# Embedded Context

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To describe one scene, a speaker can make use of materials imported from a second. In this article, I investigate how recipients as well as speakers attend to the simultaneous presence of multiple scenes in their talk. Among the phenomena examined are (a) local metrics in which features of the current scene are used to describe a narrated one and (b) unattributed imported speech in which talk from another scene is used to make coherent moves within the current line of talk. Both of these practices create the possibility for a variety of subsequent recipient operations. These practices also reveal a form of narrative activity that does not have many of the canonical properties usually ascribed to stories such as focused bounded units.

Within conversation, speakers frequently face the task of describing events that are not occurring in the current interaction. For example, in some of the data to be investigated here, a daughter is describing to her family an elaborate mansion that she recently visited. For simplicity, such an absent event will be referred to as a *scene.* In this article, I focus on two practices used by speakers for marshaling phenomena that their addressees are presumed to already know to construct a description of an absent event. The first is use of a *local metric* in which features of the current scene are used to describe the narrated one. The second is *unattributed imported speech* in which talk from another scene is used to make coherent moves within the current line of talk. Unlike quotation, the talk being imported is

not explicitly marked as something that was initially said somewhere else. This can pose for its addresses a recognition test, and indeed, on occasion it begins sequences in which the issue of recognition is raised and demonstrated. These two practices are separate and distinct. However, what both have in common is that they juxtapose two separate scenes within a single description. Indeed, they sometimes occur within the same sequence in close proximity to each other. Moreover, both of these practices create the possibility for a variety of subsequent operations by recipients. These practices also reveal a form of narrative activity that does not have many of the canonical properties usually ascribed to stories such as focused, bounded units (e.g., Labov, 1972).

## DATA

Most of the data that is used for this analysis is taken from a videotape of a middle-class family having dinner on their outside porch at the end of a summer's day. The family lives in the suburb of a large city in the northeastern United States. Present at the dinner were Mother and Father, two of their teenage daughters, Kathy and Susi, and their daughters' boyfriends, Dwayne and Ron. Kathy, one of the daughters, has just returned home after being away for a week working with a Christian fellowship group. The dinner was taped on July 5th, 1973, by M. H. Goodwin and myself at the request of the family after they had missed our recording of events at a Fourth of July block party. We set up the camera and microphone on the porch but were in another room of the house during the dinner itself. A number of data extracts occur in close proximity to each other. I have put the entire sequence where they occur in the Appendix. Data from this sequence have line numbers that begin with an A (e.g., A33). Other data are drawn from a tape of butchers working in the back room of a South Philadelphia meat market that was recorded in 1974.

## LOCAL METRICS

In the data to be examined, Kathy is telling her family about an elaborate mansion she visited while she was away. One of the tasks she faces in her talk is trying to convey to them just how big the mansion was. The following provide three examples of the methods she uses to do this. In each,

she measures the mansion by comparing it to something in her parents'
house:

(1) PD:64 (PD identifies the tape we call Porch Dinner)

Kathy:   Their DINING roo:m (0.3)
          i:s ↑how meh- *ahh
          Wud'd I say
          about fi:ve times as big as ours,

(2) PD:54
*((Describing the length of the mansion as she walks up to it))*

A21   Kathy:   *hhh Anyway I'd say it probly goess
A22            (0.4)
A23            It inclu:des, the length: of (0.2)
A24            et leas:'three: er four of ar housses.
A25            ed lea:s:t. (0.3)
A26            Probly fou:r. (.) or ar:ss.
A27            Nex'to ea chother
A28            *hhh Much lo:nger

(3) PD:62

Kathy:   They have like a suite'v rooms a'their own.
          Each person
          you wa:lk in.
          *hh there's a big bedroom a the left
          a sitting roo: : m *h over here *hh
          BA:THroom thetis bigger th'n my bedroom (.)
          I mean- u-hu:ge just a:ll in mar:ble
          with ahll this- go:ld stuff *hh
          ALL ih-the- (.)
          Evrything in it is real o:ld.

In Example 1, Kathy expresses the size of the dining room of the mansion
by saying that it is "fi:ve times as big as ours." In Example 2, she says that
length of the mansion is "at leas:t three: or four of our houses ... Probably
f:our of ours next to each other." (spelling regularized).[1] In Example 3, after
saying that each member of the family has a suite of rooms for their guests,
she says that the bathroom in a suite is "bigger than my bedroom." Thus, in
each case, some aspect of her parents' house is used as a point of reference
to describe the extravagant size of the mansion.

In some domains of discourse (e.g., carpentry and scientific writing), standard, "context free" units such as inches and meters are used to report dimensions.[2] The speaker in these data employs an alternative strategy. Kathy takes something present in the current scene, the house in which the conversation is occurring, and uses that as a yardstick to describe the size of the absent mansion. Her active use of the current visual scene is especially clear in Example 2 in which Kathy says that the mansion "inclu:des, the length of (0.2) at leas:' three: er four of our houses." As noted previously, the participants are sitting outdoors on the rear second floor porch of the family's house. During the brief pause after "length of," Kathy turns away from the others at the table and scans the back of her house; she is looking toward the house as she says "at least." Such visible looking toward the structure in the current environment ("our house") that will be used to formulate the size of the mansion displays to her recipients both how she is actively using the current scene to construct her description and the care with which she is pursuing this task (e.g., visibly trying to determine through actual inspection just how many house lengths will be needed). In this example, the scene being used by the speaker is not only clearly visible to all participants but actively being searched by the speaker. In Examples 1 and 3, the speaker is describing places in their house that are intimately known but not directly perceivable from where they are sitting on the porch (i.e., the dining room and the speaker's bedroom). Despite lack of current visual access, I use the term *scene* to encompass these as well. Although something that can actually be seen by a viewer is listed as the primary definition of *scene* in the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (2000), this is immediately followed by a second, more general definition as "the place in which an action or event occurs [including where] the action of a play, movie, novel, or other narrative occurs." I use the term *scene* in this broader sense.

The use of local materials to build a description of something that is not currently present is not at all unusual, a point well demonstrated in the work of both Hanks (1993) and Sacks (1995). For example, Hanks (1993) described how a Mayan speaker who is asked to explicate deictic terms to an outside anthropologist begins by constructing scenarios in which "speakers choose to project themselves and me, their addressee, into the role of interlocutors in the hypothetical framework" (p. 136).

