

DISCOURSE COHERENCE, PARTICIPATION STRUCTURE, AND PERSONAL DISPLAY IN A FAMILY DINNER TABLE CONVERSATION¹

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Introduction. This is an analysis of a family conversation at the dinner table. It has a twofold emphasis: (1) on discourse coherence strategies apparent in the conversation and, (2) on such conversations as a learning environment for family members. Emphasis is on both the medium and the message in the conversation--the processes by which things were being said in connected fashion and the content of what was being said.

The first part of the discussion will address relationships between content and process in the conversation, considering the sequence of topics across the round of stories, the behavioral interaction systems (verbal and nonverbal) by which the stories were produced in talk and listening behavior, and the group participation structures (enacted role sets) by which discourse coherence and interactional coherence through reciprocal and complementary role relationships was accomplished by the interlocutors. The second part of the discussion will focus mainly on issues of content in the conversation, reviewing major themes that were apparent in the talk.

Throughout the paper, and with special emphasis in the final section, the family's conversation is considered as a learning environment. This focus is guided by two questions about learning: "How and what do children learn about the ways of speaking that were employed in the conversation?" and, "How do they learn what they seem to be believing about family roles and about life outside the family?" Because this is a study of only one event in the interactional life of this family, answers to those questions about learning are necessarily tentative and incomplete. They and will only be treated explicitly in passing. Yet the guiding questions, which point to the educational significance of routine interaction in conversation, do frame the approach to analysis that I have taken in the paper.

Let me introduce the family and the researchers who studied them. I will call the family the Pastores, using the pseudonym that was also used by Shultz and Theophano (n.d.) in a separate report which compares this conversation with that of another family. The Pastore family was studied in 1974 in an investigation of how children learn the social interactional conventions of schooling in the early grades, and how those cultural conventions regarding ways of speaking differ from those that obtained in the children's homes. In that study my research group videotaped children both at home and at school. The group consisted of Jeffrey Shultz, Susan Florio, Donald Bremme, and myself. Florio and I videotaped two complete dinner conversations among the Pastores, one at the evening meal on the third work day after Labor Day in early September, and the other at dinner a week later. In the portion of the dinner conversation that is analyzed here, Florio was the guest at the dinner table.

The Pastore family had seven members: two parents and five children. There were four brothers and a sister. The youngest child was a boy who had just begun first grade. He is

"Bro. 4" in the transcript. The next older sibling was his sister Maria, who is in third grade. Then there were two boys in late grade school, one in fifth grade (Bro. 3) and one in sixth grade (Bro. 2). The oldest boy (Bro. 1) was in his early teens--in eighth or ninth grade.

Here is the way the Pastores were seated at the dinner table:

Bro.	Bro.	Bro.
4	3	2
Fa.		Mo.
Bro.	Sister	Guest
1		

The Pastores were Italian-American. They lived in a working class neighborhood in a suburb of Boston. The local elementary school received what now would be called "Chapter I" funds because a significant number of families in the neighborhood had incomes below the poverty line. This particular family lived near relatives on both the father's and the mother's sides. (Many people immigrated to this neighborhood from a few geographically contiguous villages in Calabria, which is the southernmost province of the Italian peninsula.)

The father of the family was an industrial arts teacher in a neighboring suburb that had a predominantly working class population of Italian-Americans and Irish-Americans. The mother had been an elementary school teacher before she was married.

The reader will notice that the family, collectively and as individuals, liked to play around with talk. They participated in talk actively and had fun with it. Moreover, they seem to have valued verbal art as a means of personal display.

A portion of conversation from this dinner (a portion that differs from the portion analyzed here) was discussed in a previously published paper that mainly considered turn-taking patterns and role differentiation in conversation. That paper (Shultz, Florio, and Erickson, 1982) was titled "Where's the floor?" A portion from the second dinner that was videotaped with this family was discussed in a paper on topical cohesion and on the rhythmic organization of talk. That paper (Erickson, 1982) was titled "Money Tree, Lasagna Bush, Salt and Pepper."

I. INTERACTION SYSTEMS, TOPIC, AND COHERENCE STRATEGIES

The conversation is a set of story rounds (Polanyi, 1979). Coherence in discourse, within and across the successive stories, was maintained by a number of aspects of organization that operated simultaneously. Some of these aspects will be discussed here in turn: (1) continuity of topic and protagonist, (2) continuity of keying, (3) group participation in maintaining discourse coherence, and (4) relative prominence of an individual story in the whole conversation. The third and fourth aspects of organization to be discussed involve mutually constitutive relationships between the conversational roles taken by primary speakers and audience members, and their statuses and roles within the family unit. Thus the conversation as enacted can be seen to be situated in the social organization of the family; an organization that is reflexively manifested in the doing of the talk. The meanings of a given story and the strategic position of the narrator in relation to the story and its audience are considered here as situational; a matter of social practice that is locally accomplished. The

social identities and roles of the speakers and the contents of their talk can also be seen as less locally defined, according to cultural definitions that obtain not only within this family's microculture but also within lower middle class Italian-American subcultures more generally.

The stories we will consider here were about riding bikes. They recounted wipeouts (accidents) and near misses as experienced by various members of the family (see Figure 1, "Sequence of Story Contents and Protagonists," and the full transcript of the conversation, both of which appear at the end of this paper). The sequence to be analyzed here began with an account of a wipeout by the youngest male in the family, Bro 4. It concluded with a story of a near-miss by the oldest male, the father. After the opening story the major protagonists and narrators were the two oldest brothers and the father. The sister seems to have initiated one story (in one conversational turn) but did not complete it.

The stories, told almost entirely by males with some narrative assistance by the mother, portrayed a stereotypically male world in which danger was confronted and (usually) was averted by bravery and skill. The women in the conversation--mother, daughter, guest--assisted the men mainly by being an attentive audience.

The stories were addressed primarily to the guest. She was an especially attractive audience for stories such as bike stories that portrayed the protagonist in a positive light, and self narrated bike stories are an especially effective medium for such a presentation of self. The graduate student had a number of desirable features as a primary audience. First, she was a guest, and as such could be expected to treat the stories as novel and interesting. She was also a young, pretty woman. As an Italian-American she was a fellow ethnic. As a former teacher and graduate student she could be considered a peer of the parents. Yet she was relatively young and seemed to be very interesting to the oldest son. At the time of the videotaping we speculated that the oldest son's prominence in the story round, both as protagonist and as narrator, may have been partly due to his desire to display himself as masculine and competent in the eyes of the female guest. So the presence of the guest and the availability of bike stories as a *genre* can be seen as valuable conversational resources that were capitalized upon effectively and with relish by the primary speakers.

Continuity of Protagonist and Narrator. The transcribed portion of the conversation that is analyzed here shows fourteen stories and one account that is a detailed description rather than a narrative (see turns 173-192). In each of the stories there was a protagonist, who was usually also the narrator. Sometimes other members of the family co-narrated, but within a single story the protagonist always stayed the same. Consequently the continuity of protagonist within a narrative seems to be one of the most basic of the devices for discourse coherence that was employed in the conversation.

Danger was a narrative theme that, as a *leitmotiv*, provided discourse coherence. Usually the stories involved danger and the use of skill in an attempt to confront it. Thus a resolution phase in which the danger was successfully or unsuccessfully overcome was a possible component of the narrative (the terms for phases here are those of Labov, 1972). Sometimes, however, the story of danger was left without resolution. In most instances the stories began with the danger, *in medias res*. Sometimes the story concluded with the narrative phase that Labov terms an evaluation.

The most fully developed narrative was the story told by the father at 193-242. That story began before the danger was encountered. In succession the narrative then recounted confrontation with the danger, a resolution phase, and a concluding evaluation. The father's story is analytically interesting for many reasons and I will return to it repeatedly in the subsequent discussion. Here its significance is that it was the most complete narrative in the story round. In the less fully developed narratives in the round, coherence within a story was

maintained by completing one or more adjacent units in the sequential set of narrative phases, the minimal component being an account of confrontation with some danger by the protagonist.

