

## 1 Interpretive Procedures and Normative Rules in the Negotiation of Status and Role

What is the real, not reified,  
relationship between structure  
& process?

### Introduction

It is commonplace in sociology for writers to acknowledge the ultimate importance of the interacting situation between two or more actors. The assumed relationship between structure and process, however, is often no more than an expression of faith rather than the integration of social process with social structure (or role theory with institutional theory). The present paper seeks to modify and build upon some recent literature by re-examining the utility and meaning of current conceptions of 'status', 'role', 'norm', and 'social interaction', to suggest a more explicit foundation for integrating social process with the structural or institutionalized features of everyday life.

Goode suggests that 'when the social analyst refers to a social position which is definitely institutionalized (e.g. mother, physician), he is more likely to use the term "status". By contrast, he is more likely to use the term "role" when referring to a social relation which is *less* institutionalized (e.g. peer relations in play groups).' Thus statuses are defined '*as the class of roles which is institutionalized*', and this leads to the suggestion that 'the analysis of social change must treat of the processes by which roles do become institutionalized, that is, become statuses' (1960, p. 249).

In this paper I argue that any reference to the actor's perspective must cover both the researcher's and the actor's attempts to negotiate field work and everyday activities, and not become an abstract label removed from the work necessary for recognizing and organizing socially acceptable behaviour we label the social structures. Thus, the researcher's model of the actor must rest on interpretive procedures common to both the actor's and observer's methods for evaluating and generating appropriate courses of action. Goode's formulation and the many papers on the subject do not clarify the following distinctions:

1. Terms like 'status' and 'role' are convenient for the observer as a kind of intellectual shorthand for describing complex arrangements and activities in social life, but of limited utility for specifying how the actor or observer negotiates everyday behaviour. Such terms seem to provide only a general *orientation* for describing behaviour, and as Goode notes, 'no line of theory

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has been developed from the distinction' (1960, p. 246). The usual imagery associates 'status' with wider community relationships like kinship and occupational structure, and the assumption is that more stability is implied than when the term 'role' is used to speak of behavioural expectations.

2. Can we say that individual actors employ such terms in defining social situations for themselves and others? How does the actor in everyday life order and assign meanings to objects and events in his environment? The point is whether the social analyst is using the terms as a convenient shorthand to describe what he thinks is the actor's perspective or whether the actor's vocabulary includes the same terms and meanings, or their equivalents, as those of the observer.

3. When the researcher seeks to analyse written documents, he must decide on the level of abstraction of the materials so as to know the extent to which they are 'coded' by the writer and the extent to which they represent verbatim or edited versions of observed activities, imputations, and implied or explicit inferences by the writer or others. Here the researcher must reconstruct the context of interaction and its 'status-role' components. Such reconstruction is dependent, however, upon some solution to the following points.

4. When interviewing or participating within some group or community, the social analyst must decide on the relevance of the vocabulary he uses for asking questions and the language used by the actor for responding. The empirical question here is how do observer and actor interpret each other's verbal and nonverbal behaviour and the context-restricted setting?

5. When the researcher seeks to establish contacts for field research in his own or some foreign country, how does he acquire, and to what extent does he employ, specifiable notions of 'status' and 'role' in carrying out his field work? What conceptions does he impute to respondents? Does he decide their 'statuses' and 'roles' as a condition to developing strategies of entering, maintaining and terminating (perhaps temporarily) his relationships with informants? Does he employ different conceptions with those who 'run interference' in contacting respondents and informants, as opposed to subjects with whom he conducts actual interviewing or participant observation? Does he (and if 'yes', how does he) distinguish between vocabularies he uses for 'maximum' communication with others of different 'status' in field research, and are such vocabularies different from the language of social research used to communicate theoretical and empirical findings and conclusions to colleagues?

The general question is how do respondents and observer-researchers conduct themselves during social interaction with various types of 'others',

and whether or not such conduct is governed by conceptions congruent with terms like 'status' and 'role'. The terms as currently defined do not allow for explicit shifts between the social analyst's concepts of social organization as used in published communication with his colleagues, the social analyst's common sense conceptions used for managing his own affairs, the observer-researcher's tacit working conceptions when engaged in participation and observation in field studies, and the researcher's model of how the actor's common-sense perspective is used for understanding and taking action in some environment of objects.

Anyone engaged in field research will find that the shorthand vocabulary of social science is very similar to the general norms stated in some penal code: they do not correspond to explicit sequences of events and social meanings, but the fit is 'managed' through negotiated socially organized activities of the police, prosecution, witnesses, the judge, and the suspect or defendant (Sudnow, 1965, pp. 255-76 and Cicourel, 1968a). It is not clear that terms like 'status' and 'role' are relevant categories for the actors nor relevant for the observer's understanding of the action scene he seeks to describe.

### Status as structure and process

Goode notes that even interaction between strangers involves some minimum normative expectations, and hence some kind of social organization is presumed by participants ignorant of their 'actual' statuses and roles. Thus some set of minimal 'boundary conditions' informs our actors of each other even if their imputations are seen as mistaken during subsequent reflection. The basis for social interaction among strangers therefore, is presumably those properties attached to the most institutionalized activities of everyday life. Thus, 'whether a given relationship can be characterized as a status is a matter of degree. Statuses are, then, the role relationships which are more fully institutionalized or which contain a greater number of institutionalized elements' (1960, p. 250).

What emerges is that status relationships are based upon norms (external to immediate interaction) that have a broad consensus by 'third parties' in ego and alter's social networks or some larger community. This suggests that the more spontaneous or intimate the relationship, and hence the interaction, the less 'institutionalized' the behaviour of each. Thus strangers will respond to more impersonal or 'safe' definitions of the situation in interacting with one another. Close friends would be more likely to innovate before each other during social interaction, or they would be less constrained by 'third parties'. In order for individual actors to innovate as 'loners', they would presumably reject the social network of 'third parties' or the community. By way of analogy we can refer to Mead's distinction between the

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'I' and the 'me' or 'generalized other', and make the obvious link between the impulsive features of the 'I' or the less institutionalized features of the role. On the other hand we have the reflective, community-at-large, reference group connotation of the 'me' and its links to norms viewed as commonly accepted in some group or community sense, or backed by 'third parties'.<sup>1</sup>

The general problem is that we know very little about how persons establish 'statuses' and 'roles' in everyday social interaction. Initial social encounters are based upon 'appearance factors' and/or general 'background' information. The initial encounter may lead to an acceptance of individuals qua individuals before, or in the process of, exchanging information about membership in 'legitimate' or 'acceptable' status slots. Empirically, we must know how introductions and identifications are accomplished, the ways in which actors employ sequencing rules to order their exchanges, infer and establish relevant 'facts', over the course of interaction (Sacks, 1966a and b; 1967).

The presumed conformity or nonconformity of actors to norms raises the question of how the actor decides what 'norms' are operative or relevant, and how some group or 'community' (or its representatives) decides that actors are 'deviant' and should or should not be punished or sanctioned negatively? The following quotation illustrates one set of difficulties when seeking conceptual clarification and empirical evidence on conformity and deviance:

When the individual's norms and goals are in accord with those of the group, his behaviour will meet approval. However, if the individual finds that his behaviour deviates from the group norms, he has four choices: to conform, to change the norms, to remain a deviant, or to leave the group. Of course, he may also be removed from the group without his consent (Hare, 1964).<sup>2</sup>

1. Kingsley Davis (1948, p. 90) makes essentially the same point. (How an individual actually performs in a given position, as distinct from how he is supposed to perform, we call his *role*. The role, then, is the manner in which a person actually carries out the requirements of his position. It is the dynamic aspect of status or office and as such is always influenced by factors other than the stipulations of the position itself. This means that from the point of view of the social structure it always contains a certain novelty and unpredictability.) A footnote then appears: 'What Mead calls the "me" is the internally perceived position while the "I" is the actual behaviour in the position.' Davis then quotes from Mead as follows: 'The response to that situation as it appears in his immediate experience is uncertain, and it is that which constitutes the "I".' (Mead, 1934, p. 175).

2. Translating structural notions like a legitimate order of authority into cognitive and behavioural activities at the level of social interaction remains uncharted territory, except for the truncated small groups studies which do not permit an assessment of the relevance of such work if moved to the more complicated stage of everyday life, where persons 'keep score' and worry about consequences under different kinds of pressures. I am suggesting that the qualitative differences between

The statement by Hare provides us with a set of abstract concepts based on small-group research which does not allow for the negotiated and constructed character of interpersonal exchanges in daily life. In a laboratory setting we can easily lay down general and specific rules governing play in some game or simple task. But even here there is negotiation *vis-à-vis* rules or instructions, and this latter environment of objects cannot be tied easily to notions like status, role and norms, employed by actors in less structured or controlled everyday situations (Rosenthal, 1966). Establishing 'norms and goals for the actor' much less for some group or wider community, is not obvious theoretically, nor procedurally clear methodologically. The fit between abstract community and legal categories of deviance and reported or observed behaviour is an exceptionally difficult one to describe with any accuracy, and its empirical status remains only partially clarified, cf. Lemert, 1951; Goffman, 1959; Messinger, Sampson and Towne, 1962; Newman, 1956, pp. 780-90; Becker, 1963; Sudnow, 1965; Cicourel, 1968.

References to conformity and nonconformity are not clear because social scientists have not made explicit what they mean by normative and non-normative conditions, and role and non-role behaviour. Presumably the various statuses one occupies cover a wide range of identifying characteristics and conduct, most of which would be subsumed under 'status' categories like 'male', 'female', 'student', 'father', 'husband', 'mother'. 'Non-role' behaviour might then refer to scratching one's head, picking one's nose, 'some' laughing or crying (assuming there are no imputations about a 'sick' role). But when would walking 'too fast' or laughing 'too loud' or smiling 'too often' or dressing in 'poor taste' be considered as a 'normal' feature of some set of 'statuses' and corresponding 'roles', taken singly or in some combination, as opposed to the generation of imputations that suggest or demand that the actor be viewed as 'sick' or 'criminal', and so forth? The sociologist's model of the actor's competence and performance remains implicit and does not address how the actor perceives and interprets his environment, how certain rules govern exchanges, and how the actor recognizes what is taken to be 'strange', 'familiar', 'acceptable', about someone so as to link these attributes with a preconceived notion of status or role.

Goode suggests alternatives when he states:

If 'role' includes only that part of behaviour which is an *enactment* of status obligations ('idea'), then there is little point in studying role behaviour. In his

currently conceived small-group experiments and 'spontaneous' and 'institutionalized' activities in everyday life are not shown to be in correspondence, and that the relation between our formal theoretical concepts about structure and process and the small-group theorist's formulations appear unconvincing.

*Traditional sociological definitions do not allow for the individual or the dilemma.*

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role behaviour the actor cannot face any moral problem, and there can be no deviation from the norm; else by definition there is no role behaviour. Necessarily, all the important data on roles would then be contained in a description of statuses. The alternative interpretation is also open - that the actor *can* face a moral problem, whether to enact the status demands, (i.e., role behaviour) or not. Then the study of role behaviour versus non-role behaviour would be a study of conformity versus non-conformity. However, this interpretation is not followed by Linton or, to my knowledge, by anyone else (Goode, 1960, p. 247).

