:

'But two other problems presented as pressing are in fact of long standing: the home help has been unsatisfactory for nine months and the housing transfer for ei.hteen. So they want to keep these problems or not solve them in the way proposed?'

He immediately continues in a new paragraph:

'I was surprised not to be offered material about the wife and had to press for it. Despite pressure what 1 got was meagre enough.' ... 1 cannot believe that they do not miss her.'

Their complaint is seen as a true comment but a poor
complaint and its poverty is displayed in three ways.

First it is seen as too far removed from the problem in
time. It is not a recent complaint but a problem of long
standing (nine months). One thing we might want to ask is
how nine months becomes readable as too long. Would it be
too long for any problem-complaint pair? In fact complaint
procedures are not just a matter of speed. In many instances
problems should not be complained about, e.g. trivial
instances, isolated instances, unavoidable instances, etc.
This problem is presented as regular in that much is to do
with timekeeping, for example, the home help arrives and
leaves frequently so infraction opportunity is regular. The
consequences are presented as serious in that the eldest
girl is mothering rather than attending school. The husband
is said to know the person to whom complaints should be
directed. The problem is not phased and no reasons for the
non-complaint are given. Further doubt is cast on the
accuracy and sufficiency of the presented diagnosis by
comments that the talk of the family seemed to be rehearsed.
The father is systematically impugned as an informant.

'His first remark was 'We have always had a high standard of
living'. The worker agrees that they do but the remark is
hearable as pejorative through 'first'. It continues '... I
had to use pressure to get him to talk ... his resistance
... (he) frequently checked facts with (his eldest daughter)
... (One such was his own year of marriage ...) ... (he)

produced several more problems some of which seemed unreal
...' Later he is described as 'evasive, etc.'.

The complaint is impugned as improper and the chief complain-
ant is derogated as an informant in general. It is when
these are accomplished that motive analysis is started: if
the complaint was not for the reasons stated nor reliable
(since done by an unreliable person) then what is the reason
for the complaint?

This report describes a first visit. The reporter manages
through his work with the complaint to invalidate the
complaint yet leave the impression that something is wrong,
indeed case work is to continue, 'I said I would call two or
three more times anyway, to discuss the presenting problems
and then we would see.'.

The derogation of the husband-as-informant also involves the
derogation of him as parent and as sole parent presenting the
children as having one parent and he weak and unreliable.
The derogation of the husband thus removes one problem to
imply another. Although there are allegations of unparental
events (spending the holiday money on clothes) the derogation
of the husband is achieved overwhelmingly, as Schwartz
suggests, by motive analysis of his interview remarks, 'Mr.
Phillips took advantage of a ring at the door to leave the
conversation'. Although the relationship is reflexive there
is a sense in which the assessment and categorization and
selection of mentionable past events is the product of
character (state) understandings produced in the interview.

10.6 Summary

In our consideration of both probation and social work reports,
we have been guided by two restrictions: first we have
attempted to show that in relation to certain issues there
is a case to answer, rather than to analyse or formalise
that case. Secondly, it may well be that the different
issues we address could be formalised into a few features,
indeed they are derived from a very narrow range of tools
(categorization analysis, character analysis, etc.). Given
the current paucity of work in this field (analysis of written
materials) we feel that discovery of the scope of the field
is more important than the formalization of description.
That being our view we shall not attempt to summarize the
discussions of reports into 'Formal features of written
Reports'. Rather we offer a battery of considerations that
citing sociologists might orient to. They concern what we
might term qualitative issues in the transfer of items from
reports to sociological texts. Some are irrelevant to some
reports and to some sociologists but insofar as they share a
theme it is that the report is a reflexive, total and agency-
specific product which is constructed according to cares
(about narrative, motive, adequacy, relevancy, credibility,
etc.) not considered in most empirical sociological
procedures. These cares cannot easily be rinsed off some
factual or eventful ore suitable for sociological refinement.
Maybe the dirt is more interesting than the fabled ore anyway.
A consideration of the dirt could be broken down to the
following questions:

10.7 Qualitative Considerations in Citation

1) To what extent and in what ways, with what consequences
   is the report worked up for a Competitive Narrative
   Situation?

2) To what extent and in what ... etc. are validation and
   selection of materials done by reference to notions of
   triviality, datedness, relevance, neutralization, e.g.
   Remorse; to notions of appropriate social response, e.g.
   complaint times; to notions of motive ascription?

3) How does the characterization of hero effect related
   actions, especially those of hero?

4) What 'logical' links are made by reader's use of sequence
   and juxtaposition?

5) What was the ultimate speaker origin of remarks in the
   text?

6) To what extent are contents produced by extra-reporting
   concerns, e.g. display of author competence?

7) To what extent are cited 'facts', states, etc. produced
   by background work? And to what extent does the citation
   of 'mere' facts do more work than might seem apparent?

8) To what extent are reliability, precision, etc. produced
   'within' the citation they validate?

9) How are such matters as completeness and episodic struc-
   ture achieved? How does the ordering effect of their
   achievement work on either individual facts or final

judgments and categorizations?

10) What is the effect of the reporter's freedom with walk-
on characters?

11) How does reporter's interest in leaving no loose ends
and in tidying moral discrepancy, e.g. producing
actions 'in character', affect citable terms?

12) How is knowledge of the observed state of a client
during interaction used to instruct on reading the
state that the client is reporting.

13) How are client states validated and events validated?

14) How does categorization into events and states control
scrutiny?

15) How are repetitions of the 'same' event produced? How
is quantification achieved?

If these questions are not asked by secondary report agencies
and if they are not suggested by the methodology manuals of
such agencies; then, since they all constitute potential
'troubles' to the acceptability of items and such items
unexplicated transfer, the omission of their scrutiny can
with some justification be presented as a rhetorical device.

<u>Notes</u>

1. At periods from 1973 to 1975 the author observed social
   workers making and discussing reports and it is largely
   on such observations that the chapter is based. The
   excerpts are quoted for demonstration purposes. Their
   status is, then, rather different from the excerpts
   from the S.I.Rs in the previous chapter.