Using material from the current scene to describe absent events is relevant to the tasks faced by the speaker in at least two different ways. First,

the current scene provides a storehouse of phenomena, objects, and so forth that are immediately available and thus readily at hand as raw material for building descriptions. Indeed, Hanks (1993) spoke of "a … global tendency … to use the current context of OUR interaction as the material out of which to create other interactive frames" (p. 136). Second, local phenomena are accessible to the recipient as well as the speaker. The speaker is therefore building her description from materials such as the house where they are sitting and grew up that her recipient is already familiar with. The use of local materials thus constitutes one way of providing for the intelligibility and comprehensibility of the description. To describe something unknown, the speaker uses as a point of reference something else that recipient already has access to.[3]

In brief, in these data when the speaker is faced with the task of expressing the length of something in an absent scene, she employs a *local metric*. She finds something in the current scene and uses that as a base unit to formulate the absent length. By using a local metric, the speaker simultaneously invokes two separate phenomenal worlds: (a) the current here and now within which the immediate conversation is embedded and (b) the absent scene being described within the talk of the moment. The speaker's description straddles both scenes as it exploits the properties of one to elaborate the other.

## PARTICIPANT OPERATIONS ON MULTIPLE SCENES

Once these two separate worlds have been made concurrently relevant, the question can arise as to how participants juggle the simultaneous presence of both. To explore this issue, I look first at how the speaker organizes these two scenes relative to each other in her talk, in essence proposing a perceptual ordering in which features of the current scene are subordinated to the focal, narrated scene. Then I look at how recipients can challenge this proposed ordering and in their responses, shift focus from the narrated scene to the features of the current one that the speaker has attempted to background. The speaker's invocation of multiple settings thus creates the possibility for a dialogue of contexts as participants compare features of one scene with that of the other, jump between them in their talk, use one to comment on the other, and so forth.

## HOW MULTIPLE SCENES ARE ARRANGED
## IN A SPEAKER'S TALK

Although two scenes are present in the speaker's talk, they are not given equal prominence. Consider again Example 3:

(3) PD:62

Kathy:   They have like a suite'v rooms a'their own.
         Each person
         you wa:lk in.
         *hh there's a big bedroom a the left
         a sitting roo: : m *h over here *hh
         BA:THroom thet is bigger th'n my bedroom (.)
         I mean- u-hu:ge just a:ll in mar:ble
         with ahll this- go:ld stuff *hh
         ALL ih-the- (.)
         Evrything in it is real o:ld.

Here, features of the current scene are depicted as subordinate to the larger description of the mansion that constitutes the primary focus of the speaker's talk. Thus, the speaker's bedroom is invoked only to establish the size of a bathroom in the mansion; it is  not introduced as a new topic in its own right but rather treated as an expendable prop in the mansion scene, something to be discarded when the limited purpose for which it has been brought on stage (conveying the size of the mansion's bathroom) has been accomplished. The two scenes are organized relative to each other such that one is depicted as prominent and the other as subordinate.

In line with this ordering, the attributes of the current scene being used to elaborate the absent one are depicted in a severely limited, "stripped down" fashion. The only attribute of the speaker's bedroom that is relevant to the current talk is its size, something that stands in marked contrast to the way in which features of the mansion (e.g., gold fixtures in the bathroom) are recounted in glowing detail. Examples 1 and 2 are organized in the same way. In each case, a single feature of the current scene, the size of something in the speaker's house, is used as a metric to convey the expansive size of something in the mansion.

Although two separate scenes are invoked, they are ordered such that one is constituted as the primary focus of the speaker's talk, whereas the other is used only to explicate features of that primary scene. The mansion

is subject to extensive discursive elaboration; however, only fragmentary attributes of the current scene are briefly embedded within that narrative framework when circumstances warrant and are then discarded. In brief, the current house is treated as a tool for describing the mansion; it is not offered as a focal entity in its own terms.

## Refocusing by Recipients

The fact that the speaker proposes that the two scenes available in her talk should be ordered in a particular fashion does not mean that her recipients must go along with that proposal. Although local metrics provide powerful, immediately available descriptive resources, they also come sedimented with their own history and are available in their details to recipients as well as speakers. Recipients, as active agents in their own right, can attend to features of the objects being used that the speaker has not mentioned. For example, in response to Kathy's statement in Example 2 that the mansion is four times as large as "our house," one of her recipients builds a second comparison and proposes that although the object used as a local metric is inferior in one way (smaller), it is superior in another (the mansion is not as "nice" as the house):

> (2) PD:54
> *((Describing the length of the mansion as she walks up to it))*
>
> A21    Kathy:    *hhh <u>Any</u>way <u>I'd</u> say it <u>pr</u>obly goess
> A22              (0.4)
> A23              <u>I</u>t inclu:des, the <u>le</u>ngth: of (0.2)
> A24              et <u>leas</u>:'three: er four of ar ho<u>u</u>sses.
> A25              ed <u>lea</u>:s:t. (0.3)
> A26              <u>Pr</u>o<u>bly</u> fou:r. (.) or ar:ss.
> A27              Nex'to ea chother
> A28              *hhh <u>Much</u> lo:nger
> A29              (0.3)
> A30    Ron:      But no<u>t</u> uz <u>ni</u> ce.

What happens in these data demonstrates the way in which operations involved in the deployment of a local metric—for example, treating the object to be used as a subordinate prop in another scene, ignoring attributes irrelevant to the comparison being made by speaker, and so forth—are contingent on the recipient's active cooperation for their success. By refus-

ing to abide by the perceptual restrictions proposed by the speaker and highlighting properties of the object that she has ignored, Ron undermines Kathy's comparison while building a new comparison in which the mansion loses some of its focal prominence to the house.

