

**CASE STUDY 1**

**THE GOLDEN GIRLS OF HAMBURG:  
THREE WOMEN AT A BAR**

## I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In the Fall of 1989, the student researcher asked Prue to interpret the behavior of the participants in an event of her choosing. Here is what the student researcher says about how they relate to each other: "I am very close to Prue. We tell each other everything. I think she was very comfortable with the interview and I am sure she meant what she said."

At the time of the study Prue is 45 years old, has been separated from her husband of 29 years for less than one year and is in the process of a divorce. She has two daughters, Sherri, nineteen, and Kris, 29. In the student researcher's words "Prue was always very close to Sherri, who has a learning disability. Prue was always very involved in Sherri's life and problems. When Prue left home, in some ways she felt as though she had left Sherri, who was a senior in high school at the time. I think Prue was worried about how Sherri would make it in the college environment. Kris has always been very independent. At the time of Prue's separation, she was living and working at Vassar in Poughkeepsie, from where she graduated.

Prue lives alone and works as a part-time sales clerk at Brand Names, a small retail catalog store in Hamburg, NY, to support herself for the first time in her life. She works there only in the evening. During the day she drives a school bus part-time."

Prue picked a recurrent event of great significance to her in that period of her life: her meeting after work in the local bar with a group of women friends who also work in the same store but are full time day people. Sometimes they eat together, but mostly they drink together.

Prue's mental image of "the place" in which these meetings occur and "the atmosphere", is as follows:

some of the people I work with  
 sort-of hang out at this place  
 called the Fairview Inn  
 it's on the corner of South Park and McKinley  
 so they're very sports oriented folk  
 and the whole place is like a...um...a rural Cheers  
 everybody in there knows one another  
 and they're all sort-of a family as they call each other  
 and a lot of times as I am closing the store I'll get a call and say "com'on down and we'll buy ya a beer"  
 so I wander on down there  
 and I am slowly being included in the family  
 I've met several down there and made friends with them

and further down

the only trouble is they've always had dinner  
 and are relaxed before they get down there  
 I'm comin from work and I'm hungry  
 and those ladies can usually get me trashed pretty quickly

She goes on describing the kind of talking they do and its function, as follows:

but the conversations that ensue after that are pretty uh...  
 pretty interesting to all of us  
 it's...  
 other than that I can't think too/too much else goes on except what's usually bar banter

we just sort-of climb up on the bar stools  
 and just start chitty-chatting  
 talk about  
 work  
 talk about our life situations  
 talk about  
 ahh...  
 give each other advice  
 and  
 the more we drink the more advice we give each other  
 the more we pat each other on the back  
 and usually by midnight we're such soul sisters you can't get us apart

In another context she describes the implied rules of barroom interaction, as follows:

some things are more ok at a bar... people in a bar make a contract to mix real hearts and BS... knowing full well that if disclosures get too close to the bone, you can always retract them and blame it on drinking

There is a danger endemic to this type of interaction for relationships outside the bar. As Prue puts it:

the only trouble with that—like with Julie—is that basically she's a very quiet person and the next day when you meet her and she's very quiet you're never quite sure if it wasn't something you said the night before that's caused it

Summarizing the function of these meetings Prue says:

but on the whole we do this periodically  
 and a ...  
 it's ...just a source of um... companionship and comradeship  
 and a ... way of blowing off steam about things at work that you can't do at work  
 and getting a more personal touch

The student researcher describes how the audio-tape recorded occasion was obtained:

“I asked the respondent to take a tape-recorder to a Friday evening meeting of the group. The meeting this particular evening started in the dining room. Later on they went to the bar. The respondent joined two of the women of the group (there usually are four women in addition to Prue) for dinner as well as drinks. I did not accompany her to the meeting as she thought that my presence in the group would inhibit their usual candor. With the permission of the other participants, ninety minutes of conversation were recorded.”

Prue describes the impact of the tape recorder as follows:

I recall, despite trying to keep the tape recorder out of sight,  
 everyone was AWARE it was going  
 normally under usual circumstances, other people would have come up in the conversation  
 and of course no one wanted to be responsible for that  
 consequently we kept the topics to ourselves  
 and Julie, who does not easily disclose anything about herself,  
 had to be prodded to participate  
 being co-workers for sometime, we were always looking for those areas we could connect at, on other levels  
 I do know that most of the time, our conversation over drinks at the end of the day  
 may not have been suitable to record  
 and so we started meaningless chitchat to avoid it

The two other women are Julie and Win. Julie is the oldest of the group. She is twice divorced and has a grown son. Her parents were divorced when she was a child. Win is the youngest member of the group. She is 30 years old, single and living alone.

In presenting them in her recollection, Prue specifies that she is giving a “description of the people’s situation in life. Not personality style. What they’re involved in. Not personal -- situational”:

I was gonna say if we need sort-of a description of the characters  
we’ve got:

...

Julie’s the very efficient dedicated quiet worker  
ah... faithful for all these years  
who reminds me very much of my sister Gwen  
Win is the enviable 30 year old  
she’s much younger than the rest of us  
who owns her own house  
has a job  
but is subject to depression and very unhappy basically with her life

...

so I guess you might say we got um...several women from different phases in life  
all experiencing and sharing our feelings about what phase we’re going through  
in fact we sort-of kiddingly said we were going to form the Golden Girls of Hamburg

The specimen lasts only 7 minutes. The women are in the dining room. Though bar-room conversation was taped, the noise level prevented any meaningful interpretation of the tape. Here is how, in her blow-by-blow, Prue compares the interaction taking place in the specimen to the rest of the evening:

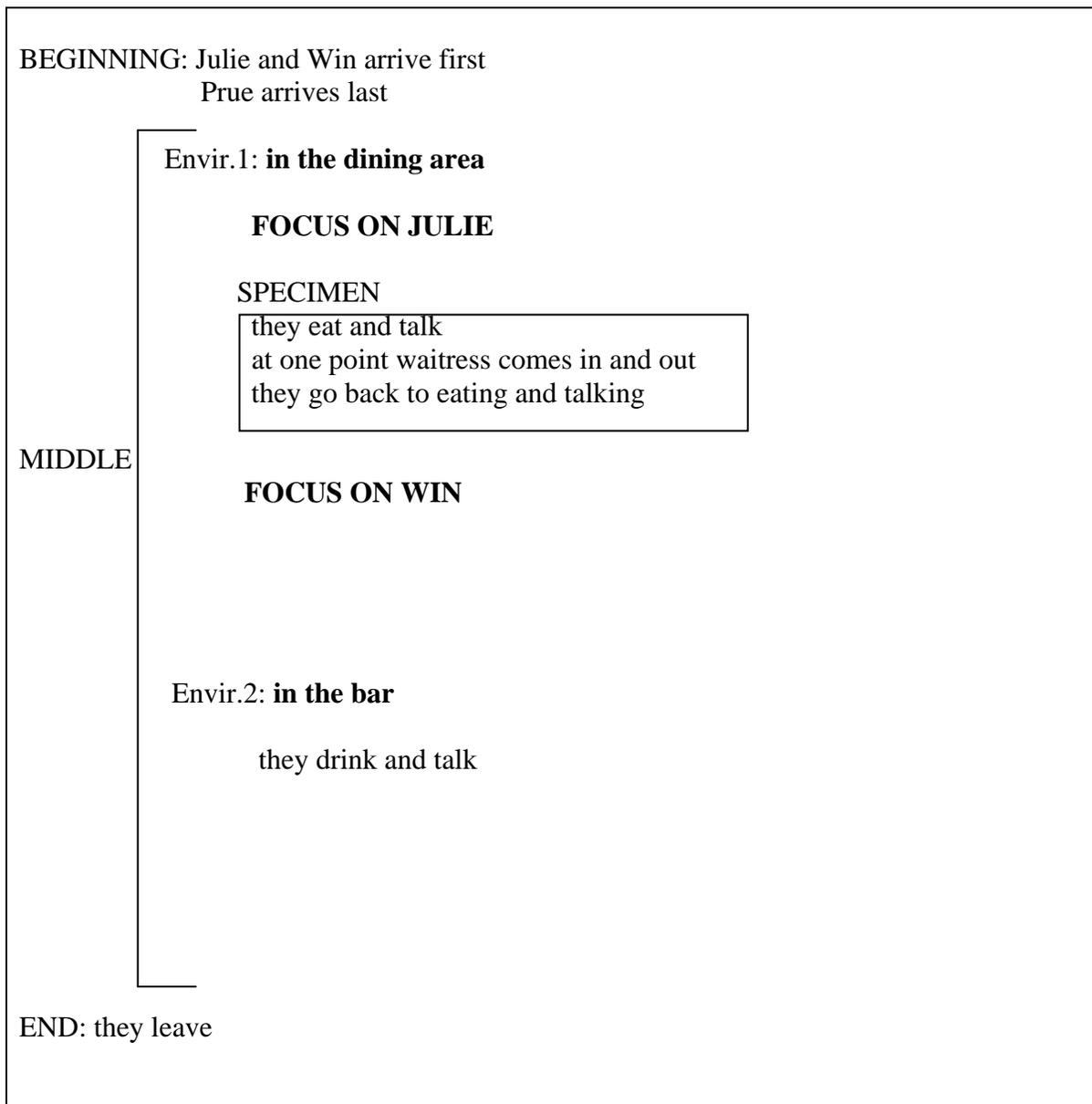
I was gonna say  
out of this whole darn tape  
it’s so hard to make one little selection  
because throughout the whole course of the evening the focus seemed to shift  
first on Julie and Julie’s concerns and things about Julie  
and then as Win started talking about her job and dissatisfaction  
it took a turn to Win’s personality and what’s going on with her  
we all injected our thought and our feelings at this point  
and then even later on as we left the dining room and went into the bar  
the conversation that went on was almost a pick up and continuance  
and probably on a deeper level or something more meaningful level  
on the earlier conversation  
so it’s kind-a hard to just pick out one at this point  
even though it’s clearer on the tape

## PLACE OF SPECIMEN IN EVENT

The event occurs in two environments:

first, **in the dining room**  
later on, **in the bar**

The place of the specimen in the entire event is as follows:



## II. VERBAL FLOW STRUCTURE

### A: SEGMENTATION OF TALK IN SPECIMEN

#### 1) RESPONDENT'S SEGMENTATION:

The respondent uses one type of talk, **CHITCHAT/SOCIAL BANTER**, to characterize talk in the specimen:

just start chitchatting

While listening to the recorded specimen the respondent gave a lengthy blow-by-blow commentary. Later, in a follow-up interview, she characterized the information given in the blow-by-blow as follows:

The overall organization is in terms of two phases: I: Getting on the playing field and II: On the playing field.

Within each phase, the information is further characterized on the basis of topics, and subtopics, which she calls Trigger Topics: family, smoking, divorce and food.

This yields the following organization of talk in the specimen:

#### **I: Getting on the playing field**

**Family:** comparison between Julie's mom and mine (1-10)

#### **II: On the playing field**

**Family:** inquiry and explanation of Julie's family (11-25)

**Smoking:** current chitchat on previous subject (26a-32)

**Divorce** (33-73):

introduction to Julie's experience as a child (33-49)

comparison of Julie's experience as a child with Prue's daughter's experience (50-51)

comparison of Julie's folks to Prue' and her ex-husband (52-58)

comparison of how Julie felt to how Prue's kids feel (59-73)

**Food:** current chitchat (74-8)

**Family:** Julie's brother and sister from a second marriage (82-118)

Julie's brother: Win's persistence (82-96)

Julie's sister (97-118):

inquiry and explanation about Julie's sister (97-108)

our perception of inquiry (109-116)

description of sister (117)

explanation of first description (118)

## Transcript of talk segmented and characterized by respondent:

### **I: GETTING ON THE PLAYING FIELD**

#### **COMPARISON BETWEEN JULIE'S MOM AND MINE**

W to J (1): is your mother little?

J to W (2): she isn't now as much

I shouldn't say it she goes over 130 pounds

P to J (3): and how old is she?

J to P (4): 72

P to all (5): well my-god! yea ok

my mother looks a/like a/sort-of a beach ball

J (6): she was ...

W to P (7): (laughter) what?

P to W (8): my mom looks like kinda a beach ball

I-mean she's 5 foot nothing and ...

W to P (9): I thought you said a bridge wall (laughter)

P to W (10a): oh no

(10b): a beach ball

(10c): so for 72 and she only goes 130 pounds

### **II: ON THE PLAYING FIELD**

#### **FAMILY: INQUIRY AND EXPLANATION OF JULIE'S FAMILY**

W to J (11): how's she doing?

J to W(12): ok

(13): she'd never let you know if she wasn't

W to J (14): no?

how about your dad?

his eyes ok?

J to W (15): he's hanging in there

W to J (16): can he drive still?

J to W (17): he'll know by next week

P to J (18): now they're sep/they're divorced or separated?

W to J (19): is there something they can do for it?

J to W (20): no

(21): and the eye specialist told him that one of the factors that hastened this ...

noise

P to J (22): his smoke? for his eyes?

J to P (23): there's a leakage from behind the retina

P to J (24): oh I thought that was from diabetes

J to P (25): he said smoking

it thins one of the veins that goes back into the connecting membrane

#### **SMOKING: CURRENT CHITCHAT ON PREVIOUS SUBJECT**

P to J (26a): really?

(26b): I know it thins the blood vessels under here  
and like Mary-Ann says, I get smoker's face  
because..

and I can tell from when I started smoking

W to P (27): really?

P to all (28): yea

the wrinkles and the deterioration under my eyes is hastened immensely  
and it's because those tiny blood vessels broke

J to all (29): it happens

W to all (30): you don't need them

J to all (31): it happens

P to all (32): (sigh) oh nobody needs them honey

**DIVORCE:****INTRODUCTION TO JULIE'S EXPERIENCE AS A CHILD**

P to J (33): ...curiosity and if it's none of my business tell me  
 how old were you when your parents divorced?  
 J to P (34): 12  
 W to J (35): 12?  
 P to J (36): how did that hit you?  
 J to P (37): it didn't really affect me that much 'cause both of my parents were always there for me  
 P to J (38): ok  
 J to P (39): and there was none of this animosity crap  
 P to J (40): 'cause I wonder about ...  
 Sherri said it doesn't affect her a whole lot  
 she says every once in a while  
 J (41): no  
 J to P (42): it/I remember at the time it upset me but my dad was always there for me and my mom too  
 W to J (43): did you know it was being ...?  
 J to W (44): they never/I never felt like I was being deprived of ...  
 P to J (45): attention?  
 J to all (46): never/never/I never felt like that  
 P to J (47): ok  
 W to J (48): who did you live with?  
 J to W (49): my mother

**COMPARISON OF JULIE'S EXPERIENCE AS A CHILD WITH PRUE'S DAUGHTER'S EXPERIENCE**

P (50a): 'cause  
 (50b): when I went up to see Sherri when she was up at ...  
 and—oh I was so damn proud -- I went  
 -- she's all dormed in on Saturday and/or-whatever—  
 and I drove in on Sunday to see her  
 and Buff State's got a beautiful running track  
 and I'm pulling around the parking lot  
 and who's with her headset on out there running ...  
 it's my Sherri!  
 so I met her at her dorm room and-everything  
 and we're sort-of/she's showing me around  
 and we had something to eat  
 and her friend Jenny is there and-everything  
 and coming out, you-know, we sort-of start talking about:  
 "mom could you ask dad about the FAS" and all-this-business  
 and I was telling her it was sort-of like a shame, you-know,  
 that we've got to split the conversations like this  
 and she/  
 and I don't know if it's a defense or-whatever  
 and I just wonder how/that/really how she really feels about this  
 but if you say there's no animosity may-be I'm reading more into it

J (51): *unintelligible*

**COMPARISON OF JULIE'S FOLKS TO PRUE AND HER EX-HUSBAND**

W to J (52): did your parents talk?  
 P to J (53): yea  
 J to all (54): oh yea all the time  
 W to J (55): do they now?  
 J to W (56): oh yea all the time  
 P to J (57): yea? oh yea?  
 holy-shit I hope that's still possible!  
 J to P (58a): no  
 (58b): they weren't the best of buddies but ... I feel bad but ...there was never that ...

**COMPARISON OF HOW JULIE FELT TO HOW PRUE'S KIDS FEEL**

W to J (59): did you know they were going to get divorced?

I-mean did they tell you?

J to W (60): oh yea they talked to me about it

P to J (61): oh yea

J to P(62): oh it was terrible

it was better/it's better not having that situation

P to J (63): ok

J to P (64): but my dad was always there for me

P to J (65): ok

J to P (66): always called during the week

P to J (67): ok

J to P (68): pick me up

took me here took me there

W to J (69): now did you/were your brother and sister around then?

J to P (70): made sure I had horseback riding lessons

and took me fishing

took me hunting

P to J (71): you had a dad that took you hunting and fishing huh?

J to P (72): oh yea

W to J (73): were your brother and sister around then?