2. See Chapter nine.

3. H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, Englewood
   Cliffs, Prentice Hall, 1967.

4. See notes 6 to 13 in Chapter eight.

5. The trivializability of items is noted by H. Schwartz in
   H. Schwartz, Data: who needs it? unpublished m.s.

6. Concept derived from D. Smith.

7. We would prefer to be evasive about nature of 'attending
   to'. We do not however imply any conscious taking the
   role of the other.

8. By 'theoretical' I intend 'extra-situational'.

9. H. Schwartz, On Recognizing Mistakes: A Case of Practical
   Reasoning in Psycho-Therapy, 1975, unpublished m.s.

10. H. Schwartz, Ibid, p. 19.

11. H. Sacks, Every One has to Lie, Lectures, University of
    California, 1967.

12. R. Watson, Formulating Moral Profiles, unpublished m.s.
    University of Manchester.

13. Chapter two.

14. S.E. Fish, 'Interpreting the Variorum', in Critical
    Inquiry, Spring, 1976, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 465-485.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PERSUASION THROUGH THE APPEAL TO COMMONSENSE

AND SYMPATHETIC RECOGNITION

11.1 Introduction

At the outset of this project, we promised to describe

four ways of achieving sociological persuasion through

rhetoric[1]. The fourth and last is the trade on commonsense.

It is a frequent ethnomethodological claim that sociological

argument involves producer and consumer in unexplicated use

of commonsense. This general claim involves a general

definition of commonsense within which many of the features

of the three rhetorical practices already discussed would be

included. Thus when we speak of commonsense in this chapter,

we refer to practices not already discussed. This chapter

consequently treats some residues. And since we have avail-

able a chapter on residual matters, we have seen fit to

include a brief discussion of 'sympathetic recognition' in

reading arguments; the process that might lead reader to find

e.g. that an argument 'rings true'.

11.2 Commonsense and Persuasion

In sociological arguments, it is assumed, with regard to many

of the __terms__ used and __relations__ claimed in those arguments

that reader will understand and recognise them without much

explanation. Reader is to accept the referents of such __terms__

as being things that 'anyone knows', and the status of such

__relationships__ as 'obvious'. Sometimes these assumptions are

articulated in asides which stress the obvious character of

the phenomena ('It is clear', 'We know', etc.). Sometimes
the conventional nature of commonsense,is stressed ('It is
now generally accepted', etc.). Very much more often there
is no aside. Put simply; if the reader of a sociological
argument scans the terms and relationships of that argument
and removes those that are defined or demonstrated, those
whose status is 'borrowed' through citation, those which are
claimed as obvious, he will find himself left with the bulk
of the 'argument'. Which is to say that arguments do not
start fro... 'scratch'. All this is not generally held to
invalidate the argument.

It is in this sense that we speak of 'Persuasion and the
appeal to commonsense. We have already encountered an example
which shows the reliance on commonsense in establishing
relationships in the analysis of Parker's trade on common-
sense ageing schemes in 'View from the Boys'[2]. That
analysis shows also that one 'answer' provided in the text-
books to the 'charge' of trading on commonsense is very
difficult to operationalise. That answer is to clarify and
distinguish between assumptions and arguments. Sacks, in an
elaborate discussion of the differences between talking of
'Everyone lying' and e.g. 'protestants lying', suggests that
there may be, contrary to expectations, more difficulty in
establishing the second than the first[3]. The aspect of this
pertinent to our concern is that sentences with subjects such
as 'Protestants' or 'the boys' or 'the working class' or the
'youth' are read differently according to circumstance and
context. One difference is the extent to which the

identification of the subject is trivializable. A proto-
typical case involves 'confusion' over whether an actor
doing something did it because of his categorization as
protestant, young or whatever. We put 'confusion' in
inverted commas because we do not wish to suggest that
members actually are confused over such issues. They 'solve'
such problems by reference outside the sentence to other
sentences and to commonsense. Any argument which tried to
separate assumption and argument would have to present, at
least, an analysis of itself.

This 'problem' once again points to the uneasy relationship
between 'scientific' argument and natural language. It also
points again to the possible uses of that relationship for
persuasive purposes. The work of Sacks and his colleagues
on the Membership Categorization Device[4] stresses the inter-
dependence of identifications of activities and actors, of
terms and relationships, of recognition and normative
expectation[5]. To invoke commonsense understanding and
recognition of ordinary words is to invoke commonsense schemes
of 'logical' and normative relationship[6]. It is most
difficult, if not impossible, to hold down statements in
natural language to a simple complementary reference to two
denotata. One simple persuasive device is to use an appar-
ently trivialized identification to do significant work.
This device can almost be elevated to a principle. He who
wishes to persuade through recognition, should reproduce
faithfully a reported activity while changing its argumen-
tative product. Make the same utterance do different work.

This device may involve cutting out and working up. Just
as citation, in moving a 'fact' from one page and context to
another, deprives it of the original literary context and
surroun s it with a new one, so what is acceptable common-
sense may be faithfully reproduced, its original context
cut out and a new one worked up, so that it is recognisable
as what any one knows but does the persuasive work of its
new master.

We have already treated many aspects of working up in the
section on presentational devices. We confine our attention
at this point to one important device, the <u>combination of
commonsense</u>. We shall then turn to consider the work involved
in removal from original context. In view of the possible
persuasive character of this second operation we shall term
it the <u>convenient abstraction of commonsense</u>. Lastly, as
mentioned, we shall look briefly at '<u>sympathetic recognition</u>'.

<u>11.3 The Combination of Commonsense</u>

We have chosen the same data for all three considerations
and shall work within it. One reason for its choice is as
follows: it is difficult to show the persuasive practice of
cutting out original context if one does not have original
context available for analysis. We have chosen a piece that
is rare in that it reproduces <u>its</u> original commonsense
context at last in part. It is an article by Graham Murdock
'Youth in Contemporary Britain: Misleading Imagery and
Misapplied Action'[7]. We concern ourselves with the following
section which starts at line twenty eight of the original.

One of the quickest ways to gain a general impression of
prevailing ideas about young people is to look at the kinds
of images which are pumped out day after day in the news
media. Here for example, is a random selection of stories
taken from my local paper, the Leicester Mercury. There
is nothing unique or special about them. They are not
particularly exiting or sensational. None of them made the
front page. They are however, typical of the routine news
coverage of young people.