This process highlights another side to the use of a local metric. Kathy in fact makes use of a range of practices to communicate to her addressees relevant attributes of the mansion. In the following, she metaphorically compares it to a museum:

(2) PD:54

| A1 | Kathy: | <u>Ah</u>' ah:m (1.3) |
|----|--------|------------|
| A2 |        | <u>we</u> drive <u>up</u> t'this place (0.4) |
| A3 | → | ↑<u>I</u> ↓thought we were et |
| A4 | → | a °museum or something° |

However, local metrics can situate relevancies for participants that more general comparisons lack. The base unit being employed for the metric is not something neutral—a meter stick or a prototypical museum, for example—but rather an object that arrives on the scene encrusted with a range of meaning, affective valence, and so forth for these very participants. Here, the house of the speaker's parents is being used to measure the mansion. In American society, the size and opulence of a family's home is one of the ways in which a wage earner's success and the family's position in the larger society are measured. The fact that the object chosen as a local metric has a special importance to current participants and the matrix of meaning that it is already embedded within, can undermine the thrust of a speaker's comparison. For example, recipients might see in the comparison not just the awesomeness of the mansion but also the inadequacy of their own house and all that implies. In Example 1, when Kathy describes the mansion s dining room as five times as big as her parents (line 4 in the following), her father interjects a warning "Oh-oh Watch it. Watch it" (line 6). Ron then, in lines 9 and 11, recycles the "But not as nice" refrain that had emerged earlier in the talk (see Example 2 and Appendix) to which Father agrees with a "No" (line 12):

(1) PD:64

| 1 | Kathy: | Their <u>DINING</u> roo:m (0.3) |
|---|--------|------------|
| 2 |        | i:s ↑how meh- *ahh |

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  3                      Wud'd I say
  4                      about fi:ve times iz big iz ars,
  5       Dwayne:    (E'y thr [ee)( )
  6   →   Father:              [Oh-oh: watch it. watch it.
  7                      (0.3)
  8       Kathy:     You wuun' t [b'lieve
  9   →   Ron:                   [But NOT ez
 10       Kathy:     [They have [this huge lo::ng,h
 11   →   Ron:       [ni:ce.    [
 12   →   Father:               [No:.
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In the data that we have been examining, the speaker invokes features of the current scene for a limited purpose: to make phenomena in an absent scene accessible to her recipients. However, that process of comparison and the directionality it implies (from current scene to focal absent scene) proves to be slippery, as her recipients focus on features of the current scene that either challenge the comparison that Kathy is trying to make (although larger, the mansion is "not as nice as our house") or call into question the social appropriateness of the comparison itself (e.g., Father's "Watch it" when the family's dining room is described as only one fifth of the size of the mansion's). Clearly there is an element of playfulness[4] to much of this.[5]

When Kathy uses features of one scene to explicate another and thus makes both simultaneously available in the talk of the moment, an arena is created for exploring the possibilities raised by their juxtaposition (e.g., comparing phenomena in one scene with relevant phenomena in the other, shifting attention to other aspects of the local scene, etc.), and this can be exploited not only by her but also by her recipients.

## UNATTRIBUTED IMPORTED SPEECH

I now investigate another way in which the simultaneous presence of multiple scenes has consequences for the interaction of the participants. Speakers can import talk from another context into a local telling without explicitly marking this fact for recipients. Talk is spoken that is locally appropriate but that nonetheless has its original home in some other environment. The following provides an example. Frank is telling his fellow butchers in the back room of a South Philadelphia meat market about his date over the weekend. It was his first date with this particular girl and he took

her to a concert, but then he was unable to do anything with her afterwards because she had to be home by midnight. Joe then makes a suggestion about what Frank should do on the next date:

(4) MeatMarket:4
*((A MacDonald's commercial current at time of this conversation has a guy announcing to his date that he's taking her to a little place for fish. It turns out to be MacDonald's for a fish sandwich))*

