

According to Lenin's reflection theory, consciousness is no more than the reflection of an external world that exists, independent of people. Reflections of real external work are transmitted to the mind through sensual contacts with reality. Thus consciousness is not only bound by human existence, but the role of consciousness in creating the objective world is denied (see Stryer, 1977, pp 93-97.)

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## 40 • Storifying as Time- Traveling:

# The Knowledgeable Use of Temporally Structured Discourse

WAYNE A. BEACH • PHYLLI' JAPP

(*huvvsvrti* of *Nhrasl, a-lme* oln)

It is commonplace for studies of everyday discourse to assume, explicitly or implicitly, that relationships among language and meaning are not static, immobile, or otherwise dormant. Interaction evolves because of the use of a variety of conversational mechanisms, situated within turn-taking sequences, which fit fiction temporally to organize understandings and regulate a sense of social structure unique to each social occasion. As information is exchanged, speakers and hearers simply go places with talk in order to accomplish such practical activities as making points, revealing opinions, planning actions, and reporting ordinary experiences. Collaboratively, speakers and hearers rely on conversation as a vehicle for traveling and journeying, that is, for taking excursions into the past, the present, and the future without ever having to leave the immediate (physical) context of interaction. Switching from one time dimension to another is a regular feature of everyday interaction. Such that present discourse both influences and is influenced by past events and future possibilities. Thus, while references to what *has* or *might* happen reveal how discourse is a medium for transcending time and space, it cannot be ignored that what is happening interactionally constrains the meaningful nature of these temporal references.



of the speaker's past. This conceptualization of a story forces concentration on the content (past experience) and the form (narrative structure), thus ignoring narration as a conversational accomplishment situated in the present. Much of the folkloristic literature on narratives deals with the formal or ritualistic performance of traditional tales, legends, and adventures by a designated teller. While more recent research focuses on the narrative as it occurs spontaneously in conversation, the concept of the narrative has typically remained locked in time past-a structured, "detachable" account of past experience, embedded in, but not generated by, the conversation.

Typical of the artifact approach is work by Degh (1974), who defines the *memorat*, a form of personal narrative, as a reproduction of the narrator's personal experiences. Similarly, Labov and Waletzky (1967, p. 20) see the narrative as a recounting of past experience "by a sequence of ordered sentences that present the temporal sequence of those events in that order." In addition to stipulating that narratives or stories (the two terms tend to be used synonymously) are ordered, sequential renderings of past events, most story-as-artifact research conceives of stories as occurring in large chunks or periods of time in which the narrator holds the floor and the audience listens. When speaking of the "life story," for example, Titon (1980, p. 276) notes that the "listener respects the storyteller, not interrupting the train of thought until *fix-* story is finished." Others acknowledge that the audience does indeed take part in the narrating process via comments, questions, and other interruptions. Although partial collaboration is acknowledged, they still remain locked into a speaker-audience role conceptualization whereby the speaker retains sole responsibility for the form and content of the story.

While the artifact approach has yielded useful knowledge about the structure and "typical" content of narratives, it fails to capture either the complexity of the process of narrating or our present stance on "storifying." The "story" is not seen as an integral part of the conversation that generated it, but rather as a self-contained unit that can be detached from its conversational base and still retain its form and meaning. Indeed, the criterion of detachability seems, along with "time past," to be the most common means of defining the story as a unit of analysis. Again, this approach sustains the belief that stories are (actual accounts of the narrator's past, presented by the narrator, with only incidental and unimportant contributions from listeners. While some (for example, Titon, 1980) acknowledge that the narrator selectively "indexes" his or her past, retrieving details most appropriate for the present conversational purpose, the temporal ordering of those details as a faithful reflection of past experience is taken for granted. In addition, this perspective locks in the conception of stories as situated in the past, neglecting the recognition that conversational participants use the process of narrating or storifying to concretize present occurrences, as well as to project or fantasize about future experiences.

#### Story as Contrived Text

Stories are also essential to researchers interested in programming computers to draw appropriate inferences about natural language users' plans and goals. As evidenced in the pioneering work of Schank and Abelson (1977), programs can be constructed that first provide the computer with a situation within which interactants accomplish some practical activity and then ask the computer questions about that activity. Answers to these questions require inferences about single actor's plans and/or the interacting goals of those individuals noted in the story (see Bruce & Newman, 1978).