1. YOUTH FINED FOR INDECENT EXPOSURE

2. BOY 16, DIES IN CHAPEL

Both from page five for September the fourth 1975. Two more
from a week later September the eleventh:

3. YOUTH THREATENED WITH KNIFE AS GANG GO ON
   RAMPAGE (p13)

4. MEDAL BOYS THROW PARTY. Eight boys who, over
   the last four years have worked for their Duke
   of Edinburgh Awards, last night threw a party
   for the people who had helped them. (p7)

And finally two adjacent stories from page 21 for November
the twelfth

5. SHOP FIGHT RINGLEADER TO FACE CROWN COURT.
   Carlton Gregory (17) pleaded guilty to causing
   Mr. Malcolm Harding actual bodily harm and having
   an offensive weapon - a hat stand - in Lewis's.

6. LOUISE GOES INTO EUROPE. Louise Riddlington, the
   15-year old winner of a 'Leicester in Europe'
   competition is having the time of her life.
   Wyggeston Girls' School pupil Louise won a two-
   day trip to Brussels for two - and went off with
   her mum to enjoy it.

Taking these stories together, two things stand out. Firstly,
they all focus on ways of spending spare time, and more
particularly, on the contrast between the wholesome recreations
sponsored and organised by adults, and the deviant and
dangerous things that teenagers are likely to get up to if
left to wander about the streets unsupervised.   Secondly, and
more generally, they counterpose two stereotypes of contem-
porary youth. On the one hand stand the model adolescents
who have knuckled down and achieved something worthwhile -
the prizewinners, award winners and channel swimmers; and on
the other stand the anti-social elements - the delinquents,
hooligans and sexually precocious. The basic contrast is
between adolescents who have been successfully socialised
into adult society and those who have failed and can't or
won't conform. Further, this difference, if it is explained
at all, is seen as the outcome of differences in individual
ability and motivation, so that deviance is mainly a matter
of instability or bloodymindedness. What is missing from
these accounts is any real consideration of the ways in which
success and failure, conformity and deviance, are rooted in
social situations, and in that complex web of advantage and
deprivation which makes up the British class system.

In his essay 'On the Analyzability of Stories by Children'[8], Sacks provides a machinery to account for how we hear certain items together. The Membership Categorization Device with its collection and rules of application can be used to tie two categories, an activity and a category incumbent, and (as variants of activity and actors), knowledge and owners[9]. Two aspects of the machinery are of particular note in the present context: the economy rule and the (modified) consistency rule: 'A single category from any membership device can be referentially adequate'[10].

'If a hearer has a second category which can be heard as consistent with one locus of the first, then the first is to be heard as <u>at least</u> consistent with the second'[11].

We know that various categories are ambiguous, the same term occurring in different devices with different references. The economy rule and consistency rule explain our recognition and combination of referents given that ambiguity. The description is recognisable through combinations of its surrounding categories. The device that permits recognition of possible description works negatively as well. It involves the elimination of ambiguity and the de-combination of category from other 'possible' contexts.

Simplistically put: a device that suggests certain orientations does so, at least partly, by suggesting that we do <u>not</u> orient to certain other possibilities. Yet the description can still be adequate by the economy rule. It is by virtue of this that the apparatus for recognition may also be

an apparatus for persuasion.

Murdock asks us to find several things in these passages
from a newspaper and provides us with the machinery for
the search. We are to find that the excerpts are <u>about</u>
youth, at least initially; 'They are ... typical of the
routine news coverage of young people.' Later we shall
find that they are not only, perhaps not at all, about
youth but are rooted in an unequal class structure. The
prime resource for or seeing the actors as young people is
that youth is one categorization that <u>can</u> embrace them all.
We are to see a categorization that will embrace them all
because the six excerpts are collected together. We might
summarize the procedure at least up to the good/bad contrast
as follows:

1) Take these stories together, do not look at them
   individually. Do not see their categories of actor
   (Youth, Youth, Boy 16, Medal Boys, Ringleader, Louise)
   as members of other possible collections. Collect them
   as in the same group 'youth'.

2) Within that 'one' group make the following divisions.
   Put the examples into two groups of three; group A
   consisting of examples 1, 3 and 5; group B consisting of
   examples 2, 4 and 6. Do not collect these items in any
   other permutations. You will find that the items have
   been spaced and divided by context references so as to
   help this collection and there are two collection titles
   available under which you can selectively list the two

groups:

'Model adolescents who have knuckled down and achieved
something worth-while - the prizewinners, award winners
and channel swimmers; and on the other hand the anti-
social elements - delinquents, hooligans and sexually
precocious.' The characteristics of each group can be
seen together not as separate. See e.g. prizewinning
and channel swimming together and in contrast delinquents
and hooligans and find one device that will explain both
the collection and the contrast that is successful
socialization/non-conformity.

3) Do contrast the two groups. Do not, for example, put
   them on a continuum either together or separately. The
   titles will provide you with ways to see them as
   opposites and no ways to scale them on a continuum.

4) You now have one type of actor (youth) and two sorts of
   actions. Find those two sorts of actions in the excerpts
   ignoring 'irrelevancies'.

5) Having characterized the actions in one way only, you
   are able to postulate the sort of actor in one way.
   The act adequately defines the actor. The contrast is
   no longer between different types of action but two
   different groups of actor.

6) We can now see the inappropriateness of explaining group
   traits as idiosyncratic action especially if we are
   sociologists.

7) **If you scan the reports** you will find little (no? author)
announced explanation of the behaviour. But if you use
my (Murdock's) translations of the behaviour you will
find that you can read in motivations according to the
contrast.. By using language more recognisable as that
of the news writer than the sociologist researcher (the
two 'possible' authors) I can make my motives appear to
be theirs, e.g.

'knuckled under ... hooligan ... won't confirm.'

Through the use of such language and the categorization
of the two groups as stereotypes, I can indicate my
exception to the views expressed therein but trade off
the two groups produced thereby to introduce (a two)
class analysis.

This summary does no justice to the elegance of Murdock's
argument. It is obviously not an adequate analysis of his
presentational work. But it does show the working up
operation that reader is asked to do. The working up is
itself achieved relative to a cutting out. The two are **inter-**
dependent operations. The sort of 'other' readings that
reader 'could' do is massively restricted in 'following'
this argument. Those readings are largely a matter of
speculation and depend on the context and concerns of the
reader. Yet one set that appears more than likely derives
from the fact, almost totally obscured by Murdock that these
excerpts appeared in a local newspaper.