The problem is to specify those sectors of the actor's actions which the social scientist wishes to 'explain' or leave untouched by terms like 'status', 'role', and 'norms'. Statements to the effect that 'statuses' are 'roles' which are 'institutionalized' do not indicate how the observer decides that the actors are able to recognize or make evaluations about 'appropriate' status obligations and then act on them in some way, or that the actors engage in procedures which can be interpreted as evaluations of action scenes in ways that are 'more' or 'less' institutionalized.

I want to underline the necessity of linking the strategies of interaction among actors with the structural framework employed by the social analyst. The observer must make abstractions from complex sequences of social interaction. How does he decide the role-status-norm relevance of the exchanges about which he observes or interviews? To what extent must he take the actor's typifications, stock of knowledge at hand, presumed appearance to others, conception of self, strategies of self-presentation, language and the like, into account in deciding the institutionalized character of status relationships, role relationships, and the normatively based expectations employed or imputed?

Some examples may help illustrate the conceptual complexity here. In a large university a new faculty member who arrives to assume his duties has already been told what classes he is to teach and may be shown his office by a secretary who addresses him as 'Mr' or 'Dr'. He may have met the other members of the department during an interview some months earlier. His initial contacts with other members of the department may occur in the hallways or at some party given by the chairman early in the autumn term. He is faced with a number of status dilemmas because of the way his colleagues introduce themselves or the way he introduces himself to them. Do they (or he) use first names, last names, formal titles, or 'Mr', or do they use their full name and refrain from calling him by his name when making or receiving a telephone call? If at the chairman's party he is introduced as 'Mr', is it because of an initial superficial formality or because he has yet to terminate his degree? How does he address the secretary, answer the phone, and sign his mail? The interaction sequences with non-academic personnel,

administration officials, colleagues inside and outside of his department, constitute encounters which may be quite fragile for our new instructor. His imputations as to 'what is going on' and how he should explain his relationships within the university may also depend upon age differences, whether he has a regular appointment or temporary one, how his colleagues and others address and speak to him, and how (if married) his wife might react to her elevation (perhaps sudden) to 'faculty status' even though she may have recently completed her undergraduate work. The young instructor will probably encounter the same type of difficulties with his new neighbours. Does he introduce himself as 'Joe', 'Dr', 'Professor' or 'Mr'? What if his wife engages in first name introductions and he with more formal usages? How or when does his occupational status enter the neighbourhood scene?

The ways in which our young instructor 'presents' himself will convey different connotations to different 'others' depending on his physical appearance, clothing, language, and more importantly, how and when his occupational status is revealed, whether after or during the initial encounter. But in what sense are the 'old hands' now looking at our new instructor as someone fulfilling or not fulfilling the 'rights and duties' of his new status? What evidence do they have about his teaching and research or contacts with students? How do they observe his conduct in their presence as 'adequate' or 'inadequate' 'role' behaviour? Who is keeping score, and how?

In his new status as professor, therefore, our colleague must generate 'adequate' performances commensurate with his position through a continued sequence of encounters and exchanges with others, despite having been officially granted his degree. New acquaintances may accept and impute considerable importance to him, but he must somehow 'carry it off', and often without any explicit 'norms' or 'rules' to go by. We obviously do not hand our new instructor a 'script' outlining his 'role' in detail. Use of terms like 'anticipatory socialization' or 'on-the-job training' add little to our understanding of actual encounters, for research on such matters is either missing or weak.

Successive encounters may not 'achieve' the status expected by others, in that those with whom he shares formal status-equality in the institutionalized sense of 'college professor' may invoke extra academic criteria that we loosely call 'personality factors' in everyday life, while others may invoke publication or conversational criteria ('is he bright') in 'granting' or withholding the treatment they give to instructors who 'come on' and 'do well'. The fragility or precariousness of our new colleague's status as seen by him and others cannot be ascertained without reference to the interactional sequences of everyday life where our young instructor must 'bring it off'.

The social analyst who goes to a foreign country (or does research in his own) encounters similar problems. Explaining yourself as a 'professor of sociology' in your own country in order to gain access to a police department for a study of juvenile justice can be a difficult problem. In another country the problem can be compounded by many additional elements (see Ward *et al.*, 1964; and Cicourel, forthcoming). For example, making the necessary field contacts may be the most difficult part of the study. How does the field researcher go about doing it? Can he pass himself off as simply an 'American professor' of anthropology, sociology or political science? Obviously, 'it depends'. Some groups really may not care what his credentials are, but only want to know if he is some equivalent of a 'good guy', a 'nice guy', or a 'right guy', that is, trustworthy in their eyes. For others, his official credentials may be invaluable and some nice letters of introduction with large gold seals affixed even impressive to many. If our researcher is based at a foreign university, problems always revolve around how 'official status' is handled or managed in subsequent interaction with foreign colleagues who work within quite a different university atmosphere, where students are a powerful and vocal group, and most professors earn their living by 'moonlighting'. Dealing with big-city bureaucrats and village functionaries may require quite a different set of strategies for gaining information or further access. Finally, interviews and/or participant observation with informants and subjects at work or at home may require further strategies and/or modifications of earlier procedures. The general problem of how we can establish, maintain and successfully terminate our contacts in field settings cannot be resolved with existing social-science role theory, although there are many works which are very informative about how people manage their presence before others.

Social scientists working in their own country take for granted their own vocabulary and common sense or implicit conceptions of others, places, and things, and also take for granted the vocabulary and implicit conceptions of the people they study. In another country, working in a village or a large city, the social analyst becomes painfully aware of the inadequacy of social science status and role concepts in guiding his own research and the necessity of negotiating his own status and role behaviour *vis-à-vis* informants or respondents. There is no adequate theory of social process by which to guide his establishment of contacts, informants, subjects, and simultaneously inform him of strange patterns of bureaucratic life in foreign areas. Each researcher must decide these matters for himself. There is, therefore, the inevitable problem of sorting out (and perhaps coding) large quantities of information and subsuming such material ambiguously under commonly used and accepted concepts like 'status', 'role', 'norm', 'values'. The grounds for deciding the 'appropriate' recognition and what is an adequate



description of different 'statuses', 'roles', and 'norms', are seldom discussed.

### *Conceptions of status*

The notion of status as a structural feature of social order leads to formal definitions and some abstract examples, but seldom points to interactional consequences. References to the literature usually begin with Linton's definition: 'A status, as distinct from the individual who may occupy it, is simply a collection of rights and duties. Since these rights and duties can find expression only through the medium of individuals, it is extremely hard for us to maintain a distinction in our thinking between statuses and the people who hold them and exercise the rights and duties which constitute them' (Linton, 1936, p. 113). Linton's definition presupposes consensus as to the meaning of 'rights and duties', and he does not make the observer's and actor's indicators for recognizing status an integral part of the concept.

Even if we could agree on formal positions within the table of organization of some kinship system or firm, the empirical evidence is not plentiful and does not make problematic variations in how individuals perceive and interpret formal statuses. The fact that we must always observe individuals and/or obtain reports about them from others or these same individuals, means that we are always confronted with the problem of knowing how to evaluate what we observe, how we ask questions, and what to infer from the answers.

Kingsley Davis's work is another well-known source on the meaning of 'status'.

A person therefore enters a social situation with an identity already established. His identity refers to his *position*, or *status*, within the social structure applicable to the given situation, and establishes his rights and obligations with reference to others holding positions within the same structure. His position and consequently his identity in the particular situation result from all the other positions he holds in other major social structures, especially in the other structures most closely related to the one he is acting in at the moment.

To aid in establishing the identity of the person, external symbols are frequently utilized. A common indicator, for example, is the style of dress . . . .

In the course of an individual's life very broad positions are first acquired . . . . As he goes through life he acquires more specific positions, and his actual behaviour in the various situations to which these positions apply serves to refine and modify the initially assigned identity . . . .

The normative system lays down the formal rights and obligations in connection with a position. Though it permits a certain amount of legitimate variation within the limits imposed, it also lays down rules to be followed in case the

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individual oversteps the limits. A right is a legitimate expectation entertained by a person in one position with respect to the behaviour of a person in another position. From the point of view of the other person this claim represents an obligation . . . .

An individual carries his social position around in his head, so to speak, and puts it into action when the appropriate occasion arises. Not only does he carry it in his head but others also carry it in theirs, because social positions are matters of reciprocal expectation and must be publicly and commonly conceived by everyone in the group . . . . The term status would then designate a position in the general institutional system, recognized and supported by the entire society, spontaneously evolved rather than deliberately created, rooted in the folkways and mores. Office, on the other hand, would designate a position in a deliberately created organization, governed by specific and limited rules in a limited group, more generally achieved than ascribed (Davis, 1948, pp. 86-9).

Davis's comments presume information carried 'in the head', some unstated principles for recognizing when 'appropriate' action is necessary, and suggest the importance of changes over time and situated action. His remarks refer to specific and vague attributes associated with the concept 'status'. On the 'specific' side persons enter situations with readily recognized 'identities' and 'rights and obligations'. Further, actors acknowledge the 'rights and obligations' and are supported by the 'normative system'. Finally, 'statuses' are spontaneously evolved and recognized and supported by the entire society, while 'offices' are more explicitly known in deliberately created organizations. The 'vague' elements include the fact that over time the actor's status may well be refined, broadened, and modified in unspecified ways. The norms governing behaviour may vary with the actor's status and the situations he encounters. Finally, since actors 'carry' social positions around in their 'heads', each interaction scene presumably is a potentially problematic state of affairs. The dialectic between what appears as 'obvious' and structurally or institutionally invariant, and what depends upon the actor's perception and interpretation-implementation of his status or statuses, is stressed as important by Davis, but is not conceptually clear. It is necessary to show how the 'vague' features that unfold and become concretized over the course of interaction, alter, maintain, or distort the 'specific' or 'institutionalized' features of 'status'. The interesting question is how we 'integrate' the apparent discrepancy between the processes necessary to understand the structure, and whether the structure is in fact an invariant set of conditions for 'explaining' or 'knowing' the significance of the processes. Or does the process recreate the structure continuously during the course of interaction? A necessary complex set of properties for understanding status and its behavioural components requires a model of

Note intervalized rather  
cognitive states (Parsons - Gearing)

the actor that includes how 'external symbols' and appropriate rules are recognized as relevant to the actor and interpreted by him over the course of interaction. Cognitive procedures (in the head) and a theory of social meaning are presupposed when the terms status and role are used. But our model of the actor refers both to the researcher as observer and actor as participant.

Parson's usage of status refers to role-expectations.

Role-expectations, on the other hand, are the definitions by *both* ego and alter of what behaviour is proper for each in the relationship and in the situation in question . . . . Sanctions are the 'appropriate' behavioural consequences of alter's role-expectations in response to the actual behaviour of ego.

Both role-expectations and sanctions may be institutionalized to a greater or lesser degree. They are institutionalized when they are integrated with or 'express' value-orientations *common* to the members of the collectivity to which both ego and alter belong, which in the limiting case may consist only of ego and alter (Parsons and Shils, 1951, p. 154).