**FOOD: CURRENT CHITCHAT**

*Waitress enters*

w (74): may I take this for you?

sure

what about your french-fries?

W to J (75): Julie do you want anymore?

P to w + J (76): yea leave em

she'll ...

w (77): may I take them?

I'll wrap them/I'll be happy to wrap them

do you want them in some tin foil?

J to w (78): yes that would be lovely

P to w + J (79): no she/she/I was gonna say

she'll nibble on them through the course of the night

J to P (80): that comes from the waste-not-want-not days (*laughter*)

P to J (81): yea

**JULIE'S BROTHER AND SISTER FROM A SECOND MARRIAGE:****JULIE'S BROTHER: WIN'S PERSISTENCE**

W to J (82): you were their only child then?

J to W (83): Peg and John are from my mother's second marriage

P to J (84): ok/ok

are/and so you're still close to them

even though they're half brother and sister?

J to P (85): with my sister

P to J (86): yea I can understand that

W to J (87): your brother looks like you

J to W (88): pfffffff ... (*laughter*)

W to J (89): you don't think so?

P to J (90): don't get excited!

J to W (91): I can't stand him

W to J (92): what?

J to W (93): you said that ...

W to J (94): I think he does

P (95): no

W to J (96): I think he does

noise

**JULIE'S SISTER:****INQUIRY AND EXPLANATION ABOUT JULIE'S SISTER**

W to J (97): I think I met her once

noise

W to J (98): did she get that job?

J to W (99): she's waiting

W to J (100): still waiting?

P to J (101): what's she waiting on?

W to J (102): isn't she supposed to know?

J to W (103): they called and told her/the receptionist told her that they still hadn't made up their mind

J (104): she's ...a/she applied to Birmingham, Cook and something else

a ... firm

P to J (105): oh so she's had training in ...?

J to all (106): the Statler ...the Statler

what they're looking for is a computer operator to handle all the bookkeeping

all the accounts

everything concerned ...

P to J (107): yea

J to P (108): this is right up her alley

**OUR PERCEPTION OF INQUIRY**

W to P (109): she used to walk to school everyday

it's how she got her degree

noise

P to J (110): how old is Peggy?

J to P (111): 28

W to P (112): and she has a son

J to all (113): it's tough

P to J (114): your mother raised some tough daughters huh?

J to P (115): she doesn't appear to be tough

P to J (116): no I don't mean tough-tough

I mean ...

**DESCRIPTION OF SISTER**

J to P (117): in fact in some respects she comes across kinda flakey if you just initially meet her, you-know?

she just kinda flies ... you-know

she's ..

**EXPLANATION OF FIRST DESCRIPTION**

P to J (118): but her real stuff is tough

## (2) ANALYST'S SEGMENTATION: VERBAL FLOW SECTIONS

The systematization of the respondent's segmentation yields candidte basic units, the Verbal Flow Sections.

They are obtained as follows:

### **DEFINING CRITERIA FOR VERBAL FLOW1:**

**Type of Talk:** CHITCHAT (in 3 modes: Neutral, Praising-Julie, and Ritualistic)

**Modality of Talk:** displaced

**Focality:** focal

### **SEGMENTATION CRITERIA FOR VF1 SECTIONS:**

**main topics and subtopics:**

1: P learning from comparisons:

J's mother's weight (1-10c)

J's parents' health (11-32)

Effect of parents' divorce on J (33a-51)

How J's parents related to each other once divorced (52-58b)

J's feelings about being the child of divorced parents (59a-73)

2: W's interest in J's siblings:

J's siblings (82-86)

J's brother (87-89)+(91-96)

J's sister (97-118)

### **DEFINING CRITERIA FOR VERBAL FLOW2:**

**Type of Talk:** CHITCHAT

**Modality of Talk:** here-and-now

**Focality:** focal (?)

### **SEGMENTATION CRITERION FOR VF2 SECTION:**

**triggering agent:** Julie's exclamation of disgust (90)

**DEFINING CRITERIA FOR VERBAL FLOW3:**

**Type of Talk:** WORK-RELATED (in 2 modes: Neutral and Teasing-Julie)

**Modality of Talk:** here-and-now

**Focality:** focal

**SEGMENTATION CRITERION FOR VF3 SECTION:**

**triggering agent:** waitress comes in to clear table (74-81)

### (3) COMPARISON between A'S and R'S ORGANIZATION

ANALYST'S	RESPONDENT'S
<b>in the dining room FOCUS ON JULIE</b>	
<b>CHITCHAT</b>	
VF1 Section (1-10c)	1: comparison.... (1-10c)
VF1 Section (11-32)	2: inquiry & expl.... (11-25)
	3: Current Chitchat (26a-32)
VF1 Section (33a--51)	4: introduction.... (33a-49)
	5: comparison.... (50a-51)
VF1 Section (52-58b)	6: comparison.... (52-58b)
VF1 Section (59a-73)	7: comparison.... (59-73)
VF3 Section (74a-81)	8: Current Chitchat (74a-81)
VF1 Section (82-86)	9: W's persistence (82-96)
VF1 Section (87-89)	
VF2 Section (90)	
VF1 Section (91-96)	
VF1 Section (97-118)	10: inquiry & expl....(97-108) (97-118)
	11: our perception... (109-116)
	12: description... (117)
	13: explanation.... (118)

**B: BASIC UNITS: INTERNAL STRUCTURE  
and  
PARTIAL RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION of  
TALK IN CORES**

Each VF Section is now examined in turn in order to ascertain how many basic units it contains. Then, the internal structure of each basic unit, and the partial rhetorical organization of Talk in their respective cores, are described in some detail.

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fn1

Note that the analyst's changes in the transcript from the respondent's segmentation are shown by letters appended to the numerals. Thus, the respondent's original segmentation:

P to W: (8) my mom looks like kinda a beach ball I-mean she's 5 foot nothin and...

is changed to:

P to W: (8a) my mom looks kinda a beach ball

(8b) I-mean she's 5 foot nothin and ...

## VF SECTION (1-10c)

### (1) RECAPITULATION

#### a) Analytic Specification of Section:

##### **Defining Criteria for Verbal Flow 1:**

**Type of talk:** CHITCHAT

**Modality of Talk:** displaced

**Focality:** focal

##### **Segmentation Criterion for VF1 Section (1-10c):**

**main topic:** P learning from comparisons

**subtopic:** J's mother's weight

#### b) Transcript of Talk in Section:

W to J (1): is your mother little?  
 J to W (2a): she isn't now as much  
     (2b): I shouldn't say it she goes over 103 pounds  
 P to J (3): and how old is she?  
 J to P (4): 72  
 P to J (5a): well my-god! yeah ok  
 P to J (5b): my mother looks [a] like [a] sort-of a beach ball  
 J to P (6): she was/  
 W to P (7): (*laughter*) what?  
 P to W (8a): my mom looks like kinda a beach ball  
     (8b): I-mean she's 5 foot nothing and/  
 W to P (9.): I thought you said a bridge wall (*laughter*)  
 P to W (10a): oh no  
     (10b): a beach ball  
 P to J (10.c): so for 72 and she only goes 3 pound...

### (2) BASIC UNITS:

There is only one basic unit, VF1 Stretch (1-10c)

It is a QUERY specified by the semantic schema: Win asks Julie about her mother's weight.

### **(3) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF QUERY (1-10c)**

#### **a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF QUERY:**

The QUERY has a nucleus and one primary satellite.

The nucleus has only a core, a dialogue initiated by W and addressed to J, with one exchange.

The primary satellite is an incidental query. It has a nucleus and one satellite.

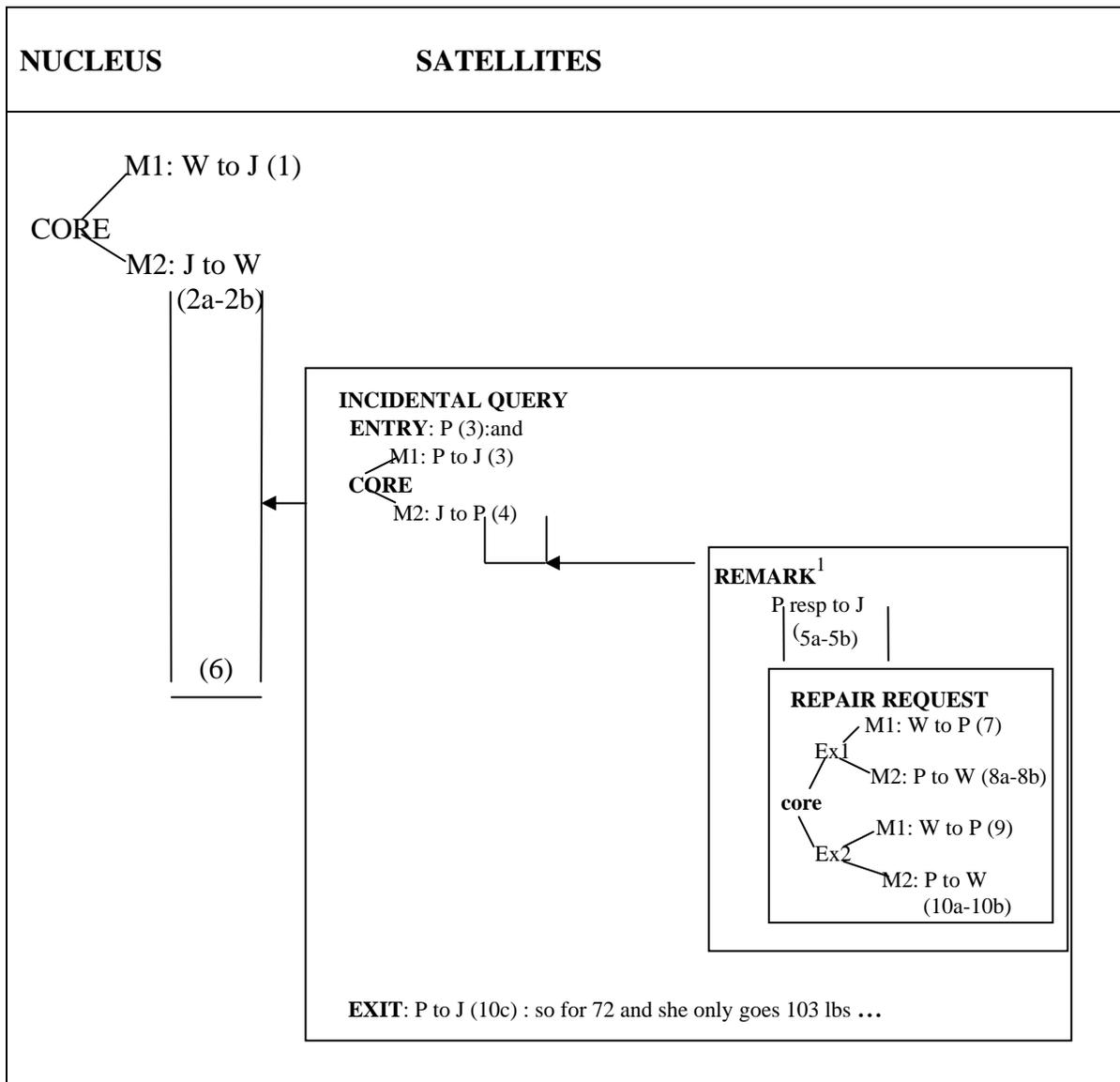
The nucleus has an entry, a core and an exit,

The entry and the exit are univoxes.

The core is a dialogue initiated by P and addressed to J, with one exchange.

The satellite is a univocal remark. It has an extension, a repair request.

The latter has only a core, a dialogue initiated by W and addressed to P, with two exchanges.



### Analyst note 1

Note that in the data base, in (5a) well, my god! yea, ok and (5b) my mother looks a/like a beach ball Prue is said to be addressing both Win and Julie.

The proposed interpretation is that Prue is not addressing anyone in particular, but rather responding to what Julie was saying.

**b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:**

M1: W's request for information to J:<sup>1</sup>

(1): is your mother little?<sup>1</sup>

M2: J's response<sup>2</sup>

- 1: response proper: implied negative
- 2: elaboration (in format of contrast between present and past):
  - (2a): she isn't now as much
  - (2b): I shouldn't say it she goes over 130 lbs

**INCIDENTAL QUERY**

M1: P's request for information to J: <sup>3</sup>

(3): how old is she?

M2: J's response

(4): seventy two

**REMARK**

comparison by P<sup>4</sup>

**initiation:**

P (5a) well my-God! yeah ok<sup>5</sup>

**development:**

P(5b): my mother looks [a] like [a] sort-of a beach ball<sup>5'</sup>

**Repairable**

(6): she was/

**REPAIR REQUEST**

Ex1: initial use of schema

M1: W's request for repeat:

(7): what?<sup>6</sup>...laughter

M2: P's response

•1: response proper (repeat):

(8a): my mom looks like a beach ball

•2: elaboration (=explanation)

(8b): I-mean she's 5 foot nothin and /<sup>7</sup>

Ex2: justification of repair request

M1: W's presumption:

(9): I thought you said "a bridge wall"<sup>8</sup>...laughter

M2: P's rejection of presumption

•1: rejection proper: <sup>9</sup>

(10a): oh no!

•2: elaboration: <sup>10</sup>

(10b): "a beach ball "

## Respondent's account:

-fn1

just social chitchat  
no great emotional thing  
social banter with the purpose of sharing information  
no loaded conversation (1-10c)

-fn1'

question

-fn2

answer  
at this part we're starting to make the comparison between Julie and her mother  
which as we go on develops a little more  
and if you know Julie and you know her mother and sister  
and that there is a correlation  
Julie's mentioning how small her mother is  
and Julie's a very tiny person  
goes 5 foot nothin  
um... very petite  
and to watch her eat is sort-of phenomenal  
so we're asking her where she gets it from  
and her mom is brought up here  
(lots of laughter) (2a-2b)

-fn3

Prue is jumping on the pile

She is bringing in her concern, making a comparison between Julie's mother and her own mother.

-fn4

at this point I make a very unfavorable comparison with my mother

-fn5

reaction

-fn5'

and at this point I make a very unfavorable comparison with my mother  
who is approximately the same age as Julie's  
Julie's mom + her: my mom + me (5b)

-fn6

question

-fn7

description (8a-8b)

-fn8

explanation  
and Win misinterprets it  
and sort-a even makes it worse  
and now hearing it on tape sort-a makes me feel even more absurd

-fn9

implied negative correction: I didn't say 'a bridge wall', I said 'a beach ball'.

-fn10

explanation

## VF1 SECTION (11-32)

### (1) RECAPITULATION

#### a) Analytic Specification of Section:

##### Defining Criteria for Verbal Flow1:

**Type of talk:** CHITCHAT

**Modality of Talk:** displaced

**Focality:** focal

##### Segmentation Criterion for VF1 Section (11-32):

**main topic:** P learning from comparisons

**subtopic:** J's parents' health

#### b) Transcript of Talk in Section:

W to J (11): how's she doing?

J to W (12): ok

(13): she'd never let you know if she wasn't

W to J (14a): no?

W to J (14b): how about your dad?

(14c): his eyes ok?

J to W (15): he's hanging in there

W to J (16): can he drive still?

J to W (17): he'll know by next week

P to J (18): now they're sep/ they're divorced or separated?

W to J (19): is there something they can do for it?

J to W (20): no

(21): and the eye specialist told him that one of the factors that hastened this /

noise

P to J (22a): his smoke?

(22b): for his eyes?

J to P (23): there's a leakage from behind the retina

P to J (24): oh I thought that was from diabetes

J to P (25): he said smoking

it thins one of the veins that goes back into the connecting membrane

P to J (26a): really?

P to all (26b): I-know, it thins the blood vessels under here and like Mary-Ann says I get smoker's face because...

and I can tell from when I started smoking

W to P (27): really?!

P to W (28a): yeah

P to all (28b): the wrinkles and the deterioration under my eyes is hastened immensely

and it's because those tiny blood vessels broke

J to P (29): it happens

W to P (30): you don't need them

J to P (31): it happens

P to W (32): (*sigh*) oh nobody needs them honey!

**(2) BASIC UNITS:**

There are three basic units, as follows:

1. VF1 SubStretch (11-14a) is a Query, specified by the semantic schema: Win asks Julie how her mom is doing;
2. VF1 SubStretch (14b-26a) is also a Query, specified by the semantic schema: Win asks Julie how her dad is doing;
3. VF1 SubStretch (26b-32) is a LAMENT specified by the semantic schemas: Prue leads a lament on the ill effects of smoking.