As interpretable stimuli, stories may be constructed in numerous ways. For example, Schank and Abelson (1977, pp. 152-154) work with hypothetical scripts (for example: "John went to Lundy's. He ordered lobster. He paid the check and left"; or "John thought he was late for his appointment but he didn't have a watch. He stopped an old lady on the street"), as well as with artificially contrived interactional situations (see also Wilensky, 1978) like:

John loved Mary very much, but she wouldn't marry him. One day a dragon stole Mary from the castle. John got on his horse and slew the dragon. Mary

agreed to become his *wife*. They all lived happily ever after. (Schank & Abelson, 1977, p. 158)

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From this, it is expected that the following questions could be answered: "Why did John kill the dragon? What would the dragon probably have done to Mary? Why did Mary agree to marry John?" (Schank & Abelson, 1977, p. 168). Another strategy is to employ a small segment of an actual narrative text, such as the fairy tale "Hansel and Gretel" (Bruce & Newman, 1978), and attempt to build a computer notation system capable of accommodating the actor's behaviors within the fairy tale.

As will become obvious, contrived scripts and stories tend to simplify social situations, as well as actor's plans and goals, throughout conversational organization. Programming computers to simulate the knowledge necessary for understanding "natural language" texts, while potentially relevant to naturally occurring (that is, observed and participated-in) events (for example, see Kuipers, 1978), offers little assistance for comprehending how interactants time-travel in the ordinary process of storifying.

Storytelling as a Sequentially Organized Achievement

Perhaps the most rigorous examinations of stories, or at least the most relevant to an understanding of everyday interaction, have been offered by conversation analysts Sacks (1970-1972, 1978), Jefferson (1978), and Ryave (1978). Each researcher lays some important groundwork for understanding how interactants structure turn-taking sequences by integrating accounts of past experiences into the stream of ongoing talk. To a large extent, data were drawn from recordings of naturally occurring conversations (for example, group therapy sessions at a county home for the mentally retarded), meticulously transcribed for purposes of capturing the most subtle regularities (and/or irregularities) evident in turn-taking behavior. As sequentially accomplished activities, numerous structural properties of stories have been identified and elaborated. An extensive review of these properties is not necessary for our present purposes (see, for example, Pike, 1982), but an overview of the sequential status of storytelling will be useful.

Sacks's (1970-1972) initial observations began by specifying how stories are at times both prefaced and projected before the actual telling occurs. Tellings can be set up to enhance the likelihood that recipients will align themselves by displaying a willingness to be receptive to the storytelling. This preparatory action can then lead to tellings that are not typically unbroken or extensive turns that remain uninterrupted, but rather *chained* or clustered throughout a given interactional sequence. Stories often emerge in segments that, collectively, indicate the breadth, depth, and overall focus of a given telling. Storytelling clusters are of major concern to Ryave (1978), who argues for the necessity of moving beyond sequential adjacency to the examination of such phenomena as the topical orientations of participants, the teller's centrality of experience in light of the telling (for example, the amount and style of involvement in the telling), how tellers use stories to make points as interaction emerges, and how participants collaborate on producing a story "on-the

spot" (that is, through spontaneous questions, clarifications, and so on). Similarly, Jefferson's (1978) focus on story beginnings and endings, especially their locally occasioned and sequentially implicative nature, reveals how tellings follow various formats, most of which do not reflect a solid narrative structure. For example, there are numerous entering and exiting devices available to tellers, even though stories may be continuous or discontinuous with prior talk and may or may not be topically coherent. Further, stories can be repeated or recycled and extended for such purposes as emphasis and clarity, while in other contexts sequentially deleted (that is, ignored or overlooked). At times, participants can even come to a mutual recognition that a given response to a telling was premature and possibly inappropriate.

Stories can be "triggered" through various words, phrases, or indirect thoughts influencing an interactant to offer a telling. The reflexive monitoring of others' talk can lead to the building of more elaborate turn-taking structures (see Cicourel, 1980), guided by how interactants integrate their experiences into the present sequence. As Ryave (1978) notes, an initial story can itself trigger following tellings, so that the analytic problem shifts from the clustering of a single story to describing how a series of stories emerge interactionally. Here it is seen that tellers assume the responsibility of showing the significance of each subsequent telling, since each story is itself a transformation of the original points or issues raised earlier in the conversation.

In most simple terms, these conversation analysts have examined storytelling as a dense achievement sustained through the interactional work of tellers and recipients. Stories are structurally complex, hierarchically ordered phenomena. Sacks, Jefferson, and Ryave have systematically identified many of the basic structural features of conversational storytelling. Yet their structural accounts fail to take into account the *temporal flow* of tellings as interactants rely on their social knowledge to organize conversation. It is in this sense that Ryave's (1978) observations on a series of stories need to be extended to account for how past, present, and future time dimensions are used to organize face-to-face interaction.

#### STORIES IN SPEECH COMMUNICATION RESEARCH Story-as-Dramaturgy

Bormann's (1972) fantasy theme research, based on Bales's studies of dramatizing behavior in small groups, views stories as fantasies created by groups to express a shared reality. The fantasies may be set in the past or the future and may reference fictitious or nonfictitious events. Fantasies differ from the present reality of the group in that they are set in a place other than the "here-and-now of the immediate communication episode" (Bormann, 1980, p. 190). As fantasies chain out through the group, group members are transported together into another spatial and/or temporal context and are returned to the present with a sense of cohesion gained by joint fantasizing.