Parsons' position in *The Social System* is similar to that of Linton, though he refers to the 'status-role bundle' (Parsons, 1951).<sup>3</sup> Parsons' formulation includes the actor in some interaction scene, but the observer and actor appear to be locked in the same social arena in unknown ways, and it is difficult to know how the observer or actors perceive 'proper role-expectations', how the observer decides on the 'fit' between ego and alter's perspectives, and what ego, alter and the observer take into account based on the 'institutionalized' features of the interaction. Thus, in focusing upon the interactional context for structural properties of social order, Parsons directs our attention to 'common' value-orientations. But this apparent conceptual 'answer' avoids the crucial questions of what passes as 'common' and how our actors decide on their own or some collectivity's 'common' value-orientations; how consistent are actors in honouring or excepting such orientations if we assume they exist; and how varying degrees of institutionalization would refer to value-orientations 'more' or 'less' common to a group? Explicit cognitive procedures and a theory of meaning are absent from Parsons' formulation.

According to Homans, 'A man's status in a group is a matter of the stimuli his behaviour towards others and others' behaviour towards him -

3. Consider the following quotation: 'On the one hand there is the positional aspect - that of where the actor in question is "located" in the social system relative to other actors. This is what we will call his *status*, which is his place in the relationship system considered as a structure, that is a patterned system of *parts*. On the other hand, there is the processual aspect, that of what the actor does in his relations with others seen in the context of its functional significance for the social system. It is this which we shall call his *role*.' (Parsons, 1951, p. 25.)

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including the esteem they give him – present both to the others and to himself, stimuli that may come to make a difference in determining the future behaviour of all concerned' (Homans, 1961, p. 337). The 'stimulus' view presented by Homans is rather general and apparently everything depends upon the actors' interpretation of implicit stimuli. But later Homans clarifies his position as follows:

In their private speculations, some sociologists were once inclined to think of the small informal group as a microcosm of society at large: they felt that the same phenomena appeared in the former as in the latter but on a vastly reduced scale – a scale that, incidentally, made detailed investigation possible . . . . But to say that the two phenomena have points in common is not to say that one is a microcosm of the other, that the one is simply the other writ small. The two are not alike if only because in an informal group a man wins status through his direct exchange with the other members, while he gets status in the larger society by inheritance, wealth, occupation, office, legal authority – in every case by his position in some institutional scheme, often one with a long history behind it (1961, p. 379).

While the stimuli, to use Homans's term, that are available to actors in face-to-face exchanges are usually quite different from stimuli available through indirect means such as the mass-media, a biography, or *Who's Who*, interpretation of the stimuli according to typified conceptions occurs in both cases. It is not clear how the actor utilizes 'external symbols' (including structural information about occupation, age, wealth) when engaged in direct exchanges with others. Nor does Homans clarify how the actor infers 'what is going on' over the course of interaction. A model of the actor that presupposes inductive procedures and a theory of meaning is also evident in Homans, but such notions remain implicit features of his discussion.

Work by Blau contains an elaborate analysis of social process, more realistically rooted in empirical studies, but it also suffers from implicit references to the actor's use of inductive procedures and a theory of meaning when engaged in social exchanges. Blau, like the others cited above, does not disentangle the observer's interpretations (requiring inductive procedures and a theory of meaning) from those of the actor, preferring to tell the reader about social life through the eyes of a detached observer armed with many complex abstract notions that subsume a rather impressive range of activities. Thus, his central notion 'of social exchange directs attention to the emergent properties in interpersonal relations and social interaction. A person for whom another has done a service is expected to express his gratitude and return a service when the occasion arises. Failure to express his appreciation and to reciprocate tends to stamp him as an ungrateful man who does not deserve to be helped' (Blau, 1964, p. 4). Precisely how actors recognize appropriate services and establish rates of exchange, how

the observer and actor assess their significance, and decide their 'normal' management, are not explicit features of Blau's framework.

Basic concepts of social interaction that presupposes tacit notions of induction and meaning are not discussed at their own level, but taken for granted as 'obvious' and meaningful. Consider the following:

The internal differentiation of status and the associated distribution of rewards in substructures may be based on standards that are, from the perspective of the encompassing social structure, universalistic or particularistic, although these standards are, by definition, universalistic within the narrower compass of each substructure, that is, they are generally accepted criteria of achievement *within the subgroup*. If internal status in substructures is governed by standards universally accepted as valid throughout the macrostructure, as is typical for criteria of instrumental performance, superior internal status indicates assets that are valued in other collectivities too . . . . If, however, internal status in substructures rests on diverse standards that are particularistic from the perspective of the macrostructure, the higher a person's status is in one collectivity, the less likely are his qualifications to make him acceptable in another with different value standards (1964, p. 297).

Blau's remarks seek to integrate social process with social structure, but he begins and ends with propositions considerably removed from theoretical and empirical clarification of the elements of process as seen by both the actor and social analyst. His theorizing does not specify how actor and researcher learn, recognize, and use standards as universalistic or particularistic, nor the kind of interpretive procedures the actor must possess to carry out social exchanges that enable him to recognize what standards are appropriate for particular social settings.

Goffman's work brings us closer to the kinds of events in everyday life from which social analysts make inferences about process and structure. Goffman's descriptions also convey the idea of a fully informed third party who has intimate knowledge of social exchanges. There are times when the reader feels Goffman has perhaps observed or experienced (from the 'inside') some of our more delicate and/or embarrassing encounters in daily life. While he fails to clarify from whose point of view, and by what procedures, the observer is to infer the details of everyday life social encounters, Goffman gives the reader a very convincing impression of being on the spot and 'knowing' what takes place from the perspective of an 'insider'. Implementing Goffman's perspective is difficult because:

1. Goffman's assumptions about the conditions of social encounters are substantively appealing but lack explicit analytic categories delineating how the actor's perspective differs from that of the observer, and how both can be placed within the same conceptual frame.

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2. All of Goffman's descriptive statements are prematurely coded, that is, interpreted by the observer, infused with substance that must be taken for granted, and subsumed under abstract categories without telling the reader how all of this was recognized and accomplished.

Consider the following:

When an individual enters the presence of others, they commonly seek to acquire information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed. They will be interested in his general socio-economic status, his conception of self, his attitude toward them, his competence, his trustworthiness, etc. (1959, p. 1).

How the actor acquires information (the interpretation of external symbols, the use of language categories) or utilizes information already possessed so as to link the presumed knowledge 'appropriately' to a particular setting, requires explicit reference to inference procedures and a theory of how the actor assigns meaning to objects and events. But Goffman's model of the actor does not reveal how the actor (or observer as actor) negotiates actual scenes, except through the eyes of an ideally situated and perceptive 'third party'. The wider community relevance of the notion of 'status' is provided in the following quotation:

Society is organized on the principle that any individual who possesses certain social characteristics has a moral right to expect that others will value and treat him in a correspondingly appropriate way . . . In consequence, when an individual projects a definition of the situation and thereby makes an implicit or explicit claim to be a person of a particular kind, he automatically exerts a moral demand upon the others, obligating them to value and treat him in the manner that persons of his kind have a right to expect (1959, p. 13).

Goffman's implicit reference to status as process alludes to many possible (but unexplicated) rules the actor might use, provides a vivid glimpse of the action scene itself, and how the interacting participants might treat each other in 'more' or 'less' institutionalized ways. But the idea of projecting a definition of the situation, and hence a claim to being a certain type of person, demands rules that both actor and observer follow in generating behavioural displays, and assigning the meanings with which Goffman endows the action scene.

### **Role as process**

The idea of 'role' as the dynamic aspect of 'status' or the 'less' institutionalized class of statuses implies a problematic or innovational element in behaviour. The problematical elements of 'role' are emphasized by

Goffman and exemplified in his remark that 'Life may not be much of a gamble, but interaction is' (1959, p. 243). A notion like 'status' provides us with an ideal normative label for understanding how both actor and observer subsume initial impressions based on appearances, and verbal identifications and introductions to establish some preliminary basis for mutual evaluation. At the level of interaction actors are constrained by the possible formality of ritualized introductions, whereby the communicants (or some third party) provide verbal material to support or detract from the appearance (Goode, 1960, p. 251). I am suggesting that labels designating a range of features that we call 'status' are used by observer and actor as practical language games for simplifying the task of summarizing a visual field and complex stimuli that are difficult to describe in some precise, detailed way (Wittgenstein, 1953). This means that the labels do not recover the appearances and imputations subsumed by the participant unless imagined details are supplied by an auditor during the course of interaction. Whereas this elaboration by the actor – an elaboration not subject (by him) to verification – serves his practical interests, the scientific observer cannot afford to rely on the same tacit elaboration; his model of the actor must clarify how his observations are necessarily deficient. Films or videotapes can provide access to the original source of observations and the possibility of improving the common sense observer's limitations. We are faced with the problem of deciding the actor's 'logic-in-use' versus his reflections or 'reconstructed logic' after he leaves the scene (see Kaplan, 1964, p. 8). Even though Goffman provides rich 'third party' descriptive accounts of the course of social exchanges, he does not tell us how the social analyst as observer and/or participant translates the 'logic-in-use' of his field work into the 'reconstructed logic' of his theorizing. The works of others cited above have also avoided this problem. Goffman, however, makes more of a frontal attack on the 'notion' of 'role-expectation' and the 'definition of the situation'.

To summarize, then, I assume that when an individual appears before others he will have many motives for trying to control the impression they receive of the situation. This report is concerned with some of the common techniques that persons employ to sustain such impressions and with some of the common contingencies associated with the employment of these techniques. . . . I shall be concerned only with the participant's dramaturgical problems of presenting the activity before others (1959, p. 15).

Goffman's remarks presume that the actor possesses well developed procedures for coping with his environment, procedures employed by the actor when satisfying what the observer (with unstated procedures) loosely labels 'role' behaviour, if it stems from, or is 'oriented by', some set of more

## 26 Interpretive Procedures and Normative Rules: Negotiation of Status and Role

formalized imputations and claims about kinship relationships, positions in groups, communities and work organizations. The perceptive remarks by Goffman extend conceptions of role generally found in the literature. The critical feature of role, as stressed by Goffman among others, lies in its construction by the actor over the course of interaction. This construction makes status-emitting stimuli problematic for the actor because of situational constraints.

This notion of construction, despite a lack of conceptual clarity, can be seen in the following quotation from Mead.

The generalized attitude of the percipient has arisen out of cooperative activities of individuals in which the individual by the gesture through which he excites the other has aroused in himself the attitude of the other, and addresses himself in the generalized attitude of the other, and addresses himself in the role of the other. Thus he comes to address himself in the generalized attitude of the group of persons occupied with a common undertaking. The generalization lies in such an organization of all the different cooperative acts as they appear in attitudes of the individual that he finds himself directing his acts by the corresponding acts of the others involved – by what may be called the rules of the game (Mead, 1938, p. 192).

Mead's remarks stress the problematic features of how two participants evoke a kind of cooperative exchange. Turner has stated the constructive elements of role behaviour clearly in the following passages:

Roles 'exist' in varying degrees of concreteness and consistency, while the individual confidently frames his behaviour as if they had unequivocal existence and clarity. The result is that in attempting from time to time to make aspects of the roles explicit he is creating and modifying roles as well as merely bringing them to light; the process is not only role-taking but *role-making*.

The actor is not the occupant of a position for which there is a neat set of rules – a culture or set of norms – but a person who must act in the perspective supplied in part by his relationship to others whose actions reflect roles that he must identify. Since the role of alter can only be inferred rather than directly known by ego, testing inferences about the role of alter is a continuing element in interaction. Hence the tentative character of the individual's own role definition and performance is never wholly suspended (1962, pp. 22–3).