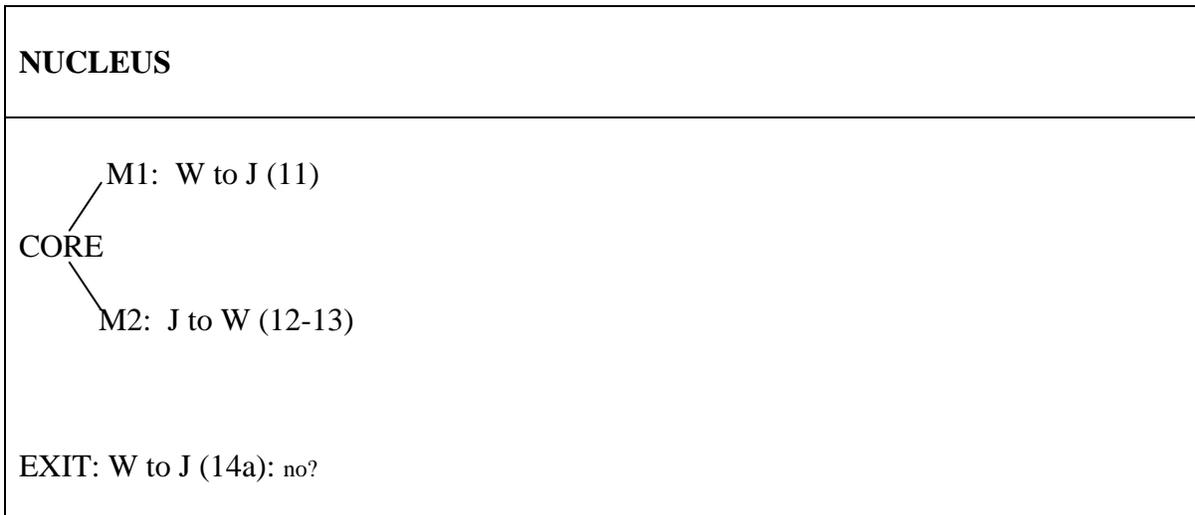
### (3.1) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF QUERY (11-14a)

#### a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF QUERY:

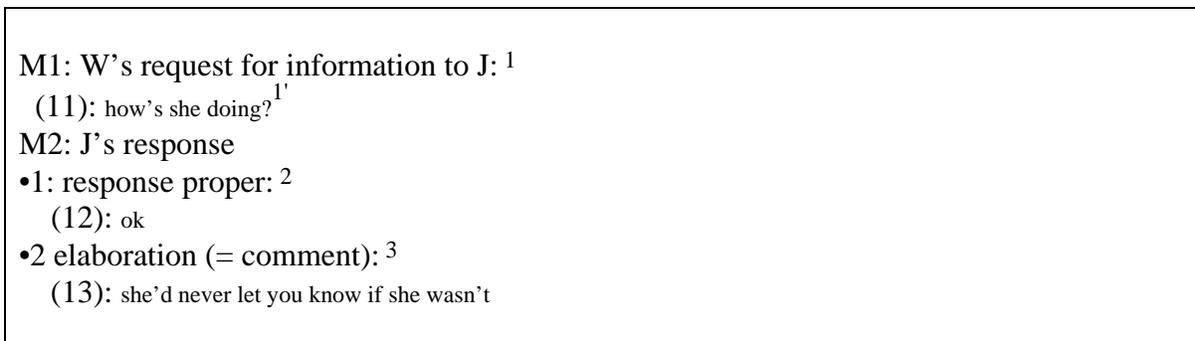
The QUERY has only a nucleus. The latter has a core and an exit.

The exit is a univox.

The core is a dialogue initiated by Win and addressed to Julie, with one exchange.



#### b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORE:



#### Respondent's account:

fn1

family inquiry and explanation of Julie's family  
 in the meantime talking about Julie's father  
 she's talking about an eye difficulty he's having  
 and the doctor's explanation that it's his heavy smoking that caused it  
 Julie is a tremendously heavy smoker  
 I am also a heavy smoker

and for some odd reason  
that smoking between Julie and even myself  
I have a sense of when that subject's brought up  
not even a sense  
I always have my sister Gwen come to mind  
'cause Julie's so much like her in so many ways  
and especially with the smoking  
and of course my sister Mary-Ann looms over my head  
and I have to bring up her comments on my smoker's face  
and we take it on (11-26a)

-fn1'

question

-fn2

answer (12)

-fn3

comment (13)

### **(3.2) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF QUERY (14b-26.a)**

#### **a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF QUERY:**

The QUERY has a nucleus and two primary satellites.

The nucleus has only a core, a dialogue initiated by Win and addressed to Julie, with three exchanges.

The first primary satellite is an incidental query. It has an entry and a partial core.

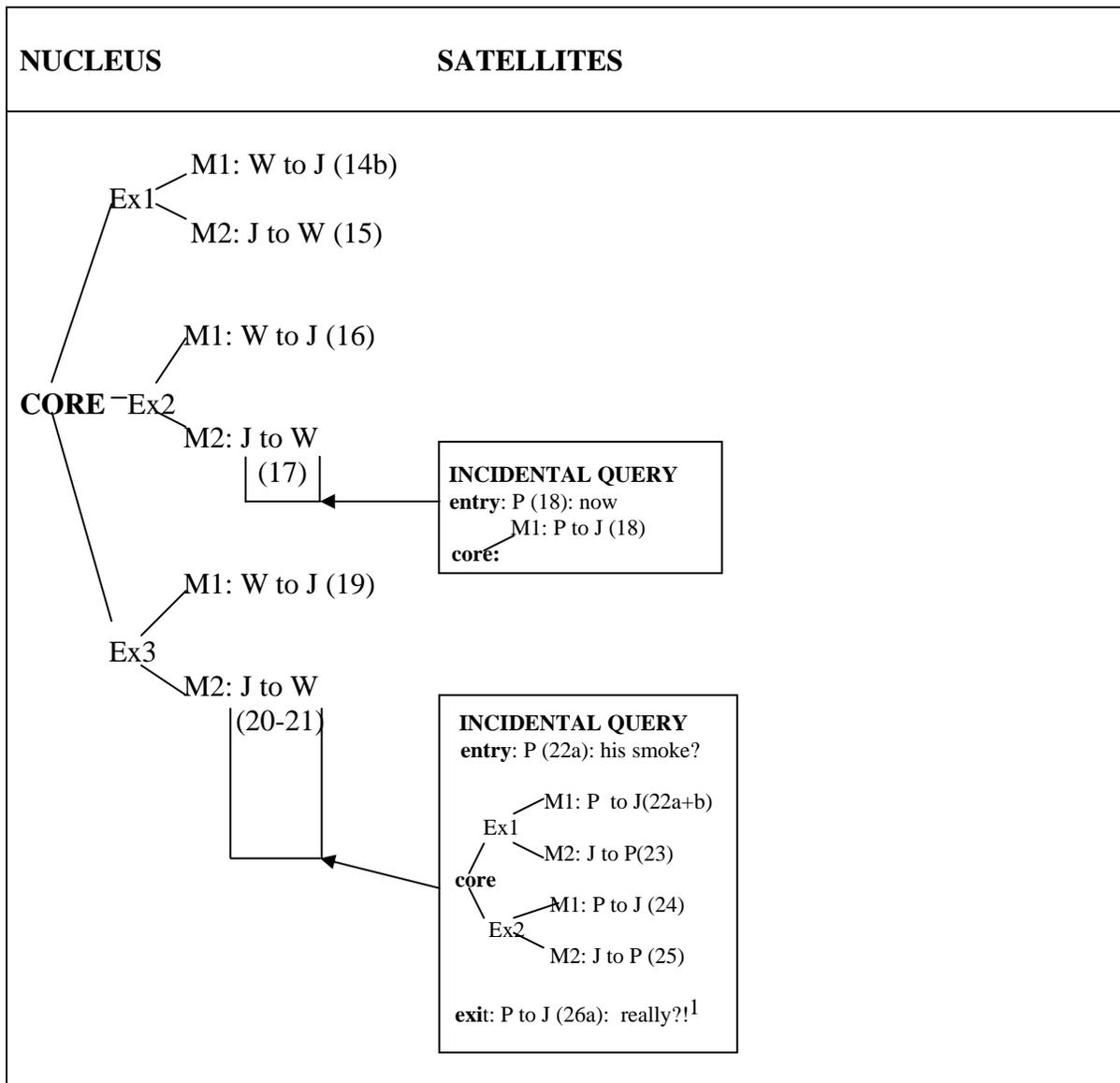
The entry is a univox.

The core is a partial dialogue, initiated by Prue and addressed to Julie, with one partial exchange.

The second primary satellite is also an incidental query. It has an entry, core and an exit.

The entry and the exit are univoxes.

The core is a dialogue initiated by Prue and addressed to Julie, with two exchanges.



### Respondent's account:

fn1

exclamatory comment

Note that in the transcript (26a) goes with the following unit

## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:

Ex1: initial use of schema

M1: W's request for information:<sup>1</sup>

- 1: preparation:

(14b): how about your dad?

- 2: request proper:

(14c): his eyes ok?

M2: J's response proper:<sup>2</sup>

(15): he's hanging there

Ex2: additional use of schema

M1: W's request for information:<sup>3</sup>

(16): can he drive still?

M2: J's response<sup>4</sup>

implied response proper

elaboration:

(17): he'll know by next week

### INCIDENTAL QUERY<sup>5</sup>

M1: Prue's request-for-information to J (disregarded):<sup>6</sup>

**REPAIRABLE:**

(18): they're sep/

(18): they're divorced or separated?

Ex3: additional use of schema

M1: W's request for information:<sup>7</sup>

(19): is there something they can do for it?

M2: J's response

- 1: response proper (negation):

(20): no<sup>8</sup>

- 2: elaboration (=comment):<sup>9</sup>

(21): and<sup>10</sup> the eye specialist told him that one of the factors that hastened this /

**INCIDENTAL QUERY** <sup>11</sup>

Ex1: initial use of schema

M1: P's request for explanation:

(22b): for his eyes?!<sup>12</sup>M2: J's response proper (explanation): <sup>13</sup>

(23): there's a leakage from behind the retina

Ex2: follow-up use of schema

(justification of request for explanation)

M1: P's presumption<sup>14</sup>

(24): oh I thought that was from diabetes!

M2: J's rejection of presumption

•1: response proper (implied negation):

(25): he said smoking

•2: elaboration (reported explanation):<sup>15</sup>

(25): it thins one of the veins that goes back into the connecting membrane

**Respondent's account:**

-fn1

question (14a-b-c)

-fn2

answer (15)

-fn3

question (16)

-fn4

answer (17)

-fn5

interruption

attempt to steer conversation

my attempt to move from chitchat to some heavier conversation

Julie and Win just ignore me

they are going to go on chitchatting

-fn6

question

-fn7

question

-fn8

answer

-fn9

comment (implied: one of the factors is smoking)

-fn10

lead on (= a way of continuing the conversation)

-fn11

trigger topic

-fn12

surprise

-fn13

explanation (implied: the leakage is caused by smoking)

-fn14

comment

'oh' marks speaker involvement

-fn15

explanation

### (3.3) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF LAMENT (26b-32)

#### a) INTERACTIONAL STRUCTURE OF LAMENT:

The LAMENT has a nucleus and two primary satellites.

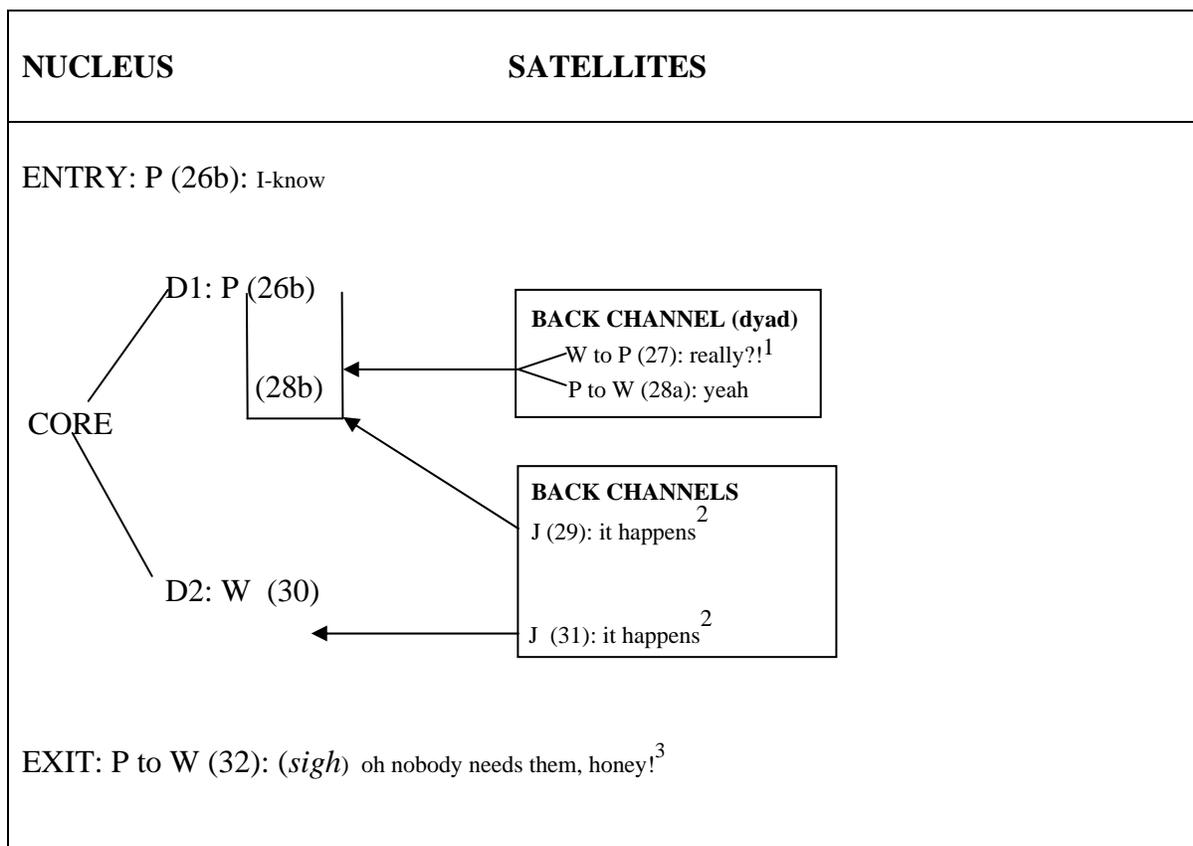
The nucleus has an entry, a core, and an exit.

The entry and the exit are univoxes.

The core is multilogic, a duo with one round initiated by P and taken up by W.

The first satellite is a back channel dyad involving W and P.

The second satellite is a cluster of 2 repeated univocal back channel by J responding to P.



#### Respondent's account:

-fn1

exclamation

lead on

-fn2

affirmation

-fn3

'oh' marks speaker involvement

## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORE:

D1: P's initiation of lament<sup>1</sup>

- 1: introduction (repeat of line 25):  
(26b): it thins the blood vessels under here
- 2: body of lament (ill effect of smoking)

**REPAIRABLE (false start)**

(26b): and like Mary Ann says I get smoker's face because/

(26b): and I can tell from when I started smoking

(28b): the wrinkles and the deterioration under the eyes is hastened immensely  
and it's because those tiny blood vessels broke<sup>2</sup>

D2: W's continuation of lament:

(30): you don't need them<sup>3</sup>

## Respondent's account:

-fn1

For an account of ritual lamenting used for bonding by Greek women, see Tannen, 1990, pp100-102.

current chitchat on the previous subject (smoking)

the three women get on the ill effects of smoking (26b-32)

-fn2

statement

-fn3

opinion

assertion

## VF1 SECTION (33a-51)

### (1) RECAPITULATION

#### a) Analytic Specification of Section:

##### **Defining Criteria for Verbal Flow 1:**

**Type of talk:** CHITCHAT

**Modality of Talk:** displaced

**Focality:** focal

##### **Segmentation Criterion for VF1 Section (33a-51):**

**main topic:** P learning from comparisons

**subtopic:** effect of parents' divorce on J

#### b) Transcript of Talk in Section:

P to J (33a): ...curiosity and if it's none of my business tell me  
 (33b): how old were you when your parents divorced?  
 J to P (34): 12  
 W to J (35): 12?  
 P to J (36): how did that hit you?  
 J to P (37): it didn't really affect me that much 'cause both of my parents were always there for me  
 P to J (38): ok  
 J to P (39): and there was none of this animosity crap  
 P to J (40a): 'cause I wonder about/  
 (40b): Sherri said it doesn't affect her a whole lot  
 (40c): she says every once in a while  
 J to P (41): no  
 (42): it/I remember at the time it upset me but my dad was always there for me and my mom too  
 W to J (43): did you know it was being/?  
 J to P (44): they never/I never felt like I was being deprived of ...  
 P for J (45): attention?  
 J to P (46): never/never/I never felt like that  
 P to J (47): ok  
 W to J (48): who did you live with?  
 J to W (49): my mother  
 P to J (50a): 'cause  
 (50b): when I went up to see Sherri when she was up at/  
 and—oh I was so damn proud -- I went  
 --- she's all dormed in on Saturday and/or-whatever—  
 and I drove in on Sunday to see her  
 and Buff State's got a beautiful running track  
 and I'm pulling around the parking lot  
 and who's with her headsets on out there running ...  
 it's my Sherri!  
 (50c): so I met her at her dorm room and-everything  
 and we're sort-of/she's showing me around  
 and we had something to eat  
 and her friend Jenny is there and-everything  
 and coming out, you-know, we sort-of start talking about:  
 "mom could you ask dad about the FAS" and all-this-business

and I was telling her it was sort-of like a shame, you-know,  
 that we've got to split the conversations like this  
 and she—and I don't know if it's a defense or-whatever—sorta blows it off like/ lightly like all her friends  
 were doing it and all her friends' parents are divorced and this-sort-of-stuff  
 and I just wonder how/that/really how she really feels about this  
 (50d): but if you say there's no animosity may-be I'm reading more into it  
 J to P (51): *unintelligible*

## (2) BASIC UNITS:

There is only one basic unit, VF1Strech (33a-51).