The story-as-dramaturgy moves beyond the story-as-artifact, allowing the story to reconstruct the past or project the future. Fantasy theme, however, takes the production of fantasies as a fait accompli. Research emphasis is on how fantasies chain out into the broader contexts of groups, organizations, movements, and the society at large. No attempt is made to discover how fantasies are practically produced and organized in the discourse through which they are generated.

#### Story Receipts and Story Sequencing

McLaughlin, Cody, Kane, & Robey (1981) treat storytelling as a contexted, structurally predictable, and collaborative activity. Research focuses on two types of storytelling behavior: (1) story *receipt* behaviors—the means by which recipients integrate the story into ongoing talk, the extent to which recipients accept the story as accurate and complete, and how recipients indicate support for the story; and (2) story sequencing behaviors—how the narrator establishes a relationship between his or her forthcoming story and a preceding story. While attention is given to the mechanisms by which stories are introduced, accepted, and integrated into the conversation, stories are seen as optional, detachable units of conversation and not as elements integral to the production of meaning by the interactants.

## STORIFYING AS TIME-TRAVELING

. Our concerns with the temporal features of storifying maybe illustrated by reference to the appendix, which consists of a video-transcribed segment of small group interaction. Note that each utterance is classified in terms of time reference: past, present (here-and-now), and future. A perusal of these time references begins to reveal, as Reichman (1978) has noted, how conversational coherence is not simply a result of syntactic and semantic features of utterances, nor even of topically relevant structures. Rather, conversation possesses deeper structures (abstract mechanisms) involving interactants' knowledgeable recognitions of various issues, events, and episodes as relevant or tied to the here-and-now circumstances of interaction.' As conversation evolves, each interactant actively constructs a model of coherence by noting how issues, events, and episodes fit together in differing degrees of relevance.

An utterance (or utterances) referring to a single issue, event, or episode is defined as a context *space*, and the relationships among these context spaces at any given point in time (for example, active, open, closed, controlling, generation) indicate the underlying structure of conversational organization (Reichman, 1978, p. 287). In turn, context spaces are hierarchically related since interactants display implicit understandings about coherence at various levels. For example, a speaker's reference points may or may not reflect how hearers focus on a given event, issue, episode, or even on particular objects, time dimensions, locations, and duration periods. As conversation unfolds, coherence is a result of im'grating active context spaces, ~~and~~ that changes in topic by a speaker, for example, may be interpreted by a hearer as a set of implicit instructions: "set aside all utterances relevant to the present topic; I wish to return to a previous (and/or focus on a yet unspoken) utterance cluster" (Reichman, 1978, p. 289). Thus, an utterance or utterance cluster is a context space that functions to orient interactants, both temporally and spatially, to a given issue, event, episode, and so on.

In a general sense, storifying may be understood as a process through which interactants shift context spaces in order to promote a shared sense of social structure. More specifically, our present concerns rest with how storifying involves the active utilization of both past experiences and future possibilities as here-and-now meanings are created and sustained throughout interaction. It is our contention that *here* and-now meanings could not exist without past and future *counterparts*, and that storifying is the vehicle through which interactants *time-travel* together. Numerous features of this time-traveling process, empirically evident in the transcript provided, will be elaborated in the subsequent discussion.

### Storyfying as a Collaborative Gloss

The reliance on past and present tenses for here-and-now conversation is, in most cases, an activity produced by more than one interactant. In various segments throughout the transcript, past reconstructions and future projections are organized by two or more interactants who actively participate in the storifying process. Each interactant contributes according to his or her focus of attention, that is, his or her point of reference in the construction of a model of conversational coherence. Each reference point, however, represents only a portion of the overall reconstruction. Even the combined efforts of interactants do not eliminate the glossing nature of references to various events, issues, or episodes. Accounts of past experiences, for example, regardless of their detailed character, begin to disclose the organized nature of a given social setting, a given personal experience, or a previously observed object. Reconstructions and projections are collaboratively produced glosses wherein the language used can at best re-present or sketch out selected features from the past or future. While language can be used to create a here-and-now context for understanding other (extrasituational) settings and experiences, it cannot replace those actual settings and experiences being referenced. Language can, however, be used to design context spaces so that the utterance(s) used to characterize past or future events, issues, or episodes are indicative of the realities being constructed through storifying.

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Consider turns 1-5, in which Speakers A and B rely on their shared past to inform C and D of their experience:

- (1) A: lie asked us he kept saying "Well where are the other two members of your group?" I said// (2) B: "They'll be here"
- (3) A: "They'll be here" an an he goes (1.0) well the first thing when he walked into the room was we we sat *duwu* and he looked over there and he goes "Oh did you dress up today for the tape?" he goes "Gol you mention a tape and everybody feels like they havtuh dress *up!*"

(4) B: (laughs)

(5) B: That was kinda funny!