Turner's exposition of role behaviour emphasizes the creative and modifying elements of role-taking and role-making. As noted in the earlier quote from Mead, the participants of an action scene emit stimuli that each must identify as relevant for taking (while perhaps modifying) the role of the other, or making (creating) the role. The role of each participant can only be inferred and never known directly, and the role behaviour displayed



is always tentative and being tested over the course of interaction.

But the model of the actor implied here lacks explicit statements about how the actor recognizes relevant stimuli and manages to orient himself (locate the stimuli in a socially meaningful context) to the behavioural displays so that an organized response can be generated which will be recognized as relevant to alter. The actor must be endowed with mechanisms or basic procedures that permit him to identify settings which would lead to 'appropriate' invocation of norms, where the norms would be surface rules and not basic to how the actor makes inferences about taking or making roles. The basic or interpretive procedures are like deep structure grammatical rules; they enable the actor to generate appropriate (usually innovative) responses in changing situated settings. The interpretive procedures enable the actor to sustain a sense of social structure over the course of changing social settings, while surface rules or norms provide a more general institutional or historical validity to the meaning of the action as it passes, in a reflective sense. To the Meadian dialectic of the 'I' and the 'me' is added the explicit requirement that the actor must be conceived as possessing inductive (interpretive) procedures, procedures designed to function as a base structure for generating and comprehending the behavioural (verbal and non-verbal) displays that can be observed. An implicit basic or interpretive procedure in Mead's theory would be the notion that participants in social exchanges must assume that their use of verbal and nonverbal signs or symbols are the 'same', or this 'sameness' (in an ideal sense) must at least be assumed to hold (Stone, 1962, p. 88).

The social analyst's use of abstract theoretical concepts like role actually masks the inductive or interpretive procedures whereby the actor produces behavioural displays which others and the observer label 'role behaviour'. Without a model of the actor that specifies such procedures or rules, we cannot reveal how behavioural displays are recognized as 'role-taking' or 'role-making'.

The extensive coverage of the research literature by Sarbin employs the following definitions of 'status' (called 'position' by Sarbin) and 'role'.

In other words, a position is a cognitive organization of expectations, a shorthand term for a concept embracing expected actions of persons enacting specified roles. These expectations, organized as they are around roles, may justifiably be called role expectations. Thus, a position is a cognitive organization of role expectations. . . .

A role is a patterned sequence of learned actions or deeds performed by a person in an interaction situation. The organizing of the individual actions is a product of the perceptual and cognitive behaviour of person A upon observing person B (Sarbin, 1953, p. 225).

Sarbin's remarks stress the learned elements of 'role' in everyday life, and refer to various studies which suggest the ambiguities of 'roles' for different actors. But Sarbin leans on the short-hand concepts of sociologists and anthropologists, taking for granted the 'positions' and 'roles' in society that social scientists treat as 'known' and 'clear', but which do not specify the mechanisms, procedures or rules employed by the actor to recognize and attribute expectations to others. While Sarbin's discussion of 'role' and 'self' takes us beyond the focus of this paper, his remarks on the self changing over time, based upon experience, are important for underlining the significance of actual 'role-enactment' on 'position' over time. But the construction of role behaviour over the course of interaction would stress learning mechanisms that would be selective in scanning the visual field or behavioural displays, rather than simply learning actions which the observer labels patterned sequences or roles. Memory would always be contingent upon procedures or rules that identify or recognize objects and events as socially meaningful.

In summarizing this section I want to stress two problems which preclude our present use of the concept 'role':

1. It is difficult to say what role-taking and role-enactment are all about if it is not explained how the 'statuses' or 'positions' to which they refer come to be recognized from both the actor's and the observer's perspective. The problem may be confounded if 'non-role' behaviour (that is, not following from some recognized 'status') as opposed to 'role' behaviour, is not clarified as a residual category, for such information could be a more important complex attribute in the evaluation by others including the observer of the actor's role behaviour.

2. To what extent does our understanding of conduct, subsumed under the label 'role', depend upon a clear analysis of the perception of 'norms', inasmuch as many writers shift their structural argument about 'status' as institutionalized to the idea of 'role' as a set of implicit 'norms'.

What we have failed to learn since the impact of Mead's work are the 'rules of the game', how many 'games' there are, and how actors and the observer come to treat some sequence of events as a 'game' or legitimate social activity. Presumably the actor's perception and interpretation of an environment of objects is established and continually re-established in unknown specificity and vagueness but according to some set of 'standards', 'rules', or 'norms'. A closer look at the concept 'norm' is the next order of business.

### **Norms and the problematic character of everyday life**

A major difficulty in analytically based accounts of 'role' lies in the 'norms' or 'rules' by which the actor is presumably oriented in perceiving and

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interpreting an environment of objects. The literature reveals continual reliance on some notion of 'status' to suggest stable meanings about 'position' *vis-à-vis* others in a network of social relationships. There is an implied consensus about the 'rights and obligations' of actors occupying some commonly known and accepted 'status'. The variability attached to 'role' (its innovative or 'less institutionalized' character) appears to stem from the various actors who may come to occupy a given 'status'. The actor's differential perception and interpretation of 'statuses' implies ambiguity for all participants.

The notion of 'norms', including legal norms, is a variable element of social interaction. The common view is to characterize our theoretical conceptions of 'norms' as stable features of society (with acknowledged differences between the mores and folkways), evoking consensus in groups.

Norms are problematic to all interaction scenes because our reflective thoughts, as participants or observers, reify and reconstruct the 'rules of the game'. The analogy which fits here is that of Mead's distinction between the 'I' and the 'me'. Although interaction is always a gamble for all concerned, we have managed to exempt that abstract entity called 'society'. The reflective 'me' of the participants and observers (including the social analyst) imputes meanings and re-interprets perceptions and actions after the social scene unfolds, but it is the 'I' which is 'leading the way' with potentially impulsive, innovative, spontaneous interpretations of the situation. Another way of characterizing the problem is to speak of role-taking as 'logic-in-use' and status as 'reconstructed logic'. The rehearsal elements of role-taking involve 'logic-in-use' because the actor is taking more than 'internalized norms' or stored information into account, for it is the appearance, behaviour and reactions of others in a particular setting that activates normative categories. The 'reconstructed logic' comes into play after the interaction as a way of evaluating 'what happened' and connecting it to others or some wider group or community. The particular action scene the actor must attend requires that he locate emergent (constructed) meanings within the wider context of general rules or policies (Rawls, 1955, pp. 3-32). The general rules or policies are norms whose meaning in emergent (constructed) action scenes must be negotiated by the actor.

Statuses, like general rules or policies, require recognition and interpretation during which interacting participants must elicit and search appearances for relevant information about each other. Role-taking and role-making require that the actor articulate general rules or policies (norms) with an emergent (constructed) action scene in order to find the meaning of one's own behaviour or that of some other.

With our present conceptions of status, role, and norms, we would be

hard-pressed to explain role behaviour by simulation techniques. We would fare better consulting theatrical directors. Suppose that the government printing office began publishing manuals, prepared by the US Office of Education, and based upon the 'expert' advice of social scientists, that purport to contain detailed descriptions of all the important 'statuses' of the society, complete with 'role variability' permitted regionally, nationally, and qualified for such categories as 'nuclear family', 'extended family', 'close friends', 'casual friends', 'acquaintances but not friends', 'strangers', 'foreigners', and 'children up to pre-teens'. Presume that the 'norms' or 'rules' governing interaction are described for each 'status' and 'role', and the settings in which variation is permitted. Suppose that another manual outlines 'role-playing procedures' beginning with children who can speak and covering all adult possibilities, including 'old-age'. Assume that grants to adult-education centres and school systems by the government provide an organizational basis for implementing the programme.

The obvious point to our example of writing simulation manuals is that the human organism must possess basic or interpretive procedures that emerge developmentally and continue to provide innovations late in the life cycle. The dramaturgical metaphor of the stage is defective in explaining how actors are capable of imitation and *innovation* with little or no prior rehearsal, just as a child is capable of producing grammatically correct utterances that he has never heard, and of understanding utterances that have never been heard before. Terms like attitudes, values, need dispositions, drives, expectancies, are inadequate because there is no explicit attempt to formulate interpretive procedures which the actor must learn in order to negotiate novel experiences as well as to be able to construct constancy in his environment. The language and meaning acquisition principles which would permit interpretive procedures to emerge must allow for the operation of memory and selection procedures which are consistent with pattern recognition or construction, active (searching for documentary evidence) and passive (taking the environment for granted, until further notice, as 'obvious' or 'clear') hypothesis testing, and must be congruent with the actor's ability to recognize and generate novel and 'identical' or 'similar' behavioural displays (Cicourel, 1970a).

The distinction between interpretive procedures and norms is tied to the difference between consensus or shared agreement and a sense of social structure. Interpretive procedures provide the actor with a developmentally changing sense of social structure that enables him to assign meaning or relevance to an environment of objects. Normative or surface rules enable the actor to link his view of the world to that of others in concerted social action, and to presume that consensus or shared agreement governs interaction. The shared agreement would include consensus about the existence

of conflict or differences in normative rules. The following two quotations from Goode and Shibutani reveal the negotiated or constructed character of consensus or shared agreement which exists in normative behaviour:

Perhaps the social structure is under no threat under modern conditions of apparently weak consensus if the conformity to which ego is pressed is merely of a 'general' nature, that is, the norms permit a wide range of rough approximations to the ideal. But whether norms in fact are general is not easy to determine. Which is in fact 'the' norm? You should not lie (only a loose conformity is demanded); or you may not tell lies of the following types in these situations but not in others, and the wrongness of other lies is to be ranked in the following order. The first is a general norm, and of course there will be only a rough conformity with it, but it is not a correct description. The second would be empirically more accurate, but no one has established such a matrix of obligations on empirical evidence (Goode, 1960, pp. 254-5).

In recurrent and well organized situations men are able to act together with relative ease because they share common understandings as to what each person is supposed to do. Cooperation is facilitated when men take the same things for granted. We are willing to wait in line in a grocery store on the assumption that we will be waited on when our turn comes up. We are willing to accept pieces of paper of little intrinsic value in return for our labours on the assumption that money can subsequently be exchanged for the goods and services that we desire. There are thousands of such shared assumptions, and society is possible because of the faith men place in the willingness of others to act on them. Consensus refers to the common assumptions underlying cooperative endeavours (Shibutani, 1961, p. 40).

The quotations from Goode and Shibutani emphasize the necessity of viewing normative behaviour as including variations in the interpretation of general rules, as well as tacit assumptions about how ego and alter will trust their environment in the absence of cumbersome and redundant details about the meaning of 'familiar' activities. Persons will recognize the grocery store queue as a particular instance of a general case and not ask the clerk or other persons standing in line if the 'general rule' holds in 'this grocery store'. The idea of interpretive procedures employed by actors is implicit in how the actor decides a general rule is implied or operative.