Discourse coherence across stories was maintained in part by continuity of content and protagonist across successive narratives and narrators. At the most general level, the danger theme provided continuity across stories as well as providing continuity within a story. More specific topical features also connected one story to the next. For example, at turns 20-40 (see transcript) the father was the protagonist in a story of jumping with a motorcycle. That story was followed at 41-56 by Bro. 2's first story, in which he was the protagonist and he was jumping with his bicycle. Jumping was a topical feature that connected both successive anecdotes. Another feature of topic in common between the two stories was the occurrence of accidents--danger was not entirely averted when the father had jumped his bike nor when the son had jumped his.

The next five stories (57-116) were connected by shared content at a general level in that the events recounted all occurred on public roads. The first four stories involved riding on city streets near the family's home, where the narrative feature of danger involved interaction with cars. In the fifth and last story of this set the scene shifted to an unpaved country road, and the element of danger was a stone in the middle of the road. There may have been an implicit connection of contrast here between types of features of danger in road conditions.

It should be noted here that the city street and traffic rotary in the town square that was described in the story at 74-81 was especially difficult to ride in. It was partially paved in brick, irregularly patched with tar, and had trolley tracks in it. An additional source of danger was the heavy traffic and moreover, the tendency of cars and trucks to move erratically as their drivers tried to avoid ruts in the paved streets. It is possible that the other three stories that involved riding on city streets may have taken place on the same main thoroughfare that led to the rotary. In that case there would have been similarity of scene across the three stories. As the scene changed to a country road, formal features differed from the previous stories (this was an unpaved road and there was no heavy traffic to contend with). Yet there was a functional similarity between elements of danger across the stories--the stone in the dirt road as analogous to the ruts and cars that made the city streets dangerous.

At 117 the topic returned to the earlier theme of jumping bikes. The last four accounts show a pattern of semantic connection by transformation of central theme across stories. The first anecdote (109-116) was told by Bro. 1 with Bro. 2 as the protagonist who jumped his bike off the front lawn onto the driveway near the street. There was a wall there about two and a half feet high running along the side of the driveway and the front of the lawn, thus the front corner of the lawn next to the driveway could serve as a launching point for jumping. Once a fence was put up along the side of the driveway one could no longer jump from the lawn into the driveway (the steepest drop possible) but one could still jump a bike straight off the front lawn on to the sidewalk. That was the action described in the second account (117-129) which was told by Bro. 1. He was the protagonist in that story as well as the narrator. As he told the story he was criticized by his father for jumping the bike so frequently. The father invoked technical knowledge to justify his criticism as he claimed that the shock of landing on the front axle repeatedly would eventually damage the ball bearings in the axle. The son countered with a more technically specific description of what he did (jumping so as to land alternately on the front and rear axles) portraying himself in the description as both technically skilled in handling the bicycle and mechanically knowledgeable and prudent by operating the bicycle so as to minimize damage to it. The father continued his criticism, arguing that the shock of landing must still damage the bearings.

At (173-192) Bros 1 and 2 (both of them apparently inveterate jumpers) defended themselves further from their father's criticism. They shifted genre from narration to a description of specific braking skills, showing that they were able to let their bikes down gently off the ledge on to the sidewalk. Thus the central focus of topic changed from jumping to specific braking skills. The father's story that followed, beginning at (199), was a fully developed narrative of riding his motorcycle across an oil slick on a bridge. Braking skills were crucial to his success in negotiating his sudden and difficult encounter with danger. Thus the topical feature of braking skills, the main point of his story, connected that story to the accounts that had just preceded it.

A final kind of semantic connection across stories was continuity of narrator and central character across successive stories. One type of connection involved continuity of protagonist, which often happened across pairs of stories. For example, Bro. 1 was the protagonist in two pairs of successive stories; two very brief accounts at 15-17 and 18-19 and two longer ones at 84-95 and 96-108. Bro. 2 was the protagonist in a pair of stories at 109-116 and 117-129. Continuity was also achieved by one individual narrating more than one story in succession. Regardless of whether or not the protagonist of one story differed from that of the next, for one individual to continue to claim the role of narrator made for some similarity across stories in terms of narrative style and perspective. This type of connection can be seen in the stories from 15-19 and from 109-129, in which Bro. 1 and Bro. 2 were the narrators as well as the protagonists.

I have described four types of semantic continuity that occurred across some or all of the stories. All but one of these (the relation of narrator to protagonist as self or other) involve aspects of topic within the content of the stories themselves. The four types of topical continuity involved (1) continuity of protagonist across successive stories, (2) connection of topical features at the same level of generality across successive stories, e.g., jumping/jumping, (3) connection across pairs of stories that involved features that were similar at a higher order of generality than that of the specific features recounted in the story itself, e.g., danger as manifested in ruts and cars in paved street/danger as manifested in stone in unpaved road, and (4) connection by evolution of topical features and the emergence of an overarching theme, e.g., jumping transformed into braking skills as the discussion turns to displaying technical knowledge and skill as evidence of competence and responsibility.

In the fourth type of connection between stories, presentation of positive face was especially salient as an interactional issue that bore on the progressive transformation of topic. Thus the maintenance of a positive *persona* in the discussion became an aspect of the organization of discourse coherence. Specific topic could shift within a continuous general frame of interlocutors working to maintain positive social identities in the immediate scene of conversation. The overall scene working at face maintenance could be sustained as a general frame while specific features of topical focus changed within it.

Coherence in Keying. The metaphor of keys in music was used by Hymes (1974:37, 181 ff) to refer to the mutually constitutive relationship between message frame and message form in the interpretation of the meaning of an utterance or action. In this Hymes followed, at least in part, Bateson's initial discussion of the role of framing in message interpretation which enables interactional partners to keep clear such distinctions as that between play fighting and real fighting among animals (Bateson, 1955, 1972).

A musical key is a set of relationships among notes of different pitches that defines the relative functional position (read, "meaning") of any one of the pitches. The pitch is a physical phenomenon, the key is a mental schemata. The same pitch, as phenomenon, plays a different role in different musical keys (thus one sees a certain commonality yet a real

distinction between the notion of the pitch/key relation in music and that of the relationship between a phonetic bit and a phonemic unit in language.

In the interpretive work of making sense of utterances (and of other units of discourse) the same utterance can be taken as happy or sad, playful or serious, off the record or on the record, depending on its situation in a key. Keying is signalled in the communicative surface structure (vocal and nonverbal behavior) by what Gumperz (1982: 131-152) calls "contextualization cues.

During the Pastore's dinner conversation the key of humorous irony appeared often. It was signalled by two main means that were used simultaneously; counterfactual negation and distinctive vocal stress (high volume and pitch level). The negation was of the sort that on the face of it seemed nonsensical, or at least contradictory with what was said immediately before or after the remark. An example occurred at (23) where the mother said, referring to a slight accident the father recently had, "We won't TA:LK about HIS best wipeout." This was said after the story had already been invoked by the father at turn 20 and other family members were beginning to talk about it, thus making the negation counterfactual. Vocal stress and sound stretches on vowels appeared at marked points in the clause rather than at unmarked points (i.e., at unusual rather than at customarily usual points). An alternative and non-ironic placement of stress and sound stretch in this clause would be "We won't TALK about his best WI:PEout.". The mother had used this same cue earlier in the conversation when a round of accounts of how much things cost nowadays, when she said "We won't TALK about THA:T" and then everyone went on to talk about how expensive everything was. The ironic negation of a topic seemed to be an invitation to continue to discuss it.

The guest participated in an ironic key in an example at (123). Like the Pastore family the guest was Italian-American. Her facility in participating in the joking irony could suggest that the key of humorous irony may be an aspect of Italian-American ethnic cultural style in conversation:

(123) G: (referring to jumping bike off ledge on front lawn)
I imagine that does a pretty good job on the front end of
your bike, huh? (no marked stress or sound stretch)

(125) Bro. 3: NotREA:LY (rather than "NOT really.")

