

THE EXPRESSION OF OPINIONS: A PRELIMINARY NEEDS ANALYSIS  
OF DISCUSSION SKILLS FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

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This study rises out of my efforts to develop a curriculum to teach foreign students discussion skills for academic purposes. When teaching foreign students skills for academic purposes, teachers can draw on needs assessments done in the areas of reading, writing, listening or scientific and technical fields. Apparently no needs assessments, however, have been done to determine what discussion skills students need in the classroom. In fact, few needs assessments of any kind of academic oral skills have been done. Two studies which have been done examine the oral skills needed by foreign teaching assistants. One examines communication strategies needed in lecture discourse (Gilette, 1982); the other, communication strategies required in student teacher classroom interaction (Meyers, 1985).

I am aware of only one study which looks at the oral needs of the general student (Chen, 1985) -- a global needs assessment of the English needs of Chinese graduate students at the University of Minnesota. It includes eight academic activities involving oral production of English. Those activities were ranked in the following order, according to their perceived importance for academic success, by 20 Chinese graduate students:

- 1) participating in class discussion
- 2) informal talk with professors
- 3) informal talk with classmates
- 4) attending graduate seminars
- 5) giving lectures
- 6) giving oral reports
- 7) asking/answering questions in class
- 8) leading class discussions/seminars

Participation in class discussion is ranked as most important. Interestingly, Chen found "participation in class discussion" and "attending graduate seminars"

to differ in their relative importance to "informal talk with professors and classmates." While he does not clearly define the difference in situations, he does differentiate them in terms of orientation. "Participating in class discussion" is grouped with "study-oriented" activities, while "attending graduate seminars" is grouped with "research-oriented" activities.

Candlin (1976) reports on a study done by Morrison, rating some of the same activities for their difficulty as listening situations that Chen rated for their perceived degree of importance to academic success. As in Chen's study, Morrison's ranking was determined on the basis of foreign student questionnaires. From the most difficult listening situation to the least, the order was:

- 1) seminar/tutorial
- 2) informal lecture ('high in informational content but not necessarily in highly formal register')
- 3) formal lecture (formal register, close to spoken prose)
- 4) individual discussion.

Candlin does not list "class discussion" separately from "seminars," as Chen does. The comparable activities, then, are Morrison's "seminar/tutorial" and "individual discussion" and Chen's "attending graduate seminars" and "informal talk with professors" and "...classmates." Morrison found listening to be more difficult in the seminar situation than in individual discussion. Perhaps fortunately for students, Chen found informal discussion with professors and classmates to be perceived as more important to academic success than attending graduate seminars.

For the purposes of this paper, I will use a general definition of group discussion given by leading figures in the field of small group dynamics, Ernest and Nancy Bormann. "Group discussion can be defined as one or more meetings of

a . . . group of people who communicate face to face in order to fulfill a common purpose or achieve a common goal." (Bormann and Bormann, 1980, p.15) The size of such a group is not strictly defined, but is limited by the clause "communicate face to face." One speech/communication textbook suggests that even a group of 50 could have face to face interaction if seated in a circle, but that usually a discussion group would be no larger than 20-25 (Hybels and Weaver, 1974, p.22). In a classroom, a discussion group is generally assumed to be no smaller than three. For my purposes, then, the size of groups under consideration falls in the range of three to 25.

The academic discussion group fits into a category which Bormann and Bormann call "learning groups." Such groups "generally are designed to provide insight and understanding through the give-and-take of people expressing different ideas, applying different experiences to the theme under discussion, and amplifying ideas." (Bormann and Bormann, 1980, p.21) This stands in contrast to a social conversation, which is generally informal, with no agreed upon theme. This distinction is supported in Chen's analysis, which lists "informal talk" with professors and classmates separately from class discussion.

Looking outside the field of ESL for relevant research, little has been done to analyze the language used in group discussions in such a way that it can be used to design a discussions skills curriculum for ESL students. The field of discourse analysis does not yet have research to offer for groups larger than dyads. This is important, because, as Bormann and Bormann point out, "the introduction of a third person changes the nature of . . . working and social relationships." (Bormann and Bormann, 1980, p.15)

The field of intercultural communication heightens our awareness of many non-verbal issues relevant to small group discussion, such as the differing

significance of silence (Braithwaite, 1982) and eye contact in different cultures.

Anecdotal evidence confirms that cultural differences are relevant to the anticipated educational usefulness of, and degree of participation in, classroom discussions. A newspaper interview of a Japanese woman who had to adjust to American classroom expectations reports:

The challenge was sometimes overwhelming. The clash between Japanese and Western culture again surfaced. In class, half the grades were based on classroom participation where classmates were expected to debate with each other on various issues. Micki's traditional upbringing as a Japanese female was to be seen, but not heard to challenge men in public. She tried to explain her situation to her professor when he indicated that she would fail the course unless she learned to participate in classroom discussions. She asked him how he thought an English woman would feel if she studied in Japan and was asked to adapt her communication style to the traditional Japanese female mode. The professor was unimpressed, and finally, amidst tears and much anguish, Micki adapted and learned to debate in class. (The Mainichi Daily, 1983)

Although some intercultural studies of verbal communication have been done, to my knowledge none have been done in the context of group discussions.

The field of speech communication offers research on group dynamics and texts on effective small group communication (Bormann and Bormann, 1980). Most of the research focuses on such dynamics as roles, norms and cohesiveness. Much work has been done coding units of social interaction according to various theoretical models or conventionalized usages of a speech community. Few of the models or categorizations have been assessed for validity and reliability, but a body of literature is developing which tries to address the question, "How do we identify appropriate, reproducible units for the study of social interaction and assign those units empirically valid meanings?" (Folger, et al., 1984, p.116)

This is an important question for the field of ESL as well. In the last ten years, many textbooks for oral English have been using the functional approach, coding social interaction in units called functions. Examples of functions are "starting a conversation," "requesting," "giving opinions" and "disagreeing." Probably no one would argue with Van Ek's definition of a function as "what people do by means of language." (Van Ek, 1975, p.5) Since no objective measure exists for deciding "what people do," however, it is not surprising that different people have come up with different descriptions of this. Wilkins has stated "there is no . . . authority for establishing a universal set of categories of language use . . . here called categories of communicative function . . ." (Wilkins, 1976, p.23) Thus different researchers have created taxonomies of varying lengths, based on their own theoretical models or intuitions (Austin, 1962, Van Ek, 1975, and Wilkins, 1976, among others). This is true even within a limited field. For example, reviewers of EST textbooks found "no general agreement among the textbooks even as to the operations or notions to be included, let alone their forms of linguistic expression." (Ewer and Boys, 1981, p.91)

Thus a needs assessment of academic oral discussion skills must at present be carried out with no operative definition of the category "function," no objective taxonomies of functions performed in English social interaction, and apparently, no previous needs assessments to draw upon.

It is now generally accepted that ESL materials should be based on valid linguistic data. This data can be obtained from published studies, by doing one's own field investigations, and/or by relying on the intuitive judgements of native speakers (Judd, 1983, p.236-237). Since no data has been published on

the language used in academic discussions, I have turned to intuitive judgments of native speakers, as found in ESL textbooks, and my own investigations of the language used in one videotaped academic discussion.

This paper then consists of three studies: 1) An examination of ESL textbooks for taxonomies of functions assumed to occur in discussions, and for the linguistic forms taught for expressing one function, the "giving of opinions"; 2) An examination of the transcript of an academic discussion among six native speakers, to see which of the forms taught in ESL texts are actually used to express opinions; 3) An examination of the same transcript by five native speakers to determine which statements in the discussion are perceived as opinions, and why they are perceived as such.

## ESL TEXTBOOK EXAMINATION

### Method

I reviewed eleven ESL textbooks of advanced spoken English for their approach to teaching discussion skills, their choice of functions occurring in discussions, and the linguistic forms taught for performing those functions. This examination does not represent an exhaustive review of all published textbooks. Nonetheless, those reviewed are very probably representative, as they are the only texts which teach discussion skills in the library of the Program in ESL at the University of Minnesota, one of the leading ESL teacher-training institutions in the United States.

All eleven texts emphasize the use of English in interaction with other students. Seven of the texts are intended primarily as material to stimulate group discussions on specified topics (Alexander, 1968; Alexander, et al., 1978; Byrd, 1980; Christison, et al., 1981; Peaty, 1981; Pifer, 1969; Rooks, 1981). Three texts are functionally organized, with the intent of teaching the language needed to perform given functions in social conversation (Jones, 1983; Keller, 1976; Reinhart and Fisher, 1985). The last text (Porter, 1985) combines the teaching of functional language, materials to stimulate group discussions, and practice, with four "communication contexts": formal, interpersonal, small group and large group.

Only five of the eleven texts make any effort to teach discussion skills (Jones, Keller, Peaty, Porter, Reinhart and Fisher). All five take a functional approach to teaching the language needed for discussions. Jones has a chapter titled "Giving Opinions, Agreeing and Disagreeing, Discussing." Keller has

relevant chapters on "Opinion Openers" (Gambits 1), "Subject-Expansion Links," "Subject-Evaluation Links," "Argumentation Links" (Gambits 2), and "Responders" (Gambits 3). Porter's relevant chapter is called "Discussing Ideas," while Reinhart and Fisher's relevant chapter is "Giving Your Opinion, Agreeing and Disagreeing." Although the main thrust of Peaty's text is not "functional," he offers a brief treatment of discussion functions in his introduction.

While Peaty and Porter are specifically presenting language for use in group discussion, Jones, Keller and Reinhart and Fisher are presenting language for discussing ideas in social conversation. As stated earlier, the dynamics of a social conversation differ from those of a group discussion. For the purposes of this study, I will focus on a function common to both, and will assume that if there are any significant differences in the language used to give opinions in the different settings, they will be brought out by the comparison of textbook material.