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1       Joe:    En then after d'con [cert wheredjeh go.
2       Frank:                      [Nowhere.
3               She hadda go ho:me.
4               M te:llin yeh [hhh!
5       Joe:                  [Wh't time was it.
6                (0.4))
7       Frank:  We got in about ten aftun twelve
8               she thought she wz gonna get ki:lled.
9               She's runnin up the ste [ps
10      Joe:                            [Uh, listen.
11              Nex' ti:me.
12              Don't take 'er tuh sumpn like that.
13  →          Take 'er to like s-
14  →          *hh uh:: a liddle place y'kno:w,
15  →          say "I know a liddle place
16  →          we c'n  [have some fish."
17      Al:             [Where didju meet this girl.
```

Instead of taking a date to something elaborate that eats up the whole evening ("Don't take 'er tuh sumpn like that," line 12), Joe suggests taking her to a more modest "little place" and then enacts a possible invitation (say "I know a little place we can have some fish," lines 15–16). A recipient within the current conversation would have no difficulty interpreting what is said here as an appropriate, self-contained next utterance in its own terms. However, Joe is in fact quoting a line from a MacDonald's commercial current at the time of the taping, and this is indeed made explicit in the conversation a moment later (I examine this later in this article). A fuller understanding of what is being said here thus involves not only hearing how the words spoken are appropriate to the current topic but also realizing that these words are in fact being imported from another context and recognizing what that context is.

Such reuse of talk from another setting is clearly closely tied to the larger family of practices that Volosinov (1929/1973) focused attention on

as reported speech (see also Bakhtin, 1981). However, it differs from canonical instances of reported speech, such as quotation, in significant ways. Most crucially, the imported talk is not framed in a way that explicitly attributes it to another speaker or setting. Such framing can be done in a variety of ways.[6] For example, in English, the talk being quoted can be preceded by what Goffman (1974) called a "laminator" verb, a reporting verb such as "X said" that takes the talk being quoted as a complement (Celce-Murcia, Larson-Freeman, & Williams, 1998, p. 688).[7] The following from M. H. Goodwin's (1990, p. 196) analysis of a dispute process among African American children that they call "He-Said-She-Said" provides an example of an utterance reporting a chain of talk attributed to two other speakers through such laminator verbs ("Kerry said" and "you said"):

    (5) Bea is confronting Annette

      1   Bea:   Kerry said you said that (0.6)
      2           I wasn't gonna go around Poplar no more.

Joe's talk in lines 13 to 14 of Example 4 ("Take 'er to like s- *hh uh:: a liddle place") is not accompanied by such a laminator verb.[8] This has a number of consequences. First, in lines 13 to 14 of Example 4, there is no linguistic signal displaying that the words that Joe is now speaking are being imported from another context. It is for this reason that such talk is being called *unattributed imported speech.*[9] The speaker is not building his action as a form of quotation or reporting the speech of another.

Second, Clark and Gerrig (1990), using Goffman (1974) as a point of departure, argued that quotations are "nonserious actions" (p. 766). The term *nonserious* is perhaps unfortunate, but the distinction they are making is both real and relevant. An actor playing Richard III on the stage is not actually offering a kingdom for a horse but instead uttering such a plea within a special frame (created by the performance of *Richard III*) in which the character being enacted, but not the actor currently speaking such lines, is about to lose both his kingdom and life. His cry is thus not "serious" in the sense that it does not actually perform the action it depicts. Similarly, Sternberg (1982) proposed that quotation is inherently a form of mimesis, a representation of human action like a picture of an object. Sternberg argued that it is crucial not to confuse the image with the object being represented. This distinction has important consequences in interaction. Thus, in Example 5, when Bea says "I wasn't gonna go around Poplar no more," she is not

now telling this to Annette (e.g., as a background segment of an emerging story); instead, by virtue of the laminator verb ("you said"), Bea is constructing a representation of an action performed by someone else and is stating that her addressee, Annette, said this in the past.

Third, the current speaker's stance toward the truthfulness of what is being asserted in the quoted frame can be opaque, and indeed, use of such reporting verbs allows speakers to distance themselves in various ways from what is being asserted (McGregor, 1994, p. 78). It is the party depicted as originally producing that talk, in this case the current addressee, who is positioned to judge whether what is now being reported is accurate, not the current speaker. Such embedding with its possibilities for distancing is most relevant to the organization of the current talk and interaction and is central to Clark and Gerrig's (1990) description of such structures as *nonserious.* However, although constructed as a representation of another's talk, line 2 in Example 5, is an essential component of a most serious action, a charge by the speaker that her addressee has been committing an infraction by talking about her behind her back.[10]

By way of contrast, *unattributed imported talk* differs markedly from quotation in that it lacks structures such as laminator verbs, which display that what is now being said is being quoted or in some other fashion imported from somewhere else. It is not being shaped discursively as a quotation but instead as a novel action emerging from and appropriate to the local talk of the moment. In Clark and Gerrig's (1990) terms, it is being displayed as serious rather than nonserious, a new current action rather than a mimetic representation of some prior one. There is no distance between the speaker and what is being said (e.g., Joe, not somebody else, can be heard as suggesting that this addressee take her to "a little place" on their next date). A speaker is presenting talk authored by someone else as his own.

Juxtaposing two scenes by finding something in another that can be used in the present interaction and moreover fitting in the details of its local context can be like punning, a demonstration of creative play with language. The speaker importing talk from another setting without attributing it will not have his wit and creativity recognized unless his addressees recognize what has been done. Although not all unattributed imported talk is recognized as such (and indeed, by virtue of the way in which it is fitted to the particulars of the local situation, it can function as thoroughly appropriate action without such recognition), in many cases issues of recognition emerge in subsequent talk.[11]

## Displaying Recognition
## of Unattributed Imported Speech

Unattributed imported speech can be adequately understood for purposes of the current interaction without recognizing that what has just been said has in fact been imported from another context. This can raise for participants a number of interactive issues. By not displaying recognition (even if recognition has in fact been accomplished), the recipient might appear to be slow, dense, not really "with it," culturally incompetent in some particular domain of discourse, and so forth in much the way that someone who doesn't get the point of a joke demonstrates that he or she lacks sophistication that teller possesses (cf. Sacks, 1974, 1978). Unmarked quotation can thus pose an interactive test for the recipient. From a slightly different perspective, if the recipient does not display recognition, the speaker of the quote may find himself or herself responsible for an utterance that he or she is not actually prepared to avow on its own terms. For example, after getting a transcript from an outstanding transcriber, someone remarked to her, "It's a pretty good transcript," a comment that in fact was a takeoff on one of the lines in the transcript ("It's a pretty good car"). Were this utterance not to be seen as importing speech from somewhere else but rather as a statement being authored in the current interaction, it could be heard as patronizing, arrogant, insulting, and so forth.

The issue of displaying recognition is complicated by the fact that characteristically there is not a slot where recognition *must* be done. In that the unattributed imported speech constitutes an appropriate move in the current sequence of interaction on its own, recipients can deal with it in those terms (e.g., if the quote is doing a request, answer the request rather than explicitly commenting on the fact that quotation is being done), even if they do in fact recognize that unmarked quotation is occurring.

In view of the interactive issues raised by unattributed imported speech, it is not surprising that participants frequently devote special attention to the question of whether recognition has in fact been accomplished, even if this sometimes means interrupting the base sequence in progress. For example, in Example 4, none of Joe's recipients display that they recognize that what he is saying is fact drawn from another environment.

(4) MeatMarket:4
*((A MacDonald's commercial current at time of this conversation has a guy announcing to his date that he's taking her to a little place for fish. It turns out to be MacDonald's for a fish sandwich))*