It is an INFORMING specified by the semantic schema: Prue expresses her concern about her daughter.

### **(3) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF INFORMING (33a-51)**

#### **a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF INFORMING:**

The INFORMING has a nucleus and six primary satellites.

The nucleus has a pre and a main part.

The pre has only a core, a dialogue initiated by P and addressed with two exchanges.

The second member of the second exchange has an extension, a univocal co-construction by P.

The main part occurs in two sections, an interrupted main part and a full main part.

Both have an entry and a core.

The entry is the same in both cases, a univox.

The core of the interrupted section and that of the full main part are monologues by P addressed to J.

Three of the satellites are back channels and two are incidental queries.

The first back channel is a univox by W responding to J (35)

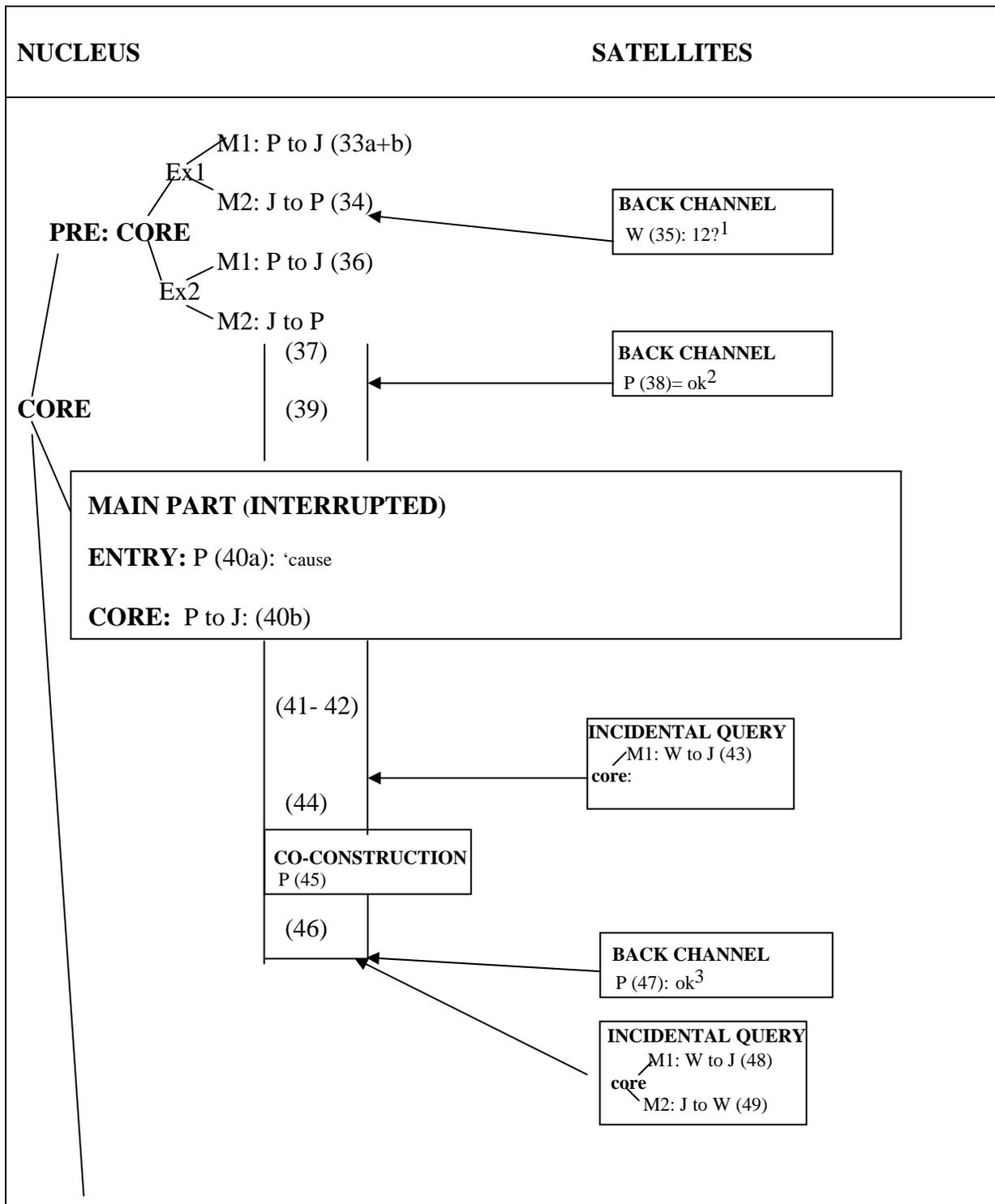
The second and third back channels are univoxes by P responding to J (38) and (47).

The two incidental queries have only a nucleus each with only a core.

The core of the first incidental query is a partial dialogue initiated by W and addressed to J with one partial exchange (43).

The core of the second incidental query is a dialogue initiated by P and addressed to J. with one exchange (48-49)

The sixth satellite is unintelligible. It is probably either a back channel or a remark by J (51)



**MAIN PART****ENTRY:** P: (50a): 'cause**CORE:** P to J

(50a-50c)

<b>BACK CHANNEL<sup>4</sup></b> J (51): ?
--

**Respondent's account:**

-fn1

rhetorical question  
jumping on the pile

-fn2

acceptance

go on

-fn3

acceptance

-fn4

dangler.

Julie's contribution is unintelligible.

## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:

### PRE TO RECOUNTING<sup>1</sup>

**Ex1:** initial use of schema

M1: P's request for information to J<sup>1</sup>

•1: preparation:

(33a): ...curiosity and if it's none of my business tell me

• 2: request proper:

(33b): how old were you when your parents divorced?

M2: J's response proper: <sup>2</sup>

(34): 12

**Ex2:** additional use of schema

M1: P's request-for-information to J: <sup>3</sup>

(36): how did that hit you?

M2: J's response <sup>4</sup>

(1) first formulation

•1: response proper:

(37): it didn't really affect me that much

•2: elaboration (explanation):<sup>5</sup>

(37): 'cause both of my parents were always there for me

(39): and there was none of this animosity crap

### MAIN PART (INTERRUPTED RECOUNTING)

P's expression of concern<sup>6</sup>

•1: statement proper (unfinished):

(40a): I wonder about / (implied: how Sherri feels about the separation)

•2: elaboration:

(40b): Sherri said it doesn't affect her a whole lot

(40c): she says every once in a while

(2) second formulation:

•1: response proper (negative)

(41a): no<sup>7</sup>

•2: elaboration<sup>8</sup>

(41b): [it] I remember at the time it upset me

(42): but my dad was always there for me and my mom too

**INCIDENTAL QUERY**

M1: W's disregarded request for information to J: <sup>9</sup>

(43): did you know it was being /?

(44): [they never] I never felt like I was being deprived of/<sup>10</sup>

**CO-CONSTRUCTION**

P (45): attention?<sup>11</sup>

(46): I never felt like that<sup>12</sup>

**INCIDENTAL QUERY**

M1: W's request for information to J: <sup>13</sup>

(48): who did you live with?

M2): J's response proper: <sup>14</sup>

(49): my mother

**MAIN PART (RESUMED RECOUNTING)<sup>15</sup>**

P's expression of concern in narrative format

(1) Background

•1: Arrival:

**REPAIRABLE (false start)**

when I went up to see Sherri when she was up at/

**PARENTHESIS :**

oh I was so damn proud!

and I went (implied: to see Sherri when she was up at Buff State)

**PARENTHESIS :**

she's all dormed in on Saturday [and] or-whatever

and I drove in on Sunday to see her  
and Buff State's got a beautiful running track  
and I'm pulling around the parking lot  
and who's with her headsets on out there running ?  
it's my Sherri!

•2: Meeting Sherri

so I met her at her dorm room and-everything  
 and [we're sort-of] she's showing me around  
 and we had something to eat  
 and her friend Jenny is there and-everything  
 and coming out y-k we sort-of start talking about:  
 "mom could you ask dad about the F.A.S" and all-this-business  
 and I was telling her it was sort-of like a shame y-k that we've got to split the conversation like this  
 and she sorta blows it off [like] lightly like all her friends were doing it<sup>16</sup>  
 and all her friends' parents are divorced and this-sort-of-stuff  
 and I don't know if it's a defense or-whatever  
 and I just wonder [how/that/really] how she really feels about this <sup>17</sup>

(2) Point of Narrative:

but if you say there's no animosity<sup>18</sup>  
 may-be I'm reading more into it

**Respondent's account:**

-fn1

inquiry + explanation [regarding ] Julie's experience as a child (33-49)

-fn1'

The student researcher felt that Prue felt that Julie could help with her confusion

quest

second attempt to steer conversation

now Julie's talking about both her mom and dad

and I know they were divorced

and she's talking about the strength of both of them

and knowing they were divorced I asked her the question when were they divorced?

how old was she?

because being in a similar situation myself

I am wondering, you-know, how her life has been affected by it

her mom's tough

she's tough

her and her sister is tough

and I am wondering in relationship to their background

what it was that may have produced this toughness

so I started talking about divorce and its effect on her

and she goes on to explain to us what she thought was happening at that time in her life

from there and get back with the divorce (33a-b)

-fn2

answer: J understood and was willing to jump in on it

-fn3

question (36)

-fn4

answer (37)

fn5

explanation

elaboration (39)

-fn6

musing report (40b and 40c)

The implied question is: should I worry about Sherri?

The student researcher expresses Prue's concern for Sherri as follows: Prue was always very close to Sherri, who had a learning disability. Prue was always involved in Sherri's life and problems. When Prue left home, in some ways she felt as though she had left Sherri, who was in high school at the time (a senior). I think Prue was worried about how Sherri would make it in the college environment. Kris, her other daughter, has always been very independent. At the time of Prue's separation, she was living and working in Poughkeepsie at Vassar (from where she graduated).

-fn7

P characterizes J's no as a dangler which indicates that she does not quite know what to make of it. The proposed interpretation is that Julie continues responding to Prue's question, interrupting the latter's recounting of her visit to Sherri.

-fn8

statement

defense of parents

-fn9

question to sustain topic

Win knows how Julie feels about her parents

Julie feels responsible for her parents

she feels the need to defend her dad (43)

W abandons this line of inquiry but takes it up again and this time successfully in (line 59a)

below: did you know they were going to get divorced?

-fn10

Julie is helping Prue out but still defending her dad (44)

-fn11

steering (45)

-fn12

denial (46)

-fn13

question to sustain topic (48)

-fn14

answer (49)

fn15

continuation of musing report

comparison of Julie's experience as a child with daughter's experience (50a-b-c-d)

Prue's narrative is a good example of a story being used as a means to illustrate a point.

For a study of the use of story telling in medical discourse, see Ainsworth-Vaughn, 1998.

-fn16

This section echoes the preceding lines (40b): Sherri said it doesn't affect her a whole lot and

(40c): she says every once in a while

-fn17

This section echoes the preceding line (40a): I wonder about/

-fn18

This line echoes the preceding line (39): there was none of this animosity crap

## VF1 SECTION (52-58b)

### (1) RECAPITULATION

#### a) Analytic Specification of Section:

##### Defining Criteria for Verbal Flow 1:

**Type of talk:** CHITCHAT

**Modality of Talk:** displaced

**Focality:** focal

##### Segmentation Criterion for V F1 Section (52-58b):

**main topic:** P learning from comparisons

**subtopic:** how J's parents related to each other once divorced

#### b) Transcript of Talk in Section:

W to J (52): did your parents talk?

P (53): yeah

J to W (54): oh yeah all the time

W to J (55): do they now?

J to W (56): oh yeah all the time

P (57a): yeah? oh yeah!

(57b): holy-shit I hope that's still possible!

J to P (58a): no

(58b): they weren't the best of buddies but/ I feel bad but/ there was never that /

### (3) BASIC UNITS:

There is only one basic unit, VF1 Stretch (52-58b).

It is a QUERY, specified by the semantic schema: Win asks Julie how her divorced parents got along.

### (3) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF QUERY (52-58b)

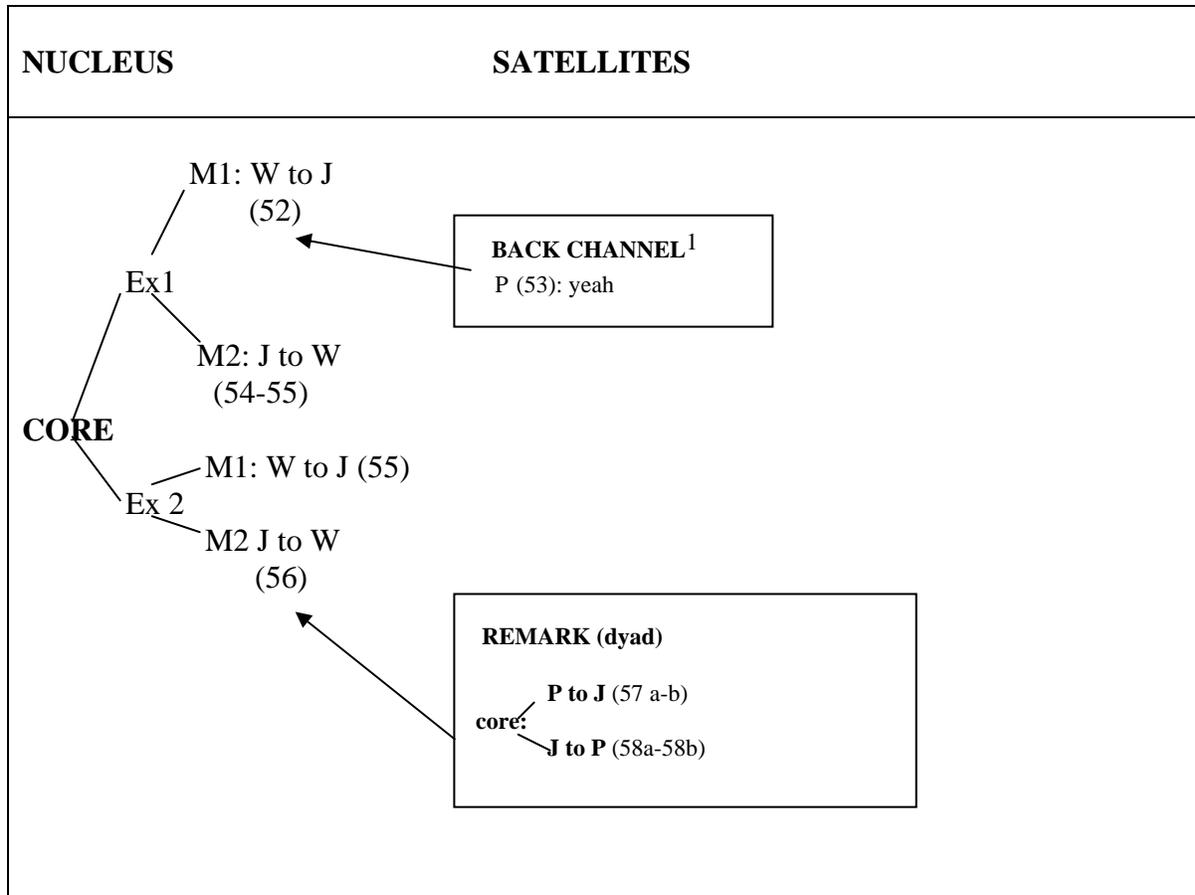
#### a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF QUERY:

The QUERY has a nucleus and two primary satellites.

The nucleus has only a core, a dialogue initiated by W and addressed to J, with two exchanges.

The first satellite is a univocal back channel by P.

The second satellite is a remark dyad initiated by P and addressed to J.



#### Respondent's account:

-fn1

Prue supports Win's question. She is jumping on the pile

## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:

Ex1: initial use of schema<sup>1</sup>

M1: W's request for information to J: 1'

(52): did your parents talk ?

M2: J's response

•1: affirmation proper:

(54): oh yeah !

•2: elaboration:

(54): all the time

Ex2: additional use of schema

M1: W's request for information to J:

(55): do they now?<sup>2'</sup>

M2: J's response

•1: affirmation proper:

(56): oh yeah!<sup>2</sup>

•2: elaboration):

(56): all the time

**REMARK** (dyad)

wish by P to J<sup>3</sup>

**initiation:**

(57.a): yeah? oh yeah!<sup>4</sup>

(57b): holy shit!