(127) Fa: Oh NO:: NO:: NO:: not TOO:: much
(rather than "OH no, not too MU:CH")

Humor without irony was also a key that was used frequently in the conversation. The Pastores were playful in talking and seemed to relish a genial silliness that was at times boisterous, especially among the younger members of the family. In addition, humor seemed to be a way to mask or mitigate the danger that was being recounted in the stories. In the actual events recounted there had been real danger (indeed, in some instances, potentially life threatening risks had been involved). In the story version of reality, however, the actual danger that had been confronted danger could be treated playfully as a stimulating challenge if it were framed in a humorous key.

A case in point is the humorous play on the name of the motorcycle jump artist, Evel Knievel (the name is pronounced with the K sounded, as "Eevul, Kaneevul"). His name appeared first at (26) as the story of the father's motorcycle jump was introduced. Then as the story progressed, various of the younger children echoed what must by then have become a standard family joke involving rhyme play: "He tried to be Evel Knievel but it was Awful Knawful!" (Note the "Kaneevul/Kanawful" contrast). The humor covers what in fact was a

situation of serious danger for the father when he lost balance on his motorcycle when landing after a jump.

Keying played a significant role in discourse coherence within a story. The key was maintained across sentences, across turns at speaking, and sometimes across chains of reported action in the narratives. Sometimes a key, once established and maintained for a while, seemed to take on a kind of momentum or trajectory in the discourse such that it became difficult to change the key. The father, for example, seemed to have had such difficulty after (127) where he had said jokingly "Oh, NO:: NO:: NO:: not TOO:: much." Some turns later (136) he said, "I've seen you go off the front over here in the morning going to school, bang!" The next speaker (unidentifiable) apparently took this as continued irony for he said (137) "Oh that's ___ no problem." Immediately next the father said (138) "A little every day, you know . . . you know the little bearings in the front wheel, the loose ball bearings?" By that point others began to react to the father as if he were being serious rather than playful, reading his utterances literally rather than metaphorically. Across this strip of interaction repeated attempts by the father were required before he was able to accomplish a key change. Once the key change was made the discourse turned to justification rhetoric on the part of the two oldest brothers.

This example attests to the power and persistence of keying as a discourse coherence device. Were keying not so powerful an aspect of discourse organization the father would not be seen swimming upstream, as it were, against the current in the discourse that was provided by a special key, which in this instance was ironic humor, but which could have been other tones such as special authoritativeness, or sadness, or rage. Indeed, the length of air time the father was able to occupy during his long story about riding over the oil slick (199-242) may have been enabled in part by the strength with which he maintained, by contextualization cues, a key of high moral seriousness and of disapproval of the highway personnel who failed to clean up the oil slick promptly. The whole family joined the father in the key of seriousness and disapprobation during most of his long turn at narration, thus helping by collective action to sustain the key the father had initiated at the beginning of the story through his serious voice intonation.

Keying also made for semantic connections across the utterances of speakers who played different roles in the conversation. One speaker could adopt the key of a previous speaker, extending the remarks of that speaker. This brings us to the topic of role differentiation among speakers in relation to the organization of discourse in their talk. I will turn now to consider the allocation of conversational roles among the various conversational partners and the ways in which that allocation influences discourse coherence.

Group participation in maintaining discourse coherence. In an earlier paper (Shultz, Florio, and Erickson, 1982) my colleagues and I reported that in this dinner conversation as a whole there were distinct differences in conversational roles among the interlocutors. Those role distinctions were important factors in the social organization of the conversation at any moment in time. A particular configuration of the whole social organization of interaction, consisting of all the role relationships that obtain at any given moment among all the interactional partners, could be thought of as a division of labor in doing the collective work of talking together as interlocutors. In our paper and elsewhere (e.g., Erickson and Shultz, 1977) we have called this total configuration of conversational roles a social participation structure, following upon yet altering slightly the terminology and conceptualization of Philips (1972, 1983).

Within the division of labor in a conversation various roles in the work can be identified. At any given moment one person may be a speaker, with other members of the audience operating as attenders. Fine-grained distinctions of role among speakers and

listeners are often found, especially in the kind of conversation that is being discussed here. There may be primary and secondary speakers; those who do the main work of talking and those who cooperate as junior partners in the work. The main work of speakers consists of such actions as initiating and maintaining topics, making major substantive points or taking leadership in the production of a narrative by telling details that advance the action, or concluding the current section of discourse. Subsidiary work of speakers consists in collaborating with the primary speakers by such actions as answering a question, echoing the primary speakers' remarks, and commenting on what the primary speaker has said in ways that show interest and approval. By such speaking activity secondary speakers assist the primary speaker in holding the floor. Secondary speakers do not compete for the floor with primary speakers; rather they help the primary speaker maintain dominance and a central position in the conversation at that moment.

Within the division of interactional labor, i.e., the total social participation structure, the work that listeners do in showing attention can also be differentiated according to primary and secondary kinds of activity. Primary attenders devote full attention to a primary speaker. They may show attention in vocal as well as nonvocal behavior, for example by uttering brief comments as well as by orienting posturally to the speaker, gazing at the speaker, and nodding. Secondary attenders may use the same behavioral displays of attention as do primary attenders but their listening behaviors in relation to the primary speaker may involve smaller expenditures of effort than do the listening behaviors of a primary attender. In addition, the attention of secondary attenders may be split among a number of speakers. Consequently secondary attenders address less of their listening behavior to any one of the speakers than does a primary attender in paying attention to a primary speaker.

The brief comments of secondary speakers and of primary and secondary attenders may echo or reiterate with slight elaboration what one of the other speakers in the scene has just said. Such retrospectively oriented talk functions as a coherence device, keeping a central idea in the air longer than if the echoing had not occurred. By echoing and not contradicting their superordinates, the subordinate conversational partners not only confirm the dominance of their superordinates but they contribute to discourse coherence as well. Thus we can see that the cognitive content and semantic connectedness of oral discourse in the conversation is related to the social organization of the conversation's enactment in speaking and listening behavior.

In the earlier paper (Shultz, Florio, and Erickson, 1982) we identified four major types of participation structure that occurred in this dinner conversation as a whole. Three of the types involved different patterns of allocation of diverse conversational roles within a single conversational "floor." A fourth type of participation structure involved multiple floors for speaking and listening as well as diverse roles within any of the conversational floors. In two of the four types of participation structure overlapping talk was appropriate--it did not constitute interruption of the primary speaker. In the other two types of structure overlapping talk might or might not constitute an interruption. We showed that for a speaker to get the floor and hold it (i.e., to gain access to attention from a set of listeners) required interactional work that differed in function and form depending on whether the social participation structure involved single or multiple floors. (For parallel discussions of the practical problem of getting the floor in situations in which overlapping talk is appropriate, see Edelsky, 1981 and Tannen, 1981.) Before proceeding it is appropriate to review here the four main types of participation structure reported initially by Shultz, Florio, and Erickson, 1982. For each type a short narrative description is presented. (N.B. In this discussion I have altered the numbering of the types from that of the original paper. In that paper what here is being called Type I was called Type II. The original numbering reflected relative frequency of occurrence of the various types in the conversation. In reporting the current analysis, renumbering the types makes for greater clarity of exposition.)

Type I Participation Structure. Single conversational floor, with all persons present participating in it. There is only one primary speaker, who addresses all those present. All who are addressed participate in similar ways as attenders. There is little or no overlapping talk and a single conversation is occurring. Overlapping talk, other than very brief comments, would constitute an interruption of the primary speaker.

Type II Participation Structure. Single conversational floor, but with only some of the persons present participating in the floor as primary speakers and attenders. Others present participate as secondary attenders who are less active in their listening behavior and attentional engagement with the primary speakers and attenders. Overlapping talk occurs occasionally by primary speakers and attenders but not by secondary attenders.