```
12         Joe:      Don't take 'er tuh sumpn like that.
13    →              Take 'er to like s-
14    →              *hh uh:: a liddle place y'kno:w,
15    →              say "I know a liddle place
16    →              we c'n [have some fish."
17         Al:            [Where didju meet this girl.
18    →    Joe:      Take 'er to MacDonald's.
19         Frank:    She's a friend of Maria's.
20         Joe:      (and have some fish).
```

In line 17, Al interrupts the quote with a question to Frank. Joe intercepts the answer to that question with "Take 'er to Macdonald's," a statement that makes the ties between what he has just said and the commercial more clear. In line 20, such ties are further elaborated when he appends "and have some fish" (further talk from the commercial) to his prior utterance. He thus goes to special work and intercepts other action in progress to show his recipients that what is saying is in fact being drawn from another environment.

The work that participants engage in to establish that recognition has in fact been accomplished can also be investigated in Example 2. The statement that the mansion is "not as nice as our house" is in fact drawn from a letter that Mother wrote to Kathy (cf. lines A12–A14 following). Ron's subsequent "But not as nice" (line A30 following), which I examined earlier in terms of recipient refocusing (the "Refocusing by Recipients" section), is thus found to be laminated with yet another layer. This remark not only reverses the comparison in progress and brings into prominence features of the house that the speaker had ignored but also is recognized by participants as a replay of earlier talk (lines A8 and A9 following). This earlier talk is itself an unattributed reuse of something originally uttered in an entirely different context:

(2) PD:54

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A1         Kathy:
                     Ah' ah:m (1.3)
A2                   we drive up t'this place (0.4)
A3                   ↑Ah ↓thought we were et
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    A4                  a °museum or something°
    A5                  (0.9)
    A6                  I mean this hou:se w'z pro:bably:
    A7                  (2.3)
    A8   →   Susi:
                        Not iz nize iz ar house.
                        ((following is spoken with smile voice))
    A9   →   Kathy:
                        NOT ess nice'ss our house [: yess.
    A10      Susi:
                                                 [However:
    A11                 (0.2)
    A12  →   Kathy:
                        Tha'wz [funny
    A13      Susi:
                               [Yes
    A14  →   Kathy:
                        =thet you wreote that in that letter.
    A15                 (0.5))
    A16      Kathy:
                        That wz funny.
    A17                 (.)
    A18  →   Kathy:
                        Dju r'memmer say'n that
    A19  →              not ez nice iz ar ha-
    A20  →              yer new house is ni-
    A21                 *hhh Anyway I'd say it probly goess
    A22                 (0.4)
    A23                 It inclu:des, the length: of (0.2)
    A24                 et leas:'three: er four of ar housses.
    A25                 ed lea:s:t. (0.3)
    A26                 Probly fou:r. (.) or ar:ss.
    A27                 Nex'to ea chother
    A28                 *hhh Much lo:nger
    A29                 (0.3)
    A30      Ron:
                        But not uz ni[ce.
    A31      Susi:
                                     [( // )
    A32      Kathy:
                        But not ez nice, *hhh
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The sequence that I examined earlier is found in lines A21 to A30. I now focus on the sequence in which the unattributed earlier talk is imported into the current talk. In line A6, Kathy displays that she is trying to describe

some feature of the mansion, saying "I mean <u>this </u>hou:se was pro:bably:." However, she stops speaking before bringing her utterance to completion. The 2.3-sec pause that ensues is one of the recognizable components of a word search (M. H. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986) as well as one of the characteristic places where recipients initiate byplay (M. H. Goodwin, 1997). Susi then says "<u>Not</u> as nice as <u>our</u> house" (line A8), a statement that on its own provides a ironic, playful completion to the comparison that speaker is trying to formulate and is indeed syntactically an appropriate next increment to Kathy's so far incomplete sentence. Kathy replies immediately by repeating what Susie just said with a smile (that is not only available visually but hearable in the talk) and a hand gesture toward Susie that seems to display recognition of the talk and the playful move that Susie has just made. Kathy then turns to her Mother and asks her if she remembers writing this in a letter (lines A12–A20). She thus displays to Susie recognition that what she has just said ("Not as nice as our house"), although fitted to the grammatical structure of the sentence now in progress, has been imported from another context (their Mother's letter) and then topicalizes this activity by asking Mother if she remembers writing the words now being replayed.

Mutually displaying to each other that they recognize that unattributed imported talk is now being used is thus an issue that the participants here explicitly devote attention to. The sequence in fact reveals a number of resources for displaying such recognition. Immediately after the imported line is produced, both Kathy and Susi smile at each other and color their talk with smile intonation (which unfortunately the transcript is not able to catch).

Laughter, which can be used to display appreciation for a variety of types of verbal dexterity (e.g., puns, unusual metaphors, etc.), provides one resource for responding to unattributed reported speech. However, the way in which laughter constitutes an appropriate response to a range of different types of actions creates the possibility that it might not serve as an unambiguous display that reuse of earlier talk has been recognized. For example, a coparticipant's smile might be a comment on the ironic completion itself, not on its status as a bit of talk that has been imported from another context.

The local accessibility of the participants to each other is also relevant to their ability to display and perceive recognition. In these data, Mother, who has food in her mouth, uses her face to display a silent laugh as soon as she hears Susi's comment. However, when this occurs, Kathy, who is looking at Susi, cannot see her. Having failed to see Mother's initial reaction,

Kathy turns to her and explicitly asks her if she recognizes the source of what is now being said (line 17).

Other data reveals other ways in which recognition can be displayed. One of the most effective consists of recipients collaborating in the production of the unattributed imported speech. The following occurs after a neighbor, able to see the family eating on its porch, humorously asks when he will be invited for dinner. Dwayne replies that they'll call and come and pick him up. He then adds, "Call you any time." Another participant, Ron, then produces an appropriate next utterance imported from a local radio promotion: "Just <u>hang</u> by that phone." Susi now takes the ball and starts the climax of the promotion, what the listener should say as they pick up the phone. As she reaches the call letters of the station, Kathy joins her, and they chant the end of the call letters in unison:

(5)PD:18

Dwayne:   <u>WE</u>- WI'LL C<u>A</u>LL YA EN <u>CO</u>:ME PICK YUP. (0.6)
Dwayne:   Call y'<u>any</u> ti:me.
          (0.7)
Ron:      *hh Just <u>hang</u> by that phone.=
Susi:     When the ph<u>one</u> r<u>ings</u> <u>answer</u>
          <u>I</u> listen tih the n<u>ew</u> sound 'v
          Thi [rt ee : n Q : !
Kathy:         [Thir teenQ:!

In these data, recognition is demonstrated not by discursive comment but rather through collaborative production, as four separate speakers work together to produce the material being quoted.

Television commercials, perhaps like proverbs and religious texts in other cultures, are one thing that participants in the American data we have collected repetitively employ as a resource for ironic commentary through unattributed imported talk. The way in which participants utilize such phenomena has interesting properties. People do not explicitly talk about commercials, analyze them, dispute the claims being made within them, and so forth. Instead, fragments of commercials are used as recognition tests and understanding is demonstrated through phenomena such as collaborative production, ironic uptake, and so forth rather than discursive commentary. Participants are thus motivated to attend to such phenomena and keep them in mind so that recognition tests can be successfully posed and passed but need not substantively analyze what is being said within the commercials

(as they must do, e.g., when coparticipants produce fresh talk that must be responded to with a subsequent utterance sensitive to the details of what has been claimed in the prior). A discourse genre that participants attend to with this kind of cognitive orientation has very interesting, indeed subversive, properties as American advertisers know only too well.

The unattributed reported speech being investigated here frequently constitutes an opening move in a playful exchange. Because the speaker's wit will only be appreciated if his or her hearers recognize what is being done, one might expect that speakers would organize the production of their talk in ways that can give relevant subtle clues to hearers that something special is emerging. Indeed, when speakers produce unattributed imported talk, they frequently set that strip of talk off from other talk with a marked change in intonation and use a variety of intonational phenomena (e.g., what Ladd, 1980, referred to as regularization in intonation) to display that a special activity is in progress. Analysis of such phenomena requires very detailed study of intonation, something that this beyond the scope of this article. It would, however, appear that unattributed imported talk provides a rich environment for the detailed analysis of a range of intonational phenomena.

## Fitting One Scene to Another

Participants do not treat the scenes that they are juxtaposing as fixed, unchangeable entities carved in stone but rather as fluid, mutable phenomena that can be reshaped to fit the tasks at hand, even if this involves some damage to the integrity of the original scene. The following provides a simple example. Dwayne and Ron have complained that Kathy got the biggest piece of steak. Father, who has been cutting the steak, justifies his allocation by saying that Kathy is "a prodigal daughter":

(6) PD:14