**development:**

(57b): I hope that's still possible!

response by J to P<sup>5</sup>

.1: disclaimer:

(58a): no

•2: elaboration (unfinished justification):

(58b): they weren't the best of buddies but/

I feel bad but/

there was never that/

## Respondent's account:

-fn1

comparison between Julie's parents + her and Prue + [her] ex-husband (52-58)

-fn1'

question to sustain topic (52)

-fn2

answer (52)+(54)+(56)

'oh' marks speaker involvement

-fn2

question (55)

-fn3

implied comparison: I hope that it is still possible for me and my ex-husband to talk to each other just like your parents did.

The student researcher explains Prue's contribution as follows:

I would say Prue's response was about 'longing and disbelief'. What I mean is that she was longing for the day when her and [her ex-husband] Charles could be civil to each other but at that moment in time she couldn't believe it would ever happen.

At that time in her life Prue was only beginning to learn how to handle conflict. It was in some ways why her marriage ended. She said they never fought. I know that she has always fantasized about a friendly divorce to the extent that she wanted her and Charles to be best buddies after the divorce. You know, each seeing other people but still going out with each other to shows etc.

-fn4

exclamatory statement

getting what she needs (57a)

'oh' marks speaker involvement

-fn5

explanation (58a-58b)

Here is how the student researcher sees Julie's contribution:

As for Julie, I think she sensed Prue's tendency to co-opt other people's experience as her own.

I think Julie's response was as much a damper as a defense.

In other words, 'don't go too far on this, everything between my parents was not peachy keen.'

I think J was trying to say 'divorce is not easy or fun'.

I think it is an attempt on the speaker's part to rectify what might be a misunderstanding by the listener.

Maybe it is a disclaimer of sorts: 'don't exaggerate or take what I have just said too far'

## VF1 SECTION (59a-73)

### (1) RECAPITULATION

#### a) Analytic Specification of Section:

##### Defining Criteria for Verbal Flow 1:

**Type of talk:** CHITCHAT

**Modality of Talk:** displaced

**Focality:** focal

##### Segmentation Criterion for VF1 Section (59a-73):

**main topic:** P learning from comparisons

**subtopic:** P learning from the child of divorced parents

#### b) Transcript of Talk in Section:

W to J (59a): did you know they were going to get divorced?  
 (59b): I-mean did they tell you?  
 J to W (60): oh yea they talked to me about it  
 P to J (61): oh yea?  
 J to P (62a): oh it was terrible!  
 (62b): [it was better] it's better not having that situation  
 P to J (63): ok  
 J to P (64): but my dad was always there for me  
 P to J (65): ok  
 J to P (66): always called during the week  
 P to J (67): ok  
 J to P (68): pick me up took me here took me there  
 W to J (69): now [did you] were your brother and sister around then?  
 J to P (70): made sure I had horseback riding lessons and took me fishing took me hunting  
 P to J (71): you had a dad that took you hunting and fishing huh?  
 J to P (72): oh yea!  
 W to J (73): were your brother and sister around then?

### (2) BASIC UNITS:

There is only one basic unit, VF1 Stretch (59a-73).

It is a QUERY specified by the semantic schema: Win asks Julie how she felt about her parents' divorce.

### **(3) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF QUERY (59a-73)**

#### **a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF QUERY:**

The QUERY has a nucleus and three primary satellites.

The nucleus has, only a core, a dialogue initiated by W and addressed to, with two exchanges .

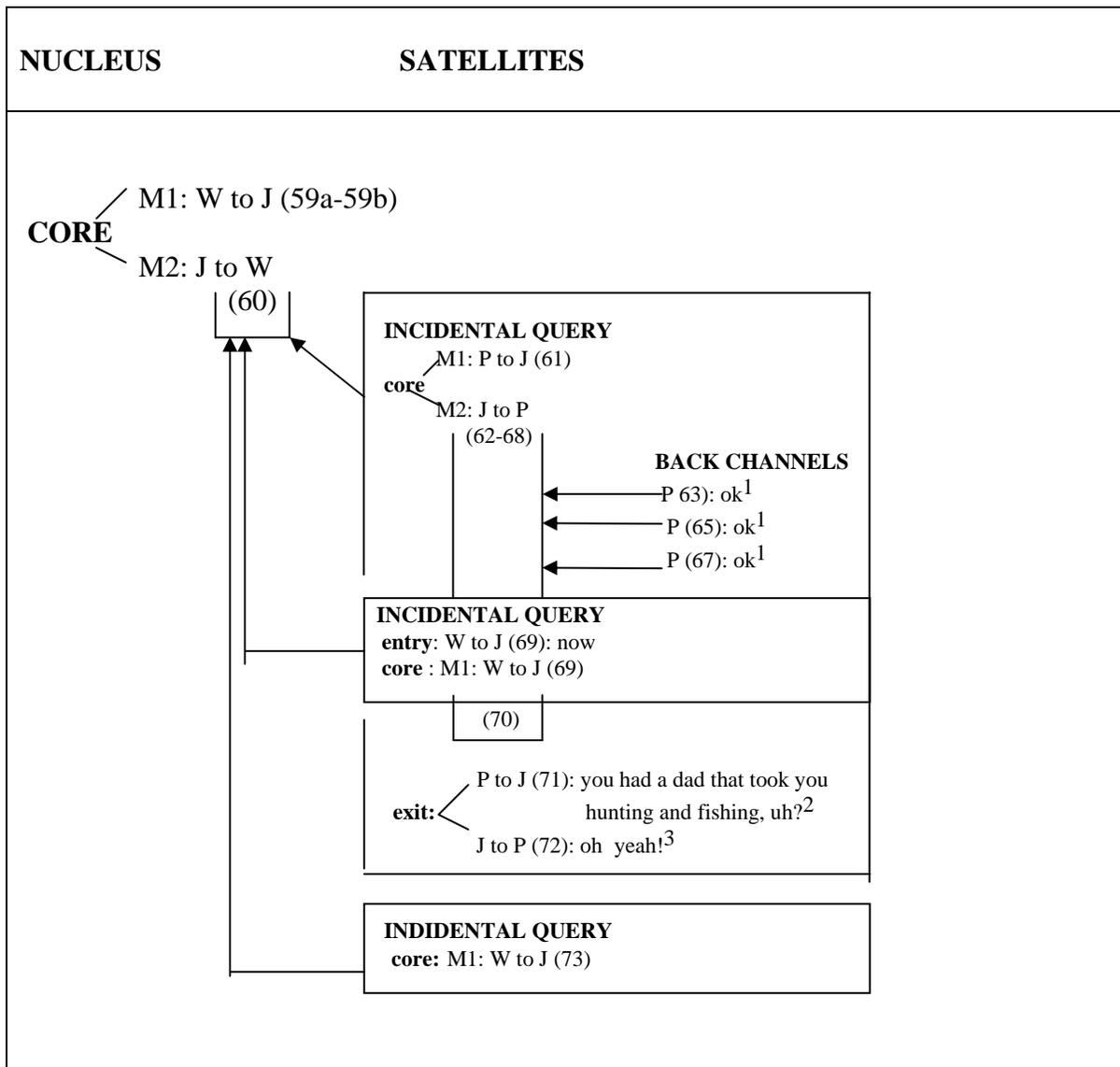
The three satellites includes three incidental queries.

The first incidental query is by P and addressed to J. It has a core with one interactive exchange and an exit dyad. The second member of the exchange has three satellites, all univocal back channels by P responding to J.

The other two incidental queries are by W and addressed to J.

The first has a univocal entry and a partial core.

The second has only a partial core.



### Respondent's account:

-fn1

affirmation

-fn2

question (71)

-fn3

answer (72)

'oh' marks speaker involvement

## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:

M1: W's request for information<sup>1</sup>

•1: initial formulation:<sup>1</sup>

(59a): did you know they were going to get divorced?

•2: reformulation:

(59b): I-mean did they tell you?

M2: J's response

•1: affirmation proper:

(60): oh yeah!

•2: elaboration:

(60): they talked to me about it

### INCIDENTAL QUERY<sup>2</sup>

M1: P's request for clarification **to J**:

(61): oh yeah?<sup>3</sup>

M2: J's response:<sup>3</sup>

•1: preparation:

(62a): oh it was terrible!<sup>4</sup>

•2: response proper:

(62b): [it was better] it's better not having that situation)

(64): but my dad was always there for me

•3: elaboration:

(66): always called during the week

(68): pick me up took me here took me there

### FIRST INCIDENTAL QUERY<sup>5</sup>

W's request for information **to J** (steering question)

(69): [did you] were your brother and sister around then?

(70): made sure I had horseback riding lessons and took me fishing, took me hunting

### SECOND INCIDENTAL QUERY<sup>5</sup>

W's request for information **to J** (steering question)

(73): were your brother and sister around then?

## Respondent's account:

-fn1

comparison of how Julie felt to how Prue's kids feel  
how Julie felt as a child (59-73)

-fn1'

question

Win's invitation for Julie to talk about herself

Win's request for information to Julie (lines 59a-59b) is the successful repeat of an initially unsuccessful attempt. Her question line (line 43): did you know [that your parents were getting divorced]? was disregarded by Julie who was involved with Prue. Here, Win asks it again and this time Julie answers it.

-fn2

'oh' marks speaker involvement

-fn3

inquiry (what was it like?)

jumping on the pile

-fn3'

monologue (62-70)

-fn4

expressive statement(62a-b)

-fn5

Win's persistence

second steering question (69) and (73)

Prue sees Win's attempts (lines 69 and 73) as an intrusion into her own territory: Win stabs at what I am doing. She doesn't have many relationships and siblings are important to her. She is trying to get feedback.



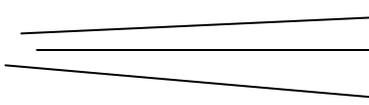
and that's in line with the rest of our teasing her earlier on in the evening  
 ah and indeed she did pull them out later on at the bar and passed them around  
 and we all ate them (74a-81)

## (2) BASIC UNITS:

The section is constituted by 3 sets of verbal responses to the triggering agent: waitress comes in to clear table. There are three basic units as follows:

1. VF3 SubStretch (74a-74c) is an OFFER of SERVICE, specified by the semantic schema: the waitress' first offer of service;
2. VF 3 SubStretch (74d-76b) is an OFFER of SERVICE, specified by the semantic schema: the waitress' second offer of service;
3. VF3 SubStretch (77a-81) is an OFFERof SERVICE, specified by the semantic schema: the waitress' third offer of service.

This is shown in the following Table:

TRIGGERING AGENT	VERBAL RESPONSES
Waitress comes in to clear table	 <p>OFFER OF SERVICE (74a-74c)            OFFER OF SERVICE (74d-76b)            OFFER OF SERVICE (77a-81)</p>

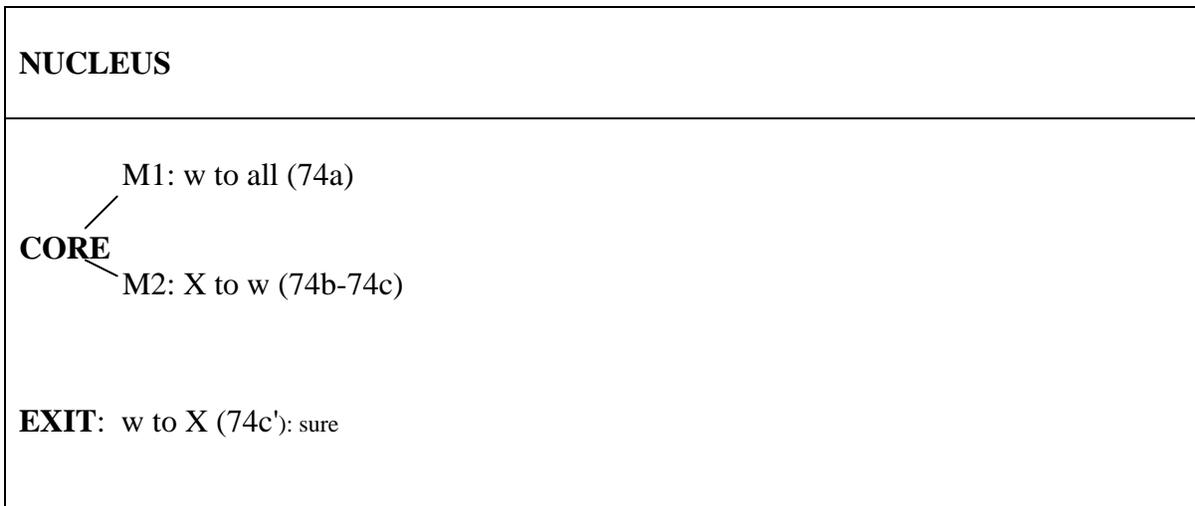
### (3.1) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF OFFER OF SERVICE (74a-74c')

#### a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF OFFER:

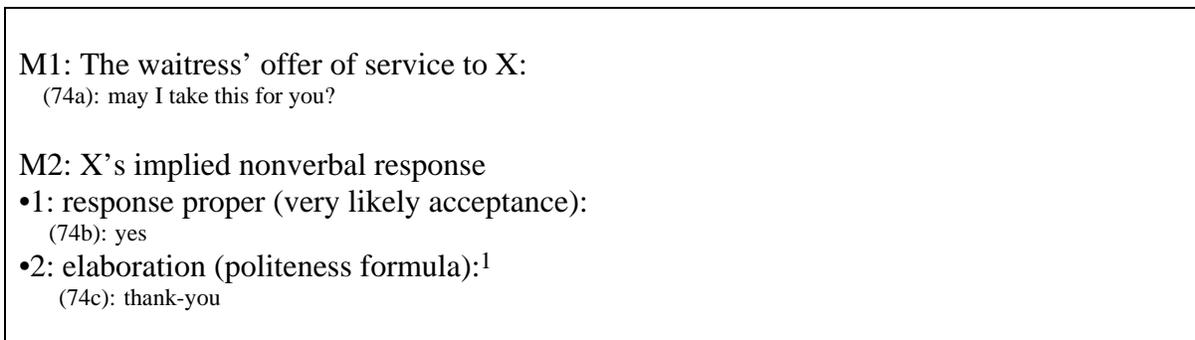
The OFFER has only a nucleus. The latter has a core and an exit.

The exit is a univox.

The core is a dialogue initiated by the waitress and very likely addressed to all but responded to by one person speaking on behalf of all, with one exchange.



#### b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORE:



#### Analyst's note:

The polite formula “thank you” is inferred on the basis of the waitress' acknowledgement in the exit.

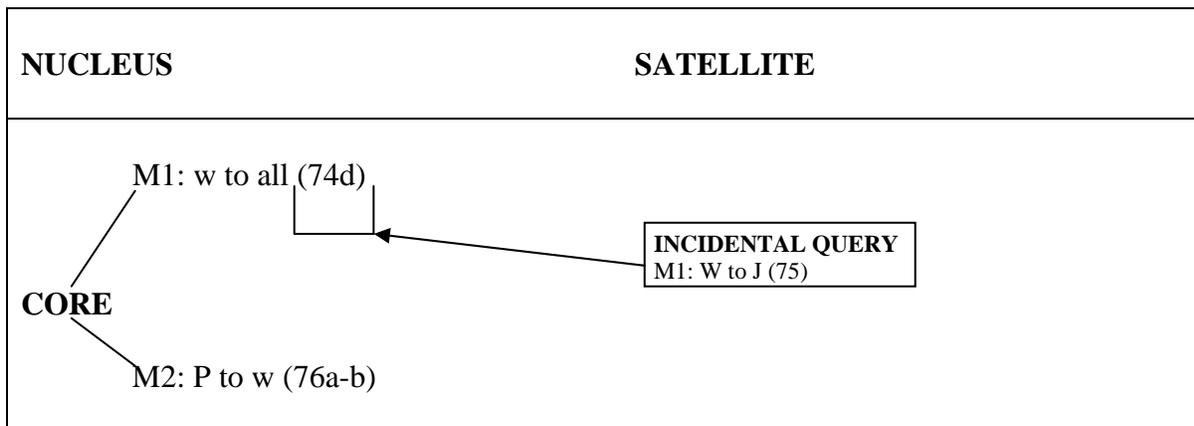
### (3.2) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF OFFER-OF-SERVICE (74d-76b)

#### a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF OFFER:

The OFFER has a nucleus and one satellite.

The nucleus has only a core, a dialogue initiated by the waitress and addressed to all, with one exchange.

The satellite is an incidental query. It has only a core, a partial dialogue initiated by W and addressed to J, with one partial exchange



**b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:**

M1: The waitress' offer of service to all (**neutral mode**):  
(74d): what about your French fries?

**INCIDENTAL QUERY**

M1: W redirects the waitress' query to J (**teasing mode**)<sup>1</sup>:  
(75): Julie do you want anymore?