11.4 Convenient Abstraction: The Annihilation

of Technical Context

Murdock contends, amongst other things, that these excerpts
are 'about' youth and that they present stereotypes. He
organizes them into two stereotype groups, 1, 3, 5 and
2, 4, 6. Another way to divide them would be into excerpts
that were only headings (1, 2 and 3) and excerpts in which
some of the story was included (4, 5 and 6). The justific-
ation for this is that the reader usually does different
things with the two groups. Such a division is part of the
technical context of the excerpts. Other parts include the
fact that the newspaper was 'local' and that these are all
'stories', not for example 'comment' or 'serials'. In order
to read intelligibly, reader searches for such directions as
these. I do not say that everybody reads in this way but
that many readers do use such features to facilitate their
reading, and that failure to do so may be held to invalidate
readings of the piece in a subsequent lay discussion. We
shall look specially at the 'headline only' group.

I, then, and I think many others, use headlines to find what
may follow. I know that local papers include comment,
serials, features, letters, advertisements, etc. and I use
the headlines to find what the subsequent text may be out
of that range. Possibly I look at the length and make a
decision to start reading or not. Journalists, at any rate,
think so, and spend time designing headlines with this,
amongst other things in view. None of this prevents someone
scanning a newspaper to find headlines to bolster their

stereotypes of youth. While such **strategic reading** is

<u>possible</u>, as indeed are a legion of other things, it is

highly <u>likely</u> that the technical reading of the headline **is**

made. The technical and substantive parts of the piece **are**

not independent. My assessment of the technical context **of**

the piece will affect any subsequent substantive reading.

Fairly obviously attributions of quality made in something

I read as an advertisement are read differently to similar

attributions in a review of competing products. The know-

ledge of what the piece is doing (trying to sell me something/

informing me) instructs me to do quite different things **to**

two sentences of the same words. That knowledge is

frequently to be found in the headline.

'Youth fined for indecent exposure' is a headline for a

story. The reader will expect a story relating some of **the**

events that 'led up to' the event of fining. The fact **that**

the story occurs in a local weekly newspaper is one thing

that suggests we see the fining, that is the event reported,

as recent[12]. Lots of concerns could be tied to the fining.

One of them is to treat firing as the end of a process **started**

by indecent exposure. Such a reading is at least grounded **in**

the observation of the co-presence[13] of fining and indecent

exposure in the heading. That co-presence and the consequent

possible orientation to process provides for a reading **of the**

heading as a story preface. As a story it will in**volve**

particular events of particular individuals. I then read

the heading as instructing me to find below a story that **ends**

in a fine. That instruction is useful since I know that

newspapers contain other things as well as stories, e.g.
comment, situation analyses, etc. I further recognise that
they contain serialised stories and stories which are
presented as trends, e.g. 'another case of'. There are also
headings which indicate stories with a moral. Whatever might
have followed this heading there is little indication <u>in the</u>
<u>heading</u> of anything like a serial, comment, moral, etc.
Such serials and morals are ways in which particular events
can be generalised. In consequence unlike Murdock I find no
instructions in the heading to read youth as implicative of
a social group youth. I find no instructions to attribute
the blame for the indecent exposure to anyone beyond the
person fined. I find nothing <u>in the text</u> to lead me to
invoke a charge of stereotyping.

Of course, the term youth permits the reader who wishes, to
tie the behaviour of youth as a group. But he would have to
do some additional work. If we look to possible reactions
to the heading as confirmations of the sort of story it is,
then while 'Disgusting' or 'Interesting' would be immediately
intelligible, 'Typical' would produce something to the effect
of 'What of '. The term youth is not, however, gratuitous.
It can help us to see the act of exposure in certain ways
and to read certain motivations in and rule others out.
Acknowledging and bypassing such considerations, we return
to the possibility of using 'youth' to generalise as
Murdock does. There are two further problems with this.

Some headings such as the beautiful 'Girl Guide aged 14
raped at Hells' Angels' Convention' analysed by Lee[14],

provide for the reading of a fairly specific connection

between act and actor and indeed contrast with other (in

this case victim), Our heading does not. While 'Mother of

six fined for shoplifting' provides for a reason for the

act in the categorization of the actor, 'youth' does not.

If we use youth to contrast with adult then we find that

some, not remarkably less, adults also expose themselves

and the contrast fails. If we try to generalise exposure

to a substantial section of youth we run up against the

unnatural/unusual nature of exposure. We cannot see exposure

as _typical_ behaviour for a section of youth, nor can we

contrast such section with a non-offending adult. We

could link exposure with hooliganism and other undesirable

things. We could do lots of tying operations. But the

instructions to do them are not discoverable in the heading.

Such operations are reader elections. It is Murdoch that

stereotypes youth not the local newspaper.

'Boy 16, swims the channel'.

We have already seen that it is useful to consider what a

headline may do technically to discern what it may do

substantively. It can, by announcing which of a variety of

newspaper activities is to follow, encourage us to read in

one of several ways. In this argument it can particularly

instruct us to generalise or read as an individual interest

story. A headline in a newspaper also seeks to interest, to

be newsworthy and this is known by most readers. Headings

then may be read to make news. They may attain newsworthiness

by announcing that something we need to know is contained in

the subsequent text; by announcing a continuation or
conclusion to something we are already interested in or by
announcing that something extraordinary has happened[15].
There is a sense in which 'Boy 16, swims the Channel' is
not about youth at all but about the unlikely achievement
of a difficult task. At least one possible response to it
would be the same as to:

Man who only learned to swim last year swims channel.
Handicapped woman swims channel.
Eighty year old swims channel.
Boy 16, climbs Everest.
Eighty year old climbs Everest.

Formally the newsworthy elements that provoke the response
of amazement are the unlikely nature of the actor for the
act. These formal elements establish the force of the
response. According to the views of the reader that force
may show itself in 'how very splendid' or 'How very stupid'.
The essence of this particular newsworthiness resides in its
outstanding mentionability. If we say 'How very stupid',
the headline remains a good headline. What this amounts to
is that 'boy' is not a mentionable in its own right. This
headline is not about youth but about juxtaposition. Once
again the reader is free to generalise about the virtues of
some section of youth or to generalise in countless other
ways but there are no instructions so to do in the headline.
The term 'boy' is a means to an end in the headline. It is
assimilable not into the category youth in the stage of life

device but into the category of agents unlikely to swim the channel; a category which includes other age groups (eighty year old) and non-age groups (handicapped woman).