The functions each text presents for use in discussing ideas were tabulated in alphabetical order according to the label given by each author (Appendix 2). Fourteen of the functions were not listed in their respective alphabetical positions. These were all cases in which the authors used different forms of the same key word, for example, "Giving opinions" and "Opinion openers." In these cases, all function labels sharing a common key word were grouped together rather than being listed in their separate alphabetical positions. Thus 14 separate listings collapsed into five groups.

TABLE 1: Groupings of function labels sharing key words

Functions	Jones	Keller	Peaty	Porter	R&F
Agreeing					X
Agreement	X		X		
Agreement responders		X			
Expressing agreement				X	
Asking for clarification				X	
Asking other people to explain their point of view more exactly	X				
Disagree (more directly)	X				
Disagreeing					X
Disagreement	X		X		
Disagreement responders		X			
Expressing disagreement				X	
Polite disagreement			X		
Strong disagreement			X		
Giving opinions	X			X	
Giving your opinion					X
Expressing opinions in a tentative way	X				
Opinions		X			
Restatement	X				
Restatement or mention of of previous ideas				X	

The final level of textbook analysis, an examination and comparison of phrases provided by different authors to accomplish a given function, was limited to "giving opinions," as that function seems more intrinsic to carrying on a discussion than any other. (In spite of this, Peaty does not include "giving opinions" as one of his functions. Because no rationale is given for his selection of functions, it is difficult to say whether this is a significant omission or not.)

The phrases taught by Jones, Keller, Porter and Reinhart and Fisher as appropriate for "expressing opinions" are listed alphabetically in Appendix 3. (Hereafter, these phrases will be referred to as the "ESL opinion phrases.") The ESL opinion phrases were tabulated in chart form to indicate which texts

they are taught in and to show which phrases are taught by more than one textbook. If the phrases had been collapsed to reflect the common use of key nouns or verbs, this compilation of "ESL opinion phrases" might reveal more overlap. For example, under 'believe' we would find: 'I believe,' 'I have reason to believe,' 'I personally believe,' and 'I strongly believe.' Doing so, however, would mask choices the authors have made in their pedagogical presentation. The above phrases, for example, are all listed by Keller as different ways to express opinion. Thus the data has been presented in the same form in which it was found.

### Results

The approach each textbook takes to teaching discussion skills is slightly different. Peaty's main intention, as stated earlier, is to offer material to stimulate discussion. His only teaching of skills is in the introduction to the book: a list of functions, and, under each, some linguistic expressions that students may find useful. Keller's approach is similar. He presents useful phrases, organized functionally, then offers activities in which to use them. However, he presents his functions one at a time through the book with activities that are oriented more toward pair conversations than group discussions. Jones and Reinhart and Fisher present their functional language in the context of dialogues, list additional alternative phrases and offer activities to practice the use of the given phrases. Reinhart and Fisher go one step beyond Jones in encouraging students to research for themselves the language used by native speakers for given functions. Porter emphasizes sociolinguistic patterns as much as the language needed for expressing given functions. She also provides material to stimulate discussion.

The functions taught by each of the five ESL textbooks which teach discussion skills appear in Appendix 2. Among the five authors, a total of 46 functions are taught. Only five of the 46 functions are taught by more than one author: agreeing, asking for clarification, disagreeing, giving opinions and restatement. All five authors agree on only two of the functions: agreeing and disagreeing. Had I not grouped function by shared key words, the overlap between authors would have been even less. If each function were listed strictly by the authors' labels, a total of 61 functions would be taught, and only three functions would be included by more than one author: "agreement," "disagreement" and "giving opinions." They are each included by two authors.

The review of phrases taught for expressing opinion in four ESL texts yielded a list of 56 different phrases. (See Appendix 3.) This appears to confirm Keller's statement: "We are all very fond of stating our own opinions. In English, we have over fifty typical ways of introducing a personal opinion." (Keller, 1979, p.33) Interestingly, however, there is little agreement about which phrases are used to express opinion. Only five ESL opinion phrases are taught by more than one author (See Table 2.) and of those only two are taught by three or more of the authors. One lone ESL opinion phrase is listed by all four authors: "I think."

TABLE 2: ESL Opinion phrases taught by more than one textbook

Phrase	Jones	Keller	Porter	R&F
As I see it	X	X	X	
I believe		X	X	
I think	X	X	X	X
In my (personal) opinion		X	X	
It seems to me that			X	X

Earlier I speculated that few differences would be found between the language presented by ESL authors to express opinions in group discussion and the language presented to express opinions in social conversation. Comparing Porter (presenting language for group discussion) and the other authors ( presenting language for social conversation) in Table 2, we can see that my speculation is borne out. The differences between Porter and the other authors is less than those among the three authors teaching social conversation.

Thus these results underline the lack of general agreement on taxonomies of units such as functions and notions, as well as those of linguistic expressions for a given unit. Because none of the ESL textbooks cited research as the source of their taxonomies, we have to assume that the authors are relying on their intuitions as native speakers. It seems then, that native speaker intuitions prove an unreliable basis for presenting reliable linguistic data. If intuitions cannot provide reliable data, how do they hold up as a basis for presenting valid linguistic data? To answer this question, I observed a native speaker class discussion to see if and how ESL opinion phrases are actually used.

## EXAMINATION OF A NATIVE SPEAKER ACADEMIC DISCUSSION

### Method

Which of the ESL opinion phrases proposed in ESL textbooks are actually used in native speaker academic discussions? A discussion among native speakers in an undergraduate university class (using small group discussion as a regular part of its curriculum) was videotaped, transcribed and analyzed to determine the occurrences of the phrases compiled from the ESL textbook review. The students in SP/COMM 3641, Discussion and Conference Method, met one hour a week for lecture, and one hour a week in small groups to plan a group panel discussion on a chosen controversial issue. The third discussion of each group had been videotaped by the class professor for analysis of group dynamics and participant roles.

That the subjects were taking a Speech/Communication course on discussion may make them an atypical discussion group. The course content however, does not deal with language at all, but with such group dynamics as cohesiveness, leadership formation and task vs. relationship orientation. Thus it seems unlikely that the language used to express opinions in the discussion would be modified in such a way as to make it atypical.

After videotaping was complete, I asked the class members for permission to use their videotapes for linguistic analysis, and received permission from all members of two groups (See Appendix 1 for consent form). One group was chosen over the other, because it seemed to include more instances of the phenomenon under observation: verbal prefaces to, or phrases used to express the various functions of discussion. The use of a videotape made for purposes other than

this research offered the advantage of providing data "uncontaminated" by participant knowledge of the focus of my research.

The purpose of the chosen group's discussion was to come up with a question to focus a panel discussion on the topic of unions -- specifically the relationship of a local Hormel plant's union to both the main union and the company. The discussion began with reports on current newspaper treatment of the topic. Some expression of opinion occurred at this point, in personal response to the content presented. Effort was made to focus the discussion on the development of a panel question, but soon the discussion turned to the participants' views of the company and unions involved, and of their recent actions. Four of the six participants did most of the talking during this part. As the time limit for the discussion approached, attention returned to the issue of framing the central question. The more silent members of the group began participating at this point, one only after being badgered to make a contribution.

I transcribed the full 45 minutes of discussion. A few transcription conventions should be clarified. Approximate pause length was indicated with one asterisk per one second pause. Words within parentheses indicate uncertain transcription, whereas empty parentheses indicate unclear utterances. Each time a new person began speaking, his/her words were noted on a new line. If this utterance overlapped the original speaker's words, a bracket was drawn between the lines of the two speakers' utterances, in front of the overlapping words. If the original speaker continued talking, and the second speaker stopped, the first non-overlapped word of the original speaker was entered on a new line.

In one instance, the single group discussion broke down into two separate conversations. As it was impossible to note the relative timing and overlap

of the four participating discussants' utterances, each of the two conversations was transcribed separately. Each sub-discussion was indicated with curved brackets, and straight brackets were placed around the whole section to indicate that the two sub-discussions overlapped.

Although the notation method used for transcribing the discussion makes little difference to the data as analyzed in this study, several issues should be pointed out for consideration in future analyses of different aspects of the data. 1) Each time a different person spoke his/her words were entered on a new line of the transcript. Sometimes these words overlapped those of the original speaker, who then continued talking. The second speaker's words may or may not be considered to be a "turn" by researchers studying turn-taking. For the purposes of this study, each time a speaker began a verbal utterance, it was counted as a turn for the purpose of comparing relative frequency of speech by the six discussants. 2) Punctuation is, strictly speaking, a device of written language. Thus some researchers do not use it in the transcription of oral language. More commonly, it is used with a very precise key to indicate phrase-final, sentence-final, or question-final intonation and pausing. In this study I did not examine intonation or pauses, and used punctuation intuitively, to clarify meaning apparent from the context. 3) Pauses of one second or more were indicated with an asterisk for each second. Where pauses occurred between the turns of two different speakers, they were indicated on a separate line so as not to make any assumptions about who held the floor, or to whose turn they belonged.

### Results

The transcript of the native speaker group's 45 minute discussion revealed the use of only three of the ESL opinion phrases: "Don't you think," "I'm

"pretty sure," and "I think." The latter was by far the most commonly used phrase, occurring 26 times in 43 minutes and 13 seconds of discussion. In contrast, "Don't you think," occurred three times, and "I'm pretty sure," occurred once.

Discussant F never used any of the ESL opinion phrases throughout the entire discussion. Discussant E used two of the phrases a total of 14 times. This difference might be expected, since discussant E took many more turns (156 turns) than discussant F did (40 turns). The number of opinion phrases used by the others, however, were not in relation to the number of turns they took. Discussants B,C and D used ESL opinion phrases approximately the same number of times (6, 5 and 4 times respectively), but varied markedly in the number of turns they took (133, 180 and 121 turns respectively ). Discussant A, who took 66 turns, used an ESL opinion phrase only once throughout the discussion.