Notice how their reconstructions (" ") are used as strategies for reporting what **did** happen in this past episode (turns 1, 2, 3). This sequence then functions to set up a sequence in which A, B, C, and D collaborate on discussing what could happen in the future:

(9) C: If were gonna play this to the hilt I'd like tuh go back down to the room  
and// (10) B: (laughs)

(11) D: Uh huhh just walk in and//

(12) C: Have some fun or somethin

(13) A: And say//

These segments illustrate how what **did** happen and what could (but probably will not) happen are reflexively connected: Each functions to elaborate the meaningfulness of the other for purposes of accomplishing here-and-now interaction. Neither sequence is explicitly detailed, yet both past and future references indicate the presence of storifying. It is thus a common misconception of such authors as Pike (1982) that storytelling involves only **detailed** reconstructions of **past** events. As a process, storifying presupposes time-traveling into past **and** future as interactants construct models of here-and-now coherence by glossing relevant features of each time dimension.

Interaction in the immediate past can thus influence future turn-taking development. What has been said often influences what is being discussed, and in some cases these discussions are projected into the future. In turn 31, for example, C states:

Oh boy I shud have done a norm study *Goddd* did I get looks!

which is subsequently integrated by D as she triggers a future storifying projection:

(42) D: *Well um* should I lake my little note pad on our walk back home and I'll count *I'll tally up how they* (1.0) you know  
*prelend like we are in a xxiol*  
*OW norm study*

(43) A: *Do do:ooo!*

(44) A: *Ya do justcjo up to people you shud spud like go up to//and like take a survey*

(45) C: *Not go up just the looks people give y.)u when you walk by* (46) A: *That'd be funny* (0 5) "We're taking a survey"

As D initiated turn 42, it is obvious on the videotape that A, B, and C are unsure of D's reference point, that is, how she is relating her telling to the ongoing flow of interaction. For a period of approximately four seconds, none of the three group members appear to walize either the event, issue, or episode she is referring to or the time dimension she is working in. There is a momentary state of suspension in the group. However, at the point at which she is interrupted by A (//), the entire group realizes she is making "pretend" and proceeds to collaborate in acting out the make-believe norm study. Until the group shared D's context space, they could not collaborate in storifying about the future.

A shift in context space is apparent in turn 47 (see Appendix) as C again focuses on his past experiences. Note how the group traveled from a futuristic fantasy in 42-46 to an actual telling about events in the past in 47-54, and accomplished this transition with relative ease. Group members appear to be monitoring C's tellings coherently (for example, D's turn 50, A's turn 52) across two different yet related past events: C's experience with the fraternity president and reactions by "guys in the house." Thus, excursions into the past can encompass a single issue constituted by multiple reconstructed events supporting and elaborating an issue.

Moreover, when a group is focusing on issues and events at a particular point of time in the past, as with turns 47-54, it is not uncommon to once more observe a shift in context space that remains in the past yet draws attention to another set of events. Such is the case with turns 55-69, a more recent event than 47-54, but still a past happening. As will be discussed, the past is sufficiently complex to allow time-traveling to occur without having to switch to present or future time domains.

Functional Status of Past, Present, and Future

Interactants use time dimensions to accomplish various communicative tasks as they negotiate meanings in the present tense. A partial list of the functions performed by interactants' language use, drawn from the transcript, is shown in Table 40.1.

Beginning with "past:" it is common for interactants to reconstruct or report on their perceptions regarding previous issues, events, and episodes. Re-

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Table 40.1  
Functions Performed by Interactants' Language Use

	Toms Present	Turns	future	turns
Reconstructing	1-8	Laughing	4,10, 32,48	Projecting 9-11
	27-29	Agreeing	6, 111,41	Pretending42.4b
	47-68	Referencing		

Justifying	14-16	objects	18-26,69-75,
Evaluating	10-41		78-91
		Acknowledging	40
		Reinforcing	4.1

constructions may be factual ("My birthday is 10/9/51"), but often involve descriptions about interactants' perceptions of what did or did not happen in such and such a way. The reconstructions (" ") in turns 1-8, for example, may or may not differ from the actual conversations that took place.