Type III Participation Structure. Single conversational floor with primary and secondary speakers and also primary and secondary attenders. Persons who are secondary attenders can also be secondary speakers, and both primary and secondary speakers and attenders engage in overlapping talk that does not constitute interruption. Two subtypes can be distinguished:

Type III-A. Single floor, yet with multiple levels of participation in it. Primary and secondary participation, considerable overlapping talk. A type II conversation is occurring among primary speakers/attenders. One or more of the secondary attenders makes comments that are topically tied to what the primary speakers/attenders are saying. The comments by the secondary speakers are "tossed out" into the main conversation and are not responded to by the primary speakers/attenders. Thus there are two different levels of participation in talk as well as in listening.

Type III-B. Interpolated single floor, with single level of participation. This is a collective commentary on a previous primary speaker's remark during which the previous floor is suspended. A Type I or II participation structure has occurred immediately previously. It is interrupted by a side sequence during which one or more of the attenders makes comments on what the primary speaker has just said. The commentators may overlap one another without their simultaneous speaking constituting an interruption. The forward course of the previous speaker's discourse is halted. It may recommence as the former primary speaker reclaims the interrupted turn, a new primary speaker may take the floor in a Type I or II or III-A configuration, or the participation structure Type III-B may be followed by Type IV.

Type IV Participation Structure. Multiple conversational floors, with subgroups of the persons present participating simultaneously in topically distinct conversations. There may be several Type II conversations occurring simultaneously, or a combination of Type II and Type III conversations. Type I conversations, by definition, cannot occur in a Type IV participation structure. In the Type IV structure of multiple conversations, primary speaker/attenders in one conversation participate as secondary speaker/attenders (and sometimes even as primary speaker/attenders) in one or more of the other conversations. There is much overlapping talk, within and between the subgroups of conversational partners.

From the previous discussion it is apparent that the prominence with which a single speaker is displayed before an audience differs across the four types of participation structure. A primary speaker is most prominently displayed in a Type I structure, since in that situation there is only one speaker who has the attention of all the remaining participants, who constitute a single audience. In the Type II structure a primary speaker may share the floor

with one or more additional primary speakers and no single primary speaker receives full, active attention displays from the secondary attenders, as is the case in a Type I structure. In a Type II structure the spotlight of attention must be shared with other speakers, and the audience roles diversify. In subtypes III-A and III-B, a single speaker occupies even less of the total audience attention than is available to a single speaker in the Type II structure. In the Type IV structure the amount and kind of attention any speaker can receive is potentially less (from the group as a total collectivity) than in any of the other types of participation structure, since in the Type IV structure some participants can ignore totally the speaking of participants in the other conversations that are occurring simultaneously.

These differences in the attentional situation of the speaker across the four types of participation structure are related to opportunities for self display and to maintenance of positive face. Speakers are prominent in the conversation when they tell stories that receive attention. The fullest possible attention to a speaker's narrative is available in a Type I participation structure, with decreasing potential for prominence across the other types of social organization of conversation.

Speaker prominence is also related to story content. An individual's potential for self display is highest during narratives in which the narrator is not only the primary teller of the story, but the protagonist in it as well. In sum, the position of persons in relation to the story being told (as narrator, as protagonist, or as both) and the type of participation structure that obtains as the narrative is told, are all features of conversational role that contribute to prominence of stories and to dominance of persons in the conversation. I will explore further the issues of story prominence, personal display, face, and conversational dominance in the discussion that follows.

Story Prominence, Positive Face, and Family Hierarchy. The prominence of a story and of its teller in the conversation was a matter of the number of stories told, their length, the quality of the attention received during the telling, and the symbolic significance of the content of the stories. In the round of bike wipeout stories the most prominent stories were told by the males of the Pastore family, and the most prominent story of all was told by the father, who was the most senior of the males.

The three persons with most access to primary speaking rights during the story round were the father and the two oldest brothers. Together they were the most senior males in the family. Thus the prominence of story and narrator seemed to be related to the narrator's position in a family hierarchy within which rank was a function of age and gender. The superordinate conversational situation of males was a characteristic of this story round, although male conversational dominance did not characterize every speech situation that occurred in the Pastore family. This story round in particular involved a topical domain (bike wipeouts) in which males apparently had special expertise and proprietary rights. Looking at the family in a more general ethnographic perspective it seems that males often found opportunity for personal display in conversation. Females and fellow males provided audiences for such display by males, and the dinner table was a key arena in which that display took place.

Tables 1 and 2 (appended) provide a synoptic view of story prominence and of differential access to primary speaking rights and personal display in the conversation. Table 1 shows that the three oldest males were the most frequent protagonists and narrators in the story round. In terms of the number of stories in which an individual figured as either protagonist or narrator, or both, the father is preceded in rank order by the second son, who is preceded by the first son. Table 1 shows clearly which individuals clustered in terms of overall conversational dominance. But the picture of rank order between the three senior males that Table 1 provides is a bit misleading.

Table 2 distinguishes better than Table 1 between the three top-ranking narrators in the conversation. Overall story prominence is shown in Table 2 in terms of total air time occupied by the narrator and/or protagonist and in terms of the quality of attention received from the audience during the telling of each story. Air time is indicated by the total number of turns at speaking in each story, together with the number of transcript lines for each turn when the turn extended beyond a single line of transcript. This is a rough measure but it differentiates well among the three most frequent narrators. We see that although only two stories featured the father as protagonist, he told by far the longest story about himself (60 transcript lines) of any that occurred in the conversation. The oldest son told the next longest story about himself (45 lines) and told three more of moderate length (10 to 18 lines). The third son figured as protagonist in only one less story than the set of six told about the second son, but the third son's longest stories were all only moderate in length (14 lines for three stories and 10 lines for one), which was a much shorter length than the longest stories told by the father and oldest brother.

Table 2 shows the same rank order for quality of audience attention as it does for length of stories told. Type I participation structure (single speaker with everyone else paying constant attention) provided a narrator with the most complete arena for personal display. In comparing the individuals it is appropriate to consider together as sets each individual's stories and their framing participation structures. In comparing the sets of stories and participation structures across individuals it is apparent that the father's set is the only one that included a Type I participation structure. That structure occurred during the father's longest story, which makes his narrative the most prominent story in the whole conversation. Type II and III-A participation structures provided a speaker with the next most complete attention after Type I. All the stories told by the two oldest brothers occurred in either Type II or Type III-A participation structures. Thus their stories were very prominent in terms of audience attention, but still were not quite so prominent as was the father's longest story.

Story prominence also involved the symbolic significance of the story content. Recall that these were bike wipeout stories in which the protagonist showed competence and courage in confronting danger. Such stories were a resource for maintaining positive face (i.e., positive reputation before an audience, see the discussion in Goffman, 1967: 5-45). The highest potential resource for positive face obtains in those stories with the most dramatic emphasis. That emphasis depended on story content as well as on the fluency and charisma of the narrator. Considered in this light, the size and complexity of the bike possessed by a narrator became an important asset within the set of resources possessed by speakers for achieving face maintenance and enhancement. The father owned the biggest and most powerful bike, a motorcycle. It required the most skill to operate and riding it presented the most danger, since it was the heaviest and traveled the fastest of all the other bikes. Indeed, the father was injured in the first story told about his bike wipeouts. Thus the velocipede he rode as well as his rank within the family hierarchy was a resource for the prominence of his stories.

The oldest son's bike ranked next in size and complexity to that of the father's. Although the oldest son's bike was not motorized, it was a ten-speed, which especially at the time this conversation occurred (1974) was by far a more elaborate and valued type of bicycle than that possessed by any other member of the family but for the father. From the older brother on down through the hierarchy of siblings, bike size decreased in descending order by age down to the bicycle of the youngest son. He had the smallest bike of all and was slightly injured while riding it, thus showing that even his little bicycle could not be ridden without confronting some danger and without exercising some skill.