TABLE 3: Frequency of use of ESL opinion phrases  
in relation to turns taken

Discussant	A	B	C	D	E	F	TOTAL
Turns	66	133	180	121	156	40	696
Frequency of "I think"	1	5	3	4	13	0	26
Frequency of "Don't you think"	0	0	2	0	1	0	3
Frequency of "I'm pretty sure"	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Frequency of ESL opinion phrases	1	6	5	4	14	0	30

Several judgements made in counting must be pointed out. I did not count phrases if they occurred in an unclear utterance (in the transcript, trans-

cribed in parentheses and underlined in red), nor if they occurred as a repetition in a false start, for example, "I think it's just that-yeah, I think . . ." (In the transcript, the second occurrence is boxed in red, with "rep." written above.)

In addition, I made one set of judgments by intuition: I did not count a phrase if it clearly did not fulfill the function of expressing an opinion, for example, "That's what Ann thinks," "I can't think." Nonetheless, all such phrases in the transcript are underlined in pencil so that the reader can make his/her own judgments.

The phrase "I think" occurred 21 additional times, embedded in 11 different longer phrases, for example, "but I think," "I don't think," "I think though." I judged such phrases as different from "I think," because the difference between them is no less than that found between other phrases which authors have listed separately (e.g. "I think" and "I personally think"). One of the longer phrases, "I don't think" was used eight times, more than any of the ESL opinion phrases besides "I think." "Well, I think" was used three times, the same number as the second most frequently used ESL opinion phrase.

Table 4: Frequency of "I think" in different settings

<u>Phrase from transcript</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
and I think	2
but I think	2
but I don't think	1
I 'ud think	1
I don't think	7
I don't even think	1
I just think	1
I think essentially	1
I think though	1
I thought	1
Well, I think	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>

Key words from ESL opinion phrases other than "I think" also occurred in different settings than the phrases as they appeared in the textbooks -- as we can see in Table 5.

Table 5: Expressions from the transcript sharing  
a key word with ESL opinion phrases

ESL opinion phrase	Expression from transcript	Frequency
I <u>believe</u>	I don't believe it	1
	No one believes it	1
Yes, I <u>guess</u>	and I guess	1
	I guess too	1
I <u>imagine</u>	I could imagine	1
As far as I <u>know</u>	I don't even know if	1
	I don't know,	4
	I don't know if	3
	I don't know so much that	1
In my personal <u>opinion</u>	That's all personal opinion	1
	That's my opinion	1
The <u>point</u> is	that's the point	2
	That ... the point	2
It <u>seems</u> to me	an' to me it just seems	1
	doesn't seem	2
	seemed to	1
	seems	2
	seems to	1
	seems like	3
	To me it seemed like	1
	To me it seems like	1
I'm pretty <u>sure</u>	An' I'm sure	2
	I'm not too sure	1
	I'm sure	2
TOTAL		37

Although the occurrence of the above phrases was infrequent, they occurred as frequently as the two ESL opinion phrases, "Don't you think," and "I'm pretty sure." For frequency of individual discussant use of "ESL opinion phrases" and expressions that share key words with ESL opinion phrases, see Appendix 4. In order to find all the expressions in their original context, all ESL phrases have been highlighted in one color, and all phrases sharing a key word have been highlighted with a consistent color.

Considering only ESL opinion phrases as ways to express opinions seems to suggest that 30 statements of opinion were made during the 43.13 minutes of

native speaker discussion. Considering the additional phrases containing key words found in ESL opinion phrases, would suggest that 75 statements of opinion were made during the discussion. Neither count includes many statements which I, as a native speaker, perceive as expressions of opinion, for example, "So this union is just like all unions in, really, they just want to get ahead for themselves, and they don't care about the lower guys."

Clearly then, there are ways other than the use of ESL phrases by which native speakers of English express and perceive opinions. These patterns of expressing opinion must be identified if we want our teaching to represent linguistically valid data.

## NATIVE SPEAKERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OPINION

Method

I conducted a two-part study of native speakers' perceptions of statements of opinion in the discussion transcript examined earlier for ESL opinion phrases. The first task in identifying how native speakers express opinions is identifying the statements of opinion. Thus I asked five native-speaker subjects to identify all statements which they perceived as expressing opinion. In the second part, I asked them what about those statements caused them to think the statements were opinions.

In order to limit the data, two of the 21 pages of transcript were chosen for examination. This section was chosen because it is fairly self-contained, and seems to me to consist almost entirely of statements of opinion, yet includes only four occurrences of ESL opinion phrases. It contains an additional four phrases that include key words from ESL opinion phrases.

In the first part of the study, five "linguistically sophisticated" native speakers of English (one professor, one Ph.D. graduate, two M.A. graduates and one M.A. candidate in linguistics) were given two pages of discussion transcript with the following instructions: "Please highlight every statement that you perceive as a statement of opinion." No guidelines regarding the definition of "opinion" were given. Results were collated, and the transcript was color-coded according to the number of people who perceived a given statement to be an opinion (Appendix 5). Statements that five, four, three, two and one person agreed were opinions were each highlighted in a different color.

In the second part of the study, a copy of the color-coded transcript was given to each of the five subjects. Each person's copy differed in one respect.

Where a subject was the only person to perceive a statement as an opinion, that statement on his/her copy was highlighted in a sixth color. In addition to the color-coded transcript, each subject was given a color key, the transcript with their original perceptions of opinion highlighted, and an answer sheet isolating the phrases which 5, 4 or only 1 person had agreed expressed an opinion. Answer sheets were marked to indicate that the subjects should ignore statements that only one person perceived to express opinion, unless that person was themselves. The subjects were given the following instructions for their second task.

For each statement highlighted in yellow, orange or green on the composite result transcript, please find the corresponding sentence or phrase on the answer sheet. Beside each, write down what it is about the statement that makes you think it's an expression of opinion. If there is a star beside the statement, it means you were the only one who did not perceive it as an opinion. In those cases, please write why you think it's NOT an opinion.

KEY: Yellow -- 5/5 thought it stated an opinion  
Orange -- 4/5 thought it stated an opinion  
Purple -- 3/5 thought it stated an opinion  
Blue -- 2/5 thought it stated an opinion  
Underlined  
with pencil -- 1/5 thought it stated an opinion  
Green -- You were the only one who thought  
it stated an opinion.

### Results

From beginning to end, the results of this study underlined the complexity involved in recognizing and expressing opinions. While identifying opinions in the first part of the study, each of the native speakers expressed uncertainty, and even anxiety, about their judgments. One stated flatly, "This drove me crazy." Several of the subjects expressed a desire to discuss their perceptions before committing themselves to judgments. No discussion was allowed, however.

My original perception that most of the two-page transcript consists of statements of opinion was borne out by the perceptions of the other native speakers. Very few clauses were not perceived to express opinion by at least one subject. About half of the clauses were agreed upon by the majority (3, 4, or 5 subjects) to express opinion. On the other hand, Appendix 5 shows quite a variation among the perceptions of the five subjects. No one color predominates on the transcript, indicating that statements were fairly evenly divided between having 5, 4, 3, 2 or 1 person perceive them as expressing opinion. Because the purpose of this study is to identify ways -- not frequency -- of expressing opinion, no finer quantification was attempted.

It is difficult to quantify the statements of opinion in order to compare the numbers of agreeing perceptions. What is the basic unit for an expression of opinion? A "turn" is too variable, sometimes containing one statement of opinion, sometimes three. Counting sentences is unsatisfactory, as many occurring in natural speech are incomplete. Words are inappropriate units for quantifying expressions of opinion, because their number is not in proportion to the number of opinions expressed. Clauses seem to come closest to reflecting the expression of a single opinion. Yet even they are difficult to count because of the number of false starts and repetitions in natural speech. "Statements of opinion" were differentiated for the purposes of the answer sheet (Appendix 6) simply on the basis of a change in turn, OR a change in the number of subjects perceiving the material to express opinion. For example, if three consecutive sentences were all perceived by two people to express opinion, those sentences were treated as one unit. If five people thought the first clause of a sentence expressed opinion, but only three people thought the second clause expressed opinion, the sentence was treated as two units.

The reasons each subject gave for perceiving a statement as opinion (or not perceiving it as an opinion when everyone else did) are listed in Appendix 6. If identifying the statements of opinion in the first part of the study yielded complex results, giving reasons for perceptions of opinion in the second part yielded even more complex results. A total of 93 different statements were made to say why a given statement in the transcript was perceived to express opinion. The subjects continued to show uncertainty about their judgments, as reflected in the number of qualifications given to judgments (e.g. #4 E.N., #8 S.G.) and several changes of judgment from the first part of the study to the second (e.g. #27 S.G., #11 P.O.).

Two interesting patterns are readily observable in the collated list of responses to each statement on the answer sheet. First, a single person often gave more than one reason for perceiving a single statement as an opinion. Second, different people often gave different reasons for perceiving the same statement as an opinion. These patterns either suggest that native speaker perceptions of opinion are unreliable, or that ways to recognize opinions are often redundant semantically as well as structurally, and different native speakers tend to pick out different elements. There was enough overlap in the responses that I believe the latter to be the case.

Some of the 93 statements of why a given statement was perceived as an opinion were clearly synonymous, such as, "could be disputed" and "could be refuted," while the others fell into 15 general categories (Table 6 and Appendix 7). Two patterns of reasons emerged as to why statements were perceived as opinion: structural (grammatical and lexical), and semantic (including functional reasons). The larger number of categories fell into the semantic group (11 out of 15), as did the larger number of statements (153 out of 228).

Table 6: Categories of Reasons Given for Perceptions  
of Statements as Opinion

I. STRUCTURAL CATEGORIES	[75 statements]
A. Judgmental vocabulary	21 statements
B. Lexical opinion markers	48 statements
C. Tag questions	6 statements
II. SEMANTIC CATEGORIES	[153 statements]
A. Agreement	14 statements
B. Conclusion	7 statements
C. Generalization	13 statements
D. Guess	2 statements
E. Implied opinion	6 statements
F. Interpretation	32 statements
G. Not factually verifiable	50 statements
H. Persuasion	2 statements
I. Probability	1 statement
J. Speculation about the future	3 statements
K. Suggestion	2 statements
L. Unsupported assertion	15 statements
III. NO REASON GIVEN	[6 statements]

At first it appears that semantic cues are far more important in the perception of opinions than structural cues. However, the four major categories of reasons given are equally divided between semantic and structural categories. From most frequently used to least frequently used they are: "Not factually verifiable," "Lexical opinion markers," "Interpretation" and "Judgmental vocabulary." It may be more accurate to say that each category of cues is at least as important as the other.