Notice that when interactants reconstruct past conversations as a means of creating present meanings, these reconstructions are typically prefaced as follows: "He kept saying" (turn 1); "an he goes" (turn 3); "I got comments like" (turn 33); "I even said" (turn 49); "their basic reaction was" (turn 54); "and we go" (turn 61); and "and he goes" (turn 68). These prefaces are Important as speakers set up their tellings by explicitly informing listeners of the nature of their context space. Thus, reconstructions are overwhelmingly used with the intention of promoting conversational coherence. We have found very few examples that might indicate that a reconstruction was a source of confusion and ambiguity rather than a successful strategy for meaningfully fitting the past into present interactional circumstances. It is Important to note, however, that reconstructions can be used in both future and present tenses as well. For example, within the group's "pretend" sequences (turns 42-46), A (turn 46) projects what she might say as a participant of the "survey": "We're taking a survey." Apparently, a future projection such as this is (unlike past reconstructions) not in need of a preface, nor is a preface needed in turn 84, when A changes her voice and offers the present tense: "Well you shud see what I'm seeing." As will become more obvious in the following section, the past is often more constrained than either the present or the future, making it necessary to qualify and preface reconstructions of what did happen as compared to what is currently happening or might happen in the future.

Turns 14 and 16 illustrate how references can be made to past events in order to justify (provide evidence for) what should not be done in the future. Following the collaborative future projection in turns 9-13, B (turn 14) appears unwilling to travel into the future with the rest of the group (that is, to participate in this possible line of action) because of the potential problems that could occur with an authority figure:

(14) B: I'll tell yd he might (2.0) ya know he zeally closed the door though when

you (lid that maybe you wouldn't (1.1)) ya know maybe he -

(15) A. = Disrupted the class

(16) B: Ya maybe lee wouldn't appreciate it cuz it seemed like he really pulled

that door shut

Finally, references to the past may be used 'o evaluate such phenomena as the emotional stale of an interactant when confronted with past situations, as in turns :30-41. A was



questioning C about his past experiences, addressed in part by C through the strategy of reconstructing (turn 33). Thus, evaluating an issue such as "embarrassment" may be treated by offering reconstructed events (for example, others (omnents toward you) as evidence of a given emotional state. As initial and general question, "Did you feel like a fool?" (turn 30) allowed C the freedom to index a specific time and place in the past as a legitimate response.

A variety of speech act types function to take care of "present" business, such as maintaining a cohesive and amiable group atmosphere and supporting interactants' identities as viable members of the group (for example, laughing, agreeing, acknowledging, reinforcing). Physical immediacy can also stimulate conversational attention, as evidenced by references to such objects as the "costume" worn by C (turns 18-26,69-75), or to a pair of ski glasses (turns 78-91).

References to the future also get things done communicatively, such as projecting (turns 9-13) an episode that could (but probably will not) happen and/or pretending (turns 42-46) an episode that could (but will not) happen. These kinds of future references are more imagined than such references as plans ("Let's meet at seven at the library"), schedules ("We need to finish by four this afternoon, so we'd better get to work"), and goals ("Let's try to have this paper done by next Friday").

As interaction unfolds through time, varying degrees of attention are given to past, present, and future issues, events, and episodes. These shifts are evident in the transcript and discussed in a following section. It is important to note, however, that interactants' references may change within any given utterance (turns 14, 16, 20, 38, 40, 43, 51, 56, 65, 73, 75). Utterances may be sufficiently complex to accommodate time-travel in that references may involve more than one time dimension, not to mention the frequency by which a given turn may involve multiple utterances. Turns 7:3 and 75, for example, clearly illustrate that one present reference may be complemented by a future state of affairs, while another may be directly related to a past event.

### Constructing a Time-Traveling Model

The time-traveling model in Figure 401 shows three dimensions of time --temporal duration, chronology, and levels of time -all of which must

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**F3. IMPOSSIBLE FUTURE** Fletton., F.ntpb.

**F2. IMPROBABLE FUTURE** Piofectton.

**F1. PROBABLE FUTURE** PI.iis Oosis

**PRESENT REALITY** m. Ita..ana-Now

**P1. FACTUAL PAST** Hls ry /

**P2. PERCEIVED PAST** r.oon.Irirdion., Ev.rM.-A.MMuOrd./ i

**P3. FICTITIOUS PAST** Fletton., F.nt.n.,

Figure 40.1. Time-travel.

be continuously monitored by interactants for conversational coherence to be achieved. *The temporal* duration, or turn-taking sequence, begins at time, (the point at which the sequence begins) and runs to time, (the end of the sequence under consideration), creating a time line along which episodes can be charted. Chronology refers to the depth or penetration into time past or time future -the degree of removal from the present moment. When interactants reference the past, it may be to events that occurred a few minutes or a few days ago-the immediate past-or to events that occurred decades or centuries ago-the far past. Likewise, the future may be immediate-minutes away-or years removed, far into the future.

*The levels* Of time indicate another dimension of removal from the "hereand-now" of the present. At the center of the chart is present reality, the "what's happening now" of the present interaction. From this level, interactants can reference the past as: P1-the factual past of documented occurrences (for example, "The temperature at 9:00 was 36°"); P2-the perceived past-reconstructions of events in the past as interpreted in the

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present by those with knowledge of the events, or P3----the fictitious past-"What might/could have occurred, but didn't." The future can be referenced at comparable levels: F1-the immediate future--is the dimension of realistic plans or goals ("What we will/could do"); F2-the improbable future-is another dimension removed from reality, referencing "What we could but probably won't (10"; and F3-the impossible future-a level of fiction or fantasy that requires a decision to fantasize, pretending that we could/might do something that we know cannot really be accomplished.