II. THE DINNER CONVERSATION AS A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Obviously, children and adults as well learn something by participating in such conversations as the one discussed here. Part of what is available to learn are definitions of family roles. This point was made by Shultz and Theophano (n.d.) in their recent paper on family dinner talk. They went on to observe that such conversation is also a means of teaching family members information, beliefs, and values regarding the world outside the family. I will comment briefly here on some of the themes that seem to be being taught within this conversation (or are at least there available to be learned) about the family and its surrounding world. At least eleven maxims appear to be present for learning during this story round: (1) courage and skill are admirable traits, (2) the world presents one with danger, which is why courage and skill are necessary, (3) it is also appropriate to seek out some danger and play with it for practice, (4) personal display that draws attention to one's own courage and skill is not only appropriate but admirable, (5) telling a good story skillfully is a means of personal display that involves risk in engaging an audience and, when successful, elicits positive attention, (6) talk is fun as well as serious and can be played with just as danger can be, (7) talk that overlaps that of the speaker can be, in the right participation structure, a means of showing high interest in and strong approval of the speaker and of what he is saying, (8) men and boys possess physical courage and skill in biking and elocutionary courage and skill in storytelling, (9) abilities in biking and storytelling are age ranked among males, (10) women provide an admiring and attentive audience to men and boys in situations of personal display such as this, and (11) the family social system here is intact--people act in age and gender-appropriate roles in this conversation.

Why eleven maxims rather than more or less? No claim is made here for the completeness of this list. It is intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive, and it covers a number of differing dimensions quite unsystematically, e.g., gender roles as distinct from speaking roles, and social roles as distinct from the physical skills involved in manipulating the brake handles on bicycles and motorcycles. The point of the list is simply to show how rich was this scene with potential for learning about self, family, and the world. Moreover, opportunities for learning and relearning were not only present for the children in this scene; they were present for the adults as well.

Let me elaborate slightly on a few of these themes contained in the maxims. The story round was full of opportunities for personal display and for maintaining and enhancing face. Opportunities presented themselves to speakers, and speakers availed themselves of the opportunities, actively seeking the limelight of audience attention. The rhetorical opportunity was that of portraying one's self and others as protagonists in situations of danger and difficulty. In availing one's self of such an opportunity through telling a wipeout story well the speaker modeled the proposition that fortitude and skill are admirable qualities. Notice the way the father described Bro. 4's scraped elbow (an injury I presume was incurred in the line of the paradoxical "duty" of entertaining risks in bike riding). The father did not issue a moral injunction to be more careful in riding the bicycle. Rather, he seems to have praised the son implicitly by his ironically counterfactual statement at (8): "That's really a good one, huh." Then Bro. 2 cooperated with the father's good-humored irony by conjoining two images: putting a bandage on the scraped elbow and using the patch kit to put a patch on a bicycle tire. In a patch kit there is a scraper with which one abrades the exterior surface of the inner tube so that the glued patch will stick securely to the tube. If one were actually to do that to Bro. 4's arm it would be gruesome. By invoking the patch kit metaphor in a humorous key Bro. 2 seemed to be saying to Bro. 4, "It's good to be tough, kid."

Injury and risk were also made light of at later points in the conversation. The father said to the oldest boy at (17), "I'll have to get you a helmet too." (Because you are doing dangerous things--but I don't tell you to stop taking risks.) Again there seems to be a complicated message being communicated. Risk is indeed to be avoided, yet the father showed admiration for the various risks entertained by the children, and the father and mother allowed the older siblings to recount, before an audience that included younger siblings, ways in which the older siblings courted risk while riding bikes.

I was particularly struck by the reference to riding in the rotary traffic circle in Watertown Square that appeared in the story told by Bro. 2 (74-81). When the videotape was made I lived just past the other side of that square from where the Pastores lived. I avoided riding through it on my own bicycle. It was, as I noted earlier, a dangerous place to ride. I would have told my own children not to ride there, had they not at that time been pre-schoolers riding tricycles. Viewing the videotape thirteen years later I realize how different Mr. Pastore's reaction to his son's report was from the one I would have given. And had I told my father, as Bro. 1 did, that I was hanging on to trucks for a power assist while riding my bicycle, my father would have forbidden me to ride that way and there would have been a big incident at the dinner table! So the issue of playing with danger that surfaced in this conversation seems to tap subculturally distinctive themes, perhaps ethnic group and social class-specific subcultural content--that seems very significant and certainly different from that of my own childhood.

Still, while risk was attractive it was important not to be utterly foolhardy. The father alternated seriousness and playfulness in commenting on risk. He was serious at 101: "(You) fool around you're gonna find out those cars are harder than you are." He was also serious in issuing at (138) a warning about damaging the front axle bearings of the ten-speed bicycle. The moralizing tone of that injunction elicited the long, and as I see it, face-maintaining exposition of braking skills by the two eldest brothers, as they seemed to argue implicitly that because they were so adept at braking they could let their bikes down off the ledge on the front lawn without damaging the axle bearings of their bikes. The father stayed serious and appeared not to have bought their argument. Indeed he was serious throughout the long story that followed about big danger from the oil slick that was averted by his braking skills. At the end of that story, in an evaluation (218), he condemned the carelessness of the highway department in not seeing to it that the dangerous oil slick on the bridge was not cleaned up immediately.

Some danger was inevitable, it seemed. One confronted it with physical skill and fortitude, and also with technical knowledge. Technical knowledge seemed to be an admirable possession in the Pastore family. The father invoked it in the discussion of the axle bearings of the bicycle (138). At (173-192) the two eldest brothers couched what I read as their defense against the charge of irresponsibility in terms of a display of their mastery of knowledge and skill in the braking technique of alternately applying pressure to the front and rear wheel caliper brakes on their bicycles. Later in the conversation the two brothers made technical suggestions for making the road surface on the bridge more safe: (222) coat the road surface with tar, or (223) rough up the steel bridge floor so that tires would have better traction. At that point in the conversation, as in a number of earlier moments, the two oldest boys seem to have functioned as a conversational team in support of each other and of their father. There is perhaps another maxim here: males stick together.

Yet another maxim could be that courage and competence are age-ranked. This is true for biking and for storytelling as well. The senior riders on the bigger bikes encountered more serious dangers than did the junior riders--danger requiring skills and fortitude greater than that possessed by the younger members of the family. The senior members also presented longer and more fully formed narratives than did the junior members, and received

more full attention from their audiences. That attention is both attractive and dangerous, since if the speaker stumbles in the narration he or she stands to lose face.

A related, more abstract point is that conversational rights and obligations appear to be clearly asymmetric and age ranked within the family. This age ranking is obvious--it is not mitigated as in some other forms of family organization. A concluding general maxim implicit in the conversation could be that the family social system here is intact. Juniors may not have had the same rights as seniors (and at least in this transcribed portion of the dinner conversation men and women had distinct conversational roles) but the overall system was clear. Consequently, members were able to play with confidence their age and gender-appropriate roles in the conversation.

The father appears to have had special conversational rights. His speech was the only talk that could sometimes be "interrupted" by overlapping speech. Although speech that overlapped even the father's talk was appropriate most of the time, earlier in the dinner Bro. 4 was sharply reprimanded by Bros. 2 and 3 for speaking while the father was speaking.

Age hierarchy was also apparent in the seating arrangement at the dinner table. The father and mother sat facing one another on one axis of the table and the children sat facing each other on the other axis. The eldest son sat on the father's right and the youngest son sat on the father's left. The situation was reversed in mirror image for the mother; the second oldest son sat on the mother's right and the second youngest child (the daughter) normally sat on the mother's left, although in the dinner considered here that seat was occupied by the guest. So the family's overall social participation structure seems to have been manifested not only in conversational arrangements during the dinner, but in seating arrangements as well.

III. EPILOGUE

I have emphasized gender as well as age in the discussion of role differentiation in the family and in its talk together during dinner. During the portion of the dinner conversation that was analyzed here women did operate primarily in listener roles. The women, especially the guest but also the mother, did provide an admiring and attentive audience for the man and the boys in the scene. I infer from this the maxims that in this family, and perhaps in its ethnic and class subculture, personal display by males through talk about physical courage and risk is appropriate and that it is a means of gaining positive attention from females. That seems a justifiable inference from the evidence available from analysis of this conversation, from wider ethnographic evidence about this family and neighborhood, and from studies of working class Italian-Americans more generally. Limitations of space prevent me from reviewing those broader evidence bases here.