```
1        Ron:     Yeah but look et hers
2                 hers is three quarters of an [inch
3    →   Father:                              [She's a [prodigal daughter.
4        Martha:                                       [eh heh
5        Dwayne:  [oo oo oo
6        Father   [she' [s been aw
7        Ron:           [Pr[odigal
```

| 8  | Kathy:  |                  [Ah Wz j [ust gunna say that, |
|----|---------|------------------------------------------------|
| 9  | Father: |                          [She's been away fer a |
| 10 | Father: | [wee:k |
| 11 | Kathy:  | [ah:'ve been a wa:y= |
| 12 | Dwayne: | [Offer it t'yer mother first. |
| 13 | Kathy:  | - ah'm the pro [digal daughter. |
| 14 | Father: |                    [We always do |
| 15 | Father: | We always do the prodigal bit don't we. |

The gender of the character in the text being cited, the prodigal son, is changed so that the imported story can be fitted to a current participant. Subsequent talk then highlights how an event in the story can apply to that participant as both Father (lines 9–10) and Kathy (line 11) state that Kathy has been away for a week. Events in the cited text that do not fit the current situation are ignored. Through such reshaping and selective filtration, participants are able to use an imported scene to comment on the current one despite the multitude of ways in which these two scenes differ from each other.

The following provides another, very simple example of this process. Dwayne reports having lent money to one of the members of Kathy's Christian group. He then says

(7) PD:39

|  | Dwayne: | He sure knows a s::ucker |
|--|---------|--------------------------|
|  |         | when he sees a new Chrishin |
|  |         | ((Several lines of talk and laughter omitted)) |
| → | Ron: | Never give a Christian |
| → |  | (0.9) an even break. |

Here Ron takes a saying well known to people in this culture (W. C. Fields's "Never give a sucker an even break") but makes it appropriate to current circumstances by substituting "Christian" for "Sucker." Note that the deleted word "sucker" has just been prominently used in the local talk, and indeed, by reshaping the quotation in this fashion, Ron manages to produce a subsequent comment built from the materials provided by earlier talk.[12]

In the following, Father actively transforms what has been said in the local talk to make it possible to bring another scene into juxtaposition with it. The sequence begins when Mother says the words "wrong" and "right" right next to each other:

(8) PD:35