### Open versus Constrained Space

Travel through levels of time is not always open to all interactants. A move to the factual or perceived past (see Figure 40. 1), for example, is constrained to those who witnessed or participated in--that is, who have knowledge of the issue or event. Within turns 1 3,57-64, and 68-69, A and B are traveling together into the past to

reconstruct their perceptions of an event—that is, what happened while they were waiting for C and D to arrive. C and D have no legitimate knowledge of this event and can monitor the travel by acknowledging or reinforcing, as in turns 4 and 6, but cannot travel along as active participants. The fictitious past, however, is open space. No specialized knowledge is necessary to collaborate on what might have occurred. In turns 63 and 64, for example, A and B have moved from the perceived past to the fictitious past, allowing C to collaborate in turn 65. The levels of the future all appear to be open space. Again, no special knowledge of issues, events, or episodes is required of participants. All relevant contributions appear acceptable, as in turns 9-13 and 42-46.

#### Accounting for Time-Travel in Specific Episodes

Figures 40.2-40.4 illustrate the first three episodes of the sequence, graphically displayed on the time-traveling model (Figure 40.1). They chart the time references of the discourse. If an interactant has not verbally signaled a move from the present, we have charted that interactant as continuing in the level of the present, taking it for granted that he or she is actively monitoring the past or future (context space) shift initiated by other interactants.

In Episode 1 (see Figure 40.2), A and B move together into the immediate, reconstructed past, relating their version of what occurred before C and D arrived. C and D can monitor the move into the past but cannot join in the collaboration. They remain in the present and are joined by A and B in turns 4-6. A and B again enter the past in turns 7-8, providing more details for the reconstruction of the event.

In Episode 2 (see Figure 40.3), C snakes a move into the future in turn 9 that borders on lire improbable. B acknowledges the move in turn 10. In turns 11-13, D and A join C in the future. In turn **14**, **B** briefly joins the future

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Figure 40.2. Episode I (turns 1-17). In Figures 40.2-40.4, the time-travel of speakers will be shown as follows: Speaker A, -; Speaker B, ...; Speaker C, ----; Speaker I1

projection, then retreats into the past to provide justification for his statement, followed by a return to the future. A moves into the past in turn 15 to collaborate B's justification. B again moves between future and past in turn 16, justifying his refusal of the projection. In turn 17, C retreats from the future and joins A and B in the past.

Episode 2 left A, B, and C in the past and D in the future. They are returned to the present by a nonverbal cue from C, who wipes the sweat from his forehead with his necktie. In turns 18-19, the three are in the present (Figure 40.4). In turn 20, however, B begins to formulate a plan, moving toward the future. All three remain in the present in turns 21, 22, and 23, but in turn 24, C also formulates a plan that includes the future. C and I1 acknowledge this in 25-26. In turn 27, D moves into the past to solicit needed information, and C complies in turn 28. I1 requests yet more information in turn 29.

Figure 40.3. Episode 2 (turns 17).

#### CONCLUSION: TOWARD A TYPOLOGY OF TIME-TRAVELING RULES

In the previous discussion we have attempted to describe numerous features of time-traveling, accomplished in and through storifying activities. These descriptions of discourse temporality, while preliminary and generated from limited conversational data, may nevertheless be transformed into a series of rule-based statements regarding the practical organization of time-traveling. The following rule-based statements are best interpreted as hypothetical claims that will, eventually, be referenced and employed to structure upcoming expansions of our time-traveling model. These refinements and expansions will be made possible by the systematic integration and analysis of additional video-transcribed discourse segments. As noted in the introduction to this study, approximately thirty such segments have been identified and remain to be examined. Of course, the strength and generalizability of time-traveling rules will, ultimately, be dependent on a sufficient data base from which descriptions are generated and conclusions drawn about past, present, and future time references.