The interpretive procedures provide a sense of social order that is fundamental for normative order (consensus or shared agreement) to exist or be negotiated and constructed. The two orders are always in interaction, and it would be absurd to speak of the one without the other. The analytic distinction parallels a similar separation in linguistics between the surface structure utterance (the normative order of consensus statements), and the

deep structure (the basic social order or sense of social structure) (Chomsky, 1965). The distinction is necessary and presupposed in a reference to how the actor recognizes social scenes as normatively relevant, and in the differential perception and interpretation of norms and action scenes *vis-à-vis* role behaviour. But unlike the rather static notion of internalized attitudes as dispositions to act in a certain way, the idea of interpretive procedures must specify how the actor negotiates and constructs *possible* action, and evaluates the results of *completed* action. Our model of the actor must specify:

1. How general rules or norms are invoked to justify or evaluate a course of action, and
2. How innovative constructions in context-bound scenes alter general rules or norms, and thus provide the basis for change.

Hence the learning and use of general rules or norms, and their long-term storage, always require interpretive procedures for recognizing the relevance of actual, changing scenes, orienting the actor to possible courses of action, the organization of behavioural displays and their reflective evaluation by the actor.

Terms like 'internalized norms' or attitudes appear inadequate when we recognize how socialization experiences revolve around our use of language and linguistic codifications of personal and group experiences over time. Our perception and interpretation of social reality is continually modified by the acquisition of new and different context-bound lexical items. The educational process is designed to teach us how to think abstractly and utilize language to order our experiences and observations. Linguistic structures enable us to extend our knowledge and subsume a wide spectrum of experiences and observations, but it also filters these activities both as inputs and outputs. For those with less educational experience, the social meanings of the world of everyday life may be represented differently (Bernstein, 1958; 1959; 1960 and 1962). The study of language use is important for understanding how actors routinize or normalize their environments, perceive and interpret them as threatening, disruptive, new or strange.

Structural arrangements provide boundary conditions by using what the actor takes for granted; typified conceptions that make up the actor's stock of knowledge, ecological settings, common linguistic usage and bio-physical conditions. The interaction remains structured by such boundary conditions, but is also problematic during the course of action. But the actor's typified orientation to his environment minimizes the problematic possibilities of social encounters: the fundamental importance of common sense ways of perceiving and interpreting the world is the taken-for-granted perspective which reduces surprise, assumes that the world is as it appears

today, and that it will be the same tomorrow. The actor constructs his daily existence by a set of tried and proven recipes (Schutz, 1962 and Garfinkel, 1967).

A more refined conceptual frame for understanding norms will have to specify interpretive procedures as a set of invariant properties governing fundamental conditions of all interaction so as to indicate how the actor and observer decide what serves as definitions of 'correct' or 'normal' conduct or thought. The interpretive procedures would suggest the nature of minimal conditions that all interaction presumably would have to satisfy for actor and observer to decide that the interaction is 'normal' or 'proper' and can be continued. The acquisition and use of interpretive procedures over time amounts to a cognitive organization that provides a continual sense of social structure.

#### Some features of interpretive procedures and their field research relevance

In this final section of the chapter I want to outline some of the elements that the notion of interpretive procedures would possess if terms like status, role, and norm are to retain any usefulness. In presenting my discussion I will lean heavily on the writings of Alfred Schutz because I believe he has made more explicit the ingredients of social interaction also discussed by James, Mead, Baldwin, and others. I find Schutz's writings to be quite compatible with some elements of the linguistic theory known as generative-transformational grammar, and hence will draw upon elements of both in my discussion.

Both Chomsky and Schutz stress the importance of the intentions of speaker-hearers. In transformational grammar considerable emphasis is placed upon the speaker-hearer's competence to generate and understand acceptable (grammatically correct) utterances. This competence presumes a deep structure whereby the speaker's intentions are first formulated according to base or phrase structure or rewrite rules. The base structure utterance, therefore, can be viewed as an elaborated (before the fact) version of what is actually spoken (and heard by a hearer). Transformational rules operate on the deep structure so as to delete or rearrange the utterance so that a surface structure comes out as a well-formed or grammatically correct sentence. For present purposes we can say that speakers and hearers possess two common sets of phonological and syntactic rules whereby each is capable (possesses the competence) of generating and comprehending deep and surface structures.

Schutz is concerned with the semantic or meaning component of social interaction. The linguist is not interested in focusing on interaction itself, but his statements can be extended logically to include conditions formulated by Schutz for understanding how social order or social interaction is

possible. I consider the following passage from Schutz to be central to the problem of social order, as well as compatible with elements of the formulations of generative-transformational linguists.

More or less naively I [referring to the common sense actor's view of things] presuppose the existence of a common scheme of reference for both my own acts and the acts of others. I am interested above all not in the overt behaviour of others, not in their performance of gestures and bodily movements, but in their intentions, and that means in the in-order-to motives for the sake of which, and in the because motives based on which, they [others] act as they do. (Schutz, 1964, p. 11).

The notion of a common scheme of reference includes the idea of action that is motivated by a plan of projected behaviour which Schutz calls an 'in-order-to' motive, and the possibility of reflective behaviour whereby some reason is assigned to the past, completed action (called a 'because motive' by Schutz). Many readers may not feel that Schutz has presented material that goes beyond the work of James, Baldwin, Mead, or others, but I believe the extension by Schutz of ideas by these writers can be found in several features making up the 'common scheme of reference' which can be viewed as interpretive procedures capable of being studied empirically. The following features are proposed as basic to all interaction, but not exhaustive, yet a necessary first step in clarifying the fundamental base structure of social interaction.

1. The first procedure refers to a reciprocity of perspectives which Schutz divides into two parts. The first part instructs the speaker and hearer to assume their mutual experiences of the interaction scene are the same even if they were to change places. The second part informs each participant to disregard personal differences in how each assigns meaning to everyday activities, thus each can attend the present scene in an identical manner for the practical matter at hand. Schutz uses a question and answer format to further illustrate this procedure. The question-answer sequencing requires a reciprocal rule whereby my question provides a basis (reason) for your answer, while the possibility of a future answer from you provides a basis (reason) for my question. When I ask a question I have intentions (a deep structure) or a more elaborated version in mind than what I actually ask you. My 'pruned' or 'deleted' surface question, therefore, presumes a more elaborated version which I assume you 'fill in', despite receiving only my surface message. Your answer, therefore, is based upon both the elaborated and surface elements of my question, and I in turn 'fill in' your answer so as to construct your elaborated intentions. Both participants, therefore, must presume that each will generate recognizable and intelligible utterances as a



necessary condition for the interaction to even occur, and each must reconstruct the other's intentions (the deep structure) if there is to be coordinated social interaction.

2. The reciprocity of perspectives cannot operate unless additional procedures or sub-routines accompany its use. One sub-routine consists of the actor's ability to treat a given lexical item, category, or phrase, as an index of larger networks of meaning as in normative development of disease categories, colour categories, and kinship terms (Bar-Hillel, 1954; Cicourel, 1970a; Conklin, 1955; Frake, 1962; Garfinkel, 1967 and Sacks, 1967). The appearance of a particular lexical item presumes the speaker intended a larger set, and assumes the hearer 'fills-in' the larger set when deciding its meaning. A related sub-routine allows the actor to defer judgment on the item until additional information is forthcoming. Alternatively, an item or category may be assigned tentative meaning and then 'locked-in' with a larger collection of items retrospectively when a phrase appears later in the conversation. This *et cetera* procedure and its sub-routines permit the speaker-hearer to make normative sense of immediate settings by permitting temporary, suspended, or 'concrete' linkages with a short-term or long-term store of socially distributed knowledge.

3. To introduce a third interpretive property, the idea of normal form typifications, I quote again from Schutz:

But as I confront my fellow-man, I bring into each concrete situation a stock of preconstituted knowledge which includes a network of typifications of human individuals in general, of typical human motivations, goals, and action patterns. It also includes knowledge of expressive and interpretive schemes, of objective sign-systems and, in particular, of the vernacular language (Schutz, 1964, pp. 29-30).

Interaction participants presume normal forms of acceptable talk and appearances, or if discrepancies appear, attempt to normalize the action scene. The procedure provides the actor with a basis for rejecting or reducing a range of possible meanings to a collapsed typification of the social structures. The procedure instructs the actor to reject or recognize particular instances as acceptable representations of a more general normative set. The collapsing, typifying activity of immediate action scenes is context-bound, but enables the actor to make use of short and long-term store (socially distributed knowledge) so as to subsume the particulars of an unfolding setting under more general normative rules. Hence notions like status, role, and norm cannot be relevant to an understanding of everyday social interaction unless the actor possesses a procedure for recognizing normal forms or subsuming particulars under general normative or surface

rules, and thus establishing a basis for concerted action. Asking the actor what he 'sees' or has 'seen' in experimental or field studies requires that the researcher know something about how the actor typifies his world, according to what kinds of linguistic categories and syntactic rules.

When the observer seeks to describe the interaction of two participants, the environment within his reach is congruent with that of the actors, and he is able to observe the face-to-face encounter, but he cannot presume that his experiences are identical to the actors: yet both actors assume their experiences are roughly identical for all practical purposes. It is difficult for the observer 'to verify his interpretation of the other's experiences by checking them against the other's own subjective interpretations', because while there exists a congruence between them, it is difficult to 'verify' his interpretation of the other's experiences unless he (the observer) becomes a 'partner' and/or seeks to question the other along particular lines (Schutz, 1964, p. 34). The observer is very likely to draw upon his own past experiences as a common-sense actor *and* scientific researcher to decide the character of the observed action scene. The context of our interpretations will thus be based upon 'logic-in-use' and 'reconstructed logic', and therefore include elements of common-sense typifications and theorizing.

The observer's scheme of interpretation cannot be identical, of course, with the interpretive scheme of either partner in the social relation observed. The modifications of attention which characterize the attitude of the observer cannot coincide with those of a participant in an ongoing social relation. For one thing, what he finds relevant is not identical with what they find relevant in the situation. Furthermore, the observer stands in a privileged position in one respect: he has the ongoing experiences of *both* partners under observation. On the other hand, the observer cannot legitimately interpret the 'in-order-to' motives of one participant as the 'because' motives of the other, as do the partners themselves, unless the interlocking of motives becomes explicitly manifested in the observable situation. (1964, p. 36).

The complexity of perspectives involved in direct interaction and observation depend, therefore, upon subtle shifts by the researcher, requiring that he use interpretive procedures and common-sense typifications. The observer cannot avoid the use of interpretive procedures in research for he relies upon his member-acquired use of normal forms to recognize the relevance of behavioural displays for his theory. He can only objectify his observations by making explicit the properties of interpretive procedures and his reliance on them for carrying out his research activities.

When our interest in the sources of information provided by direct participation in interaction and observation is shifted to interaction by

telephone, exchange of letters, messages we receive from third parties, read or hear about via the news media, the actor's perspective for 'knowing' his partner or 'other' narrows. If the telephone conversation is between acquaintances, friends or kinship elements our model of the actor must include the situation described by Schutz as follows:

I hold on to the familiar image I have of you. I take it for granted that you are as I have known you before. Until further notice I hold invariant that segment of my stock of knowledge which concerns you and which I have built up in face-to-face situations, that is, until I receive information to the contrary (1964, p. 39).