M2: P's response to the waitress (**teasing mode**)

- 1: response proper
- 1: affirmative:  
(76a): yeah
- 2: echo of offer of service in line 74d:  
(76a): leave 'em
- 2: elaboration (unfinished justification):  
(76b): she'll [implied: nibble on them through the night]<sup>2</sup>

**Analyst's notes:**

1. W teases J by suggesting that she alone should decide what to do with the French fries, an indirect reference to her insatiable appetite.
2. P teases J by implying that the French fries are only for her, here again, an indirect reference to her insatiable appetite (see also line 79a-b)

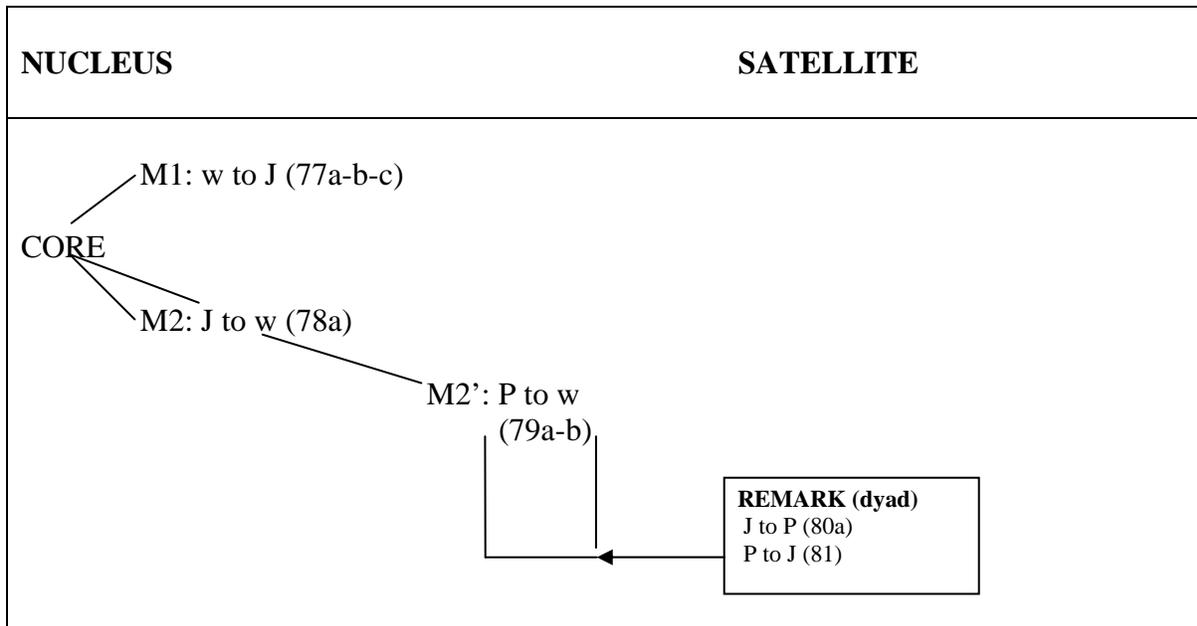
### (3.3) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF OFFER OF SERVICE (77a-81)

#### a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF OFFER:

The OFFER has a nucleus and one satellite.

The nucleus has only a core, a dialogue, with one exchange involving three speakers: the waitress who initiates the dialogue addressing herself to Julie; J and P who answer her.

The satellite is a remark dyad initiated by J responding to P.



## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORE:

M1: The waitress' offer of service (**neutral mode**):

- 1: preparation:  
(77a): may I take them?
- 2: offer proper:  
(77b): [I'll wrap them] I'll be happy to wrap them
- 3: elaboration:  
(77c): do you want them in some tin foil?

M2: J's acceptance of the waitress' offer (**neutral mode**):

- 1: response proper (acceptance):  
(78): yes
- 2: elaboration (polite formula):  
(78): that would be lovely

M2': P's rejection of the waitress' offer (**teasing mode**):<sup>1</sup>

- 1: response proper (rejection)  
(79a): no
- 2: elaboration (justification of rejection):  
(79b): [she/she] I was gonna say she'll nibble on them through the course of the night

**REMARK** (dyad)

J goes along with the teasing:<sup>2</sup>

(80a): that comes from the waste-not want-not days .....laughter

P's acknowledgement:<sup>3</sup>

(81): yeah

## Respondent's account:

-fn1

P teases J by indirectly suggesting that she has an insatiable appetite.

-fn2

defense/explanation

when she was divorced and raising her two sons on her own and she does not waste

and she always refers to it as her "waste-not want-not years"

when she was divorced and raising her two sons on her own and she does not waste

she is Scotch from the word go

By joining in the teasing J shows that she takes pleasure in it.

-fn3

affirmation

## VF1 SECTION (82-86)

### (1) RECAPITULATION

#### a) Analytic Specification of Section:

**Defining Criteria for Verbal Flow1:**

**Type of talk:** CHITCHAT

**Modality of Talk:** displaced

**Focality:** focal

**Segmentation Criterion for VF1 Section (82-86):**

**main topic:** W's interest in J's siblings

**sub-topic:** Julie's Siblings

#### b) Transcript of Talk in Section:

W to J (82): you were their only child then?

J to W (83): Peg and John are from my mother's second marriage

P to J (84.a): ok/ok

P to J (84.b): [are] and so you're still close to them even though they're half brother and sister?

J to P (85): with my sister

P to J (86): yeah I can understand that

### (2) BASIC UNITS:

There is only one basic unit, VF1 Stretch (82-86). It is a QUERY specified by the semantic schema: W asks J about her siblings when her parents got divorced.

### (3) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF QUERY (82-86)

#### a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF QUERY:

The QUERY has a nucleus and two primary satellites.

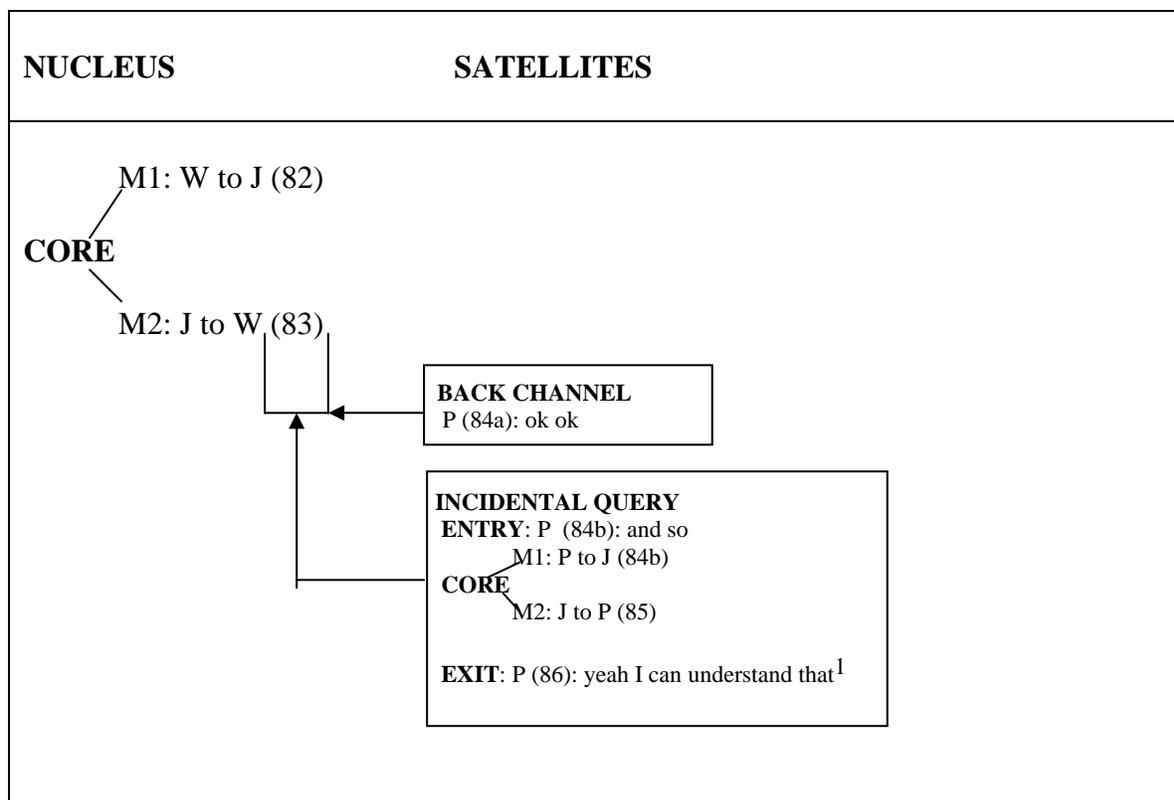
The nucleus has only a core, a dialogue initiated by W and addressed to J, with one exchange.

The first satellite is a univocal back channel by P responding to J.

The second satellite is an incidental query. It has an entry, a core and an exit.

The entry and the exit are univoxes.

The core is a dialogue initiated by P and addressed to J, with one exchange.



#### Respondent's account:

-fn1

comment

**b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:**

M1: W's request for information to J (steering question) <sup>1</sup>

(82): you were their only child then? <sup>1</sup>

M2: J's response

1: response proper (implied): yes

2: elaboration (explanation):

(83): Peg and John are from my mother's second marriage

**INCIDENTAL QUERY<sup>2</sup>**

M1: P's request for information:

(84b): [are] you're still close to them even though they're half brother sister?

M2: J's response proper <sup>3</sup>

affirmative (implied): yes

restriction:

(85): with my sister

**Respondent's account:**

-fn1

W's persistence: the continuance of W's interest in J's sister and brother

there we're questioning about her brother and sister from a second marriage (82-86)

-fn1'

Win resumes steering

-fn2

question

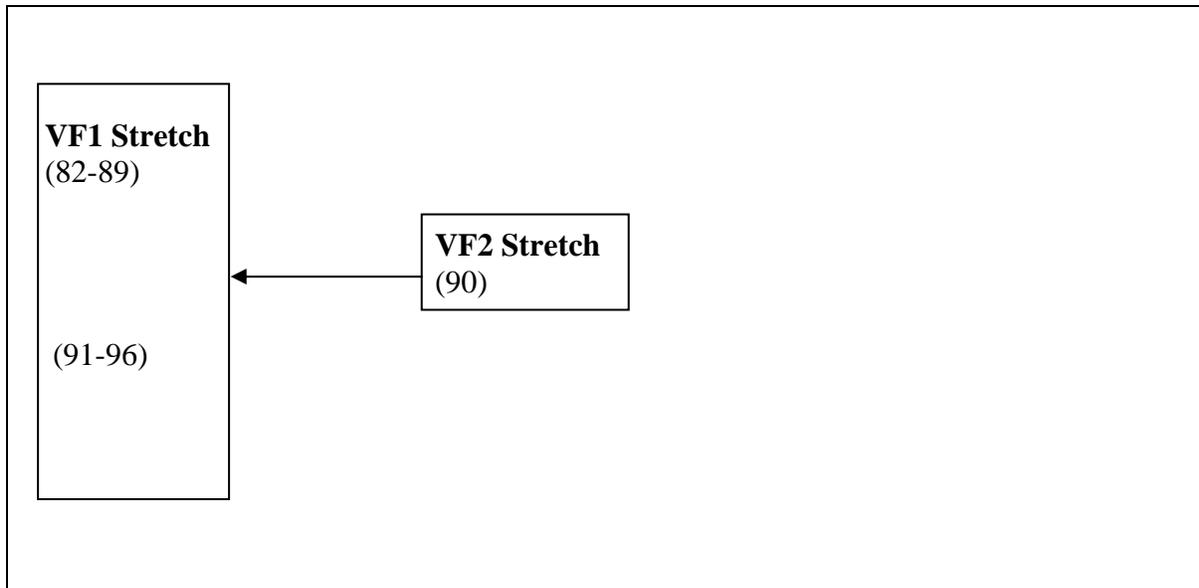
jumping on the pile

-fn3

answer(85)

**OVERLAPPING VF STRETCHES**

VF1 Stretch (82-89)+(91-96) is overlapped by VF2 (90)



## VF1 SECTION (87-89)+(91-96)

### (1) RECAPITULATION

#### a) Analytic Specification of Section:

##### Defining Criteria for VF1:

Type of talk: CHITCHAT

Modality of Talk: displaced

Focality: focal

##### Segmentation Criterion for VF1 Section (87-89)+(91-96):

main topic: W's interest in J's siblings

sub-topic: J's brother

#### b) Transcript of Talk in Section:

W to J (87): your brother looks like you

J resp. to W (88): pfffffff ... (laughter)

W to J (89): you don't think so?

J to W (91): I can't stand him

W to J (92): what?

J to W (93): you said that ...

W to J (94): I think he does

P for J to W (95): no

W to all ? (96): I think he does

noise

### (2) BASIC UNITS:

There is only one basic unit, VF1 Stretch (87-89) +(92-96). It is an OPINION, specified by the semantic schema: Win tells Julie her opinion that her brother looks like her.

### (3) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF OPINION (87-96)

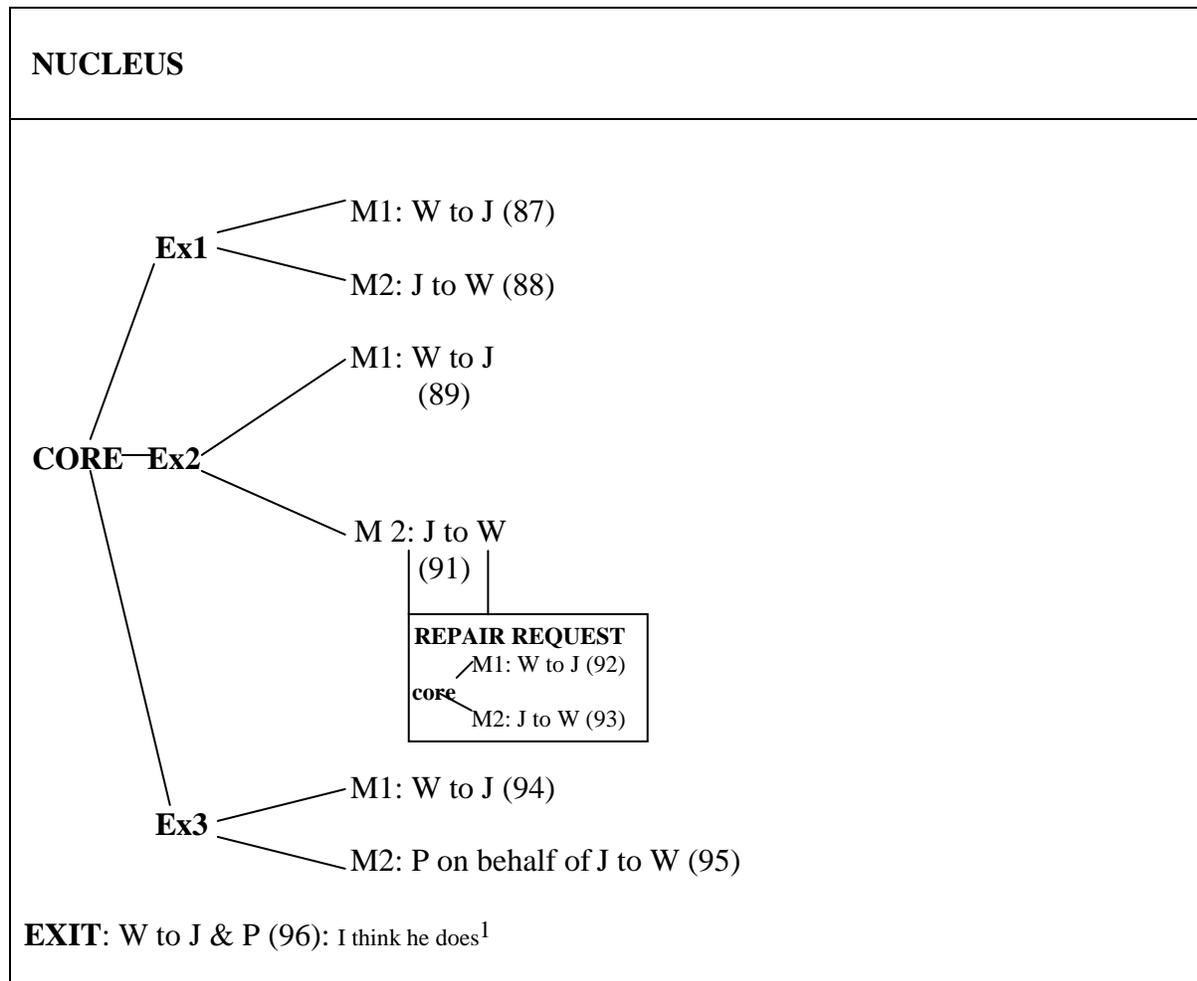
#### a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF OPINION:

The OPINION has only a nucleus. The latter has a core and an exit.

The exit is a univox.

The core is a dialogue initiated by W and addressed to J, with three exchanges.

The second member of the second exchange has an extension, a repair query. The latter has only a core, a dialogue initiated by W and addressed to J, with one exchange.