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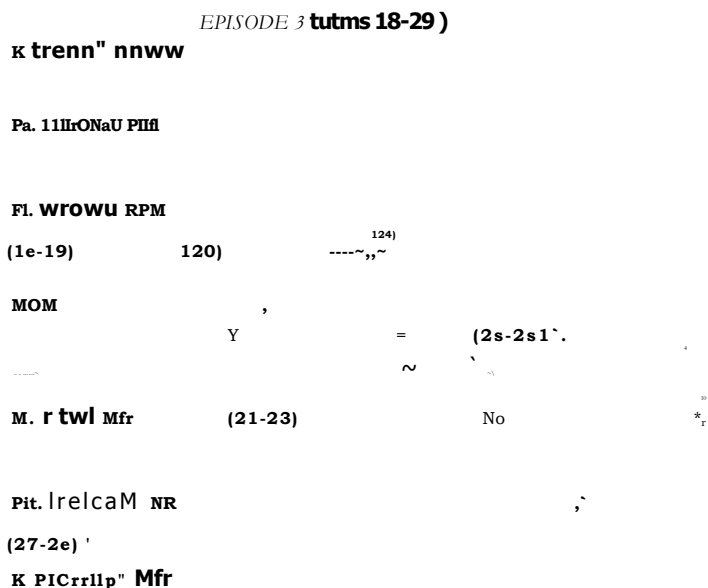


Figure 40.4. Episode 3 (turns 18-29).

We conclude with a list of preliminary rule-based statements:

*Rule 1:* Conversational organization presupposes time-traveling, inasmuch as the present tense of interaction is meaningful only in relation to past and/or future issues, events, and/or episodes.

*Rule 2:* Storifying is the vehicle through which time-traveling is accomplished. A conversational shift from the present to the past and/or the future (or variants thereof) requires storifying.

*Rule 3:* In order for conversational coherence to be achieved, storifying must be a collaborative process; that is, interactants must actively participate in time-traveling together in order for past, present, and future context spaces to be shared and understood.

*Rule 3a:* Conversational misunderstandings (a matter of degree and kind) occur when any given interactant time-travels into a context space not monitored and/or understood by other interactants.

*Rule 4:* Storifying is a glossing activity through which past experiences and future projections are presented within present interactional circumstances. Storifying language can do no more than sketch out selected features of the past and the future, requiring interactants to work reflexively with unspoken or tacit time reference presuppositions.

*Rule 5:* Time-traveling can occur solely within the past, present, or future. Each dimension of time is constituted by various levels or layers of reference, and shifts in context space can represent shifts across the same time dimension but from a different reference point.

*Rule 6:* Conversation may be reconstructed from the past, projected into the future, and/or personified in the present. Reconstructions tend to be prefaced ("as he goes"), while projections and personifications need not be attributed to specific speakers and therefore occur regularly without preface.

*Rule 7:* Conversational coherence requires the simultaneous monitoring of temporal duration, chronology, and levels of time (see Figure 40.1) by interactants.

*Rule 8:* The greater the time-travel toward the fictitious past or toward the impossible future in discourse, the less constrained (i.e., the more open) the interaction becomes in terms of participation and collaboration through storifying.

Rule 8a: Conversely, time-travel via factual reconstruction and via shared experience is limited to those interactants possessing requisite knowledge.

Rule 9: Speakers can time-travel both across and within turns-at-talk, while listeners can monitor such traveling without verbally collaborating in storifying (see Figures 40.2-40.4).

Rule 10: The greater the number of interactants involved in storifying, the greater the likelihood that multiple context spaces will be active at any given point in time.

NOTE

1. These 'deixis, inferences' or "abstract mechanisms" may be pragmatically grounded in interactants' background understandings or stock of knowledge at hand, including linguistic, relational, cultural, private, shared, and common knowledge resources (see Reach, in press; Kreckel, 1981). Background understandings are usefully depicted as tacit resources informing the orderly production of natural language, all owing interactants to work reflexively with discourse presuppositions. Storifying is an explicit vehicle through which background understandings function to organize time-travel in a coherent fashion. As noted below, shifts in context spaces may be monitored and understood with relative ease by interactants across time and space yet these skills themselves presuppose a shared sense of social structure grounded in socially meaningful background understandings.

## APPENDIX

## Appendix (Continued)

GPI: 127-197.(3.40.6)

Transcribed Segment of Small Group Interaction'

				Video		
				URN	SPIAKI R	I IA RI 11
		11M?		24	C	Pres
						I utu
				25	I)	Pres
				26	C	Pres
				27	I)	Past
				28	C.	Past
				29	1)	Past
				fit	A	[last
				it	C	Past
				32	A,B,I)	fres
4	B	Present	(laughs)			
				11	C	Past
5	A	Past	That was kinda funny!			
6	D	Present	Urn Hm::mm=			
7	A	Past	=And Then umm			
8	B	[last	I just couldn't handle it I know this//	34	A	Past
9	C	future	If we're gonna play this to the hill I'd like tuh go	Is	C	Past
			hack down to the room and//	36	A	Past
10	B	Present	(laughs)	37	(-	Past
11	D	future	Uh huhh just walk in and//	)8	A	Past
12	C	Future	Have some fun or sumethin			Pres
13	A	I ulure	And say//			1 ulu
				19	B	Pres
14	B	f ulure	I'll fell ya he might (2.0) ya know he really closed			
		fast	the door though when you did that maybe you	40	C	Pres
15	A	Future	wouldn't (1.0) ya know maybe he = -			Past
		Past	-Disrupted the class	41	A	futu
						Pres
16	8	Future	Ya maybe he wouldn't appreciate it cuz it seemed			
		[last	like he really pulled that door shut	42	I)	Futu
17	C	Past	Oh (lid he? -			
17a	B	Past	=Ya			
18	A	Present	Are you hot?	43	A	Pres
19	C	[resent	Ihis thing is terribly hot			futu
				44	A	I ulu
20	8	Present	Well (all/ you			
		Future		45	C	Fut
21	A	Present	What the wit or//			
22	C	Present	The pillow my (;o:::dd! 1			
				46	A	I utu
23	B	Present	=Oh I'll bet!			
		Future				