The ways in which the actor retains an image of the other based upon prior face-to-face experiences is a fundamental feature of how we can interpret interview material from respondents. Knowledge of what Schutz calls the 'constitutive traits' of the other by the actor is presupposed in making inferences about the meaning of respondents' utterances. Hence, when we become interested both in the actor's comprehension of a world divided into different sectors of immediacy, as opposed to others or objects not in face-to-face contact, then our theory and methodology must reflect the many transitional ways of 'knowing' for the actor which fall between 'direct' and 'indirect' experiences of others, objects, and events. The experience of others not in face-to-face contact Schutz refers to as the actor's perspective of a 'contemporary'. The mediate apprehension of the contemporary is accomplished by typifications, even though the 'other' may have been known in the past through face-to-face communication.

The act by which I apprehend the former fellowman as a contemporary is thus a typification in the sense that I hold invariant my previously gained knowledge, although my former fellowman has grown older in the meantime and must have necessarily gained new experiences. Of these experiences I have either no knowledge or only knowledge by inference or knowledge gained through fellowmen or other indirect sources (1964, p. 42).

Schutz's remarks suggest the elements necessary for understanding the basic processes that generate role behaviour or the actor's point of view *vis-à-vis* some 'other'. They also point to a more general model whereby we can decide how the observer-researcher obtains data about the actor-other, and how such data are to be interpreted. Schutz notes how the simultaneity of ongoing interaction means that the actor follows a step-by-step constitution of the other's conduct and its experienced meaning, and therefore, when faced with 'an accomplished act, artifact, or tool', the actor views the end-products 'as a pointer to such subjective step-by-step processes' experienced in direct interaction (1964, p. 43). The observer-researcher therefore, cannot always take utterances by respondents as evidence, unless

he has some confidence that they can be shown to reflect the step-by-step processes of the original or mediate experiences thereby lessening the possibility that 'coded' substantive responses are distorting, altering or truncating the meaning of the activities, objects or events for the actor. Schutz comments on how the actor utilizes 'personal ideal types' as a means of comprehending what is experienced directly and indirectly. These provide the observer-researcher with a fundamental element for any model which seeks to understand how the actor manages to perceive and interpret his environment, in spite of apparent discrepancies and despite the fact that the 'norms' are not clearly understood 'directives to action' and that 'consensus' emerges through the constructions of participants using interpretive procedures in the course of interaction. The 'stability' of the world of contemporaries for the actor refers to the typifications employed by him and the fact that they are detached from an immediate and hence emergent subjective configuration of meaning because 'such processes - typical experiences of "someone" - exhibit the idealizations "again and again", i.e. of typical anonymous repeatability' (1964, p. 44). In the case of direct interaction the personal ideal types are modified by the concrete 'other' given in direct experience to the actor. Hence, the actor can deal effectively with an environment which carries with it ambiguity and gaps in 'directives to concrete action' because the typical is rendered homogeneous, non-problematical, and, therefore, taken for granted. The actor establishes equivalence classes subject to the modifications inherent in direct and indirect contacts with others. The observer-researcher's equivalence classes cannot be established without reference to the actor's use of interpretive procedures and the common-sense equivalence classes constructed during interaction.

Thus, when the observer-researcher questions respondents about the 'social structures', he must distinguish between various events and objects and how they are known to the actor. Schutz claims that a typifying scheme is inversely related to the level of generality of the actor's experiences, and the experiences are rooted in the stock of knowledge possessed by the actor, from which he derives the scheme.

These remarks make it obvious that each typification involves other typifications. The more substrata of typifying schemes are involved in a given ideal type, the more anonymous it is, and the larger is the region of things simply taken for granted in the application of the ideal type. The substrata, of course, are not explicitly grasped in clear and distinct acts of thought. This becomes evident if one takes social realities such as the state or the economic system or art and begins to explicate all the substrata of typifications upon which they are based (1964, p. 49).

If our observer-researcher is studying a family unit, a small village, a small group of elite leaders, he may interview A about X, where X may be an individual or some collectivity. The ideal-typical characterization of X by A keeps invariant A's direct experiences of X, making them typifications. A's description of X may be punctuated by examples designed as 'evidence' and motivated by various interests and stock of knowledge. The observer-researcher refers the information (depending upon how it is interpreted *vis-à-vis* the strata of meaning suspected and/or probed for) to his own stock of knowledge about X and his interest in X. The more removed (by 'institutionalized' law, by physical and social distance, by tradition) X is from A, the more standardized a given typifying scheme will be, the more careful will be the required probing and the inferences drawn. If the respondent A is referring to documents he has read, or his information is based upon others' interpretations of documents, the observer-researcher will have to decide the meaning of the sign-system used by A, for the 'distance' of the document is likely to lead to more 'objective' use of signs, that is, without benefit of 'inside' knowledge. If A was the member of some audience witnessing a village fight, and was face-to-face with the participants, his remarks shift to that of an observer as described earlier.

Summary "Taken for granted" ideal types ↔ interpretive procedures

Throughout this chapter I have tried to discuss terms like status, role and norm within a general model for characterizing social interaction and the perspectives employed by participants. Everyday experience for the actor is at any particular moment partitioned into various domains of relevances whereby common-sense equivalence classes of typifications taken for granted are employed. The correspondence between the social analyst's terms, e.g., 'status', 'role', 'role-expectation', and the world as experienced by our constructed actor-type does not refer to the same sets of typifications, nor are the two sets of categories used by our actor and observer-researcher, or the experiences upon which they are based, arrived at by the same inferences and reasoning. In the ideal the actor and observer-researcher employ different kinds of constructs and their procedural rules are distinct. In actual practice, however, the actor's everyday theorizing is probably not much different from the observer-researcher. Both employ the same interpretive procedures and similar typifications, and they seldom clarify during interaction the particular vernacular or rules used to communicate the domains of relevance which each describes, nor do they delineate the strata or layers of meaning intended or suggested by the linguistic categories and connotations used. Differences between our 'practical theorist' and 'academic theorist' may all but disappear when both describe everyday activities. The observer-researcher must rely upon interpretive procedures when sub-

suming 'recognized' behavioural displays under concepts derived from his scientific vocabulary. Hence unless the researcher clarifies, conceptually and empirically, his reliance on interpretive procedures, he cannot make claims to 'objective' findings. Most of the above discussion can be summarized by the following remarks:

1. Participants in social interaction apparently 'understand' many things (by elaboration of verbal and nonverbal signals) even though such matters are not mentioned explicitly. The unspoken elements may be as important as the spoken ones.

2. The actors impute meanings which 'make sense' of what is being described or explained even though at any moment in clock-time the conversation may not be clear to the partner or independent observer by reference to the actual terms being used. Through the use of interpretive procedures the participants supply meanings and impute underlying patterns even though the surface content will not reveal these meanings to an observer unless his model is directed to such elaborations.

3. A common scheme of interpretation (the interpretive procedures) is assumed and selective background characteristics are invoked to account for and fill in apparent "gaps" in what is described or explained. The participants seem to agree even though neither has indicated any explicit grounds or basis for the agreement. Each may choose to 'wait and see'.

4. The participants do not typically call each other's utterances into doubt, demanding independent evidence, so long as each assumes he can receive 'details' (or that 'details' are available) on discrepancies detected in the conversation. But even when there are doubts, the partner will seek to 'help' the other get through the conversation. Direct confrontations require radical shifts in the perspective each participant employs; but as a first approximation they both take for granted that each knows what they say and mean by their utterances.

5. The interpretive procedures activate short and long-term stored information (socially distributed knowledge) that enables the actor to articulate general normative rules with immediate interaction scenes. The interpretive procedures and surface (normative) rules provide the actor with a scheme for partitioning his environment into domains of relevance.

6. The interpretive procedures govern the sequencing of interaction and establish the conditions for evaluating and generating behaviour displays which the researcher labels as appropriate status and role attributes or conduct. The articulation of interpretive procedures and surface (normative) rules establish a basis for concerted interaction which we label the social structures.

7. Notions like status, role and norm, therefore, cannot be clarified unless the researcher's model explicitly provides for features enabling the actor to recognize and generate 'appropriate' behavioural displays. Nor can we explain the observer's ability to recognize behavioural displays as talking under such procedures and rules, unless we have a model of interaction that provides for interpretive procedures and their interaction with normative or surface rules.

Interaction is common sense theorizing where the specific is understood in light of the generalized ideal type.

Role's Status being unequal in that one carries out different elements of it personalizes a role salient to the performer, situation.

Tool of analysis is the understood indicated by flow of language.

### Some properties of interpretive procedures

The use of the term 'rules' (or legal and extra-legal norms) in everyday life usually means various prescriptive and proscriptive norms (Morris, 1956; Bierstedt, 1957; Williams, 1960; Gibbs, 1966). I have labelled such norms surface rules. In this paper I shall treat norms in everyday life and scientific rules of procedure as legal and extra-legal surface rules governing everyday conduct and scientific inquiry, in keeping with recent work in ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967). By ethnomethodology I mean the study of interpretive procedures and surface rules in everyday social practices and scientific activities. Hence a concern with everyday practical reasoning becomes a study in how members employ interpretive procedures to recognize the relevance of surface rules and convert them into practised and enforced behaviour. Scientific research has its ideal or normative conceptions of how inquiry is conducted as well as implicit or intuitive strategies followed by individual researchers and promoted by different 'schools'. Paradigms of 'normal science' (Kuhn, 1962) emerge in different fields to define temporally enforceable strategies of research and bodies of acceptable propositions. As Michael Polanyi (1958) has argued, the scientist's success in his research relies heavily upon 'tacit knowledge' or unstated knowledge that cannot be articulated into surface rules. Interpretive procedures in everyday life and scientific research, however, are not 'rules' in the sense of such general policies or practices like operational definitions or legal and extra-legal norms, where a sense of a 'right' and 'wrong' pre- or proscriptive norm or practice is at issue. Instead they are part of all inquiry yet exhibit empirically defensible properties that 'advise' the member about an infinite collection of behavioural displays, and provide him with a sense of social structure (or, in the case of scientific activity, provide an intuitive orientation to an area of inquiry). I assume that interpretive and surface rules govern normal science in the same sense in which everyday social behaviour requires that members generate and use 'acceptable' descriptive accounts about their environments; scientists seek accounts that can be viewed and accepted as recognizable and intelligible displays of social reality. Scientific procedures orient the researcher's conception of normal science surface rules in normative or actual practice.

The child cannot be taught to understand and use surface rules unless he acquires a sense of social structure, a basis for assigning meaning to his environment. The acquisition of language rules is like the acquisition of norms; they both presuppose interpretive procedures. The child must learn to articulate a general rule or policy (a norm) with a particular event or case said to fall under the general rule (Rawls, 1955). There are no surface rules for instructing the child (or adult) on how the articulation is to be made.



Members of a society must acquire the competence to assign meaning to their environment so that surface rules and their articulation with particular cases can be made. Hence interpretive procedures are invariant properties of everyday practical reasoning necessary for assigning sense to the substantive rules sociologists usually call norms. Surface rules, therefore, always require some recognition and cognition about the particulars which would render given rules as appropriate and useful for understanding and dealing with actual behavioural displays. Hence all surface rules carry an open structure or horizon *vis-à-vis* some boundable collection of meanings until they are linked to particular cases by interpretative procedures.