The headline should not, of course, satisfy but arouse the reader's curiosity. It announces newsworthy events to be described below. Most readers know the formal elements of a routinely recounted news story. It is as if the headline precises which blanks will be filled in below. Thus; 'Youth threatened with knife as gang go on rampage', does not only tell reader by virtue of it being a headline that there is more to come, but the reader knows what sort of blanks might be filled in because of his knowledge of the normal formats of local newspapers and because the terms of the headline narrows such expectations. A rampage is a series of actions; a threatening is one action. An effort to relate the two juxtaposed items may result in the threatening being seen as one of a series of actions. There may then be others to be disclosed and the seriality provides for the possibility of them being of a similar order of gravity to threatening with a knife. The paper is local, the reader probably local: the headlines announce that a series of serious unruly offences have taken place in the reader's locality. For details see below. Such details include when, where, the names and addresses of participants, the gravity of individual events, etc. Readers may peruse to find out such details or to find that they occurred some distance away and reassure themselves.

Rampages are accountable actions which involve people whose

duty it is to stop them. They need to have their origins
explained ('The trouble started when a group of ...');
their continuance, development and possible escalation
accounted for ('Things got worse when ...'); their response
accounted for ('The police ...'). A little law knowledge of
the form of newspapers and a brief reading of the heading as
a heading promises the answers to such things. Once again
the heading contains no stereotypical picture of youth. The
gang is not even identified as young.

When we say that these headlines contain no stereotypes of
youth, what we mean is that they do not produce them in the
way that Murdock claims as products. We have already said
that the headlines use highly generalized concepts as a means.
If we wish to visualize the indecent exposure scene, then the
age of the actor provides one of the resources for so doing.
If we wish to visualize the swimming of the channel scene and
to see why the feat is unlikely, then the age of the actors
can help us. We orient to the description of most actors to
see the act and vice-versa. But, as we have shown, there is
no attempt to typify the act to the generalized actor, or
monopolise the act to the generalized actor. It would seem
that Murdock is confusing the practical everyday need for
generalized attributions as tools with the practice of
holding transituational stereotypes. That an actor who is
young and who is announced as being young commits an act is
little resource for suggesting the announcer to have a stereo-
type. It does however highlight the generalized and transitua-
tional way that some sociologists treat variables such as age

compared to the practical and particular way that lay members

use generalizations. Such discrepancy becomes serious in the

light of our assertion that sociology appeals to commonsense

for much of its plausibility. It suggests that sociology

appeals to a commonsense deprived of its practical character.

The concern with the practical difficulties of what to do

next in any particular situation dominate much commonsense

reasoning. In such a concern generalizations are used not

as products but as a means to a particular end.

11.5 Abstraction from Practical Context

An account of a brief conversation and some observation illust-

rates the above points. The author constructed an actor

categorization 'Youth' and a Topic (behaving like adults) and

asked some sixteen year olds how they managed the topic in

one instance; having alcoholic drinks in public houses. The

inquiry was all sociologically set up to be about Youth and

Adulthood, etc. We can watch it collapse in a sea of prac-

ticality and particularity.

When asked how a youth could contrive to be served under age,

they suggested

        Act in a natural manner

        Never hesitate

        Be polite to earn respect

        Talk about adult things, for example cars and local news

        Openly talk to the barman

        The right personality and manner are more important

            than clothes

        Know the pub, use a 'regular' or 'local'

Avoid pubs where there are known raids

To gain admittance to restricted films

Look smart

Go with a girl

Do not go in a crowd

Driving under age

Lie about how long you have been driving

Since many of the procedures listed were as indexical as 'being adult', for example 'acting in a natural manner', a second discussion took place to ask what the boys meant by their previous statements. This was recorded.

About acting in a 'natural manner':

R₁   ... well c you you try to make yerself look—oh a (p) ye'know what I mean yer don't go in 'ere talking—stupid talk

A   (f~

R₂   'enthing like that do yer ( ) know

A   Um— e('ve) got (to

R₁   (what didy'a do at school yesterday or somethin like that ...

...

A   what do (ee) really mean by adult things?

R₁   (4.00) (could) talk about races (dogs) dogs ( ) yer know (p) things in the news?

A   (p) Mmm

R₁ (4.00)'ll you just don't (like) (p) don't go-running

in 'n say did'you like school yesterday

R₂ what did'you get for homework (laughter)

...

R₁ ... Dressing up

A Dressing up?

D ('Yeah yeah

A Yere (2.00) um (p) again could you explain that a bit

more — why

R₂ to look older than you are

...

R₁ when you're dressed up it makes you look older than

you are

A (p) uh, uh.

...

In what ways do adults look old then

R₁ (3.00) ( ) personality mate 'ou look like ( ) feel

old because I mean you know you could go into a pub

and you could be (p) all shy an' that with your collar

up and everything but you could be well dressed and

everything - but I mean it's the way you carry yourself

— it really matters (p) ou' know (p)

A mmm

R₁ ... also you know you when you say you go into a pub

you always go into a local (p) one you're always been

going into (2.00) if you've been going in there for a

long time they don't say ('anything

R₂ ('ere you've got to know the

history of the pub.

...

R₁   you don't go i' with a gang of people

...

A   ... never hesitating

R₁   (p) .o don't .o up to the bar 'n go'l'll 'a a (bit'er)

    (bit'er) ((stammering)) you know coz ('e) knows ( )

    'nt been in there before ( )

...

talking of ordering drinks by name - a name is suggested

R₁   an' there again you can always get caught up if they

    don't do it on draught or something ((laughter)

R₂   they start giving (em) those technical names

...