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Appendix (Continued)



TURN	SPI AKI R	TIM RI T1 RI NCI
47	C	Past
48	A,B,t)	Present
49	C	Past
50	D	Past
51	C	Past Present
52	A	Past
53	B	Past
54	C	Past
55	D	Past
56	8	Past
57	A	Past
58	8	Past
59	A	Past
60	B	Past
61	A	Past
62	B	Past
63	B	Past
64	A	Past
65	C	Past
66	A	Past
67	B	Past
68	A	Past

*/// TI RAN(/*

Oh you know the neat thing about it was I walked by by a fraternity (0.5) the past fraternity house president (1.0) and he didn't know one

(laugh)

He didn't even know me (2.0) I even said "Hi" to him and lie just / /Iurned straight awaa:yy

He probly would (1.0) he probly wouldn't have wanted to know ya (laughs)

Not now!

What'd the guys in the house say? Well you can tell right when he//

The guys in the house was uh (1.0) their basic rea( - tion was "What's goin on?" "What are you doing I" "What's this?" =

=Umm when he (ame popped up the stairs and started walkin down the/ /down the hallway all of us saw and we just went ((snicker))

That's Lust what 1(1.5) I knew it

And we turned around and he said/ /

I kept laughin and he he thought we were laughin at him or somelhin//

Ya lot- goes (1.0) cuz I asked him

Va and I just couldn't help it though I saw that and//

John and I were tryin to fell ourselves not to laugh before he got here and we go/ /"We're not gonna laugh" "We're not gonna laugh"

I wanted to leave  
 I wanted to get out of the classroom and just have him ya know walk in and pretend ya know we can just wait / /or hide in the women's room  
 We wanted to hide so that you would walk in  
 Oh ya I wanted to go in the room tow I wanted to ya see I planned to go in late Iike you guys said  
 But see he//  
 But see that was too late he wanted fit get things rollin  
 He fold us that it you guys didn't show up within the next /wo or three minutes he'd havtuh take another group 0.0) r uz he wanted to gel us gain and

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 Appendix (Continued)

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T URN	SPI AAI R	I IM1 RI II RI N(-I	UI II RAN(I
			he said we need a hall hour and he goes "I'm sorry that you know we got ya all dressed up ya know" It was funny funiiy
69	8	Past Present	I couldn't beli'se it I couldn't believe ya know what I expected? I expected something really really (0.5) weird but that looks kinda in a way kinda natural (1.0) and a it's worse I mean//
70	A	Present	Well I mean it looks like//
71	B	Present	Cur I mean it )usf doesn't look that (1.0) it doesn't look lake (2.0) No (0.5) that's what I mean it doesn't look take it doesn't look real take
72	A	Present	Are you saying Ithat Brian really looks like that? I
73	B	Present Future	No:: o take the pillows out you look like Brian with the pillows you look like somebody else (1.0)//But you don't look
74	D	Present Future	Well with the exception of the wrinkled tie (1.5)1 don't think you'd wear the yellow wrinkled tie
75	C	Present Future	I have a fluorescent redone and I almost wore/ /a real big and fuzzy
76	A	Past	Why didn't you) Why didn't you?
77	C	Past	Oh I don't know I felt too conservative
78	A	Present	Let me see your glasses (1.0) are these ski glasses?
79		Past	I wore those things just so I wouldn't crack up on the way over here (1.0)1 know that they can't see my eyes so I feel fine
80	B	Present	Sure
81	A	Present	Can you see out I Can people see in?
82	C	Present	I cannot see your eyes
83	D	Present	I can't see your eyes
IH	A	Present	"Well you shud see what I'm seeing"
85	B	Present	Hey those don't float though (1.(p do they
86	A	Present	Whaddya mean float
87	8	Present	Are those uh ice ya snow skis
88	A	Present	Ya they look like
89	B	Present	Coy 1 know that//
90	A	Present	I look terrible I shuduv brought a comb) Oh well
91	8	Present	tlaughs)

\*Transcribing conventions were generally borrowed hom the notation system developed and refined by Gad Jefferson. This system appears in full in Harvey Sacks. I mmanuel Schegfoll.