



August 23, 1977

Dear Bill,

Here's a version of my comments on Response Cries. I'm sending a copy to Erving, since he'd sent me a copy of the paper months ago; seems fair to do it that way.

I'd like to get together with you and talk about this paper in particular, and about refereeing in general, among other things. Let me know when you've got some free time. I'm up at UCLA now and then, and I love the salad bar at what used to be the gypsy wagon. So, how about lunch.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gail".

Gail Jefferson

To: William Bright
From: Gail Jefferson

Ref. B

Re: "Response Cries"
Recommend: Publication with deletion and revision

Recommendation to publish is based on what I take to be the procedural argument of the paper (that by means of observation and detailed study of, not only a behavior but its environment, one can discover features of the behavior which are not in the first place intuitively available -- indeed, may be counterintuitive), and on what I take to be the major business of the paper, the presentation of a discovery made by means of such a procedure; that behaviors which are generally conceived of as asocial and/or incompetent (i.e., as 'delicts') are orderly and social-situationally functional. A class of behaviors is isolated -- recognizable responses to impinging circumstances. These behaviors, far from instancing incompetence or psychopathy, can be remedial of just such circumstances as bring a person's proper orientation to his environment into question; where, further, the 'delict' prototype is central to the intelligibility and thus the effectiveness of the work done by these behaviors. The argument is elegant and powerful, and it is on this basis that I recommend publication.

Recommendation to delete and revise is based on the fact that I take the above matters to be core to the paper, and thus have seized upon and tried to track them through the paper. This made me a dour and impatient reader. Roughly, I am treating the paper as a concise argument which has been overexpanded and weakened by the introduction

of tangential considerations (e.g., frame and its limits, the function of ritualization, gender partitioning, etc.), and in particular by frequent times-out for "examples", which seem to dissipate rather than focus the argument. That this is so may be a matter of the paper's current organization. Roughly, it appears that a range of potentially interrelated matters are arranged in a piecemeal and arbitrary fashion, either linked together, not as facets of a developing argument, but by means of literary-conversational techniques (e.g., conventional transition phrases, re-mentions of earlier matters, co-positioning within a single paragraph of matters which are otherwise not provided a warrant for their belonging together), or segregated and treated as quite distinctive (in particular, the arrangement of behaviors the functions of which appear to be identical, into 'linguistic' categories, as "fully-formed" utterances, "silent gesticulations", and "discretely articulated non-lexical expressions"). Both the linkage techniques and the segregations result in a this-and-that, here-and-there organization which permits a reader to make his own decisions as to the central business of the paper. Given the choice I have made, and the sense I have of its interest and importance, I recommend cutting back on the examples and tangential considerations, and providing a revised organization which would have the argument unfold step by step rather than piece by piece.

Detailed comments attached.

Notes on "Response Cries"

- 1
1. re. "This easy contrast conceals some complications Strictly speaking, then, etc."

The way this thing sets up, it looks like something is going to be made of the actual complicatedness of the apparently easy contrast. As it turns out, nothing is made of the phenomenon of the 'solitary with', or of the issue of apparently-easy-actually-complicated contrast. The stuff appears, then, to be tangential. Might go into a footnote. Further, that the next sentences is proposed as a "then" makes it look like the 'strict' definition follows from the mention of the complication of the 'solitary with'. Looks to me more like a 'nevertheless' than a 'then' by reference to the directly prior materials.

2. re. "...no lay warrant . . . context of use . . . etc."

Again, this opens up issues which are not dealt with.

3. re. "...without specifying gender..."

Since there are now and then mentions of gender differences (e.g., p.23-24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32), and since when those mentions do appear they come as surprises; as tangential and somewhat gratuitous, it would help to have a footnote which indicates that although for the most part the talk will be about people in general, without gender specification, for some behaviors there will be mention of gender differentiations.

4. re. "...in an editorial voice . . . etc."