#### Respondent's account:

-fn1

assertion

holding ground

## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:

### Ex1: initial use of schema<sup>1</sup>

M1: W's offer of opinion to J:

(87): your brother looks like you<sup>1</sup>

M2: J's rejection of W's opinion (response cry):

(88): pfffffff !)<sup>2</sup> + laughter

### Ex2: follow-up use of schema

M1: W's request for justification of rejection to J:<sup>3</sup>

(89): you don't think so?

M2: J's response (justification):

(91): I can't stand him<sup>4</sup>

### REPAIR REQUEST

M1: W's request for repeat:<sup>5</sup>

(92): what?

M2: J's response (avoidance to repeat):<sup>6</sup>

(93): you said that/

### Ex3: recycling of Ex1

M1: W's offer of opinion to J:<sup>7</sup>

(94): I think he does

M2: P's rejection of W's opinion:<sup>8</sup>

(95): no

## Respondent's account:

-fn1

W questions her about her brother, remarking that she looks like her brother  
you should see the look on her face! It was...

we know how she feels about her brother (87-89)+(91-96)

-fn1'

statement/assertion

-fn2

laughter= refusal

-fn3

question (89)

-fn4

assertion

-fn5

question:

demand for explanation

-fn6

denial

avoidance

-fn7

assertion/persistence

-fn8

dangler

support for Julie

## VF2 SECTION (90)

### (1) RECAPITULATION

#### a) Analytic Specification of Section:

**Defining Criteria for Verbal Flow2:**

**Type of talk:** CHITCHAT

**Modality of Talk:** here-and-now

**Focality:** focal (?)

**Segmentation Criterion for VF2 Section (90):**

**triggering agent:** J's facial expression

#### b) Transcript of Talk in Section:

P to J (90): don't get excited!

### (2) BASIC UNITS:

The section is constituted by verbal responses to the triggering agent: J's facial expression.<sup>1</sup> There is one basic unit, VF2 Stretch (90). It is a DOWNTONER.

This is shown in the following Table:

TRIGGERING AGENT	VERBAL RESPONSES
J's facial expression	<p>DOWNTONER (univox) P (90): don't get excited!<sup>2</sup></p>

### Respondent's Account

-fn1

verbal response to visual input  
you should see the look on her face!

command

-fn2

command(90)

## VF1 SECTION (97-118)

### (1) RECAPITULATION

#### a) Analytic Specification of Section:

##### Defining Criteria for Verbal Flow1:

**Type of talk:** CHITCHAT

**Modality of Talk:** displaced

**Focality:** focal

##### Segmentation Criterion for VF1 Section (97-118):

**main topic:** W's interest in J's siblings

**sub-topic:** J's sister

#### b) Transcript of Talk in Section:<sup>1</sup>

W to J (97): I think I met her once

noise

W to J (98): did she get that job?

J to W (99): she's waiting

W to J (100): still waiting?

P to J (101): what's she waiting on?

W to J (102): isn't she supposed to know?

J to W (103): they called and told her/the receptionist told her that they still hadn't made up their mind

J to P (104): she's a/ she applied to Birmingham, Cook and something else a ... firm

P to J (105): oh so she's had training in /

J to P (106.a): the Statler /the Statler

J to P (106.b): what they're looking for is a computer operator to handle all the bookkeeping, all the accounts  
everything concerned

P to J (107): yeah

J to P (108): this is right up her alley

W to P (109): she used to walk to school everyday ...it's how she got her degree

noise

P to J (110): how old is Peggy?

J to P (111): 28

W to P (112): and she has a son

J to all (113): it's tough

P to J (114): your mother raised some tough daughters huh?

J to P (115): she doesn't appear to be tough

P to J (116.a): no I don't mean tough-tough

(116.b): I mean ...

J to P (117): in fact in some respects she comes across kinda flakey

if you just initially meet her, you-know?

she just kinda flies ... you-know

she's ...

P to J (118): but her real stuff is tough

## Respondent's account:

-fn1

inquiry and explanation about Julie's sister

Win asks about Julie's sister

we both know how she feels about her

we're giving Julie an opportunity to express her feelings.

Julie won't ask a lot of questions about anyone's life.

She'll ask how you are, but seldom does she initiate anything

Never asks for feedback like me and Win.

This is how we let her know we care for her, by asking questions

I know her loyalty and her love for her sister ...

Julie's talking about what her sister's gone through

which was sort-a interesting to me

because in all the time I've known Julie she's mentioned her sister

but she is describing an admiration

even though she describes her sister as being such a flake

but she's proud of her

for the toughness she's displayed

which she also mentions the toughness about her mother

and if anybody knows Julie

there's a quiet toughness about her

so this is the first time I actually heard her describe her sister

and also express her admiration for her (97-108)

## (2) BASIC UNITS:

There are three basic units as follows:

1. VF1 SubStretch (97-108) is a QUERY specified by the semantic schema: Win inquires about Julie's sister's job;
2. VF 1 SubStretch (109-113) is a PRAISING specified by the semantic schema: Win indirectly praises Julie's sister for her toughness;
- 3: VF1 SubStretch (114-118) is also a PRAISING specified by the semantic schema: Prue indirectly praises Julie's sister for her toughness.

### **(3.1) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF QUERY (97-108)**

#### **a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF QUERY:**

There is a nucleus and one primary satellite.

The nucleus has only a core, a dialogue initiated by W and addressed to J, with two exchanges.

The primary satellite is an incidental query. It has a nucleus and one satellite.

The nucleus has a core and an exit attempt.

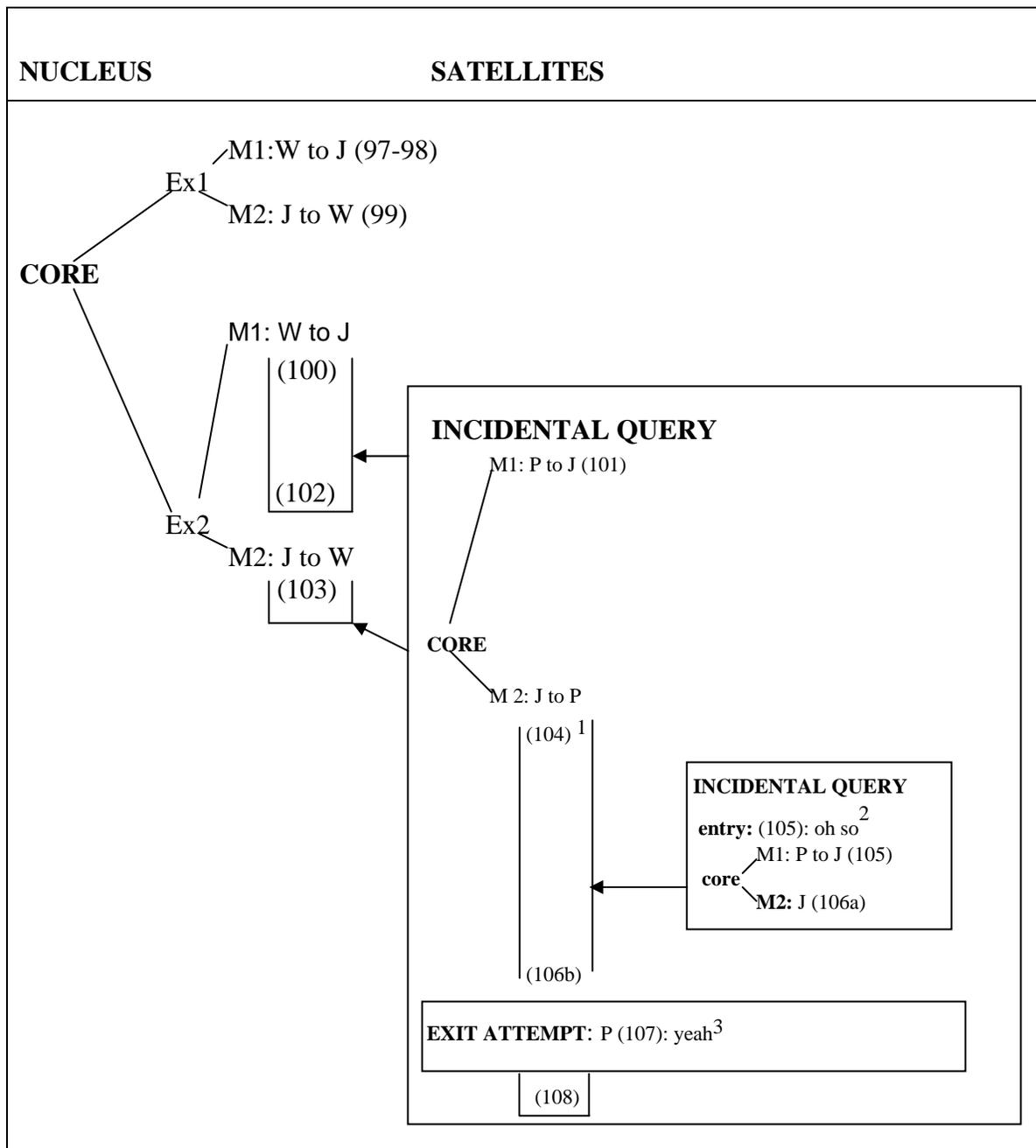
The latter is a monad.

The core is a dialogue initiated by P and addressed to J, with one exchange.

The satellite is also an incidental query. It has an entry and a core.

The entry is a univox.

The core is a dialogue initiated by P responding to J, with one exchange.



### Respondent's account:

-fn1

dangler

-fn2

'oh' marks speaker involvement

-fn3

affirmation

## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:

Ex1: initial use of schema

M1: W's request for information to J

- . 1: preparation:  
(97): I-think I met her once
- . 2: request proper:  
(98): did she get that job?

M2: J's response

- . 1: response proper: negation (implied)
- . 2: elaboration (justification):  
(99): she's waiting [implied: for the answer]

Ex2: follow-up use of schema

M1: W's request for explanation of response to J:

- . 1: initial formulation:  
(100): still waiting?<sup>1</sup>

### INCIDENTAL QUERY

M1: P's request-for-information<sup>2</sup>  
(101): what's she waiting on?

- . 2: reformulation:  
(102): isn't she supposed to know?

M2: J's response (justification of implied negation):<sup>3</sup>

(103): [they called and told her]  
the receptionist told her that they still hadn't made up their mind

M2: J's response (in format of a list):

- . 1: name of firm: <sup>4</sup>  
(104): [she's /a]  
she applied to Birmingham, Cook and something else  
a...firm

### INCIDENTAL QUERY

M1: P's request for confirmation: <sup>5</sup>  
(105) she's had training in /  
M2: J's response:  
(106a): the Statler/the Statler <sup>5'</sup>

- . 2: job description: <sup>6</sup>  
 (106b): what they are looking for is a computer operator to handle  
 all the bookkeeping, all the accounts,  
 everything concerned
- . 3: sister's qualifications for the job: <sup>7</sup>  
 (108): this is right up her alley

### **Respondent's account:**

-fn1

lead on

rhetorical question (= how come she is still waiting for the answer?) (100)

-fn2

jumping on the pile

inquiry (= what kind of a job did she apply for?) (101)

-fn3

answer (103)

-fn4

dangler (104)

P does not understand what this is all about

-fn5

request to join in  
 question

-fn5'

the firm is located in the Statler

-fn6

descriptive statement (106b)

fn7

comment (108)

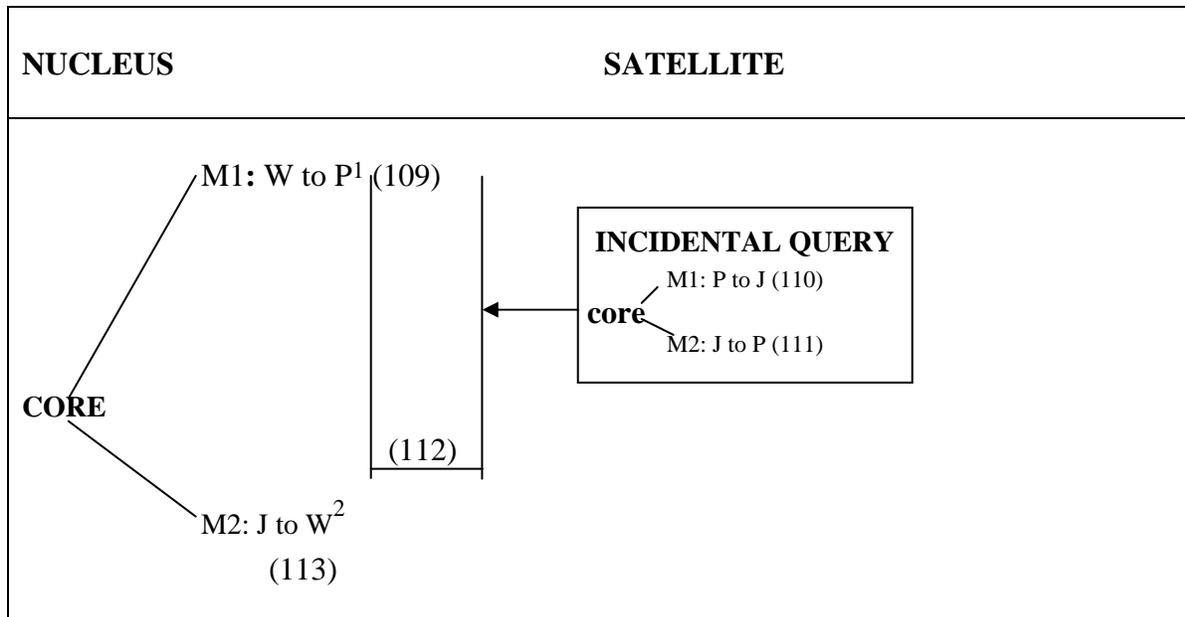
### (3.2) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF PRAISING (109-113)

#### a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF PRAISING:

The PRAISING has a nucleus and one primary satellite.

The nucleus has only a core, a univox by W addressed to P, in the praising mode.

The satellite is an incidental query. It has only a core, a dialogue initiated by P and addressed to J, with one exchange.



#### Analyst's notes:

1. W openly addresses P and indirectly J.
2. It is not clear whether J addresses both W and P, or only W

## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORES:

M1: W's indirect offer of praise to J<sup>1</sup> (in the format of a list of reasons for her to be praised) addressed to P:

. 1: first reason: <sup>2</sup>

(109): she used to walk to school everyday... it's how she got her degree

### INCIDENTAL QUERY

M1: P's request for information:

(110): how old is Peggy?<sup>3</sup>

M2: J's response proper:

(111): twenty eight

. 2: second reason: <sup>4</sup>

(112): and she had a son

M2: J's acceptance<sup>5</sup>

(113): it's tough

## Respondent's account:

-fn1

Win's indirect way of telling Julie how she perceives her

perception of the inquiry (= how we see her sister)

indirect way of telling Julie how she perceives her

Julie is stoic and can't be told directly 'cause she'll deny it (109-118)

-fn2

report (109)

-fn3

my reference to Julie's sister's age probably was to compare her to my daughter Kris a point of the connectedness

-fn4

report continues (112)

-fn5

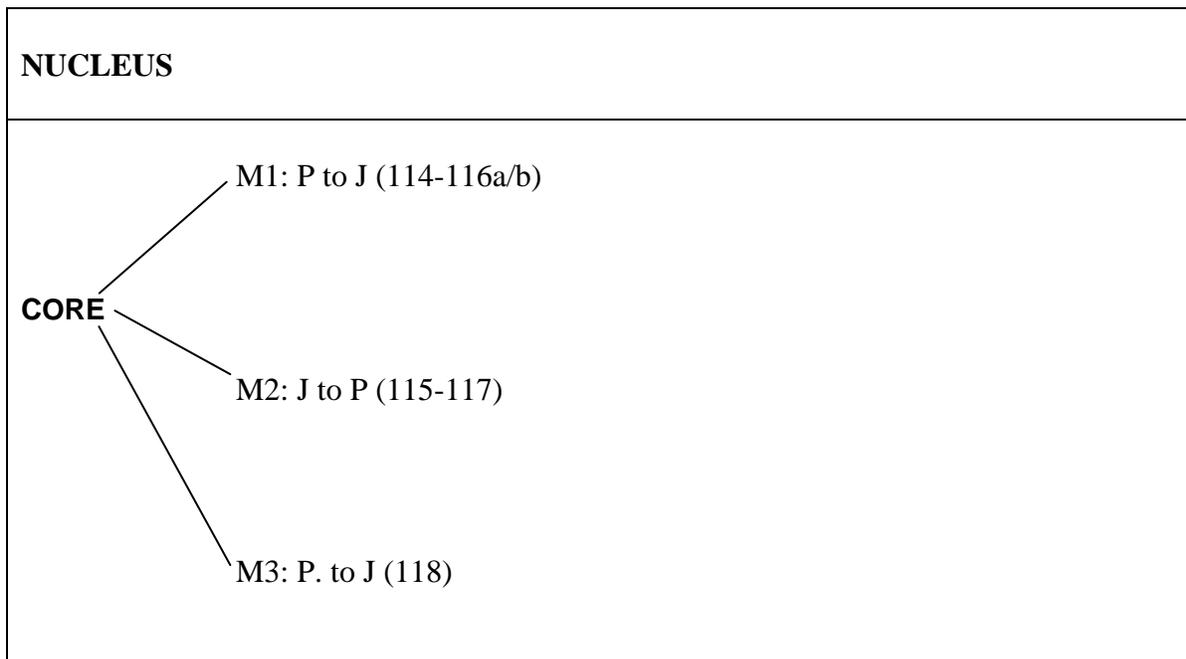
comment

link to Prue (=Prue picks that up in her next statement)

### (3.3) DETAILED ANALYSIS OF PRAISING (114-118)

#### a) INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF PRAISING:

The PRAISING has only a nucleus, a dialogue initiated by P and addressed to J, with one three member exchange.