Before leaving the immediate scene of the dinner table, however, it is appropriate to conclude by saying a bit more about the women and their roles. They were not simply passive in the scene. Both the mother and the guest made ironic comments, as well as serious ones, on what the males were saying. Moreover, because bike wipeout stories as a genre may be generally a male province of discourse (that certainly appears at least to be the case here) the women appeared less prominently as speakers in this transcript than they did in the dinner conversation as a whole. In other parts of the dinner they were active primary speakers.

In the dinner conversation as a whole, and even within this transcribed portion of it, food talk seemed to be more a province of the females than of the males. Women initiated talk about food more often than did the males, although the father commented on the cake frosting at (190). The cake appeared as a recurring, fragmentary topic parallel to the bike stories throughout the second half of the transcript. During that period of time the mother sliced and

served the cake. The children made brief comments and non-lexicalized noises of appreciation (e.g., "Mmmmm!") as the cake reached their places at table and they began to eat it.

It is important to note that food talk occurred much more frequently in the parts of the dinner prior to the occurrence of the bike wipeout stories, which happened as family members were finishing their main course and as dessert was beginning to be served. As noted above, the mother and guest participated actively in conversation at earlier points in the meal, often as food was being discussed. Indeed food talk framed the bike wipeout stories. The transcript began with the childrens' enthusiastic requests for dessert, ("Cake! Cake!"). The transcript ended as the topic shifted back to an earlier one--that of the inexpensive electric mixer that broke as the mother was using it to stir the batter of the cake that had just been served. The cheap mixer that turned out not to be a bargain (the father called it a "disposable mixer") was a humorous topic introduced at (243) by the mother. Possibly this was humorous self-deprecation by an invitation to criticism for buying it. But mentioning the mixer at that point also tied far back into the conversation's history, where at the beginning of the meal there was general discussion of how much things cost nowadays. The mixer was originally mentioned as a subtopic of that larger topic. Then at the end of the meal the mixer was re-invoked as an object of attention.

Here perhaps I overinterpret. But perhaps not. The males had been talking about wipeouts with their machines, the bikes. Then that story round concluded with the long silence at the end of the father's long, dramatic narrative. At that point the mother's comments could be seen as tied to the previous topic by an analogical relation. The mixer was the mother's machine. Since it broke she had a wipeout story too, in the province of female-dominated talk about food. She too was a person capable of personal display through talk and she too was capable, as had been the men, of being a speaker who could take an active stance of irony and humor in performing verbal artistry effectively before an appreciative audience. The family social system was not simply one in which females were exclusively the recipients of male-initiated action. It was one in which women took initiative in their own right, and in their own ways.

¹This study was supported in part by a grant for faculty research from the Spencer Foundation to the Harvard Graduate School of Education, awarded to Frederick Erickson in 1975-76, and by a post-doctoral fellowship from the Center for Study of Metropolitan Problems of the National Institute of Mental Health, awarded to Jeffrey Shultz in 1974-75.

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Figure 1. SEQUENCE OF STORY CONTENTS AND PROTAGONISTS

<u>Turn #</u>	<u>Protagonist and Narrator</u>	<u>Content of Story</u>	<u>Comments</u>
	F, children	(discussion of cake as dessert)	
		[PAUSE]	
1-13	Bro 4 (others narrate)	Fell off bike and scraped knee and elbow	Irony---tire patch analogy to bandage
14	Sister (self narrates)	??? (incomplete--fragment) Wiped out on hill	
15-17	Bros 1 & 2 (co-narrate) Story #1	??? Both wiped out on hill	Paired with previous story??
18-19	Bro 1 (self narrates) Story #2	Hit Bro 2	Bro 1 says, "One of my best."
20-41	F (F introduces, #1 others narrate)	Jumping with motorcycle	Big Story---Biggest Bike (Motor) Word play---Evel Knievel-Awful Knawful
42-56	Bro 2 #2 (others narrate)	Jumping with bicycle-bent fork	Paired with previous story Irony---no that doesn't hurt it.
		[TAPE OFF ABOUT 45 SECONDS]	
57-71	Bro 1 #3 (self narrates)	Passing a car while riding bike	
74-81	Bro 2 #3 (self and Bro 1)	Narrowly escapes accident in rotary in Watertown Square	There is much traffic in rotary
84-95	Bro 1 #4 (Bro 2 narrates)	Unclear---?hitching ride from truck by hanging on to it and coasting??	Reciprocal co-narrator pairing? (with Bro 1 in previous story)
96-108	Bro 1 #5 (self and Bro 2)	Unclear---perhaps another hitching story---Lady in that car	F issues moral injunction
109-116	Bro 2 #4 (self narrates)	Stone in dirt road in New Hampshire	
117-129	Bro 2 #5 (Bro 1 narrates)	Jumping bicycle off front lawn	(adventure story rather than wipeout story?)
130-172	Bro 1 #6 (self narrates)	Jumping bicycle off front lawn	Paired content with previous one. Mentions braking skills---F issues moral injunction
173-192	Bro 1 & Bro 2 (co-describe)	Description of specific braking skills	Shift of <u>genre</u>
193-242	F #2 (self narrates)	Slowing down rapidly because of oil slick on bridge---danger with motor-cycle	Longest story, most dramatic. Other family members silent
		[6 1/2 SECOND PAUSE AFTER FATHER'S STORY]	
243-252	M, Bro 2, and others	(Cheap mixer that broke after one use)	Return to previous theme from earlier---how much things cost now.

Table 1 - Rank Order of Protagonists by Number of Stories Told¹ About Them

<u>Protagonist</u>	<u>Number of Stories</u>	<u>Narrated by Self</u>	<u>Narrated by Others or Co-Narrated</u>
Bro 1	6	4	2
Bro 2	5	2	3
F	3	1	2
Bro 4	1	0	1
S	1	1	0

¹Totals exclude Bro 1 and Bro 2 description of braking skills at 173-192, and include single line references to self by Bro 1, Bro 2, and S

Table 2 - Rank Order of Protagonists by Story Prominence¹

<u>Protagonist</u>	<u>Story Number</u>	<u>Number of Turns and Total Number of Turns</u>		<u>Participation Structure Type</u>
		<u>Transcript Lines</u>	<u>Per Protagonist</u>	
F	#2	60		I—>IIIA
	#1	25	53	II—>IIIB
Bro 1	#6	45		II—>IV
	#3	18		II—>IIIB
	#5	13		IIIA
	#4	10		IIIA
	#1	3		II
	#2	1	84	II
Bro 2	#2	14		IIIA
	#5	14		II
	#3	14		II
	#4	10	40	II
	#1	1		II
Bro 4	#1	14	14	IIIA
S	#1	1	1	

¹Story prominence is indicated by total number of turns plus transcript lines per turn for each story and is also indicated by participation structure type. An arrow (e.g., I—>IIIA) indicates that the participation structure type shifted toward the end of that story.

Transcript of Dinner Table Conversation

Transcription Conventions

- Bro - brothers, by birth order
- F - father
- G - guest (Suzana Fiorio)
- M - mother
- S - sister

- [] - brackets indicate overlapping speech
- | - marking: alternation of speakers with no gap and no overlap
- - underlined words: indicates vocal stress (emphasis)
- _____ - extended line indicates speech that that was not transcribable

.....
 further conversations going on simultaneously

- F: (to Bro 4) What do you want?
- Bro 2: (to father) What did he eat?
- F: (to Bro 4) What did you eat? .. (in the meal up to now)
- Bro 4: _____ (unintelligible)
- F: just chicken? .. No potatoes ..
 no salad .. .
- F: (to whole family) What do you want?
- Bro 2: salsa ..
- Bro 4: salsa !
- S: salsa !
- Bro 3: cake
- Bro 4: salsa cake
- Bro 2: cake.