The voicing and seeming other-than-ourselves is mentioned for just one example, when it appears to hold for the others, as well.

5. re. "...and generally mark junctures in our physical doings..."

It is not obvious that the collection of passing comments made aloud constitute the 'marking of junctures'. Might do some elaboration re. how kibitzing, rehearsing editorializing, etc., are specifically to be seen as such a technical thing as 'juncture marking'.

- ge 2
6. re. "Self-talk of one type seems rarely replied to by self-talk of the other."

Too condensed. I'm supposing that the idea is that a first utterance by a 'standard bearing voice' doesn't get a reply in which 'we address an absent other' (i.e., we don't talk back to the 'standard bearing voice') -- or vice versa. Further, it appears that such a phenomenon is being proposed as a "rare" occurrence among what has already been proposed to be rare occurrences (i.e., that conversation-like exchanges are rare, and rarer yet are those conversation-like exchanges in which there is not merely an exchange of utterances but a shifting of "roles"). Then, it turns out that this characterization of a hierarchical organization is somewhat tangential and parenthetical.

ge 2

7. re. "To talk absently . . ."

It's not clear in the first place whether this intends, e.g., talking absent-mindedly or talking in the absence of others, or...? I find myself wondering which is the intended sense and which, then, is the pun. Maybe a better way to characterize it as, e.g., "in both the absent-minded and absence-of-others sense of the phrase."

ge 2-3

8. re. "Self-talk can, of course...after all...surely...Or worse,..."

It took me awhile to recognize 'naivety markers'. One problem I had was that the placement of the paragraphs on the 'egocentricity' and 'perversion' theories of self-talk, directly after a straightforward discussion of other matters, urged me to a straight reading. A lead-in sentence which tells how to read these theories would be helpful. Also, since there is no indication of why these theories are not to be taken seriously (just a retroactive implication that they are not to be so taken, when the next paragraph starts off with "A more serious argument..."), it's not clear what their status is.

ge 3

9. re. "In any case, in our society at least..."

This ought to be a new paragraph.

10. re. "And anyway . . . etc."

This segment weakens the punch of the 'no official claim upon its sender-recipient' bit. Since the issue of how hearers react to self talk is taken up later in more detail, it could be omitted here, and the consideration could go directly from the 'no official claim' stuff to the 'taboo' considerations.

11. re. "For the offense seems to be created by the very person who catches the offender out . . . etc."

I get the impression of someone lurking and pouncing on an otherwise unoffending self-talker. The characterization seems to focus off of the setting's witnessability of an act, and onto a happenstance witnessing of it. Seems to me the distinction is important, and captures the loathesomeness of Peeping Toms; i.e., it is such characters who potentially catch us out doing non-witnessable things in what we take to be witness-proof settings. If what is intended here is a consideration of self-talk by solitaries in a public setting, where the catching-out of an offense as creating the offense has to do with, e.g., that it's a happenstance witness' business to "not have seen" the act he's seen, then the characterization is too condensed. It urges for the Peeping Tom sense of a witnessing rather than the Innocent Bystander as troublemaker sense.

12. re. "...the misdoing . . . as continuing to do it. We are all . . . allowed to fail to stop talking to ourselves quickly enough. . ."

It took me several readings to understand that a distinction is being made between continuing and stopping as soon as possible. On early readings I was treating 'failing to stop quickly enough' as another way of saying 'continuing'. Might reword it so it's clear that they are two very different businesses.

- 4 13. re. ". . . questions of frames and their limits . . ." through ". . .whistling, humming or singing" and the footnote.

This segment comes off as a parenthetical business inserted into a discussion about self-talk as a thing to be stopped quickly when witnessed. Further, the series of examples don't, in themselves, fall out cleanly as to how they address the issue of frames and their limits, and there is no guiding discussion. Some bit of discussion is needed. Maybe this whole segment could be added to the footnote on page 5.