The category of "lexical opinion markers" corresponds to the type of structures taught by ESL textbooks, referred to in this paper as "ESL opinion phrases." The five native speakers perceived the following six phrases to mark, or signal, the expression of an opinion:

I think  
 I'm sure  
 key point  
 seems like  
 seems to be  
 you can say what you want

Of these, only one was included verbatim in the ESL opinion phrases: "I think." Four others share a key word with an ESL opinion phrase: "I'm sure," "Seems like," "seems to be" and "key point." "You can say what you want," which was only perceived by one subject to mark an expression of opinion, does not resemble any of the ESL phrases. Thus the set of "lexical opinion markers" perceived by the native speakers was quite different than that taught by the ESL textbooks.

Many of the semantic categories appear to fulfill other functions besides "giving opinions." In fact, six of the categories correspond to six of the other functions used in expressing ideas which are taught in ESL textbooks.

Table 6: Correspondence of Semantic Categories Used in the Perception of Opinions and Functions Taught in ESL Textbooks

<u>Semantic Categories:</u>	<u>Functions Taught in ESL Texts:</u>
Agreement	Agreeing
Conclusion	Concluding
Generalization	Generalization
Guess	Guessing
Interpretation	Interpretation
Suggestion	Questioning and Suggestions

These results are based on semantic categories formed after the subjects had identified and given reasons for their perceptions of opinion, without any guidelines as to what an "expression of opinion" is. The results might have been different if the subjects had been given a list of functions (such as that in Appendix 2) and then asked to identify the expressions of opinion.

As it is, function theory supports these findings. Wilkins has stated, "The fact that categories are presented as an inventory is not meant to suggest that they are mutually exclusive. Any actual utterance . . . may simultaneously perform more than one function." (Wilkins, 1976, p.24)

This overlap becomes more complicated, however, when we note that two of the categories of reasons given for perceiving statements as opinions are also among the categories of reasons given for not perceiving statements as opinions (The latter are listed in Appendix 8). The two categories are "Agreement" and "Suggestion." It is possible that the rejection of "agreement" and "suggestion" as expressions of opinion is an artifact of familiarity with traditional functional categories. The answers given for why the "agreement" and "suggestion" were not perceived as opinions indicate that the subjects may have rejected them because they fulfilled the other functions:

agreement: "I think I was trying to consistently not mark statements which were agreement although this one does expand on the previous point."

suggestion: "a suggestion -- not really a statement"

On the other hand, the differences in judgment may simply reflect the complexity of semantic judgments. It is probably because of this complexity that ESL textbooks have taught the "expression of opinion" through structural, rather than semantic cues. The results of this study, however, make it clear that it is a grave misrepresentation of the English language to ignore the way opinions are apparently expressed more than half the time.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study raise a number of serious questions about the functional approach. They also have important implications for the teaching of discussion skills, and raise interesting questions for future research.

With neither a clear definition of "function," nor an objective set of parameters for determining what a function is, the functional approach has major problems. The first step in materials development and syllabus design is needs assessment. If a textbook writer or a teacher does not know what a function is, how can he/she determine which functions need to be taught for a given purpose? Thus it is that we have the five ESL authors of this study teaching 46 different functions for the discussion of ideas, but only agreeing with even one other author on five of them. None of the authors gave a rationale for including the functions they chose to include.

If an analysis of needed functions is done by intuition, as a result of not having an objective criteria for identifying functions, how can the data collected by a materials developer or teacher be linguistically valid? If they don't know what exactly a "function" is, how can they decide whether a given linguistic form really performs that function or not?

This points to the second major problem of the function approach. As far as I am aware, all taxonomies of functions, as well as the taxonomies for their forms of linguistic expression, are based on intuition. This study shows intuition to yield unreliable results for both the selection of functions performed in a given situation, and in the selection of linguistic forms used to accomplish a given function. Furthermore, the intuitions of the four ESL text-

book writers did not yield linguistic data, comparable to the actual data from a native speakers' academic discussion.

Finally, this study shows the functional approach to be limited in its restriction to structural expressions of functions. Although I doubt that any functional textbook says that structural cues are the only way to recognize or express opinions, I suspect they misrepresent the language by what they have omitted. Students should be alerted to the semantic categories underlying the use of lexical markers, and to the existence of those semantic categories unmarked by structural forms. One way to this might be to have students do the same tasks that the five native speakers were asked to do with the two pages of native speaker discussion transcript: identify the parts they feel fulfill a particular function, and then state why they think that.

The long lists of phrases offered by textbooks for use in expressing opinions may also misrepresent the language by suggesting that students need all those expressions to give their opinions. This study shows that not only do native speakers not use a wide range of expressions, they often express opinions without using structural cues. It may be that academic discussions in other circumstances would yield a broader range of opinion phrases, but this remains to be demonstrated.

Anecdotal evidence from ESL teachers suggests that intermediate ESL students already know how to use the opinion phrase relied on most heavily by the native speakers in the academic discussion of this study -- "I think" (Gillette, personal communication). Additional evidence has been documented by Smith (1985) in her transcript of a 9.5 minute discussion among three non-native speakers of English. The three discussants each used "I think," and the phrase was used a total of 15 times.

What does all this imply for the teaching of discussion skills? Should the use of the functional approach be abandoned altogether? I think not, but the use of functional texts should be modified. Before the texts are used, needs analyses of what phrases student need should be carried out. These needs analysis can be done effectively through error analysis. The textbook lists of expressions used to accomplish functions should then not be taught didactically, but rather used as resources for error correction. When structural cues are thus taught in response to specific errors, they will automatically be presented in semantically appropriate contexts.

A productive forum for the above error and needs analysis is a method of small group discussion outlined by Hill (1977) in his book, Learning Through Discussion: Guide for Leaders and Members of Discussion Groups. Hill's method has been simplified for ESL students by Tom Rowland and Kimberly Brown (1983). Essentially, the method consists of a totally student-controlled period of discussion followed by teacher feedback on whatever aspect of communication is being focused on. Each student is assigned (or chooses) one of the following roles:

- 1) initiating
- 2) giving and asking for information
- 3) giving and asking for reactions
- 4) confronting and reality testing
- 5) clarifying, synthesizing and summarizing
- 6) gatekeeping and expediting
- 7) time keeping

It is not necessary for the student to perform his/her role, but to see that it is performed.

The teacher stays completely out of the discussion (physically separate from the group, with no verbal or non-verbal interaction with any of the

members), taking notes on the language and interactions that "didn't work." At the end of the period of discussion, the teacher leads a short discussion of his/her observations, the degree to which roles were successfully fulfilled, and any group dynamics that seem relevant. These discussions are not particularly productive when done only once or twice. When done regularly, however, with everyone getting a chance to try all the roles, definite progress can be seen on many levels.

The common criticism of error analysis may also be leveled here: only errors which are made can be corrected. If a student avoids certain patterns, s/he may never be taught how to use them. This problem may be offset slightly if the teacher expands his/her comments to offer possible alternative ways of expressing things in addition to correcting mistakes.

It might be useful to teach non-native speakers set phrases to express given functions even though native speakers may not use them in the same situation. First of all, having a set phrase with which to initiate a question or comment in discussion may offer a student a sense of confidence allowing him/her to initiate more than s/he would do otherwise. Secondly, the phrases may serve to signal the second language learner's general intention when the rest of his/her message is difficult to decipher. Finally, routine phrases could buy a second language learner time for working out what exactly s/he wants to say, which s/he is more likely to need than a native speaker.

In addition to the informal needs analyses done by individual teachers, formal needs analyses of non-native speakers' use and mis-use of "opinion phrases" need to be done. If done at different levels of English mastery, it would provide a solid base for the development of a functional discussion skills curricu-

lum. Eventually, the language used to express all the functions should be researched both for native and non-native speakers of English.

Before this can be done effectively, however, more research must be done toward defining the parameters of the concept of "function." If this cannot be done in general terms, then perhaps multiple studies of native speaker perceptions of various functions would reveal some general patterns in addition to function-specific guidelines similar to those revealed in this study for "expressing opinions."

In order to validate this study's findings as to how opinions were expressed by native speakers, more research needs to be done in different discussion settings. Variables that might be expected to affect choice of expressions are formality, sex, age, socio-economic community, differences in status among the group members, and academic vs. personal topics of discussion.

All three parts of this study dramatically underlined the need to base materials and curriculum development on needs analyses and research rather than pure intuition. Although limited time and financial resources may make formal research difficult, informal research may be just as useful for the individual teacher. Having students do their own research and share it with one another can be even more productive.

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Appendix 1  
RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a linguistic needs analysis of the language and non-verbal communication used in small group discussions. This study is being done to clarify what linguistic skills need to be taught to non-native speakers of English to prepare them for effective participation in academic discussions.

Your participation requires only your consent to the linguistic analysis of the videotape made of your discussion group in SP/COMM 3641, spring quarter, 1985.

Your anonymity is guaranteed. In any written reports or publication, no one will be identified or identifiable. Only aggregate data will be presented. If you are interested in the results of this study, you may request a copy of the results to be sent to you at a given address.

If you have any questions, please ask me, Amy Burkhalter. If you have any additional questions at a later date, please feel free to call me at my office (376-1598) or at home (331-4214).

5/1/85  
Amy Burkhalter  
Program in ESL  
Department of Linguistics  
University of MN., Minneapolis

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You are making a decision whether or not to give your consent to the linguistic analysis of a videotaped discussion in which you participated for SP/COMM 3641. Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above, and consent to the use of the videotape.