R₁   often looked as coz me height

Taking such remarks at their face value we can make the
following points: the boys wish to behave like adults to get
a drink; an adult bound activity will not do, boys must
behave like adults-in-pubs; but adults are the 'only' people
allowed in pubs: the boys must then behave like people in
pubs, they must be situationally competent. The law by its
exclusiveness proves a resource for its successful infraction.
The boys do not have to work out what is adult about the adults'
behaviour. Competent pub behaviour is adult. The boys can
trade on the reflexivity of practical reasoning: the pub is
seeable as a pub partly because of its clientele's age: the
clientele is seen as adult because it is in a pub. The problem
for the boys is thus not how to be adult, not even to be
adult-in-context but to be in context. Topic talk of 'races'

and 'dogs' and 'news' is at least as much pub talk as adult
talk. For 'dressing up' to work it must be dressing up in
pub appropriate not any adult-bound clothes. However there
are also some generally age bound activities that must be
avoided as tied to the under age refused customer, such as
talk about 'school' or 'homework'. That would be 'stupid
talk' in the context.

In short there are two ways of trading in the publican's
reflexive reasoning: the boys may pass as adults and thus as
customers or as customers and thus as adults. As we have
observed elaborate work on passing-as-adult may be wasted
work as situationally inappropriate, what is needed is the
avoidance of activities bound to juvenile categories.
Passing-as-a-customer involves a more positive orientation.
It may necessitate learning technical knowledge, that
customers routinely have 'you can always get caught if they
don't do it in draught'. One sophisticated way of passing-
as-a-customer is to pass-as-a-regular. With adequate know-
ledge a boy may pass as a regular, as having been served
before, as routinely served, as servable now. Technical know-
ledge is necessary to display familiarity and familiarity is
acquired over time. Thus to successfully bring off familiarity
and regularity is to make categorically problematic and
improbable the invocation of age. 'If you've been going in
there for a long time they don't say anything'.

If passing-as-a-customer is the important part then it
requires acting as well as learning. To pass requires not

just the technical knowledge but the acting skill. Such skills have formal qualities of which the boys are well aware. 'Acting natural' means at least acting consistently and coherently. The giveaway is as likely to be the bad performance ('never hesitate') as the wrong casting. 'So don't go up to the bar 'n go 'I'll 'a a (bitter, bitter) ((stammering)) you know coz ('e) knows ( ), nows ('nt been in there before ( )'. The hesitation remarkable in stammering is bad acting of the customer part (''nt een in there efore,' not, of course, of an adult part.

To pass, the boys need technical knowledge of situational particulars and a concern for consistency and planfulness, 'you always go into a local'. They manipulate the restriction of the law by artful use of the particularized and joint categories of age and customer.

To use these boys' remarks 'about' adults as a demonstration of their views of adults would be to misunderstand the whole point of their enterprise (to get served). These boys did not 'have' a view of adulthood any more than the headlines 'had' a stereotype of youth. They use various views as tools to solve practical problems or as technical aids. If they used a generalized view for itself from what I saw, they never got a drink.

The sociologist then who appeals to commonsense is asking the reader to accept in the sociological account what he would accept in commonsense but not in the way that he would accept it in commonsense. That was true enough in some

practical circumstances may not be in others. What worked
as a situational resource may not be elevated into a state-
ment about how the social world is. That was one of a
collection of views that laymen used cannot be used as the
view. The boys' reasoning is practical; their terms tech-
nical; their operational definitions plural. The
annihilation of the technical, practical and adjustable
character of such reasoning on the sociological appeal to
commonsense is fundamentally persuasive.

11.6 Sympathetic Recognition

Let us set up a banal distinction between appearance of logic,
argument and truth on the one hand and recognizability and life
likeness or the other. We have so far in the thesis been
more concerned with the rhetorical production of 'truth' or
verisimilitude but rhetorical practices can also produce
'reality' or like likeness. One instance during the course
of some arguments may be that reader may feel that something
'rings true' or that 'he sees what he is driving at' or that
'he knows what he means' or that 'it rings a bell'. Sometimes
in conversations these and other phrases are used by
conversationalists to 'seek the floor' for their own story
in a round of such stories[16]. The technicalities of such
rounds are then investigatable. When we read, our sympathetic
recognition typically remains a private phenomenon. The
sociological outsider might be forgiven for thinking that
sympathetic recognition as part of the study of how people
read, would be the object of literary criticism. But literary
criticism has produced few studies of how people read. It

seems more concerned with the effects that a piece should
by all rights have on anyone than the effects it actually has
on someone. Criticism that pretends to be descriptive seems
frequently to be legislative[17]. All of which is but a
preamble to a few speculations and a justification of their
speculative character.

Two questions are at least of interest. First, what literary
devices are thought to produce sympathetic recognition? To
this a list answer might run: metaphor, rhythm, word order,
background organization, courtesy to reader, personification[18],
none of which have been considered so far in this study; and
character consistency, plot, etc. which have been considered.
Secondly, what is the relationship between such devices and
natural language? More particularly, are they optional? If
reading is a reader-writer product, can a text be ever cleared
of metaphor? Lucas speaks of language as composed of (largely)
dead metaphors[19]. But such a distinction Live/Dead does
little to show the layers of metaphor that may be attended to
in one context by one reader for one purpose and not by
another for another. Stein notices with some amazement that
sociology contains metaphor[20]. Is such a feature eradicable?
If not what are the consequences of such features for
argument. Assembled, all this amounts to the possibility
that sociology is written in a language that is irreparably
and problematically metaphorical: irreparably, if all natural
language is metaphorical; problematically, since different
layers of metaphor are context dependent.

That applies to metaphor may well apply to the others in
the list of devices above. We can now speculate: one reason
for our positive evaluation of a sociological argument may
be, e.g. that it 'rings true'. That validity may be produced
by 'poetic' devices. The contextual status of the poetic
'component' makes it difficult/impossible to distinguish it
from the non-poetical component unless such distinctions are
to be a study in their own right. The speculative conclusion
then resembles that of the argument about trivializable and
significant subjects and presentational work. These
phenomena are difficult/impossible to separate out but are it is
their problem ic embeddedness that makes the usual tools is
the persuasive process.