- ge 5 14. re. ". . . one might want to say . . . for after all . . . etc."

(See note 8 for page 2-3). Again, I missed the naive markers, started to work up a note on why the proposal here is problematic, then caught them and understood them as a way of marking the proposal as not to be dealt with seriously.

- ge 5-7 15. re. the relationship of "But what is intended here is...an invocation of the dyadic setting...etc.", to "Self-talk described in this way recommends consideration of the soliloquy...etc.", to "Now, if talking to oneself in private involves a mocking-up... etc., to "Here, then, a first example of what will be pressed as a crucial feature of human communication."

It's not clear which of these considerations is the source of the "first example". I'm supposing that it's the first; i.e., that the central phenomenon is the everyday "stage-acting" considered on page 5, and not the "laminations" phenomenon of theater and advertisements. These matters might go into a footnote.

- ge 7 16. re. "(or for that matter, any other form of communication)"

This remark ought to be strengthened with at least one instance of other communication forms which permit and require attention to the 'ritualization' function.

re. "...is unlikely to be satisfactory."

Without some indication of how such analysis is unlikely to be satisfactory, this is just mysteriously critical.

- age 9 17. re. "Understandably self-talk is less an offense in private than in public . . . This general argument makes sense of . . . minor details."

Seems to me that the general argument which makes sense^e of, e.g., the permissibility of reading in a waiting room, etc., is not the public/private issue, but the prior stuff on being recallable should events warrant. And since the talk which follows this sentence addresses that issue and not the public/private issue, the raising of public/private confuses things. Might cut the public/private stuff and just start out with "This general argument makes sense of . . . etc."

18. re. "...should we mouth the read words to ourselves and in the process make the mouthings audible...etc."

Not clear whether the issue here is that when the mouthings become audible, then we're getting another instance of self-talk in particular as the problematic activity, or whether mouthing the words in general is another instance of 'engrossment' as the problematic activity. The inclusion of "make the mouthings audible" ambiguates the discussion.

Since there is later some discussion of 'linguistic forms' which seems to partition activities strongly in-terms of silence and sound, there might be some discussion here or elsewhere of a possible grading, a real alternation between silent and out-loud versions of an activity, the latter being, for a range of activities, less readily tolerated.

Also, bringing in the contrast between 'unschooled' and 'unhinged' seems tangential to the issue of readily and less-readily tolerated levels of engrossment in publicly available and acceptable things which one can be engrossed in. Seems to me the problem with the proposed contrast is that if one is observably unschooled, then in order to just accomplish 'reading', one needs to be devoting attention beyond the tolerable levels of engrossment; i.e., we're back to levels of engrossment, not into unschooled vs unhinged; i.e., both sets of readers are observably (for whatever reasons) over-engrossed, over and above the problem of 'unaccountable' involvements.

19. re. the relationship of "understandably, self-talk is less an offense in private than in public..." through "...implies a rather total immersion in the fictive world..." to the prior and subsequent considerations.

The prior and subsequent considerations seem to be about one sort of phenomenon while the waiting room, etc., stuff (independent of the problematic introductory sentence about public/private) seems to be about something altogether different. Whatever else, the return to talk about the former sort of phenomenon oughtn't start out with "Similarly", nor should it be placed in the same paragraph as the waiting-room considerations. It seems to belong directly after "...ready mutual intelligibility among all persons present" on page 9, and might be placed there with a "For example..." beginning. The materials about waiting-rooms, etc., could go as a footnote to the "mutual intelligibility" considerations.

20. re. "...while silently gesticulating. . . etc."

Seems to me that too much is being made of a contrast between sound and silence as criterial features of observable alientation. For any of the phenomena under consideration a silent version is available, can be done, and is troublesome; someone silently gesticulating can be observably talking to himself. It's the activity, not the instrumentation which seems to count (unless, cf. note 18, a case can be made for a tolerance-grading for which silence vs. sound is crucial).