```
 1      Mother:    If: if Ta:ffy en Brad think
 2                 they're getting something unusual
 3                 fr'm ar dinn(h)er t(h)able
 4   →             they're wro:n [g. Right?
 5      Kathy:                   [I know.
 6                 (0.7)
 7      Mother:    Uh: hu[h?
 8   → Father:           [Wrong'r right.
 9      Rob:             [Uh hoo-hoo yer
10                 mom'so [methin
11   → Father:              [Wrong right.
12      Dwayne:             [No wir not,
13      Kathy:     aah [heh haa haa haa he -uh=
14      Dwayne:        [Ah'm uh- Ah'm unusual
15      Kathy:     [hhh uh hu
16      Dwayne:    [Ah'm( [ )
17   → Father:            [Left r:ight yeah
18                 (0.3)
19   → Father:     Hut two ↓ three,
```

A number of those present playfully comment on what Mother has said here. Father's comments initially take the form of repetition of Mother's "Wrong right" (lines 8 and 11). Having established this format, he then uses it to transform the talk being talked about. In line 17, the format is recycled yet again but the word "Left" is substituted for "Wrong." The word "Right," is thus placed in a new contrast pair. This placement creates a new expression "Left right" that has a distinctive, recognizable home environment: military marching. This framework is then made more explicit in line 19 when Father produces further talk from such an environment ("Hut two three") and moreover, talk that seems to occur only there. Father has thus (a) used repetition to extract something from an embedded position in another's talk and promote it to a position of focus where further operations can be performed on it, (b) systematically transformed that object, and (c) used this process of transformation to invoke a specific scene and domain of discourse that is external to the current interaction.

## Cascading Scenes

The data that have been examined suggest that within talk, participants can not only deal with simultaneous phenomenal scenes but move with

quick agility from one to another. The following provides an example of
how different participants rapidly invoke one scene after another as a way
of playing with the talk in progress (the teller has just returned from a week
with a Christian fellowship group):

(9) PD:69

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Kathy: | End the <u>den</u> is <u>a</u>ll wood |
| 2 | | p<u>a</u>nel. <u>Ca</u>:rved. |
| | | *((10 seconds of intervening talk))* |
| 3 | Father: | Any re<u>la</u>tionship between th' <u>d</u>:ens |
| 4 | | en the (.) <u>C</u>hristians ↓I mean↓ |
| 5 | | (0.4) |
| 6 | (): | |
| | | khh [h<u>h</u> mff.hh |
| 7 | Father: |     [en the uh |
| 8 | Dwayne: | [mehh heh hu::h <u>hu</u>::h heh heh |
| 9 | Kathy: | [(.mh) .nh .hn:h (.hn) |
| 10 | Susi: | Do th<u>e</u>y have <u>li</u> [ons? |
| 11 | (): |      [.hhh |
| 12 | Martha: | [No::::: |
| 13 | (): | [ihh uhh |
| 14 | (): | ↑eh [h<u>e</u>h huh eh <u>he</u>h↑ |
| 15 | Ron: |     [en <u>ti</u>ger[s? |
| 16 | Father: |         [<u>They</u>'re |
| 17 | | coming [in <u>la</u>ter. |
| 18 | Kathy: |      [hh [They had a DO : : G, |
| 19 | Susi: |         [en <u>BEA</u>:RS <u>oh</u> [<u>my</u>:. |
| 20 | Ron: |              [Oh <u>my</u>:. |
| 21 | | (0.2) |
| 22 | Kathy: | thet I- |
| 23 | Father: | No l [ions but do:gs. |
| 24 | Kathy: |     [<u>didn't see</u> when I first,taw |
| 25 | | [It stands about th<u>i</u>s= |
| 26 | Dwayne: | [°mghhh° |
| 27 | Kathy: | =<u>hi</u>: [gi' it,s a bl<u>a</u>ck like = |
| 28 | Dwayne: |     [<u>Tell'er</u>' bout the dog |
| 29 | Kathy: | i-sih:[:<u>ee</u>p dog <u>A</u>h dunno= |
| 30 | Ron: |      [La:b'rador. |
| 31 | Kathy: | =w:<u>a</u>t it [is. |
| 32 | Father: |         [This is <u>m</u>odern Christians |
| 33 | | they don't h<u>a</u>ve l<u>i</u>ons now |
| 34 | | they have d<u>o</u>:gs. |

In line 1, Kathy describes the *den* of the mansion. In lines 3 and 4, Father begins to engage in playful byplay by juxtaposing *dens* with *Christians.* Note how a simple transformation of Kathy's original talk, pluralizing *den* and the juxtaposition of this term with a religious group, manages to not only echo the Bible but also change the relevant meaning of *den* from a room to a place associated with animals. In line 10, Susi develops this allusion, and the mixture of scenes it has invoked further when she asks Kathy if the owners of the mansion have lions. Once *lions* have entered the phenomenal world of those present, a new resource emerges that can be played with and elaborated in ways that have nothing to do with either the mansion or the Bible. Thus, in line 15, Ron names another animal, *tigers,* proffering it as the second item in an emerging list (note how he ties *tigers* to the earlier *lions* with the conjunction *and*). In line 19, Susi demonstrates that she recognizes that he has begun a unattributed quotation from *The Wizard of Oz* by completing the emerging list with *and Bears* and then providing the refrain "Oh My." In line 20, Ron joins her in this refrain. Meanwhile, Kathy has been trying to talk about a *dog* that she saw at the mansion (line 18). In lines 32 to 34, Father juxtaposes this talk to the earlier Biblical allusions by saying that the people in the mansion are modern Christians who have dogs instead of lions.

In this sequence, participants move rambunctiously but effortlessly from the mansion Kathy is describing to the world of the *Bible* to *The Wizard of Oz.* None of these scenes (except possibly the mansion) are dealt with as coherent wholes but instead are apprehended and alluded to by producing fragments from each and relying on the competence of recipients to find the proper home environment for that bit of talk. Rather than having their phenomenal focus limited to the actual physical surround that encompasses their talk, the participants here in fact inhabit a rich and mutable world within which scenes from widely different home environments can be invoked on the spur of the moment and juxtaposed to each other in unusual, playful combinations.

## CONCLUSION

Analysis in this article has focused on how participants invoke and deal with the simultaneous relevance of multiple phenomenal scenes in the talk of the moment. One very common process that leads to such a situation involves what has here been called a *local metric,* the use of resources in the present

scene to make visible absent phenomena. The juxtaposition of the narrated scene and metrics drawn from the current scene is handled in part by organizing these two scenes relative to each other. The narrated scene is treated as focal, whereas the current scene is subordinated to it; for example, isolated features of the current scene function as props that aid explication of events in the narrated scene. In much work on the analysis of talk, there is a tendency to analyze the organization of a text and scenes manifested within it largely from a speaker's perspective, for example, to focus on the work that speakers do to build and order such phenomena within their talk. The data examined here reveal some of the weaknesses of such a perspective. Although speakers can *propose* that the events in their talk should be ordered in a particular fashion, recipients have the ability to challenge, overturn, and play with the structures being utilized by the speaker. Recipients can transform the way in which she has ordered events, shifting phenomena that she has placed in the background, such as local metrics invoking the current scene, into positions of focal prominence. The organization of texts and scenes is thus not the prerogative of the speaker alone but rather an interactively sustained phenomenon in which the recipient plays a very active role.

Multiple scenes also arise when a speaker imports talk from another context and uses it in some way in the current scene. My analysis in this article has focused on situations in which this process of quotation is not explicitly marked. In such circumstances a recognition test is posed for recipients, and this has a range of interactive consequences. Rather than commenting discursively on the quoted material, recipients frequently demonstrate recognition by collaborating in its production. The scenes being juxtaposed by speakers are not treated as immutable, self-contained wholes but rather as phenomena that can be shaped and rearranged to assure proper fit between them.

Much work on the analysis of talk has focused on the organization of coherent, self-contained packages such as sentences, turns, stories, topics, sequence types, and so forth. The events I investigated in this article raise the possibility that not all phenomena relevant to the organization of talk are in fact organized in this way. Thus, although features of the current scene are repetitively invoked as resources for the production of the scene being narrated, the current scene is not treated as something to be itself described as a coherent whole. Instead, it is invoked in bits and pieces where needed. Moreover, this episodic, fragmentary treatment extends as well to textual materials being imported. For example, in these data, scenes from the Bible and television commercials are repetitively used to make com-

ments about events in progress. However, the events being cited are never described in detail, and indeed, what fragments are noted are frequently transformed to fit local circumstances. From a slightly different perspective, some of these same resources are returned to again and again despite changes in the focal content of the talk in progress. Although never organized or attended to as coherent packages in their own right, these background phenomena pervade long stretches of talk and provide participants with continuing resources for the accomplishment of local tasks. One thus seems to find here a type of organization that provides a counterpoint to the vast range of structures, from topics to sentences, that shape talk into coherent bounded units.

# NOTES

1  For detailed analysis of how processes of interaction between speaker and her addressed recipient are relevant to the moment-by-moment production of this description, see M. H. Goodwin (1980). As the recipient produces "oh wow" lateral headshakes and thus positively evaluates what is being said, the speaker escalates her description. The final description (e.g., the move from "at least three or four of our houses" to "Probably four") emerges not from the actions of the speaker alone but rather as the product of a process of interaction in which the recipient is a very active coparticipant.

2  The use of meters and inches is of course a specific measurement practice appropriate to some domains of discourse but inappropriate to others. Kathy's recipients would have been altered to a very different type of activity and possibly a rather bizarre one if she had said "This house is probably 158.33 meters long." For more detailed discussion of how exact and "inexact" numbers are deployed within talk, see Sacks (1995) and Lynch (1991).

3  What precisely constitute local materials that can be employed in this way of course varies in terms of the types of access that participants have to each other and current scenes. A range of phenomena that are mutually accessible in face-to-face conversation may be accessible to only one party in a telephone call. Similarly, in face-to-face conversation, participants are frequently positioned so that each can see something that the other can't (e.g., if they are facing each other and can see what is behind B but not him or herself). Such differential access and perception is a pervasive feature of scientific and work settings (C. Goodwin, 1995; C. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996). For more detailed description of how access organizes deictic frames, see Hanks (1990).

4  As Kathy talks on and on about the mansion, her recipients amuse themselves with her talk by engaging in a variety of different types of playful commentary or byplay on it. For detailed analysis of this process, see M. H. Goodwin (1997).

5   The comments that recipients provide here call into question the social appropriateness of the comparisons that the speaker is making and protect the status of the family's home. Although this talk is keyed in a playful mode, it may well be focusing on issues of genuine concern to some of the participants.

6   Alternative framing structures help to make salient the differences between direct quotation, indirect quotation, free indirect quotation, and so forth—see Clark and Gerrig (1990), McGregor (1994), Sternberg (1982), Volosinov (1929/1973), and many others.

7   In verb final languages such as Korean and Japanese, the particles that signal "quotation" typically occur after the talk marked as quoted rather than before it (Hayashi, 1997). This creates a range of interesting interactive possibilities; for example, based on analysis of how the addressee is responding to the talk in progress, a speaker can retrospectively frame it as quotation and thus distance herself from it. Indeed, such "quotative" particles may no longer mark quotation per se but rather function as signals about the speaker's stance toward what he or she is saying. Tanaka (1999) investigated how such differences in placement make it possible for listeners in Japanese conversation to be engaged in quite different processes of projection than those described for hearers in English conversation (e.g., C. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987).

8   The verb *say* does occur in lines 15 to 16; "say 'I know a liddle place we c'n have some fish.'" However, this verb is not tying this talk to the McDonald's commercial but instead depicting as fresh talk what the addressee should say on the next day. It is functioning to signal that talk that occurred elsewhere is being reported.

9   The term *speech* in *unattributed imported speech* is slightly problematic because what is being quoted in two of the examples discussed here is something that was originally written. More generally, many of the examples investigated are drawn not from an earlier conversation (although paradoxically, the note that Kathy's mother wrote to her daughter comes quite close to this) but instead from either central texts in the culture such as the Bible or specialized performance genres such as radio and television commercials. Genres such as this, which are known to be heard or read by a large audience, would seem to provide an excellent source for utterances that a speaker can legitimately expect others to be able to recognize. The validity and relevance of such a distribution for these source materials requires investigation that goes beyond the limits of this article.

10  See M. H. Goodwin (1990) for more detailed analysis of *He-Said-She-Said* disputes and McGregor (1994) for a similar critique of the characterization of quotation as nonserious.

11  See C. Goodwin (2003) for other analysis of how speakers work to secure recipient recognition (in this case of a type of automobile as an assessable object) without explicitly telling them that what has just been said should be treated in a special way.

12  For more detailed analysis of how participants build subsequent utterances by reusing the materials provided by earlier talk, see the discussion of format tying in M. H. Goodwin and Goodwin (1987).

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# APPENDIX
## Not as Nice Sequence

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A1 | Kathy: | A͟h' ah:m (1.3) |
| A2 | | w͟e drive u͟p t'this place (0.4) |
| A3 | | ↑I ↓thought we were et |
| A4 | | a °museum or something° |
| A5 | | (0.9) |
| A6 | | I mean t͟his h͟ou:se w'z pr͟o:bably: |
| A7 | | (2.3) |
| A8 | Susi: | N͟ot iz nize iz a͟r house. |
| | | *((following is spoken with smile voice))* |
| A9 | Kathy: | N͟OT ess nice'ss ou͟r hous  [: yess. |
| A10 | Susi: | [Howe͟ver: |
| A11 | | (0.2) |
| A12 | Kathy: | Tha'wz [f͟unny |
| A13 | Susi: | [Yes |
| A14 | Kathy: | =thet you wreote that in that l͟etter. |
| A15 | | (0.5)) |
| A16 | Kathy: | Th͟at wz f͟unny. |
| A17 | | (.) |
| A18 | Kathy: | Dju r'memmer sa͟y'n th͟at |