Informed consent given by \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(full signature) (date)

Appendix 2  
FUNCTIONS TAUGHT FOR DISCUSSIONS IN ESL TEXTBOOKS

Functions	Jones	Keller	Peaty	Porter	R&F
Accepting responders	X				
Adding something	X				
Agreeing					X
Agreement	X		X		
Agreement responders		X			
Expressing agreement				X	
Appearance and reality	X				
Asking a question				X	
Asking for clarification			X		
Asking other people to explain their point of view more exactly	X				
Compliment Responders	X				
Conceding a point		X			
Concluding	X				
Confidential information	X				
Consensus responders	X				
Contingency	X				
Conviction	X				
Cross-check gambits	X				
Disagree (more directly)	X				
Disagreeing					X
Disagreement	X		X		
Disagreement responders		X			
Expressing disagreement				X	
Polite disagreement			X		
Strong disagreement			X		
Disbelief responders	X				
Disputing facts		X			
Encouragement responders	X				
Expanding a point	X				
Explaining a result	X				
Generalization	X				
Get the floor				X	
Giving a reason	X				
Giving examples	X				
Giving in	X				
Giving opinions	X		X		
Giving your opinion					X
Expressing opinions in a tentative way	X				
Opinions		X			
Giving some information				X	
Guessing	X				
Informal openers				X	
Interpretation	X				
Interrupt				X	
Personal circumstances	X				
Personal evaluation	X				

Functions

Jones Keller Peaty Porter R&amp;F

Pointing out exceptions	X
Pointing out illogicalities	X
Pointing out irrelevance	X
Questioning and suggestions	X
Relinquishing the floor	X
Rejecting	X
Rephrasing your own statements when they're not understood	X
Restatement	X
Restatement or mention of previous ideas	X
Resuming an idea after an interruption	X
Seeing the other side	X
Stating reservations	X
Summarizing	X
Taking into account	X

## Appendix 3

## PHRASES TAUGHT IN ESL TEXTBOOKS FOR EXPRESSING OPINION

Phrases	Jones	Porter	Keller	Reinhart & Fisher
As far as I can tell			X	
As far as I know			X	
As far as I'm concerned		X		
As I see it	X	X	X	
As I understand it			X	
Don't you agree that	X			
Don't you think				X
For my own part			X	
I believe		X	X	
I don't know why				X
I feel that	X			
I figure that	X			
I have reason to believe			X	
I honestly feel			X	
I imagine			X	
I personally believe			X	
I personally feel			X	
I personally think			X	
I rather suspect			X	
I sometimes think that	X			
I strongly believe			X	
I suspect			X	
I think	X	X	X	X
I understand this to be			X	
I'd just like to say that I think that	X			
I'd like to point out that	X			
If I had my own way			X	
If you ask me	X			
I'm almost positive			X	
I'm convinced			X	
I'm fairly certain			X	
I'm positive			X	
I'm pretty sure			X	
In my case			X	
In my (personal) estimation			X	
In my (personal) opinion		X	X	
It appears to me			X	
It seems to me that		X		X
It's my feeling that	X			
My understanding is			X	
Not everyone will agree with me but			X	
Personally, I believe/think/feel			X	
Personally, I'm more interested in			X	
The point is	X			
The way I see it		X		
To my mind			X	
To the best of my knowledge			X	

Phrases	Jones	Porter	Keller	Reinhart & Fisher
Undoubtedly			X	
Well, I've heard that	X			
What I'm concerned with is			X	
Without a doubt			X	
Wouldn't you say that	X			
Yes, I guess				X

## APPENDIX 4

## DISCUSSANT USE OF EXPRESSIONS SHARING KEY WORDS WITH ESL OPINION PHRASES

	Discussants						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	TOTAL
ESL OPINION PHRASES	1	6	5	4	14	0	[30]
I think	1	5	3	4	13		26
Don't you think			2		1		3
I'm pretty sure		1					1
BELIEVE	0	0	0	0	2	0	[2]
I don't believe it.					1		1
No one believes it.					1		1
GUESS	0	0	2	0	0	0	[2]
and I guess			1				1
I guess too		1					1
IMAGINE	0	0	1	0	0	0	[1]
I could imagine							1
KNOW	0	4	0	1	4	0	[9]
I don't even know if		1					1
I don't know,		1			3		4
I don't know if		2		1			3
I don't know so much that					1		1
OPINION	1	0	0	0	1	0	[2]
That's all personal opinion	1						1
That's my opinion					1		1
POINT	0	0	0	2	2	0	[4]
that's the point					2		2
That's ... the key point				2			2

	A	B	C	D	E	F	Discussants	TOTAL
SEEMS	0	4	3	4	1	0		[12]
an' to me it ju' seems like				1				1
doesn't seem		1		1				2
seemed to			1					1
seems			1	1				2
seems to		1						1
seems like		1	1	1				3
to me it seemed like		1						1
To me it seems like					1			1
SURE	0	0	4	0	1	0		[5]
An' I'm sure				2				2
I'm not too sure			1					1
I'm sure			1		1			2
THINK	0	4	5	3	8	1		[21]
and I think				2				2
but I think		1	1					2
but I don't think					1			1
I'd think				1				1
I don't think		1	1	2	3			7
I don't even think					1			1
I just think					1			1
I think essentially			1					1
I think though					1			1
I thought					1			1
Well, I think		2				1		3
TOTAL NUMBER OF ESL OPINION PHRASES PLUS EXPRESSIONS SHARING KEY WORDS WITH ESL OPINION PHRASES	2	18	20	14	33	1		[77]
TOTAL NUMBER OF TURNS TAKEN	66	133	180	121	156	40		[696]

## APPENDIX 5

### IDENTIFICATION OF OPINIONS COLOR CODED FOR NUMBER OF AGREEING PERCEPTIONS [\_\_\_\_\_ = qualified judgment]

D: So this union is just like all unions in, really, they just want to get ahead [for] themselves,  
B: wanna get a  
D: and they don't care about the lower guys.  
C: So they're greedy.  
D: Right.  
B: Well I think ( ) international thinks they have a better case against Armor. I mean, or \* what they're arguing \*\*\* Cause they got more support, I mean, 1.3 million's a few more people than 1,300 at Hormel.  
C: And that's just at this (point) though,  
B: the 1,300.  
D: Yeah. We could go either way. \* Either one'd be good. \* You know, um, are they being inflexible with the wages?  
B: Well I think [they  
D: or are they just, or are they ruining it with the solidarity? I mean,  
B: I think the union has to go in it all for one and one for all, not just  
E: How 'bout like a question like a, 'Should unions,' or, yeah, 'Should unions change with the time or,' I think that's, you're claiming the economy's changing, right?  
C: Um hum.  
E: And I agree with that too, that a lot of companies just can't make it, so they're forced, instead of keeping the wages the same or raising them, \* sooner or later it's coming down to a point now where a lot of places just can't make it anymore.  
?: \*  
C: Yes.  
E: I mean, isn't that-that's the point though, right? They're just not changing. They're not looking at the whole picture. They're staying on one course and the economy says we gotta do something else.  
C: Yeah, I mean, I can imagine how painful it'd be for me to work someplace and all of the sudden they're asking me to cut my salary \*\* and that would just be, that'd be overwhelming. I'm sure it's overwhelming (for) a big company also. \* But at the same time, and as hard as it would be, something is still better than nothing. And if they go on strike, they're not gonna have anything.  
A: (If) they close the plant, they're out of a ( ) job.  
E: Yeah. \*\* So I mean that-that's one question we could \*\*  
?: \*  
C: So, and I think essentially  
E: that  
C: too, that unions are losin' their power because of the economy.  
E: Well, yeah, because a lot of, it's-it's happened before. Companies just, you know, they've-they've folded. They have folded. And there's a lot of people, you know, they talk a mean line, but when it comes down to it, you know, you uh \*\* you guys take a cut or you have no job, most people are gonna take the cut. \* I mean you can say what you want, but most people are gonna take that cut 'cause they want some money.

C: Um hum. And [I  
E: and that's why they're gonna lose [some power.  
C: afraid too, because of what has happened at GM \* \* at Crysler. (It's)  
Crysler [I was looking at.  
E: Yeah.  
C: I mean, the fat cats got healthy and the fat cats got ( )  
B: (Yeah)  
D: Four thousand a year's a big cut.  
E: But, yeah but, O.K., you might not take the cut. You're-you're gonna say I'm gonna band together with the union, but there's always about five other guys opposed to you that are, that are, they don't care. You know. Once it comes down to the, to the money, they're gonna take what's there. They're not gonna risk a, you know, a shot at all or nothing. You know, meaning keeping your same wage or-or nothing. (Uh) They're gonna play it safe or take a little cut, or, you know, not so much little, but \* smaller than if you lo-lose it all. \* \* Don't you think so?  
D: Yeah. But I mean they look at it just like, heah, I'm gonna be losing four thousand a year. That's why they're  
E: They're gonna be mad, but when it comes right down to it, I think people are gonna take the cut. And that why u-unions are losin' their power.  
B: I think.  
E: The guys, they're not stickin' together.  
B: Yeah, I think  
D: ( )  
E: ( )  
B: the union instills a false hope in all the(ir) employees. Like, O.K., we're gonna get this an' this an' this, so keep with us, and then pretty soon, bang, the plant's gone an' you guys are in the soupline.  
C: Yeah, this striker's not really being realistic,  
B: Um hum.  
C: 'cause he's makin' money off [them any how.  
B: He's sayin' how there's no way this plant'll ever close down an' stuff like that \* ( )  
D: Seems like they always wanted a fair share of the profits, but then when the profits go down \* they don't want their fair share of taking  
E: they don't wanna go down, yeah  
D: losses with the thing.  
C: Yeah.  
B: Yeah.  
D: That seems to be the key point.  
B: It's just greed.  
E: But they're just, they're not changing. They're just  
B: Not, they're stayin' on one course an' the  
?: \*  
C: 'Cause we could look at the union (in) this corporation as being just another group, who has to work \* together cooperatively and effectively.  
?: \*  
B: (Oh) there is his [( )] [laughter] What?  
A: That [was good.  
B: That ( ) a professional: Ray Rogers, Labor Consultant.  
?: \* \* \* \* \*

C: Now the rank and file's a big issue. I mean, what does happen to the rank  
and file, but  
?: \* \* \* \*  
F: Now we're back to flexibility again \* and  
B: But like they're payin' that-that stupid consultant like  
C: a hundred  
B: three hundred dollars and he hasn't even been on the ( ) six months  
( ) any of the employees ( )  
C: And the union, this union is payin' him that. \*\* Did you guys hear this?