- e 11 21. re. "...its intended recipient is likely to confirm...before our utterance is completed."

This confirmation-prior-to-completion specification promises some delicate and technical considerations which don't materialize. It is not clear whether, by 'confirmation', an actual utterance is intended, or, e.g., an observable alignment to speaker of the summoning utterance. I take it that the latter is intended. This may turn out to be technically interesting, e.g., that while a summoning utterance is still in progress, an unequivocal summoning component has reached completion, where such components are short and rapidly completable by design, so that someone can decide very rapidly that (or not) they have been summoned (e.g., to reduce the time in which someone is standing there yelling and no one has as yet aligned as a recipient of a summons, and correlatively, to reduce the time in which someone might be unsure as to whether the yelling is a summons to him or, e.g., a constituent component of some business which did not involve him); where it may be the case that a summoning utterance's summoning component can be further broken down in terms of a hearer's response; i.e., at onset of the object, hearer goes into 'alert' but does not yet initiate an aligning move, has not yet done a 'response'; the response being initiated when the component has been adequately delivered and is recognizably that and not something else. If it turns out not to be a summons component, then no response has been initiated (there might be observable increase in tension, perhaps even a mild 'startle', but not a commitment to a "confirmation of the existence of the required environment").

22. re. "A summons that is openly snubbed or apparently undetected... [is] something like talking to ourselves..."

Seems to me that these don't qualify as self-talk analogs, but are standard instances of a range of embarrassing goofups, including the prototypic summoning and being responded-to by someone who turns out not to be who you thought it was.

23. re. "...self-talk...[is not] a conversational delict..."

Given the discussion on page 4: "...someone caught out talking to himself attempts to transform the delict into a yawn...", there is an apparent problem here. Is self-talk to be treated as, yes, a delict, but not a conversational delict? Or has it been called a delict on page 4, and is now being asserted to be not a delict? Is this an inconsistency or a specification? Should be clarified.

- age 11-12 24. re. "The individual who begins to talk to himself while in a conversational encounter will cause the other participants in the encounter to think him odd . . .those not in the encounter... will think him odd, too. Clearly, here the social encounter... is not the relevant unit."

The crucial point can be made without invoking the most pathological version of self-talk; i.e., for the various forms of self-talk, both coparticipants to the encounter and those not in the encounter will make of it whatever is available to be made of it, in the systematic ways those things are available.

ge 12 25. re. "Like catching a snail outside its shell . . . linguistic horror..."
I'm mystified.

ge 12-14 26. re. the series of examples of "favored locations for self-talk" and their consideration.

On reading this stuff, I made a note that the fact that these people are knowingly talking in the presence (or audienceship) of others had to be taken into account. I suggested that these behaviors might better be treated as enacting or performing self-talk to an audience; that in these situations there was a mimicking of self-talk. I proposed that it was then to be seen as a next level removed from the initially proposed definition of self-talk as a mimicking of interaction; here, a mimicking of a mimicking of interaction. I noted that that sort of situation is vastly different from that in which one does not in the first place know or understand that others are present. Then I came upon the 'mimicry of a mimicry' notion on page 16 and wondered why it was not proposed for the behaviors on pages 12-14 in which copresence is recognized and operative, and self-talk occurs. I suppose the way it's done can be treated as easing a reader toward the notion. But if that's so, then the notion ought to be retroactively applied. A problem now is that a reader has grounds to decide that the mention of this next "lamination" on page 16 and not earlier is a matter of the author's naievite; i.e., that the "laminated" character of some self-talk is only discovered in those situations in which it is "inescapably clear" that one is "providing information to others present", but is not noticed for those situations in which it is not inescapably clear. Seems to me that the notion of a 'mimicry of a mimicry' might be planted earlier and developed, and punched home with the "inescapably clear" examples, or else, having been proposed for the inescapably clear examples, then some consideration might be done of earlier examples as possibly also "displays"; as "providing information" for copresent others, although they are not so obviously that sort of thing.

ge 16 27. re. "...merely not using the prescribed arrangements..."