- (1) F: (to Bro 4) What 's you got there?
- (2) ? : Yeah.
- (3) F: What 'd you do there?
- (4) ? : Well .. .
- (5) Bro 2: He fell off his bike.
- (6) Bro 4: _____ when I was going over there.
- (7) M: (to F) Well that was the day that he really had a terrible time. He got that on his knee and he got the other, one on his knee, one on his arm.
 That's really a—that's really a good one, huh?
- (8) F: _____
- (9) M: Yeah.
- (10) Bro 4: Yeah, and a scrape over the _____
- (11) F: _____ You should keep a _____ patch on that.
- (12) Bro 2: Go get the patch
- (13) Bro 3: _____ the patching kit _____ scrape down _____
- (14) S: _____ I wiped out my knee on the hill.
- (15) Bro 1: Last time I did it. That was good wipeout.
- (16) ? : _____ was the last time I did this.
- (17) F: I'll have to get you a balloon too.
- (18) Bro 1: (to Bro 2) I think one of my best, my best wipeouts, was when I hit you when I was doing about twenty.
- (19) Bro 2: Well that was good.
- (20) F: (to M) What was our best wipeout that?
- (21) Bro 3: Two weeks ago.
- (22) F: Ho ho ho ho
- (23) M: We even talk about his best wipeout.
- (24) ? : Whaaaaa cchhh (sounds like car descending off cliff)
- (25) ? : _____

- (26) Bro 2: When you tried to do Evil Kalleval.
- (27) Bro 4: What did he do? TRY to jump the Snake Canyon Max?
- (28) M: Oh go more.
- (29) ? : It was an Awful Kalleval!
- (30) F: Hu hu hu hu
(Father and Bro 1 laugh)
- (31) Bro 1: Hu hu hu hu
[32 to 45 -- to G]
- (32) Bro 1: He tried to do Evil Kalleval off a van drop, a straight drop, about five feet high, and didn't purposely go off it, he kind of
- (33) M: Landed on the side of his face.
- (34) G: Aw -uh.. 'w
- (35) Bro 3: He tried to do Evil Kalleval but it went Awful Kalleval.
- (36) Bro 2: Sounds like a, there's a parking lot and there was a bunch of brush an
- (37) M: We didn't believe that he would try it. He he he.
- (38) Bro 2: And he was going sort of slow so instead of going off level, the bike went down and landed on the front fender.
- (39) Bro 4: (stretches sound, high pitched)
- (40) Bro 1: _____
- (41) Bro 4: Oh you tried to Evil Kalleval (high pitch register)
- (42) Bro 1: Jump
- (43) Bro 2: Yeah down low on _____
- (44) Bro 3: But he's
- (45) Bro 4: _____ end on Awful Kalleval.
- (46) G: Was this on a bicycle?
- (47) Bro 1: Oh you slid your wheels.
- (48) Bro 4: _____ (loud, high pitch)
- (49) S: Well then the bike's twisted a little out of shape.

- (50) G: I'll bet.
- (51) Bro 2: No, it's not bad. It only bent the forks back a little.
- (52) Bro 1: Yeah, you try to put extensions on it, it goes like this.
- (53) Bro 3: I tried that.
- (54) Bro 1: Ah ha, you must have screwed it up.
- (55) Bro 3: What ya do with the forks?
- (56) Bro 2: I have em.
(tape off)
- (57) Bro 1: I was gonna pass it, right?
(tape back on)
- (58) Bro 4: (Something about cake)
- (59) Bro 1: (to G) I was doing you, thirty _____
- (60) Sister: _____
- (61) Bro 1: (to G) I was just about to, I was right behind the car and all of a sudden he slowed down to about twenty, you know, he slowed right down and I almost ran into the back of his car.
- (62) Bro 4: (to F) I need another one. (high pitch)
- (63) Bro 1: Then the same guy. Wo, you know we got over again, an there were no cars coming, there were no cars coming on the left, this guy was driving pretty slow
- (64) G: Yeah
- (65) Bro 4: Right around the left, right around him and passed him.
- (66) G: It would've startled him.
- (67) M: _____ parents
- (68) G: You would have surprised me.
- (69) Bro 4: M m m m m m m m m m (mudor noise, of car passing another)
- (70) ? : Oh you must be _____

- 71) ? : Yeah and how often do you see a bike go flying by a car?
- 72) F: (to Bro 4) Do you want a little glass today?
- 73) ? : A little glass today?
- 74) Bro 2: (to Bro 1) Do you want to see . . . you want to see astonishment, I almost gave you a little heart attack.
- 75) Bro 1: Oh yeah, that.
- 76) Bro 2: (to G) Yes, you know down at Waterlorn (i.e. the railway in Waterlorn Square)
 there's all these cars goin' by? _____ The sidewalk. I hit the sidewalk, an' then it was almost like with a motorcycle, cause I hit the sidewalk . . . flew about five feet, hit the edge of the . . . cars were all gaily by . . . an' hit the street and stopped short
- 77) G: _____ He he he dodging cars . . .
- 78) Bro 2: _____
- 79) Bro 2: coach (imitates sound of screeching brakes)
- 80) G: _____ He he he he he (imitates laugh)
- 81) Bro 1: And he says I hit them oldery hard, you know
- 82) Bro 3: (Question to G)
- 83) G: Yes, in New York.
- 84) Bro 2: He was goin' . . . in transit (?)
- 85) Bro 3: _____ Truck
- 86) G: (Hesit.) do you have a job, clearing up the tables? Is that your job?
- 87) Bro 2: He tied (?) on the truck as it was going by or
 as the truck slowed down, and he reacted into the back
- 88) Bro 3: _____
- 89) ? : _____
- 90) G: Thanks for telling me.
- 91) F: (to Bro 4, 3, 2) He fooled around with those big ones, huh

- 92) G: (to S) Ooooo, _____
- 93) Bro 2: Yeah, nice big rigs
- 94) ? : No he's a lot, _____
- 95) Bro 3: _____ squish him and drive him up your nose.
- 96) Bro 1: [Remember!!! on the way we went out the . . . he he . . . the lady in that car?
- 97) : _____ you.
- 98) S: Was this him?
- 99) Bro 1: No no, it's one of the first times I ever he he
- 100) Bro 3: What are you trying?
- 101) F: (to Bro 2) (You) _____ feel around you're gonna find out those cars are a lot harder than you are.
- 102) Bro 2: Fall on his head you'll never know.
- 103) Bro 4: ha ha ha ha ha
- 104) ? : _____
- 105) ? : _____
- 106) Bro 1: you know how they . . . just as I was passing it around the corner.
- 107) ? : _____
- 108) ? : _____
- 109) Bro 2: (to G) in New Hampshire we could ride around on . . . T'saw . . . like dirt roads.
- 110) Bro 3: Yeah.
- 111) Bro 2: You go on a dirt road that's like two paths where the cars go.
 Ah, me and a friend of mine were riding our bikes, we were going pretty fast down the road, an' s' this ruck in the road, you know, stuck in the ground, it was like this.
- 112) F: You want one of the kids to help you?

- (113) Bro 3: All right.
- (114) M: I'm just going to get the cake now.
- (115) Bro 2: _____ and it was flat on the end. He's going like this all over.
gasps, he went right in front of him and he kept going.
- (116) Bro 3: (Name) do you know how these things up the road look like?
- (117) Bro 1: (to G) You know the wall right up here by our driveway?
- (118) G: No.
- (119) Bro 1: (to G) You know that wall right over here by our driveway?
- (120) G: No.
- (121) Bro 1: Right there
- (122) G: _____ I
 haven't seen that.
- (123) Bro 1: The grass grows but it drops off about oh two and a half, three feet,
 right at the, by our driveway here. Well before the fence was there,
 he rode, he used to ride his bike right across the lawn... right off
 there... right off the wall... and keep going.
- (124) G: I imagine that does a pretty good job on the front end of your bike, huh?
- (125) Bro 3: Not really.
- (126) Bro 4: No, not if you know how to use
- (127) F: Oh no, no, not too much.
- (128) G: he he he he
- (129) Bro 4: Nobody gets _____ riding a bike.
- (130) Bro 1: _____ you ever see something like our driveway and if you know
 anything about riding a bike, and if you know how to do it, you ever see
 somebody you know, like probably M... pop a wheelie, hit the front
 wheel...? Well just as you go off, you hit the front wheel up...
- (131) G: (to Bro 1)

Yes.