If we turn to the Murdock piece, we can see some fairly
obvious instances of poetic devices. I certainly see 'One
of the quickest ways' as a stylistic device. ' a speaker
must not only look to his words, to see they are cogent and
convincing, he must also present himself as a certain type of
person and put those who judge him in a certain frame of
mind ... for it makes all the difference to men's opinions
whether they feel friendly or hostile, irritated or indul-
gent'[21]. Murdock presents himself as someone who is not
out to waste his reader's time. For this the reader is
grateful. The phrase may have the added advantage that
reader may be prepared to relax standards for brevity. In
the lines that follow we have other instances of courtesy to
reader. The ease of reading prose so devoid of technical
terms and irritating pedantry may well make us lenient with

the obvious oddity of 'random selection' even of a selection that randomly results in six stories which all turn out to be about youth. While 'images pumped out day after day' is too infelicitous a metaphor to earn reader's assent, it at least permits writer to do some pejorative work that would have been the more remarked if done more directly. It also prepares the ground for the stereotypes that are to be discovered. Again the lulling effect of the succession of negatives, 'there is nothing ... or ... not ... or ... none ... page', combined with the redundancy of terms in those sentences (unique or special) and the purely stylistic use of 'however' while in no way convincing, does have its effect. Perhaps more successful is the employment of irony and sarcasm in the use of newspaper language that the newspaper did not actually use 'knuckled down', 'hooligans' and 'bloodymindedness'. These contrast sharply with the rest of Murdock's language but fit quite well with the cited, 'rampage' or 'mum'. They are also likely belongings of an image pump.

The personification in 'two things stand out' and (these stories) 'focus' and 'they counterpose' works to confuse the issue of who is ordering the events reported. The contrast already worked by image (image/real) is nicely recalled in the end 'what is missing ... is any <u>real</u> consideration'. And the unpleasantness of the class situation emphasized in 'web', its importance and all embracedness in 'system'.

The sorts of poetic operations described above, in practice

merge with the operations described earlier. Consider the
recognition work we are asked to do by 'They are however
typical of the routine news coverage of young people'. If
we look at the excerpts and search our knowledge of (local)
newspaper to see if we agree on the excerpts' typicality,
how do we match the two. First we can find that the excerpts
have the formal characteristics of headlines and stories, we
can also see the newsworthiness and in some instances the
local emphasis. Certainly the excerpts are typical of local
newspaper minor stories in a formal way. Are we required to
assess their typicality as 'images' of youth? That is
uncertain: the uncertainty deriving from the identification
problem pointed to earlier. Anyway how would we do such a
third? To we have a notion to hand of the other things that
newspapers say 'about' youth? How would we quantify them?
Further we know that we are doing something quickly
('quickest way') and without fussiness ('general impression').
Further still the 'tone' of the Murdock piece is friendly and
relaxed. He invites us to see that he is right in a general
sort of way. Some readers may well be disposed to agree with
him.

The author has no facility in literary criticism and, in the
absence of empirical work on reading-identification practices
referred to above, it would be wise to proceed no further.
While the Murdock piece does not, I think, do its poetry very
well, there is some evidence that it does include poetic
devices. If such devices are common in sociology then they
represent the extreme of our claim that sociological argument

is a deeply literary process.

11.7 Conclusion

Our treatment of commonsense and sympathetic recognition
has been necessarily speculative: of commonsense because in
general, the commonsense that is used or cut out in
sociological argument is unavailable except by conjecture or
through study as presentational practice or organizational
practice (aspects we have already considered); of sympathetic
recognition because of lack of analytic tools. Insofar as
this treatment may be said to produce conclusions, they add
to the conclusions of our previous sections and increase our
tendency to see the literary features of sociological argu-
ment as

1) significant
2) largely inevitable
3) difficult/impossible to separate from other features in
   the practice of argument
4) not repairable by abbreviated concepts of 'style'.

Consequently, we see the study of such literary features to
be tantamount to an obligatory sociological methodology on
a par with the scientific methodology conventionally accepted.
Such an obligation would not fall on certain sorts of
mathematical sociologists. And then again, if we accept
certain views about the necessity of language for thought
and of commonsense practices in science[22], even mathematical
sociology may be so obligated

Notes

1. Persuasion through presentation, author disclosure, citation and commonsense.

2. In Chapter five.

3. H. Sacks, 'Everyone has to lie' lecture, University of California 1967.

4. H. Sacks, 'The Search of Help: No-one to Turn to', in E. . Schneidman (ed.), Essays in Self-destruction, Science House Inc., 1967. Or in H. Sacks 'On the analyzability of Stories by Children', in R. Turner (ed.), Ethnomethodology, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1974.

5. H. Sacks, 'On the analyzability ...', ibid.

6. Ibid, pp. 235-236.

7. Murdock, 'Youth in contemporary Britain: Misleading Imagery and Misapplied Action in D. Marsland and M. Day (eds. Youth Service, 'Youth Work and the Future, N.Y.B. occasional paper, 12 March, 1976, pp. 15-17.

8. Op. cit.

9. See , W. Sharrock, 'On Owning Knowledge', in R. Turner, Ethnomethodology, op. cit.

10. H. Sacks, 'On the analyzability ...', op. cit., p. 219.

11. H. Sacks, 'On the analyzability ...', ibid, p. 22 .

12. What is presented as recent, as 'news', see the discussion on social work visit schedules and client improvement schedules in chapter ten.

13. As suggested in J.R.E. Lee, 'Innocent Victims and Evil Doers', unpublished paper, University of Manchester.

14. Idem.

15. Or, of course, in other ways.

16. A. Ryave, 'Aspects of Story Telling amongst a Group of ''Mentally Retarded''. Ph.D. Thesis, U.C.L.A.

17. The distinction, in which I do <u>not</u> concur, is made in G. Watson, The Literary Critics, London, Penguin, 1962.

18. For example as discussed in J.L. Lucas, title, London, Jan, 1965.

19. Ibid, p. 165.

20. M. Stein and A. Vidich, (eds.), Sociology on Trial, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1963.

21. Aristotle, Rhetoric, II, 1, cited in J.L. Lucas op. cit.

22. For example, P. Elliot, Similarities and Differences between Science and Commonsense, in R. Turner, Ethnomethodology, op. cit.

23. The transcript in this Chapter and some of the reflections on it are from the author's M.Phil. Thesis 'Youth: the Social Attribution of an Age Category', Brunel University, 1975.

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONCLUSION

Formulating objectives for innovative and hence tentative study enterprises is as much a matter of style as it one of research procedure. The central and sustaining interest of this study has been the literary character of certain features of some sociological arguments and the possibility of their involvement in the 'logical' satisfaction of those arguments.