Since by this point in the paper, self-talk is shaping up as a very orderly, socially functional sort of business, it deserves more than to be characterized as an absence of some other business; might be examined as itself a "prescribed arrangement".

28. re. "...that did not allow an answer..."

While the particular instance here might best be described as not allowing an answer, other self-talk situations might be considered in which, it's not that an answer is not allowed, but that it is not required; i.e., many of these sorts of utterances have as a feature of them that they can, but need not be responded to. (Harvey talks about "out-louds" or "out-loud musings" in terms of this sort of feature).

29. re. "...trumping up..."

This sounds like an unnecessarily pejorative characterization.

- ge 16 30. re. electing to be seen as a self-talker rather than being seen as bumlike or childlike.

Seems to me that the former is not a real alternative; i.e., for such a thing as "How about that, a quarter!", one isn't seen as "Look at that guy talking to himself," but then and there as someone who got excited about finding a quarter. A trouble with this 'example' in the first place is that these days a quarter is an object which only a bum or a child ought to get excited about. (On the other hand, for anything of even slightly greater value, you run the risk of getting mugged). Since a very similar consideration is done later (page 22), this example might be omitted. Further, it sits uncomfortably between the matters which precede and follow it; it seems an afterthought rather than a "Finally...". In any event, the proposed alternatives do not seem correct.

- ge 17 31. re. "One could say what children haven't learned is to wait until their circumstances are relevant and glaringly evident to others before indulging in self-talk."

For the experiment described, it's not clear that the kids' circumstances weren't relevant and glaringly evident; i.e., the description can be read as one of an experiment in which the kids were told to draw something and then not given paper or a blue pencil. It ought to be made clear that, e.g., there were many possible tasks lying around, up to the kids to choose to to one of them, or any of them, or none of them. Also there's the standard problem kids face -- that they are subject to being seen as doing nothing; just fooling around; where here the self-talk seems to be announcing serious engagement in a task. And of course the age-old problem of a subject knowing he's a subject and thus whatever he's doing is aimed at the examiner as, if not a recipient, a receptor.

re. "...indulging in self-talk"

Again, sounds unnecessarily pejorative.

32. re. fn.1., the definition of self-talk as "speech not meant for others."

"Meant" is ambiguous here; could be read as 'addressed to' or as the broader 'taking others into consideration; treating as relevant'.

- ge 19 33. re. "...if situational delicts can be perpetrated with sound, so; then, can their attempted remedy."

(See note 23). I'm having trouble tracking the delicts.

- ge 19-20 34. re. problems which have to be accountable for by words, and the decreasing likelihood of offering such an account.

My suspicion is that there is a 'backup account': a generalized display which can be deployed in 'complex' situations; e.g., for 'remembering that one is supposed to be someplace else', one can use the 'oops, I'm going in the wrong direction' display, or the 'omygod it's later than I thought' display, etc. Those might handle a big bunch of what one might otherwise figure would have to be left as unaccounted-for behavioral curios.

- e 20 35. re. ejaculatory expressions not having talk in the ordinary sense as an issue since there is no ratified speaker and recipient, merely actor and audience.

I don't see any particular distinction between this type of 'self-talk' and the other types so far considered. The discussion of ejaculatory expressions, then, seems redundant rather than a next step in a developing argument.

- e 21 36. re. "Significantly, here is a form of behavior whose very meaning is that it is something blurted out, something that has escaped control, and so such behavior very often is and has; but not so much as to escape certain forms of social processing."

Unclear as to what the argument is; that this form of behavior is best to be seen as an out of control blurt which nevertheless is subject to "certain forms of social processing", but where that is not the crucially interesting thing about the behavior, or whether such a behavior is best treated in the first instance as a meaningful informative activity, produced just as it is for just the situation in which it is produced; its meaningfulness in part residing in its recognizability as an out of control blurt. It's the "and so such behavior very often is and has..." clause which muddies the argument.