```
A19              not ez nice iz ar ha-
A20              yer new house is ni-
A21              *hhh Anyway I'd say it probly goess
A22              (0.4)
A23              It inclu:des, the length: of (0.2)
A24              et leas:'three: er four of ar housses.
A25              ed lea:s:t. (0.3)
A26              Probly fou:r. (.) or ar:ss.
A27              Nex'to ea chother
A28              *hhh Much lo:nger
A29              (0.3)
A30     Ron:     But not uz ni [ce.
A31     Susi:    [( // )
A32     Kathy:   But not ez nice, [*hhh
A33     Frank:                    [°M-m.°
A34     Kathy:   An' ah:m
A35              (1.4)
A36     Kathy:   end it's a:ll (.) ril super old
A37              so it's that beautiful
A38              ↓s:tone house with all this: (.)
A39              *hhh gorgeous wood'n everything.
A40              .hh [h
A41     Susi:       [Ar [s  is sto:ne,]
A42     Kathy:          [W'l they have s ]:o much leea-
A43              W'l they [ev a D R I : V E way.] =
A44     Ross:                [Yeah b't it's not ez]=
A45     Ross:    =[nice [ [I mean their's] isn't °( )°
A46     Kathy:   =[Ril LO] N [G drive w a y] thet comes up
A47              en crcles ↓arou:nd like that: yihknow
A48              en goes back .t.hhh
```