## APPENDIX 6

### Native Speaker Reasons for Perceiving Statements as Opinions

1. So this union is just like all unions in, really, they just want to get ahead (for) themselves, [II:B,C,F,G,H,L]

J.F.: so suggests conclusion of speaker; really suggests trying to convince hearer; statement itself has no factual basis. [II:B,H,L]

S.G.: because comparative statement -- generalizing to all unions [II:C]

J.G.: evaluative statement which is not an independently established fact [II:G]

E.N.: it represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others) [II:F]

P.O.: makes a comparison and provides a justification for that comparison which is one of many possibilities [II:G]

2. wanna get a [II:G]

J.G.: (evaluative statement which is not an independently established fact)[II:G]

3. and they don't care about the lower guys. [II:B,C,F,G,H,L]

J.F.: (continuation of (1) -- same reasons)[II:B,H,L]

S.G.: generalized statement -- sounds more like an opinion to me when people generalize [II:C]

J.G.: (evaluative statement which is not an independently established fact)[II:G]

E.N.: [it represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)][II:F]

P.O.: could be refuted [II:G]

4. So they're greedy. [I:A,II:B,G,Appendix 8:A]

J.F.: (so suggests conclusion of speaker); statement is speaker's interpretation of previous speaker's statement [II:B]

S.G.: conclusion from previous opinion [II:B]

J.G.: (evaluative statement which is not an independently established fact)[II:G]

E.N.: This is not C's opinion. It's what C understands B to have meant. In one sense, though, it is an opinion. C is saying "I believe that you are saying they're greedy." So it is an opinion in that sense -- an instance of Case 1. "So they're greedy" represents C's opinion of what B's opinion is [Appendix 8:A]

P.O.: (could be refuted)/ "greedy" implies a judgement [I:A,II:G]

5. Well I think ( ) international thinks they have a better case against Armour. [I:B]

J.F.: I think denotes what follows is opinion [I:B]

S.G.: marker "I think" [I:B]

J.G.: I think [I:B]

E.N.: like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker" [I:B]

P.O.: "I think" -- not presented as fact [I:B]

6. And that's just at this (point) though, [II:E]

J.F.: literally re-statement of fact, but it implicates more, i.e. "I think it's going to change." [II:E]

7. Yeah. [II:A]

J.F.: means "I agree." (an opinion)[II:A]

8. Either one'd be good. [I:A,II:F,G,K,III,Appendix 8:B]

J.F.: good = value judgment, which is always an opinion [I:A]

S.G.: This appeared to be disconnected from the immediately preceding discourse, so although it is opinion I couldn't decode of what so it was one of those filler noises to me. [Appendix 8:B]

J.G.: [III]

E.N.: [it represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] OR represents the speaker's idea of what to do -- a suggestion [II:F,K]

P.O.: (could be refuted)/ "good" implies a judgment [I:A,II:G]

9. Well I think-I think the union has to go in it all for one and one for all, not just [I:B,Appendix 8:C]

J.F.: (complement of "I think" is an opinion) [I:B]

S.G.: ("I think") [I:B]

J.G.: (I think) [I:B]

E.N.: (like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker" --"I think" [I:B]

P.O.: This seems to me to be just a cliche -- not a personal opinion [Appendix 8:C]

10. or are they just [III]

J.G.: [III]

11. Um hum. [changed judgment, Appendix 8:G]

P.O.: verifying that the opinion stated is indeed this person's opinion [changed judgment, Appendix 8:G]

12. I agree with that too, that a lot of companies just can't make it, so they're forced, instead of keeping the wages the same or raising them, \* sooner or later it's coming down to a point now where a lot of places just can't make it anymore. [I:B,II:A,Appendix 8:D]

J.F.: agree reflects opinion [II:A]

S.G.: I think I was trying to consistently not mark statements which were agreement although this one does expand on the previous point. [Appendix 8:D]

J.G.: I agree [II:A]

E.N.: (like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker") -- "I think" [I:B]

P.O.: "I agree" [IIA]

13. Yes. [II:A]

J.F.: confirmation of agreement (not really clear)[II:A]

14. They're just not changing. [I:A,C,II:C,F,G,L]

J.F.: Assertion without back-up. therefore opinion [II:L]

S.G.: the generalizations here again are probably what make me think of these as opinions [II:C]

J.G.: introduced by tag question -- indicates uncertainty/opinion [I:C]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted)/ "changing" is judgmental [I:A,II:G]

15. They're not looking at the whole picture. [I:C,II:C,F,G,L]

J.F.: [same as 14, (continuation)] [II:L]

S.G.: (the generalizations here again are probably what make me think of these as opinions) [II:C]

J.G.: (introduced by tag question -- indicates uncertainty/opinion) [I:C]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted)[II:G]

16. They're staying on one course and the economy says we gotta do something else. [I:C,II:C,F,G,L]

J.F.: [same as 15 (continuation)] [II:L]

S.G.: (the generalizations here again are probably what make me think of these as opinions [II:C]

J.G.: (introduced by tag question -- indicates uncertainty/opinion) [I:C]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted) [II:G]

17. I'm sure it's overwhelming (for) a big company also. [I:B,C,Appendix 8:B]

J.F.: I'm sure = I think in that complement is opinion [I:B]

S.G.: "I'm sure" [I:B]

J.G.: (introduced by tag question -- indicates uncertainty/opinion) [I:C]

E.N.: (like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker") -- "I'm sure" [I:B]

P.O.: seems more like a filler than an opinion -- doesn't sound like speaker is really convinced of this [Appendix 8:B]

18. something is still better than nothing. [I:C,II:E,F,G,Appendix 8:C]

J.F.: assertion -- implicates "They should settle," which is an opinion [II:E]

S.G.: could be disputed [II:G]

J.G.: (introduced by tag question -- indicates uncertainty/opinion) [I:C]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (cliche) [Appendix 8:C]

19. Yeah. [II:A]

J.F.: = I agree with you. Therefore is opinion. [II:A]

20/21. I think essentially / too, that unions are losin' their power because of the economy. [I:B,II:G]

J.F.: [complement of think is opinion. (Maybe strictly speaking the statement of speech act (I think) isn't part of opinion.)] [I:B]

S.G.: ("I think") [I:B]

J.G.: ("I think") [I:B]

E.N.: (like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker") [I:B]

P.O.: ("I think" -- one of many possible explanations) [I didn't consider this (20) in isolation, but as part of 21.] [I:B,II:G]

22. Well, yeah, [II:A]

J.F.: agreement with previous statement = opinion [II:A]

23. Companies just, you know, they've-they've folded. [II:L]

J.F.: unsupported assertion = opinion [II:L]

24. They have folded. [II:A]

J.F.: (unsupported assertion = opinion) [II:A]

25. most people are gonna take the cut. [I:B,II:C,D,F,G,L]

J.F.: (unsupported assertion) actually a guess [II:D,L]

S.G.: generalization [II:C]

J.G.: (I think) -- also -- introduced by "You can say what you want" -- indicates opinion [I:B]

E.N.: [represent one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted) -- the alternative outcome is possible [II:G]

26. but most people are gonna take that cut 'cause they want some money. [I:B, C,D,F,G,L]

J.F.: [unsupported assertion (actually a guess) [II:D,L]

S.G.: (generalization) [II:C]

J.G.: (same as 25) [I:B]

E.N.: [represents on speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted) also, there could be other reasons [II:G]

27. and that's why they're gonna lose some power. [I:B,II:F,G,L,III]

J.F.: [unsupported assertion (actually a guess)] (continuation)[II:L]  
S.G.: Can I change my mind? I don't remember what I was thinking at the time  
but it sound like one now. [changed judgment, III]  
J.G.: (introduced by "You can say what you want" -- indicates an opinion)[I:B]  
E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be dis-  
agreed with by others)] [II:F]  
P.O.: (could be refuted) -- other outcomes or explanations possible [II:G]

28. and I think this union's afraid too, because of what has happened at GM \* \*  
at Crysler. [I:A,B,C,II:G]

J.F.: (complement of think is opinion) [I:B]  
S.G.: ("I think") [I:B]  
J.G.: (introduced by tag question -- indicates uncertainty/opinion) [I:C]  
E.N.: (like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker" -- "I think")  
[I:B]  
P.O.: ("I think") / "afraid" is judgmental / other reasons possible [I:A,B,II:G]

29. It's Crysler [III]

J.G.: [III]

30. Yeah. [II:A]

J.F.: (agreement with previous statement = opinion)[II:A]

31. the fat cats got healthy [I:A,II:F,G,L,Appendix 8:A]

J.F.: (unsupported assertion); idiomatic usage "fat cats," "healthy" (in this  
sense) connotes opinion [I:A,II:L]  
S.G.: This was clarification of the earlier point "afaid of what happened at  
Crysler" [Appendix 8:A]  
J.G.: "the fat cats" indicates subjectivity [I:A]  
E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be dis-  
agreed with by others)] [II:F]  
P.O.: (could be refuted) / entire vocabulary suggest judgment [I:A,II:G]

32. Four thousand a year's a big cut. [I:A,II:F,G,Appendix 8:E]

J.F.: Big is relative. Assertion that a particular amount is big is an op-  
nion. [I:A]  
S.G.: I think I was thinking that this was more factual (4000 as a percentage  
of X) [Appendix 8:E]  
J.G.: a subjective statement [II:G]  
E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be dis-  
agreed with by others)] [II:F]  
P.O.: (could be refuted) / "big" is judgmental [I:A,II:G]

33. Once it comes down to the, to the money, they're gonna take what's there. They're not gonna risk a, you know, a shot at all or nothing. [II:C,F,G,J, Appendix 8:E]