- e 22 37. re. "...might rather be seen as someone who talks to self than as someone who is incompetent in certain other ways."

The argument, as it is developing, urges that under various specifiable conditions people in effect properly talk to themselves; i.e., someone talking to himself is someone doing what anybody would, perhaps even should, do (cf. p.12-13 re. "utter self-containment" creating uneasiness etc.). Someone who trips and self-talks might best be seen as behaving properly. and observably behaving properly. The alternation, then, may not be a matter of 'someone who talks to himself' vs. 'someone who is otherwise incompetent', but, e.g., a matter of 'someone who (by now talking to himself is to be recognized as someone who) doesn't go through the world stumbling' vs. 'someone who is incompetent'.

For one, it may be a matter of what interpretive identificatory categories should be applied to the behaviors, where [someone who does X (talks to self)] is not properly applied to someone who, having stumbled, is now talking to himself. Rather, the self-talk is an indicator of what's to be seen as having happened, not the thing itself (cf. note 30 for page 16). Perhaps, then, rather than [someone who does X], the appropriate identificatory category would be, e.g., [someone who did X because Y happened], or better, simply [someone to whom Y happened].

38. re. "...self-communication of this kind..."

Especially at this point in the paper, it seems better to use the term 'self-talk' rather than 'self-communication'. The former, whatever it might mean, isn't so strongly weighted. By now, a reader is coming to accept and understand 'self-talk' as a means of communication with others. "Self-communication" used at this point is a setback.

age 22

39. re. "...we might well be willing to breach a rule...etc.", through
"...a mode of response constantly readied for those circumstances in which it is excusable."

At this point in the paper it might be relevant to re-examine the notion of self-talk as, in the first place, a "breach of a rule", and to wonder if it is instead best treated as itself not merely frequent, orderly in its occasioned placement, informative, effective, etc., but lawful; i.e., not merely "excusable", but appropriate, perhaps even requisite under certain specifiable conditions.

40. re. "I am arguing here that a verbalization can play much the same role as a choreographed bit of nonvocal behavior."

It's not clear that that's been the thrust of the prior discussion, or where such an argument started, and what its components have been in the course of the ongoing discussion. And again, a classificatory distinction between sound and silence is proposed. That distinction may be functionally, analytically insignificant. In order to use the distinction (and then argue its problematicness), it needs to be established as one in which members (and researchers) place great store, use, etc.

41. re. fn.1. "A similar argument holds for nonvocal responses."
(See note 40, above, and note 20 for page 11).

age 22-23

42. re. "They are like clothing more than like speech", vis-a-vis
"However, unlike clothing or cosmetics. . . etc."

Having proposed a likeness and an unlikeness, it would be nice to arrive at some formulation of these objects, rather than resting with the noticing of like and unlike characteristics. The formulation might include other activities or objects than self-talk; i.e., might turn out to be a generalizable classification. Or, if it turns out that there are no other behaviors which are like and unlike clothing and cosmetics in just these ways, then self-talk will emerge as an utterly unique behavior, which would be a significant feature of self-talk.

age 23

43. re. "It is plain that singles use imprecations for a variety of circumstances . . . etc."

Again, this discussion comes off as redundant; another set of examples of the type of behavior which has already been described and characterized.

age 23-24

44. re. "...special domain of males"

(See note 3 for page 1). Without some prior notification that such issues will be addressed, the gender remarks come off as casual, as gratuitous, as linking up with some currently 'relevant' issue as the warrant for their occurrence here. If there is substantial and interesting material on the gender phenomena in re. self talk, they ought to have a section of their own. (This is so for other such issues, e.g., frames and their limits.)