- (132) Bro 1: _____
 it goes off and it lands flat.
- (133) G: (to Bro 1) Really?
- (134) ? : (to G) Yeah, both times.
- (135) G: I'm not so sure.
- (136) F: (to Bro 1) I've seen you go off the front over here in the morning going to school, bang,
 wheel, the loose ball bearing?
- (137) Bro 2: Oh that's _____, no problem (ironically)
- (138) F: A little every day, you know... you know the little bearing in the front
 wheel, the loose ball bearing?
- (139) Bro 1: (to F) Yeah.
- (140) Bro 4: (starts shouting something)
- (141) F: You keep pounding there, that's going to _____
- (142) ? : _____ I was rolling _____ with my little
 bike.
- (143) M: How many hands do you think I have?
- (144) Bro 3: Yeah, I know.
- (145) ? : _____
- (146) ? : _____
- (147) ? : Right, (name, Bro 4)? _____
- (148) ? : _____ F and Bro 1 talk about
- (149) ? : (G and S talk together) Bro 1 doing the same
- (150) ? : _____ thing with his bike.
- (151) ? : (F and Bro 1 talk together)
- (152) ? : _____
- (153) Bro 1: Sometimes I land on the back tires. _____
- (154) ? : _____

and

- 1) ? : _____ back tire, right and the back tire
- 2) F: (to Bro 1) That still doesn't help your bicycle any.
- 3) G: Well you can go off the curb too, you can even go up the curb, but that's low. That's very low.
- 4) Bro 1: Yeah I've had the bike for...
- 5) M: _____ three
- 6) Bro 1: _____ Three years now and no one knows...
- 7) F: You've had it two years now, you take it easy, you'll get... four years.
- 8) ? : (Bro 4 name) rolled TWICE!
- 9) F: You'll get four years out of it.
- 10) G: I'm really anxious to try this. I watched the creation. (referring to the cake)
- 11) Bro 1: I'm just about too big for it now.
- 12) F: Don't worry about it... just _____
- 13) ? : _____
- 14) Bro 2: Really a ten-speed _____
- 15) ? : _____
- 16) ? : _____ what?
- 17) ? : _____
- 18) F: Well you can still _____
- 19) Bro 1: _____ I don't ride the ten-speed off that wall.
- 20) F: All right.
- 21) Bro 1: (to F) Well I ride it off but just as I came to it, I hit my brakes and it goes *eeeenh!* (brake imitation), boom... ah... boom, just you know, hit the brakes just as it's going off, it comes down real easy.
- 22) Bro 2: (to F) He grabbed the back, he grabbed the back brake and you let the front go off and then you grab the front brake and let the back go off.

- (177) Bro 1: _____ I w... I use the front and back brake...
- (178) F: You let the front out...
- (179) Bro 1: and the front and back brake, you let the back off and _____
- (180) Bro 2: What you do is you're going... and you're sliding along and you grab the front brake and it goes *eeenw* (sound imitating a bike flipping over forward)
- (181) G: (to S) Does it?
- (182) ? : (Hand) a bike will turn right over.
- (183) F: Really?
- (184) ? : Michael _____
- (185) Bro 1: My bike will go right over.
- (186) Bro 2 (high pitch) Anybody's... (low pitch) will go right over.
- (187) F: _____ (low pitch) if you grab the front brakes too hard.
- (188) M: Three oh, eight's ago.
- (189) ? : Well he wanted them, what're you yelling at me for?
- (190) F: Is that your peanut butter frosting, M?
- (191) M: This is peanut butter frosting.
- (192) Bro 1: You ever skid with... you ever skid with both tires on the bike?
- (193) M: There's more down the other end.
- (194) Bro 1: Skid with both tires. If you hit the brakes, both tires lock up
- (195) F: ... it stops.
- (196) ? : Yeah.
- (197) Bro 1: _____ just to put your feet out to the side cause you have no control when the front tire skids.
- (198) Bro 2: You know what you should do, you know how you do, when you pull the wheel and you jam the brakes.

- (199) F: Her? The other night when we were out with the motorcycle? There was a bridge. Way up in the _____
- (200) Bro 3: Why would you jam up on the front of it? _____
- (201) F: And I really couldn't believe this bridge. He slowed down that motorcycle right down about fifteen miles an hour and going over that bridge was going like on a road that was just covered with grease. That's how bad it was. (all family members silent by this point)
- (202) M: Really?
- (203) F: Yeah. It was one of those uh... bridges y'know bridges that open... all steel bridges.
- (204) M: The metal ones?
- (205) F: Yeah.
- (206) M: Oh yeah.
- (207) F: Two _____ he told me, he was waving his hands and everything else you know, slow down, slow down, so what the heck is going on, you know? I couldn't figure it out. Then I noticed he put both feet out and he slows the motorcycle right down about fifteen miles an hour. What the heck is going on? You know? and I saw the metal bridge.
- (208) Bro 2: _____ usually go forty. Yeah, you _____
- (209) F: ... and I just... just could feel it. I could feel it. Awful, can you imagine someone going over that and not knowing that?
- (210) M: Yeah, like you would have?
- (211) F: You ain't kidding, right. I would have gone right over it.
- (212) Bro 1: Well were there any sides on it?
- (213) F: Oh yeah.
- (214) Bro 1: I wonder if somebody hit that in a week, once a week right off the side.
- (215) Bro 4: How about a big truck?...

- (216) S: _____ ahm...
- (217) Bro 4: _____ **aaaaaaargh** (high to low groan imitating truck falling off bridge)
- (218) F: Terrible. I would think there'd be something else they could build a bridge out of that wouldn't _____
- (219) Bro 2: Either that or they could coal it.
- (220) SF: I wonder what they could put on it?
- (221) Bro 1: Coal it with tar or something.
- (222) Bro 2: You could put tar on it or steel with roughing on it.
- (223) F: That was weird _____ all the traffic going on it.
- (224) M: _____ going right through
- (225) Bro 1: Y'know _____ there's three columns
- (226) F: _____ regular tar _____
- (227) Bro 2: You know that tar that you put on with the brush? You know all you have to do is recoat it every year.
- (228) F: You have no idea how many cars go on that.
- (229) Bro 1: An' y'know, the metal, why can't they make the metal like, you know, little ragged you know
- (230) : Yeah.
- (231) M: It would be kind of bad for the tires wouldn't it?
- (232) D: No. (high pitch for emphasis) What's worse, a little wear and tear on the tires or somebody pulling off that bridge and cracking up?
- (233) M: _____ a little?
- (234) Bro 1: That wouldn't hurt the tires, it wouldn't hurt the tires.
- (235) Bro 4: aa _____ (siren-like fall, imitating call falling off bridge)
- (236) M: _____ goes over that bridge twice a day, 365 days a year...

- (237) D: What are sayin'? Another _____ n he stopped out and asked the ab...
 the attendant of the bridge. 'N he said the average during the summertime
 is somewhere's around forty accidents in that bridge during the summer.
- (238) G: Hum! (expression of surprise)
- (239) F: Forty accidents. That's more than the _____ street an'
 M: _____
 all summer? _____
 Forty accidents
- (242) F: Yeah. On that one little bridge... It's drawbridge... one that,
 you know, opens up
- [6 1/2 second pause]
- (243) M: Well that stupid mixer did a good job beating this cake.
- (244) G: Um ham.
- (245) F: (to M) Maybe that's all it's made for, one cake and that's it.
- (246) Bro 2: Five dollars for one cake?
- (247) F: It's a disposable mixer.
- (248) G: Ho he he... yeah
- (249) Bro 3: _____ is disposable.
- (250) Bro 4: Can I have another piece?
- (251) Bro 2: (to M) Remember I told you ya got frosted, didn't I?
- (252) M: Um ham... I should have believed...