J.F.: speculation on future action is opinion [II:J]

S.G.: assumptions about all the workers [II:C]

J.G.: maybe this is an opinion -- but it could be a more "objective" prediction based on past experience -- it is verifiable, unlike most of the statements above -- (verifiable) [Appendix 8:E]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (other possible outcomes) [II:G]

34. They're gonna play it safe or take a little cut, [II:C,F,G,J, Appendix 8:E]

J.F.: (speculation on future action is opinion) [II:J]

S.G.: (assumptions about all the workers) [II:C]

J.G.: [maybe this is an opinion -- but it could be a more "objective" prediction based on past experience -- it is verifiable, unlike most of the statements above -- (verifiable)] [Appendix 8:E]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (other possible outcomes) [II:G]

35. Don't you think so? [II:G]

J.F.: ? (Are questions in the fact-opinion domain? I think I was thinking this wasn't a fact.) [II:G]

36. They're gonna be mad, but when it comes right down to it, [I:A,II:F,G,I,J, Appendix 8:E]

J.F.: assertion about future action is opinion [II:J]

S.G.: statements of probability [II:I]

J.G.: (maybe this is an opinion -- but it could be a more "objective" prediction based on past experience -- it is verifiable, unlike most of the statements above -- (verifiable) [Appendix 8:E]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (other outcomes possible) / "mad" is judgmental [I:A,II:G]

37. I think people are gonna take the cut. [I:B,II:G]

J.F.: (complement of think is opinion) [I:B]

S.G.: ("I think") [I:B]

J.G.: (I think) [without this it would be same as above -- verifiable] [I:B]

E.N.: (like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker" -- "I think") [I:B]

P.O.: ("I think" / alternative outcome possible) [I:B,II:G]

38. And that why u-unions are losin' they're power. [I:B,II:B,F,G]

J.F.: (continuation of 37) [I:B]

S.G.: (conclusion from previous opinion) [II:B]

J.G.: not verifiable [II:G]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted -- other explanations possible) [II:G]

39. The guys, they're not stickin' together.[I:A,B,II:B,F,G,Appendix 8:E]

J.F.: (continuation of 37)[I:B]

S.G.: (conclusion from previous opinion) [II:B]

J.G.: (maybe this is an opinion -- but it could be a more "objective" prediction based on past experience -- it is verifiable, unlike most of the statements above) -- "seems" verifiable [Appendix 8:E]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted) / "sticken' together" is judgmental [I:A,II:G]

40. the union instills a false hope in all the(ir) employees. [I:A,B,II:C,F,G,L]

J.F.: (unsupported assertion = opinion) [II:L]

S.G.: (generalization) [II:C]

J.G.: (I think) [I:B]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted) / "instills" and "false hope" are judgmental [I:A,II:G]

41. Yeah, this striker's not really being realistic, [I:A,II:A,F,G]

J.F.: (agreement with previous statement = opinion) [II:A]

S.G.: interpretation of situation [II:F]

J.G.: (not verifiable) [II:G]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted) "realistic" is judgmental [I:A,II:G]

42. Um hum. [II:A,F]

E.N.: if B is saying "Yes, that's what I meant," then 43 is not an opinion. But I took it to mean "Yes I agree with you that . . . not realistic" [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:A,F]

43. Seems like they always wanted a fair share of the profits, but then when the profits go down \* they don't want their fair share of taking losses with the thing. [I:A,B,II:G]

J.F.: Seems like = I think; (complement is opinion) [I:B]

S.G.: "seems like" [I:B]

J.G.: seems like [I:B]

E.N.: (like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker") -- "Seems like" [I:B]

P.O.: (could be refuted) -- other perspectives possible / "fair share" is judgmental [I:A,OO:G]

44. they don't wanna go down, yeah [II:A,B,F,G]

J.F.: (agreement with preceding statement = opinion) [II:A]

S.G.: (conclusion from previous opinion) [II:B]

J.G.: agreement with an opinion (43) also not clearly verifiable since it is a judgment of other people's motives/wants [II:A,G]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (other perspectives possible)[II:G]

45. That seems to be the key point. [I:B,II:G]

J.F.: seems = I think [I:B]

S.G.: "seems to be" and "key point" mark it as opinion [I:B]

J.G.: seems [I:B]

E.N.: (like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker") -- "seems to be" [I:B]

P.O.: alternatives possible [II:G]

46. It's just greed. [I:A,II:C,F,G,L]

J.F.: (unsupported assertion = opinion) [II:L]

S.G.: (labling all -- interpretation of behavior) [II:C,F]

J.G.: judgment about other people's motives [II:F]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (alternatives possible) / "greed" is judgmental [I:A,II:G]

47. But they're just, they're not changing. They're just [I:A,II:C,F,G,L,III]

J.F.: (unsupported assertion = opinion) [II:L]

S.G.: general statement -- interpretation [II:C,F]

J.G.: not sure -- this is borderline [III]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted) / "changing" is judgmental [I:A,II:G]

48. Not, they're stayin' on one course an' the [II:C,F,G,L,III]

J.F.: (unsupported assertion = opinion) [II:L]

S.G.: (general statement -- interpretation) [II:C,F]

J.G.: (not sure -- this is borderline) [III]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted) [II:G]

49. 'Cause we could look at the union (in) this corporation as being just another group, who has to work \* together cooperatively and effectively. [II:A,F,G,Appendix 8:F]

J.F.: 'cause suggests (in this case) agreement and amplification of previous point. We could look at . . . as suggest this is one of several views = opinion [II:A]

S.G.: possible alternative way of looking at group -- [put forward as a possible interpretation (not the speaker's own opinion perhaps though)] [II:F,G]

J.G.: a suggestion -- not really a statement [Appendix 8:F]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (other perspectives possible / makes a comparison) [II:G]

50. Now the rank and file's a big issue. [I:A,II:F,G,III]

J.F.: Big is relative; statement that something is big without referring to standard of comparison is opinion [I:A,II:G]

S.G.: who says? statement open to dispute [II:G]

J.G.: not sure [III]

E.N.: [represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others)] [II:F]

P.O.: (could be refuted) -- "big" is judgmental [I:A,II:G]

51. Now we're back to flexibility again [II:E]

J.F.: The words themselves aren't opinion, but what is implicated by this whole statement is that the consultant isn't worth the money, and that's an opinion. [II:E]

52. But like they're payin' ... like [II:E]

J.F.: (The words themselves aren't opinion, but what is implicated by this whole statement is that the consultant isn't worth the money, and that's an opinion.) [II:E]

53. three hundred dollars and he hasn't even been on the ( ) six months [II:E]

J.F.: (The words themselves aren't opinion, but what is implicated by this whole statement is that the consultant isn't worth the money, and that's an opinion.) [II:E]

54. And the union, this union is payin' him that. [II:E]

J.F.: (The words themselves aren't opinion, but what is implicated by this whole statement is that the consultant isn't worth the money, and that's an opinion.) [II:E]

## APPENDIX 7

### Reasons For Perceiving Statements As Opinions

#### I. STRUCTURAL CATEGORIES [75 statements]

##### A. JUDGEMENTAL VOCABULARY [21 statements]

- P.O.: "greedy" implies a judgement (4)  
J.F.: good = value judgment, which is always an opinion (8)  
P.O.: "good" implies a judgment (8)  
P.O.: "changing" is judgmental (14)  
P.O.: "afraid" is judgmental (28)  
J.F.: idiomatic usage "fat cats" (31)  
J.F.: "healthy" (in this sense) connotes opinion (31)  
J.G.: "the fat cats" indicates subjectivity (31)  
P.O.: entire vocabulary suggest judgment (31)  
J.F.: Big is relative. Assertion that a particular amount is big is an opinion. (32)  
P.O.: "big" is judgmental (32)  
P.O.: "mad" is judgmental (36)  
P.O.: "sticken' together" is judgmental (39)  
P.O.: "instills" and "false hope" are judgmental (40)  
P.O.: "realistic" is judgmental (41)  
P.O.: "fair share" is judgmental (43)  
P.O.: "greed" is judgmental (46)  
P.O.: "changing" is judgmental (47)  
J.F.: Big is relative; statement that something is big without referring to standard of comparison is opinion (50)  
P.O.: -- "big" is judgmental (50)

##### B. LEXICAL MARKERS [48 statements]

- J.F.: I think denotes what follows is opinion (5,9,20/21,28,37,38,39)  
S.G.: marker "I think" (5,9,20/21,28,37)  
J.G.: I think (5,9,20/21,25,26,37,40)  
E.N.: Like Case 1 and also has an identifiable "opinion marker" (5,9,  
12,17,20/21,28,37,43,45)  
P.O.: "I think" -- not presented as fact (5,20/21,28,37)  
E.N.: -- "I think" (12,28)  
J.F.: I'm sure = I think in that complement is opinion (17)  
S.G.: "I'm sure" (17)  
E.N.: -- "I'm sure" (17)  
J.G.: introduced by "You can say what you want" -- indicates opinion  
(25,26,27)  
J.F.: Seems like = I think; (complement is opinion)(43)  
S.G.: "seems like" (43)  
J.G.: seems like (43)  
E.N.: -- "Seems like" (43)  
J.F.: seems = I think (45)  
S.G.: "seems to be" and "key point" mark it as opinion (45)  
J.G.: seems (45)  
E.N.: -- "seems to be (45)

##### C. TAG QUESTION [6 statements]

- J.G.: introduced by tag question -- indicates uncertainty/opinion  
(14,15,16,17,18,28)

## II. SEMANTIC CATEGORIES [153 statements]

### A. AGREEMENT [14 statements]

- J.F.: means "I agree." (an opinion)(7)  
J.F.: agree reflects opinion (12)  
\*S.G.: I think I was trying to consistently not mark statements which were agreement although this one does expand on the previous point.](12)  
J.G.: I agree (12)  
P.O.: "I agree" (12)  
\*J.F.: confirmation of agreement (not really clear)(13)  
J.F.: = I agree with you. Therefore is opinion. (19)  
J.F.: agreement with previous statement = opinion (22,30,41,44)  
\*E.N.: if B is saying "Yes, that's what I meant," then 43 is not an opinion. But I took it to mean "Yes I agree with you that. . . not realistic" (42)  
J.G.: agreement with an opinion (44)  
J.F.: 'cause suggests (in this case) agreement and amplification of previous point. (49)