## b) RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF CORE:

### M1: P's offer of praise

#### . 1: initial formulation: <sup>1</sup>

(114): your mother raised some tough daughter, huh?

#### . 2: reformulation (self correction):

##### • rejection of initial formulation:

(116a): no

##### • correction (unfinished):

(116a): I-don't-mean 'tough-tough'

(116b): [I-mean ]

### M2: J's response

#### 1: response proper (rejection of P's offer of praise): <sup>2</sup>

(115): she doesn't appear to be tough

#### 2: elaboration (counterclaim)<sup>3</sup>

(117): in fact in some respects she comes across kinda flakey if you just initially meet her y-k  
she just kinda flies y-k  
[she's/]

#### M3: P's response to response (countering J's rejection): <sup>4</sup>

(118): but her real stuff is tough

## Respondent's account:

-fn1

comment

Prue's acknowledgement of Julie (114)

-fn2

self defense (115)

-fn3

opinion

description of sister (117)

-fn4

statement

explanation of first perception (118)

### III: INTERACTION CLIMATE

#### INTERACTIVE MODE ONLY:

The respondent never describes the activities taking place in the course of the evening for their own sake. Whenever she refers to them, it is always in connection with how they relate to the women's purpose in meeting, namely, finding and giving support to each other. The student researcher reports that "through the course of taping the commentary, I was struck, and at times frustrated, by my respondent's tendency to focus almost exclusively on how the women felt towards each other." When asked why she gave so much information about how she felt and so little about what they did, the respondent said: it's just the way I think about it.

The respondent gives an account that is entirely self-centered. She attributes to Win the same goals as she has herself but does not attempt to follow that up. As a consequence the picture we get is restricted to what is going on for her.

#### 1: THE SUPPORT STRATEGIES

The respondent views the interaction between herself, Julie and Win as a means for them to convey support for each other. For the women friends the major purpose of getting together at the bar after work is to support each other. The respondent makes this clear in her recollection. The meetings are a source of companionship, camaraderie. The women give each other advice, pat each other on the back. For them it is a way of experiencing and sharing [their] feelings ... [they]'re all sort-a bouncing off one another in [their] interpretation of [their] women's lives.

The goal of supporting each other is achieved through three support strategies. Two of the strategies aim at fostering companionship by either sharing information or making-Julie-feel-good. The third strategy aims at learning from each other's experience.

The student researcher describes the participants as "gleaning from each other's experience advice on present and future choices". Prue feels that Julie can help with her present confusion: if we're going to talk, we're going to use it to our benefit. The student researcher sees Prue's behavior as a "tendency to co-op other people's experience as her own".

The three support strategies make use of different rhetorical resources:

- one type of talk (chitchatting), in two modes, teasing and praising;
- two rhetorical devices, asking questions ( making-Julie-talk-by-asking-her-questions and steering-questions) and comparison.

The relation between support strategies and rhetorical resources is as follows:

-In the sharing-information strategy, the participants use one type of talk, chitchatting. This is especially the case with Win and Julie. In spite of Prue's attempt to move from chitchat to some heavier conversation, J and W just ignore me. They are going to go chitchatting (see line 18).

-In the making-Julie-feel-good strategy, Prue and Win make use of chitchatting in two modes, teasing-J, indirectly-praising-Julie, and one rhetorical device, making-Julie-talk-by-asking-her-questions.

Prue and Win tease Julie because Julie likes it. This is apparently something that happens quite often between them. It happens in the specimen when the waitress comes to clean up the table (see lines 74-81). It had happened before : our teasing relates to earlier comments in the evening. Prue and Win also join forces to indirectly-praise-Julie. Instead of telling her directly how they perceive her, they praise her sister for being tough (see lines 109-118). Prue explains the need for doing so: Julie is stoic and can't be told directly 'cause she'll deny it. Throughout the specimen, Prue, but mostly Win, make Julie talk by asking her questions. Prue explains why they do it: we're giving Julie an opportunity to express her feelings. Julie won't ask a lot of questions about anyone's life. She'll ask how you are, but seldom does she initiate anything. Never asks for feedback like me and Win. This is how we let her know we care for her, by asking questions.

-In the learning-from-each-other's experience strategy two rhetorical devices are used: steering questions and comparison.

A steering-question is an attempt by either Prue or Win to steer the conversation in the direction most beneficial to her. For Prue it is to make Julie talk about her parents' divorce. For Win it is to make Julie talk about her siblings: she doesn't have many relationships and siblings are important to her, she is trying to get feedback, something we can all relate to.

Note, however, that once Win has secured the topic of her choice, she uses it for the making-Julie-feel-good strategy, rather than for the learning-from-each-other's experience strategy. This is in keeping with Prue's perception of her as trying to help.

In the specimen, steering-questions are sometimes unsuccessful and sometimes successful. When unsuccessful, they have no effect on the interaction taking place between the other participants (see line 18). When successful, the topic changes. Thus when Prue repeats her steering question for the second time, Julie understood and was willing to jump on it (see line 33b).

The other rhetorical device for learning-from-each-other's-experience, comparison, is used only by Prue. It is the means by which she affirms, questions or decides on her own actions, past , present and future. Here is how Prue explains how she makes comparisons:

I think in this part when I get Julie talking about herself and I compare myself  
there are many parallels that I see in Julie's life  
that I identify in the patterns of my own family life  
and I guess there are times when we're talking and drinking  
especially later on and not in this sort of setting  
where we do make comparisons of where our feelings and where our attitudes  
and where our presentations come from  
and I am always amazed  
at some strong similarities in our family backgrounds and patterns  
and in our explanations of them  
and how we/how we respond to them too on the surface  
this is surface

For Prue some topics trigger comparisons between what the speaker says and herself. Anything talked about is a potential "trigger topic".

There are two kinds of topics: "routine topics" and "natural topics". "Routines topics" are always brought up by one or another of the women, such as mother, father, brother, sister. "Natural topics" pop up unexpectedly, such as food. Comparisons are based on common "roots". A "root" is something within a topic that serves as a "tool" for a comparison. "Roots" are either familial or interpersonal. An example of a familial root is Julie talking about her mother's weight. It serves as a basis for Prue's comparison with her own mother's weight (see line 5b). An example of an interpersonal root is Julie talking about how she experienced her parents' divorce when she was a child. It serves as a basis for

Prue's comparison with how her daughter Sherri is currently experiencing her own divorce (see lines 33a-49).

## 2: PARTICIPANT ALIGNMENTS

The participants orient to each other along a closeness vs distance opposition.

Prue emphasizes the closeness between the three women: They are soul sisters, the Golden Girls of Hamburg.

The bar where they meet is a rural Cheers family.

Their regular meetings after work are a source of companionship, comradeship, a way of getting a more personal touch (than at work).

The distance between them is only suggested by Prue:

Julie and Win were friends before I knew either of them

It seems I was the intruder with the 'tape recorder'

Her feelings toward Win are ambivalent: she was not so much a friend as a co-worker

Prue likes Win—or at least she tries to--:

I did (do) like Win. I was impressed with the hardworking farm background she came from. An afternoon at Crystal Beach was "vacation" to her because they could not leave the cows for very long.

but she feels Win is awkward: Julie and I had a sense of place in a bar that Win did not

and she feels sorry for her: she was a big girl, lacking in self esteem and very giving

but she gets on her nerves: there were times back then when I wanted to shake her

Because of her reluctance to volunteer information about her feelings towards Win, Prue had to be interviewed on that subject again. When asked whether she felt that Win was interrupting her in section 4 (as Julie talks about her experience as a child of divorced parents) and if so, how she felt about it, Prue commented:

Julie had also gone thru a divorce

I think I may have wanted to get a little deeper into the subject and what she thought and Win's comments did not let that happen

I probably was somewhat annoyed

Although her annoyance comes through very clearly in her commentary about Win's steering questions in section 4 (Win stabs at what I am doing), she refuses to characterize Win's behavior as "competing" or "interrupting". Here is how she explains why:

I think I do not use the terms competing or interrupting<sup>1</sup> when I describe Win's statements because she is unassuming and not at all an aggressive person.

those terms would not fit anything I would ascribe to her interactions.

I actually thought she was trying to help the conversation.

if it had been someone else I might have described their efforts as being a pain in the ass.

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fn1

The position adopted here is that the notion of interruption is a subjective one.

A ten year old boy, when asked to explain how he conceived of interruption, said:

"you interrupt the teacher, you don't interrupt a friend"

Note also that Prue's comments are in keeping with American women's reluctance to admit that they are competing with one another.

### 3: Interaction Tone

Prue makes a distinction between the mood of the evening which can be light or serious/heavy, and the quality of the talk which varies from less substantial/less intimate to more substantial/deeper, more personal .

-In the entire event, the mood and the quality of the talk vary with the environment, as follows:

<b>in dining area</b>	<b>at the bar</b>
light	serious/heavy
less substantial	more substantial

To the two environments there correspond two levels of depth in the interaction between the participants:

a lighter, more shallow, less intimate level in the dining area;

a heavier, deeper, more personal level in the bar, obviously due to the alcohol they imbibe.

-In the specimen the mood is consistently light:

no great emotional thing

no loaded conversation

it was not a serious type conversation nor was it a chitchat

the purpose was just social

This is because of the presence of the tape recorder but also because it is still early in the evening:

had Julie and I been at the bar drinking

and under more intimate situation than having a tape-recorder there

I think we would have gotten a-heck-of-a-lot deeper into this

and that's when we start getting into heavy conversations

-The quality of the talk varies from section to section.

It is less substantial in section 1, which Prue characterizes as: getting on the playing field,

ie. preparing for the real thing,

and in section 8, the waitress interlude.

It is more substantial in sections 2-7 and 9-13, which Prue characterizes as: on the playing field,

i.e., enacting the real thing.

The relation between the quality of the talk and the 6 rhetorical resources used in the support strategies is as follows:

less substantial

chitchat  
teasing-J

more substantial

comparison  
asking-a-steering-question  
making-Julie-talk-by-asking-her-questions  
praising-Julie

# DATA FROM RESPONDENT'S ACCOUNT PERTAINING TO INTERACTION CLIMATE

## VF1 SECTION (1-10c)

### INTERACTIVE MODE

#### (1) THE SUPPORT STRATEGIES:

W: sharing-information strategy (chitchat)

P: learning-from-each-other's experience strategy (comparison)

Prue's comparison is embedded in chitchat in a sequence of 4 steps, as follows:

In the first step Win chitchats with Julie. The topic is Julie's mother's weight. Prue makes use of this information to initiate a comparison between Julie's mother and her own mother.

In the second step Prue establishes the validity of the comparison by ascertaining that Julie's mother's age is about the same as her own mother's. These two steps can be said to constitute the preparation for the comparison.

In the third step Prue phrases a comparison which is derailed by Win's misunderstanding.

In the fourth step Prue abandons her comparison to join Win and Julie in the chitchat.

#### (2) PARTICIPANT ALIGNMENT:

closeness: social banter with the purpose of sharing information

#### (3) INTERACTION TONE:

less substantial (chitchat)

slightly more substantial (comparison)

## **VF1 SECTION (11-32)**

### **INTERACTIVE MODE**

#### **(1) THE SUPPORT STRATEGIES:**

W: sharing-information strategy (chitchat)

P: learning-from-each-other's-experience strategy:

(steering question)

(incipient comparison)

At first Win again chitchats with Julie. The topic is Julie's father. Prue does not participate. She interrupts with an unsuccessful attempt at steering the conversation toward her topic of predilection, divorce. Then Prue's comparison is submerged under the chitchat, as follows: Prue chitchats with Julie on the topic of Julie's father 's difficulties due to his smoking. Smoking brings up an implicit comparison between Julie and Julie's father, Julie and Prue, Julie and Prue's sister Gwen. This is almost a replica of the situation in *subpart I.1*, except that here the comparison is implicit rather than expressed in the actual talk. It is made explicit by Prue only in her commentary.

#### **(2) PARTICIPANT ALIGNMENTS:**

closeness: bonding through ritual lamenting (26b-32)

#### **(3) INTERACTION TONE:**

less substantial (chitchat, lines 11-21 and 26b-32)

more substantial (steering question, line 18, and comparison lines 22-26)

**VF1 SECTION (33a-51)****INTERACTIVE MODE****(1) THE SUPPORT STRATEGIE:**

P: learning-from-each-other's-experience strategy: steering question (33a+b)  
comparison

P gets involved in a comparison because she feels that Julie's experience as a child of divorced parents can help her understand better her daughter's reactions to her own divorce (50a-51)

W: making-Julie-feel-good strategy (asking questions, lines 48, 49)

Win, while retaining the topic of divorce, makes Julie talk by asking her questions in order to get in.

**(2) PARTICIPANT ALIGNMENT:**

closeness: J is helping P out

J understood and was willing to jump in on it

**(3) INTERACTION TONE:**

more substantial (steering; comparison; making-Julie-talk by asking questions)

**VF1 SECTION (52-58b)****INTERACTIVE MODE****(1) THE SUPPORT STRATEGIE:**

P is using the learning-from-each-other's-experience strategy: comparison (57-58)

W is using the making-Julie-feel-good strategy: asking questions (2-56)

The situation is similar to that in section1: Win makes Julie talk by asking her questions, and Prue co-opts what is being said for a comparison.

**(2) INTERACTION TONE:**

more substantial

## VF1 SECTION (59A-73)

### INTERACTIVE MODE

#### (1) THE SUPPORT STRATEGIES:

W: making-Julie-feel-good: W makes J talk by asking her questions

W and P: learning-from-each-others'-experience: steering question and comparison

-W tries unsuccessfully twice to steer the conversation away from divorce toward the topic of her predilection, siblings. She will be successful in sections 9-13.

-P finally joins in and make a comparison between how J felt as a child of divorced parents and how her own children feel.

#### (2) PARTICIPANT ALIGNMENT:

Distance between P and W: W's persistence

Win stabs at what I'm doing

#### (3) INTERACTION TONE:

more substantial

## VF3 SECTION (74-81)

### INTERACTIVE MODE

#### (1) The support strategies:

P and W: making-Julie-feel-good (teasing)

A common trigger for teasing Julie is how much she eats. Prue comments on Julie's eating habits as follows:

Julie's a very thin person

goes 5 foot nothin

um very petite

and to watch her eat is sort-of phenomenal

Note that in American culture, teasing is a way of showing that you like somebody.

#### (2) PARTICIPANT ALIGNMENT:

closeness: teasing Julie

#### (3) INTERACTION TONE:

less substantial

**VF1 SECTION (87-89)+(91-96)****INTERACTIVE MODE****(1) THE SUPPORT STRATEGIES:**

W and P: making-Julie-feel-good strategy: making-Julie-talk by asking questions  
 W, with P in tow, makes J talk about her brother.  
 It seems that instead of using the topic of siblings for herself (as Prue would ) Win tries to help Julie.

**(2) PARTICIPANT ALIGNMENTS:**

Distance between P and W: W's persistence  
 Closeness between P+W and J: support for J

**(3) INTERACTION TONE:**

more substantial

**VF1 SECTION (97-118)****INTERACTIVE MODE****(1) THE SUPPORT STRATEGIES:**

-making Julie feel good strategy by making Julie talk:  
 Win and Prue make Julie talk by asking her questions.  
 W, with P attempting and finally managing to get in, makes Julie talk about her sister.  
 - making Julie feel good by indirectly praising J:  
 Win and Prue indirectly praise Julie.  
 - learning from others' experience through comparison:  
 In line 110 P expresses concern about Peggy's age, because she's thinking of her own daughter, Kris. Prue explains her question to Julie, as follows:  
 my reference to Julie's sister's age was to compare her to my daughter, Kris.  
 a point in the connectedness.

**(2) PARTICIPANT ALIGNMENT:**

closeness between P+W and J:  
 we're giving J an opportunity to express her feelings  
 this is how we let her know we care for her by asking questions  
 closeness between W and J: W's indirect way of telling J how she perceives her

**(3) INTERACTION TONE:**

more substantial  
 P: learning from others' experience (comparison).