Linking interpretive procedures and surface rules presumes a generative model in the sense of Chomsky's work on generative or transformational grammar. The interpretive procedures prepare and sustain an environment of objects for inference and action *vis-à-vis* a culture-bound world view and the written and 'known in common' surface rules. And just as a generative grammar is not a model for a speaker or a hearer (Chomsky, 1965, p. 9), but a basis for revealing how actual use is possible, the idea of generative or praxiological (Kotarbinski, 1962; Hix, 1954; Garfinkel, 1956) social structure is not a model for well socialized members of a society but an attempt to show:

1. How the acquisition of interpretive procedures and surface rules is necessary for understanding members' everyday activities.
2. How members and researchers assign structural descriptions to all forms of social organization.

An analogous generative or praxiological perspective is suggested in the remark by Goodenough (1964, p. 36): 'As I see it, a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves.' Stated another way, what must be known about the properties of interpretive procedures and surface rules in order to programme subjects' actions (in field and experimental settings) so that such behaviour can be recognized as 'normal' or routine (or unusual or bizarre) social activity by members?

Our present knowledge of the nature of interpretive procedures is sparse. I do not want to suggest or claim the existence of a 'complete' list (or of any 'list') but will simply describe a few properties to facilitate further discussion.

1. The reciprocity of perspectives. Schutz (1953, 1955) describes this property as consisting of

(a) the member's idealization of the interchangeability of standpoints whereby the speaker and hearer both take for granted that each (A assumes it of B and assumes B assumes it of A, and vice versa) would probably have

the same experiences of the immediate scene if they were to change places, and

(b) that until further notice (the emergence of counter-evidence) the speaker and hearer both assume that each can disregard, for the purpose at hand, any differences originating in their personal ways of assigning meaning to, and deciding the relevance of, everyday life activities, such that each can interpret the environment of objects they are both attending in an essentially identical manner for the practical action in question. A corollary of this property is that members assume, and assume others assume it of them, that their descriptive accounts or utterances will be intelligible and recognizable features of a world known in common and taken for granted. The speaker assumes the hearer will expect him to emit utterances that are recognizable and intelligible, and the speaker also assumes that his descriptive accounts are acceptable products and will be so received by the hearer. Finally, the hearer assumes that the speaker has assumed this property for the hearer, and expects to comply with the tacit but sanctioned behaviour of appearing to 'understand' what is being discussed.

2. *The et cetera assumption.* To suggest that speakers and hearers sanction the simulated 'understanding' of each other implies something more than a reciprocity of perspectives. Garfinkel (1964, pp. 247-8) suggests the understanding requires that a speaker and hearer 'fill in' or assume the existence of common understandings or relevances of what is being said on occasions when the descriptive accounts are seen as 'obvious' and even when not immediately obvious. The tolerance for utterances viewed as not obvious or not meaningful depends upon further properties and their reflexive features. The et cetera assumption serves the important function of allowing things to pass despite their ambiguity or vagueness, or allowing the treatment of particular instances as sufficiently relevant or understandable to permit viewing descriptive elements as 'appropriate'. What is critical about the et cetera assumption is its reliance upon particular elements of language itself (lexical items, phrases, idiomatic expressions or *double entendres*, for example) and paralinguistic features of exchanges for 'indexing' (Garfinkel, 1967) the course and meaning of the conversation. I return to this problem below. But notice that neither the reciprocity of perspectives nor the et cetera assumption imply that consensus exists or is necessary; rather, they indicate that a presumed 'agreement' to begin, sustain, and terminate interaction will occur despite the lack of conventional notions about the existence of substantive consensus to explain concerted action.

3. *Normal forms.* Reference to a reciprocity of perspectives and the et cetera assumption presumes the existence of certain normal forms of acceptable talk and appearances upon which members rely for assigning sense to their

environments. Thus, on occasions when the reciprocity of perspectives is in doubt (when the appearance of the speaker or hearer, or the talk itself, is not viewed as recognizable and intelligible such that the et cetera assumption cannot overcome discrepancies or ambiguities) efforts will be made by both speaker and hearer to normalize the presumed discrepancies (this is similar in sense to the reduction of dissonance or incongruity, cf. Festinger, 1957; Brown, 1962; 1965). But, unlike the social psychologist's interest in dissonance, the anthropologist-sociologist's attention must be directed to the recognition and description of normal forms, and to how members' linguistic and paralinguistic behaviour reveals the ways in which interpretive procedures and surface rules are called into question and the ways in which the social scene is sustained as dissonant or is restored to some sense of normality. Competent members (those who can expect to manage their affairs without interference and be treated as 'acceptable types') recognize and employ normal forms in daily interaction under the assumption that all communication is embedded within a body of common knowledge or 'what everyone knows' (Garfinkel, 1964, pp. 237-8).

4. *Retrospective-prospective sense of occurrence.* Routine conversation depends upon speakers and hearers waiting for later utterances to decide what was intended before. Speakers and hearers both assume that what each says to the other has, or will have at some subsequent moment, the effect of clarifying a presently ambiguous utterance or a descriptive account with promisory overtones. This property of interpretive procedures enables the speaker and hearer to maintain a sense of social structure despite deliberate or presumed vagueness on the part of the participants in an exchange. Waiting for later utterances (that may never come) to clarify present descriptive accounts, or 'discovering' that earlier remarks or incidents now clarify a present utterance, provide continuity to everyday communication.

The properties of interpretive procedures have been ignored because sociologists have taken them for granted when pursuing their own research, particularly research in their own society. Hence the sociologist invokes the properties of interpretive rules as a necessary part of making sense of the activities and environment of members he studies, and his use of these properties is derived from his own membership in the society, not from his professional training or from knowledge gained from research. Members use the properties of interpretive procedures to clarify and make routine sense of their own environments, and sociologists must view such activities (and their own work) as practical methods for constructing and sustaining social order.

Garfinkel (1966) has suggested that the properties of practical reasoning (what I am calling interpretive procedures) be viewed as a collection of

instructions to members by members, and as a sort of continual (reflexive) feedback whereby members assign meaning to their environment. The interpretive procedures, therefore, have reflexive features linking their properties to actual scenes such that appropriate surface rules are seen as relevant for immediate or future inference and action. The reflexive features of talk can be viewed as saying that the properties of interpretive procedures as a collection, are reflexive because they are necessary for members to orient themselves

- (a) In the presence of, but not in contact with (for example, driving a car alone), other members.
- (b) During face-to-face or telephone exchanges.
- (c) In the absence of actual contact with others.

The properties of interpretive procedures provide members with a sense of social order during periods of solitary living, and they are integral to actual contact with others (though the contact may vary from walking alone in a crowded street, to sitting on a bus but not conversing, to actual exchanges with others). Within talk and in the absence of talk, reflexive features of interpretive procedures operate to provide a continuous feedback to members about the routine sense of what is happening. Hence physical features of the ecological scene, the members' presence or absence, the existence or absence, of conversation and features of talk within conversation, all provide the participants with continuous 'instructions' for orienting themselves to their environment and deciding appropriate inferences and action.

5. Talk itself as reflexive. Talk is reflexive to participants because it is seen as fundamental to 'normal' scenes. I am not referring to the content of talk but simply its presence during speech and the expectation that particular forms of speech will give a setting the appearance of something recognizable and intelligible. The timing of speech (as opposed to deliberate or random hesitation and alterations of normal-form intonational contours) and the timing of periods of silence or such occasional reminders of normal speech like the 'uh huh', 'I see', 'ah', 'oh', reflexively guide both speaker and hearer throughout exchanges. The observer must also make use of reflexive features to assign normal form significance to a scene or sequence of scenes as a condition for deciding the content of talk. Talk provides members with information about the appropriateness of occasions. Garfinkel notes that talk is a constituent feature of all settings because members count on its presence as an indication that 'all is well', and members also use talk as a built-in feature of some arrangement of activities to produce a descriptive account of those same arrangements. Thus the member's accounting of some arrangement relies upon the talk itself as a necessary way of communicating the recognizable and intelligible elements of the scene. Talk is con-

tinuously folded back upon itself so that the presence of 'proper' talk and further talk provide both a sense of 'all is well' and a basis for members to describe the arrangement successfully to each other.

6. *Descriptive vocabularies as indexical expressions.* In recommending further reflexive features of the properties of interpretive procedures I draw upon Garfinkel's discussion of how members take for granted their reliance upon the existence and use of descriptive vocabularies for handling bodies of information and activities, where the vocabularies themselves are constituent features of the experiences being described. The vocabularies are an index of the experience. But the experiences, in the course of being generated or transformed, acquire elements of the vocabularies as part of the generative process and permit the retrieval of information indexed by selected elements of the original vocabularies. Garfinkel uses catalogues in libraries as an example of this reflexive feature of practical reasoning. The titles used to index reports to facilitate a search for something, are invariably part of the vocabulary that went into the terminologies or vocabularies of the very experiences they describe. The catalogues are terminologies or vocabularies of the experiences they describe. Several years ago Bar-Hillel (1954) noted the necessity of indexical expressions in ordinary language, stating that context is essential but that different sentences might require knowing different common knowledge or presumed common knowledge to give them some kind of interpretation. Thus it might be necessary to know where the utterance was made, who made it, and its temporal character. The significance of conversational or written indexical expressions, however, cannot be stated as merely a problem in pragmatic context; rather it requires some reference to the role of 'what everyone knows' in deciding the indexicality of the utterance or some part of the utterance. The significance of descriptive vocabularies as indexical expressions lies in their providing both members and researchers with 'instructions' for recovering or retrieving the 'full' relevance of an utterance; suggesting what anyone must presume or 'fill in' in order to capture the fidelity of a truncated or indexical expression whose sense requires a specification of common assumptions about context (the time or occasion of the expression, who the speaker was, where the utterance was made, and the like). Brown and Bellugi (1964, pp. 146-7) suggest elements of this problem in discussing parental expansions of children's speech:

How does a mother decide on the correct expansion of one of her child's utterances? Consider the utterance 'Eve lunch'. So far as grammar is concerned this utterance could be appropriately expanded in any one of a number of ways: 'Eve is having lunch'; 'Eve had lunch'; 'Eve will have lunch'; 'Eve's lunch', and so forth. On the occasion when Eve produced the utterance, however, one

expansion seemed more appropriate than any other. It was then the noon hour, Eve was sitting at the table with a plate of food before her and her spoon and fingers were busy. In these circumstances 'Eve lunch' had to mean 'Eve is having lunch'. A little later when the plate had been stacked in the sink and Eve was getting down from her chair the utterance 'Eve lunch' would have suggested the expansion 'Eve has had her lunch'. Most expansions are responsive not only to the child's words but also to the circumstances attending their utterance.

Brown and Bellugi are concerned with how the mother decides the appropriateness of expansions under situational constraints. But there are several problems here: the child's telegraphic utterance viewed as a reflection of a simple grammar of less complexity than adult grammar, thus endowing the child with limited competence; the adult expansion that encodes elements of social organization not coded by the child's telegraphic utterance; the child's utterance as indexical to children's grammar; and the adult's various expansions decided according to the indexicality deemed appropriate to the situational constraints or context. We should not confuse children's normal forms and the child's ability to recognize and use indexical expressions with the adult's stock of normal forms and typical usage of indexical expressions for encoding broader conceptions of social organization than those possessed by the child. When Brown and Bellugi (1964, pp. 147-8) suggest that a mother's expansion of a child's speech is more than teaching grammar, that it is providing the child with elements of a world view, there is the presumption of a developmental acquisition of social structure. Hence the child's creation of social meanings not provided by an adult model would parallel the creation of children's grammar not based exclusively upon a model provided by an adult but generated by innovative elements of the child's deep structure grammar. The child's creative attempts at constructing social reality or social structure and grammar can be viewed as generated by a simple conception of indexicality stemming from developmental stages in the acquisition of the properties of interpretive procedures and deep structure grammatical rules. The acquisition of interpretive procedures would parallel the acquisition of language, with the child's interpretive procedures gradually replaced or displaced by adult interpretive procedures.