Page 24-34 45. re. Sections V through VIII

Sectioning off "Response Cries" as "an allied set of acts" seems the same sort of arbitrary distinction as is made between 'self-talk' and 'silent gesticulation' (see note 20 for page 11 and notes 40 and 41 for page 22). The discussion in Section V - VIII would seem to hold, in general, and in the various particulars, for the range of behaviors and businesses considered so far.

If "Response Cries" is to be the title of the paper, then the phenomena considered on pages 1-24 can well be included as, all of them, generically 'response cries', all of them versions of the situational appropriateness and designedness of otherwise 'spontaneous' behaviors (that being what, to me at least, emerges as the central stuff of this paper). That some of them are done with "well-formed words", some with "silent gesticulations", and some with "nonlexicalized expressions" does not seem to be a central classificatory feature of them. Further, the one-by-one considerations of proposed types (transition displays, spill cries, threat startles, revulsion sounds, strain grunts, pain cries, floor cues) is not sufficiently rewarding for the space it takes.

On page 24 there is a prescription for the study of phenomena (to collect as many cases of a particular behavior as one can. . .etc.) It would be appropriate, then, to have specific results of such a procedure; a display and consideration of instances, rather than what looks like a distillation specifically lacking in "information about the setting and circumstances in which each was found". Instead there are 'typicals' which come off as hypotheticals. The sections in which specific types are proposed and discussed, then, come off as very weak and inevitably redundant, where, were they to contain collections and discussions of actual instances, they might be much stronger.

Page 25 46. re. "...malice aforethought..."

Again (see note 29 for page 16 re. "trumping up", and note 31 for page 17 re. "indulging") this characterization seems unnecessarily pejorative.

Page 26 47. re. "...to address the whole gathering with an expression of our inner state."

The notion of 'talk at large', of 'addressing the whole gathering' would seem to work nicely for a range of the phenomena otherwise treated as "self-talk" (and occasionally as "self-communication"). Treating the behaviors as 'talk at large' in the first place might serve to isolate those behaviors which just don't seem to work that way, but, indeed, might have to be treated as, in the first place, "egocentric" self-talk.

Page 27 48. re. "...oops defines the event as a mere accident...etc."

Would this characterization not also apply to the "ejaculatory self-communications" talked about on pages 21-22? Again, it appears that the categories are arbitrary, since, e.g., 'spill cries' seem to work the same way as 'ejaculatory self-communications'.

- Page 27-28 49. re. "...downplaying import [of a failure]", as downplaying its
"implication for our incompetence."

Seems to me that what counts would be the fittedness of the cry to the observable import of an event; e.g., a gigantic failure might require something other than "oops" and probably gets it. A mis-fitted cry could itself be an index of incompetence or craziness.

- Page 32 50. re. "...an individual not sufficiently self-centered..."

This is as good a place as any to pick up another order of problem; that of here and there throughout the paper the occurrence of casual, non-technical explanations of a behavior. These explanations seem to be substituting for an exploration of a phenomenon in its situated occurrence. Here, in particular, "not sufficiently self-centered" comes off as just the sort of lay-explanation which is elsewhere throughout the paper treated as, at best, a take-off point for close, technical, situated consideration.

An alternative treatment of these "floor cues" might be that, e.g., it appears that in general, all sorts of announcements, reports, stories, etc., are designed to occur, not as firsts, but as seconds; as responses to queries rather than as volunteered objects; where, then, "floor cues" (or prefaces, or pre-sequences) work to achieve just that situation, to get a query, with, then, the otherwise volunteerable stuff coming off in response, as an 'answer'. This seems to be a general procedure for a range of matters. Whether, and what, it has to do with issues of sufficient self-centeredness can be of interest, but requires an altogether different approach to the materials than that being proposed here.

- Page 36-37 51. re. "However, there is one source of trouble. . .etc., through the
discussion of response cries for the management of talk itself.

This segment is such a lovely finale. The subsequent talk about imprecations, tennis, etc., comes off as anti-climactic and again redundant.