We offered[1], rather than set out, three objectives as possible means of entry for readers with different interests[2]. These are expressed in the introduction as follows:

(a)   To describe certain localized features of sociological arguments as objects in their own right.

(b)   To describe how such literary features make possible judgments about the worth of those arguments.

(c)   To show the practical difficulties caused by the use of natural language to the operation of scientific methodologies in research: and to show how the ambiguities and equivocalities produced by such language use in research are repaired by the use of the same natural language in reading written argument.

The Chapters that followed both pointed up a number of these literary features and examined their relationship to argument satisfaction, occasionally remarking on their possible

generalizability. Most of these features are explicitly summarized at the close of Chapters seven and ten. We intendedly termed the operation of the first objective a description and have made little attempt to collect and taxonomise the individual descriptions, except insofar as they are reducible to those initial orientations to sequencing, recipient design, implicativeness, contrast, pairing derived from Sacks and Smith and noted in Chapter four[3]. It is our view that any elaborate formalisation at an intermediate level (i.e. between the orientations and descriptions) would be premature and restrictive. The basic implication of this conclusion is not to formalisations but to the need for accumulation of more features through more empirical studies.

That implication apart, these studies as initial tentative descriptions are not easy to 'conclude'. However both objectives (b) and (c) make use of the descriptions to hazard some implications for sociological argument and on those implications a few concluding comments will be made. Objective (b) is concerned with the 'possible' use of literary features in (socio)-logical judgments: with the relationship between the literary and logical organization of argument. The studies display that relationship both as enmeshed and reflexive; the literary facilitating the logical; and as obligatory insofar as certain logical relationship are of necessity expressed in written sequences and orders and taxonomies. This powerfully suggests that the possibility of rhetorical persuasion is pervasive rather than occasional,

minor or accidental. When we refer to the 'possibility'
that literary organization may facilitate logical
organization, we do not refer to a hypothetical situation -
a theoretical possibility. Our analyses show that at least
one reading of some sociological texts, and that a reading
at least partially provided for in our analyses, _empirically_
displays reader orientations to such facilitations, which
are then at least occasionally (i.e. in our readings)
realised. It is the empirical details of the manner in which
they are realised that point to likely pervasiveness.

It is with objective (c) that we encounter difficulties.
Our few studies of an eclectic batch of texts, studies
conducted with a technical apparatus borrowed and pragmat-
ically adjusted, do not justify any firm comment about the
practices of sociology at large. But as suggested in the
introduction such comment is likely to be sought and
conclusions are perhaps suitable and forgivable places to
make it even at a very tentative level.

The type of 'troubles' that natural language occasions
scientific methodologies in research acts turns out, in
Chapters two and three, to be incorrigible. This portrayal
of scientific methodologies as irreparably 'fla wed' when
combined with the portrayal of scientific arguments as
pervasively 'literary', entices some possible match to the
effect that socio-logical flaws are repaired in practice
through literary devices. This is little more than an
intriguing enticement but the studies at least point to it

rather than away from it. It should be remembered that we are talking of the reader's repair not the writer's. The reader's interest qua reader in understanding and following the text, in looking for instructions, help, etc., provides a likelihood that he will use the literary organization to _support_ rather than destroy the logical organization (at least initially); to find it rather than to lose it. If he disagrees with 'it', that is the discovered argument; if he unpacks 'it' and reassembles 'it' to show inconsistency and confusion, he is still performing operations on 'it'. Literary features do not, of course, ensure an argument's success, but in all our analyses they contribute to, rather than against it and we think them necessary for it. In fairness, it should be admitted that we were constrained by the same orientation as reader to find order and that, an order of facilitation.

It may be argued against all this that the _persistent persuasive_ as distinct from the occasional, _necessary and neutral_ use of literary features to repair scientific methodology, is a characteristic of 'bad' sociology. Possibly some of the individual features that our analyses have displayed, while they cannot be _eradicated_ might be _neutralized_. Since they are writer-reader products, any neutralization involves writer in stipulating readings explicitly. The writer who wishes while operating the scientific methodology to use the literary methodology neutrally will wish to 'control' his scientific and literary variables. He will wish to separate knowns from unknowns and givens, starting points and

assumptions from ends and conclusions. Th~ use of natural language will bedevil such control. The conventional procedures of headings, titles, narratives, citations, glossing, discerning controversials, pacing and tying defy his total control. To control he must stipulate. At each sta~ he must instruct reader what to do and provide uniquely, exhaustively and explicitly for that action. The end of such stipulative procedures is of course a closed language or artificial language.

The eternal possibility of a sociology that eradicates the features we have displayed or neutralizes them is hypothetically undeniable. But one of the prices it ~~~ld have to par would be abandonment of natural language. Less hypothetically if such a sociology is practiced today then it operates with a third and secret methodology for protecting the logical from the literary since no current research texts or manuals (publications not known for their reluctance for utopianism) give instructions on how such an operation may be performed. Moreover in the event of such an operation being partially successful, there are no ready methods for quantifying and evaluating the partiality.

Not only would we expect the use of literary features to be pervasive and persuasive and reparative of logic in sociology but we have encountered few indications that such usage is specific to sociology. We would expect it to have some relevance wherever written arguments are made in natural language. Nor do we see any reason to imagine that the other

organized media of social science procedures; conferences,
seminars, supervisions, proof readings addresses, lectures,
etc., are not suitably regarded as variants on conversation
and written language practices as well as on scientific and
logical practices.

Moving, then, from the descriptive to the speculative, we
suggest that:

1) our texts display a range of literary features which
   have logical significance,

2) their occurrence and logical significance are possibly
   pervasive

3) and at least occasionally realised.

4) Their realization contributes to the argument satis-
   faction of these texts.

5) Such a contribution is generally positive - a facilitating
   contribution

6) That four and five are more likely than not, on the
   scant evidence of this study, to be general to current
   sociological practices, to social science practices and
   future practice in these fields for as long as such
   practices are conducted in natural language.

Notes

1. Introduction, Chapter one, Section one.

2. Very loosely (a) is for ethnomethodologists, (b) for sociologists of sociology (c) for methodologists.

3. Chapter four, Section two.