A necessary condition of animal and human socialization, therefore, is the acquisition of interpretive procedures. Sufficient conditions for appropriate use of language and interpretive rules in actual settings include:

1. The acquisition of childhood rules (gradually transformed into adult surface rules).
2. Interpretive procedures and their reflexive features as instructions for negotiating social scenes over time.

Hence members are continually giving each other instructions (verbal and nonverbal cues and content) as to their intentions, social character, biographies, and the like. The interpretive procedures and their reflexive features provide continuous instructions to participants such that members can be said to be programming each other's actions as the scene unfolds. Whatever is built into the members as part of their normal socialization is activated by social scenes, but there is no automatic programming; the participants' interpretive procedures and reflexive features become instructions by processing the behavioural scene of appearances, physical movements, objects, gestures, sounds, into inferences that permit action. The progressive acquisition of interpretive procedures and surface rules is reflected in how children and adults interact, or how children interact with other children. Children continually rehearse their acquisition of social structure (and language) in ways reminiscent of adults rehearsing for a play or translating a written play into a live production. But in the latter cases the interpretive procedures and surface rules are already built-in elements of the actors, while in children it is possible to observe different stages of complexity over time. For example, the child's ability to learn surface rules governing a game follows a developmental sequence, and his ability to decide the relevance and applicability of surface rules is always a function of the development of interpretive procedures.

The child's conception of 'fairness' in games, play or family settings cannot be specified by reference to surface rules. Nor will any conception of norms now available in the sociological literature provide a basis for explaining how the child learns eventually to distinguish between games and their normal forms, and everyday life activities and their normal forms. What seems plausible despite little or no empirical evidence is that children acquire interpretive procedures prior to their use of language, and that they develop normal forms of voice intonation and expect their usage by others. Children are able to recognize and insist upon normal form spacing in speech and to develop their own indexical expressions.

The child's acquisition of social structure, therefore, begins with a simple conception of interpretive procedures and surface rules, and his stock of common knowledge is expressed initially in the form of single lexemes whose meaning by parents is usually judged by reference to imputations of childhood competence and adult meanings. Inasmuch as our knowledge of adult recognition and usage of meanings is unclear, a word about this problem is in order before going on to strategies for the semantic analysis of adult speech that could be useful for following the development of meaning in children.

### Kernal and fringe meanings and their situational embeddedness

Earlier I remarked that members obviously are capable of carrying on conversations endlessly without recourse to a written dictionary by invoking an oral dictionary derived from common knowledge. The field researcher must obviously utilize the same oral dictionary in deciding the import of his observations despite the possibility of asking natives for definitions or referents. But in referring to an oral dictionary we lack a check as to its accuracy or the extent to which communicants actually refer to the 'same' oral dictionary. The child's acquisition of language, interpretive procedures and surface rules is complicated by exposure to limited oral dictionaries in different households, but we are still rather ignorant about the sequence of development here. I assume that the acquisition of meaning structures and the use of lexical items is governed by the development of interpretive procedures. Interpretive procedures, therefore, filter the acquisition and use of lexical items intended as indexical semantic inputs and outputs. Hence the use of an *etic* framework presupposes an *emic* perspective (following the usage by Pike, 1954); the researcher's use of formal grammatical or semantic (dictionary) categories provides an *etic* framework imposed upon unclarified *emic* elements used by both subjects and researcher. If we assume that children's language, interpretive procedures, surface rules, and common knowledge as opposed to adult conceptions, are contrastive sets that overlap because of developmental stages of acquisition, then our theories must include their developmental organization and reorganization as well as rules for their contrast. Modern approaches to the problem of meaning in philosophy, linguistics, psychology, and anthropology, however, do not deal with the problem of knowledge as socially distributed (Schutz, 1955, pp. 195-6).

Some things can be supposed as well known and self-explanatory and others as needing an explanation, depending upon whether I talk to a person of my sex, age, and occupation, or to somebody not sharing with me this common situation with society, or whether I talk to a member of my family, a neighbour, or to a stranger, to a partner or a nonparticipant in a particular venture, etc.

William James has already observed that a language does not merely consist in the content of an ideally complete dictionary and an ideally complete and strangled grammar. The dictionary gives us only the kernal of the meaning of the words which are surrounded by 'fringes'. We may add that these fringes are of various kinds: those originating in a particular personal use by the speaker, others originating in the context of speech in which the term is used, still others depending upon the addressee of my speech, or the situation in which the speech occurs, or the purpose of the communication, and, finally, upon the problem at hand to be solved.



Members' common knowledge permits typical imputations of behaving, dress, talking, motives, social standing and the like to others in everyday exchanges, and each developmental stage in the socialization process alters and utilizes interpretive procedures and surface rules, language, and non-verbal behaviour.

A characteristic feature of speech is its embeddedness or entification (Campbell, 1966) as the dialogue or written document unfolds. Initial use of speech presupposes kernals and fringes embedded in past experiences, or it may rely upon a written dictionary for structuring the assignment of meaning to early parts of exchanges and in later dialogue. I will mention only three general contexts within which the problem of embeddedness or entification is basic to semantic analysis.

1. The construction of written reports intended for general audiences or the preparation of a radio script or news broadcast does not permit immediate face-to-face exchanges between members; the use of embedded terms or phrases is usually restricted. Radio announcers with their own 'show' may presume an audience with whom embedded talk may be used, particularly if the programme consists of music designed for adolescent consumption. Radio stations with programmes directed to Negro audiences invariably presume their listeners are socialized to highly embedded speech. A news broadcast, therefore, would rely upon normal form speech.

2. Strangers meeting for the first time must rely upon appearances and a minimum of embedded speech, but interpretive procedures continually provide information as to the interpretation of appearances, initial speech, and nonverbal behaviour. The reflexive features become operational indicators of the sense of what is 'happening'. As strangers continue talking they may begin to develop embedded usage that can sustain particular relationships between them and evoke particular meanings with truncated expressions on later occasions. Embedded terms and phrases become indexical expressions carrying fringe information that encodes meaning structures considerably beyond kernal or denotative meanings. When strangers meet, therefore, conversations can remain superficial, relying upon appearances to make the setting recognizable and intelligible, or the exchanges can lead to progressive embeddings and elaborations that interlace the biographies of the speakers. The recursive folding back of speech by members that creates embedded talk is reflexive because such talk and accompanying nonverbal behaviour provide instructions indicating the relationship is or is not evolving into something more intimate. Embeddedness leads to the use of and reliance upon *double entendres*, antinomies, and parodies, thus enabling members to sanction indexical expressions as evidences of intimacy or 'friendlier' relations.

3. Acquaintances not only presuppose and use normal form expressions when conversing with each other, but demand embedded expressions to ensure and reaffirm the existence of past relationships. Treating embedded terms and phrases as indexical expressions enables members to talk about things not present (Hockett, 1959; Hockett and Ascher 1964) and fill in 'what everyone knows' to create or sustain a normal form. Intimates' use of embedded speech relies upon connotative meanings built up over time. A componential analysis of such speech leading to denotative meanings presumes preliminary knowledge (or conjectures) by the researcher of interpretive procedures and surface rules. Members' use of terms from everyday social organization for the researcher's benefit become somewhat arbitrary abstractions or artificially constructed indexical expressions that are not clearly articulated with actual use by particular members on specifiable occasions of talk. If we wish to ask natives for denotative meanings about the use of kin terms it might be more appropriate to have them begin with childhood practices rather than with adult usage. The problem is similar to one posed by Brown and Bellugi on how we decide the appropriateness of a child's utterance; without contextual cues for deciding the sense of social structure required for inference and action the expression's relevance cannot be clarified. The elicitation procedures of componential analysts or ethno-semanticists are not always clear on this point. Frake (1961; 1964), however, does link abstract procedures to actual arrangements.

In each of the above general conversational settings members must assume the existence of an oral dictionary of 'what everyone knows'. The use of embedded terms and phrases in conversations generates meanings for indexing particular social relationships between members and becomes reflexive for members by instructing them on the unfolding relevance of lexical items in the course of attributing structure and 'sameness' to social objects and events. The measurement of social organization must include how embedded speech and its reflexive features enable members to mark off and identify settings into relevant categories for generating and deciding upon the appropriateness and meaning of communication. How members accomplish the task of assigning relevance to their environments enables the researcher to find measurement categories in everyday behaviour. In addition to how members employ categories signifying quantity (Churchill, 1966), the problem is also how members utilize particular social categories in situationally bounded sequences, under the assumption that normal forms of language and meaning prevail. The particular use of categories and the assumption of normal forms permits members to 'close' the stream of conversation such that sets are created permitting exclusion and inclusion of linguistic and paralinguistic behaviour into meaningful inferences about 'what happened'. The 'closing' operations presume members have 'frozen'

temporally constituted imputations of meaning; interpretive procedures and their reflexive features generate a basis for 'freezing' surface structures into socially meaningful sets. Hence interpretive procedures and their reflexive features generate 'sameness' or equivalence in social objects and events in temporally and socially organized contexts according to the social relationships of participating members.

To summarize, members' linguistic and paralinguistic behaviour is transformed by interpretive procedures and their reflexive features into instructions to participants; the unfolding interaction leads to a continuous programming of members. Hence interpretive procedures and their reflexive features lead to behavioural outcomes within unfolding situational constraints. Members, therefore, impose 'measurement' on their environments by the articulation of interpretive procedures and their reflexive features with emergent social scenes.

The child's acquisition of social structure, therefore, begins with simple interpretive procedures and their reflexive features, facilitating the learning of lexical items and the development of an oral dictionary consisting of simple denotative meanings. The situated indexicality of early vocabulary is both grammatical and semantic, because it is assumed that the child with pivotal grammar is not using lexical items as indexical of adult sentences but is expressing telegraphic sentences of his ability to assume and refer to past experiences and/or objects not present. The researcher must restrain himself from imposing measurement categories intended for adults as relevant 'closings' for children's speech. This is difficult to avoid when we are not entirely clear about the nature of children's grammar and lexical domain. Attempts to develop measurement categories by examining the child's speech must follow the dictates of a developmental model and not simply what a researcher assumes is 'obvious' *vis-à-vis* adult meanings. Thus when adults seek to convince children that crossing the street can lead to dreadful consequences, the child's response or behaviour is not exactly unequivocal; the child may laugh at the suggestion. Attempts to explain death also pose difficult problems for adults because we are not clear when interpretive procedures development is adequate for the comprehension of death, especially when it involves the child or his parents. Recent developments, however, suggest some directions we might pursue in the analysis of conversational materials and I now turn to a brief examination of work that is sometimes called 'contrastive analysis'.

#### **Contrastive analysis and the measurement of social organization**

When the speaker commits himself to linguistic and social categories, he provides the hearer, himself, and an observer or researcher with information about what he intends. The commitment, however, may be a compromise