### B. CONCLUSION [7 statements]

- J.F.: so suggests conclusion of speaker (1,3,4)  
S.G.: conclusion from previous opinion (4,38,39,44)

### C. GENERALIZATION [13 statements]

- S.G.: because comparative statement -- generalizing to all unions (1)  
S.G.: generalized statement -- sounds more like an opinion to me when people generalize (3)  
S.G.: the generalizations here again are probably what make me think of these as opinions (14,15,16)  
S.G.: generalization (25,26,40)  
S.G.: assumptions about all the workers (33,34)  
S.G.: labeling all (46)  
S.G.: general statement ,(47,48)

### D. GUESS [2 statements]

- J.F.: actually a guess (25,26)

### E. IMPLIED OPINION [6 statements]

- J.F.: literally re-statement of fact, but it implicates more, i.e. "I think it's going to change." (6)  
J.F.: assertion -- implicates "They should settle," which is an opinion (18)  
J.F.: The words themselves aren't opinion, but what is implicated by this whole statement is that the consultant isn't worth the money, and that's an opinion. (51,52,53,54)

### F. INTERPRETATION [32 statements]

- E.N.: it represents one speaker's interpretation of events (which could be disagreed with by others) (1,3,8,14,15,16,18,25,26,27, 31,32,33,34,36,38,39,40,41, 42,44,46,47,48,49,50)  
S.G.: interpretation of situation (41)  
S.G.: interpretation of behavior (46,47,48)  
J.G.: judgment about other people's motives (46)  
S.G.: [put forward as a possible interpretation (not the speaker's own opinion perhaps though)] (49)

G. NOT FACTUALLY VERIFIABLE [50 statements]

- J.G.: evaluative statement which is not an independently established fact (1,2,3,4)  
S.G.: a subjective statement (32)  
J.G.: not verifiable (38,41)  
J.G.: also not clearly verifiable since it is a judgment of other people's motives/wants (44)
- P.O.: could be refuted (3,4,8,14,15,16,25,26,27,31,32,38,39,40,41,43, 47,48,50)  
S.G.: could be disputed (18)  
S.G.: who says? statement open to dispute (50)
- P.O.: makes a comparison and provides a justification for that comparison which is one of many possibilities (1,20/21,49)  
P.O.: the alternative outcome is possible (25)  
P.O.: also, there could be other reasons (26,28)  
P.O.: other outcomes or explanations possible (27,33,34,36,37,38)  
P.O.: other reasons possible (28)  
J.F.: (Are questions in the fact-opinion domain? I think I was thinking this wasn't a fact.) (35)  
P.O.: other perspectives possible (43,44,49)  
P.O.: alternatives possible (45,46)  
J.F.: We could look at . . . as suggest this is one of several views = opinion (50)  
S.G.: possible alternative way of looking at group (49)

H. PERSUASION [2 statements]

- J.F.: really suggests trying to convince hearer (1,3)

I. PROBABILITY [1 statements]

- S.G.: statements of probability (36)

J. SPECULATION ABOUT THE FUTURE [3 statements]

- J.F.: speculation on future action is opinion (33,34)  
J.F.: assertion about future action is opinion (36)

K. SUGGESTION [2 statements]

- E.N.: represents the speaker's idea of what to do -- a suggestion (8,9)

L. UNSUPPORTED ASSERTION [15 statements]

- J.F.: statement itself has no factual basis (1,3)  
J.F.: Assertion without back-up. therefore opinion (14,15,16)  
J.F.: unsupported assertion = opinion (23,24,25,26,27,31,40,46,47,48)

III. NO REASON GIVEN [6 statements]

- J.G.: (8,10,29)  
S.G.: Can I change my mind? I don't remember what I was thinking at the time but it sounds like one now. (27)  
J.G.: not sure -- this is borderline (47,48)  
J.G.: not sure (50)

## APPENDIX 8

### Reasons For Not Perceiving Statements as Opinions

#### A. CLARIFICATION

- E.N.: This is not C's opinion. It's what C understands B to have meant. In one sense, though, it is an opinion. C is saying "I believe that you are saying they're greedy." So it is an opinion in that sense -- an instance of Case 1. "So they're greedy" represents C's opinion of what B's opinion is (4)
- S.G.: This was clarification of the earlier point "afraid of what happened at Crysler" (31)
- \*E.N.: if B is saying "Yes, that's what I meant," then 43 is not an opinion. But I took it to mean "Yes I agree with you that... not realistic" (42)

#### B. "FILLER"

- S.G.: This appeared to be disconnected from the immediately preceding discourse, so although it is opinion I couldn't decode of what so it was one of those filler noises to me. (8)
- P.O.: seems more like a filler than an opinion -- doesn't sound like speaker is really convinced of this (17)

#### C. CLICHE

- P.O.: This seems to me to be just a cliche -- not a personal opinion (9,18)

#### D. AGREEMENT

- S.G.: I think I was trying to consistently not mark statements which were agreement although this one does expand on the previous point. (12)

#### E. FACTUAL

- S.G.: I think I was thinking that this was more factual (4000 as a percentage of X) (32)

- J.G.: maybe this is an opinion -- but it could be a more "objective" prediction based on past experience -- it is verifiable, unlike most of the statements above -- (verifiable) (33,34,36,39)

#### F. SUGGESTION

- J.G.: a suggestion -- not really a statement (49)

#### G. VERIFICATION

- P.O.: verifying that the opinion stated is indeed this person's opinion (11)

## APPENDIX 9

C: Oh, this is really good

B: I don't know, to me it seemed like the union wasn't organized at all, I mean, ready for this, as a whole, because there's another article where the local and the main meeting have-are totally at o-odds.

?:

C: That is because they picked-they had another union member come in who is really in opposition to the main meeting, isn't it?

B: I mean-you mean that professional striker?

C: Yeah. That really [caused some-some -- That's  
B: That could be. I don't know. I couldn't find that article though. 'Cause I remember reading it, like this year

C: Un hunh.

B: like within the last two months, that they brought in this professional strike leader. And that all he does is go to different strikes (and) get the people to rally behind the cause.

C: Because I-I watched that, um, remember when they were downtown? Last Friday?

E: Yeah, yeah. Then (we went on) [Wednesday.

C: [Wednesday. Well that was on the news then that night. Did you see that, Steve?

D: Yeah. We would have to buy a share of stock

E: That's what Ann (thinks).

B: All the union members bought one share of stock so they could get into the board meeting.

E: Whose-Who set that criteria?

D: Well that's what ( ) board meeting must be.

B: Yeah. You can either proxy a vote or

E: O.K. O.K. sure

C: And as it came out, because First Bank are shareholders

B: They got two people on the board of directors

C: Un hunh. They said they don't really have enough, um

D: control

C: control or influence to really determine anything. The stockholders really seemed to look pretty sheepish on T.V., didn't they?

B: But I mean

D: Did you see some interviews?

C: Yeah.

E: Oh, I didn't see any interviews. I just \* I saw (it) earlier -- it just showed them filing in

?:

C: Yeah, and I guess that is the big problem is that they've got this striker that's come in and that's causing them a lot of problems within the union \* itself. (There's this) striker that you

B: Yeah. He gets paid. He's like a

F: Who hired him?

B: The local

D: How much does he get paid?

F: The local union?

B: I'm pretty sure they did. He's like a consultant, like you'd have in business.

C: Un hunh.

B: Except he consults them on the strike. You know, he's the guy who decided

that they should try to boycott First Banks and stuff like that -- which I think -- I don't know if it's even-to me it would be even that ethical, to boycott another business, just because it has a member on their board or something.

D: They took out a 70 million trust fund. Did you read that?

C: No.

D: They took it out of First Banks -- the unions did, or one of the unions.

E: Oh yeah?

C: How did they do that?

B: They just took it.

D: They just took it out and put it in a different bank. But there's a little something to that. Half of it had to go someplace else anyway. But still, 35 million is a lot of money.

C: It certainly is.

B: Really.

D: I mean even for First Bank.

B: But to me this strike just doesn't seem-I mean if they're gonna strike, it just doesn't seem organized at all.

C: What makes you think it's not organized?

B: Well, I mean, first they say O.K., we'll give it to the arbitrator and let him decide, you know. And then the arbitrator decides against it, and then they said, "Well, I guess we won't accept the arbitrator's decision," you know

*quote*

C: The union said that

B: Yeah.

C: Uh hunh. And then, after that, they decide, "Well, maybe we'd better bring in a profession s-

B: striker

C: strike leader.

F: And see what he can do.

D: I don't think that means they're not organized. They lost and they don't want to give up, so they're gonna take it to a

B: Yeah, but I mean, when you decide to go to arbitration, you should basically-cause the guy's neutral, you should

C: The arbitrator is

B: follow his decision-what his decision is. If that's what-that's why you wanted to go to arbitration, 'cause you feel you have a chance to win and the other team feels they have a

A: So what're they gonna do when they're not taking what he said

B: Right.

A: they're not taking that decision. Even though he decided that the two dollar-I mean, he had all the information there -- the balance sheets and -- he knew what kind

E: I think it's just that-yeah, I think it's just that they don't want to lose. They're just not going to lose. They've made that decision.

B: So, I mean, why take it to arbitration then?

E: In case

D: Well, you might as well. In case they do win they look good.

F: Yeah, and

B: But now they look like -- they look

F: If they win they can always say, "Well, look this (guy) was neutral and he"

B: But now they look like-I mean, now they're back's are to the wall. They look

F: really bad

B: They look stupid.  
C: Well  
B: Well not stupid.  
C: Yeah, I mean, I guess too, you can see both sides.  
B: Yeah  
C: You can understand how [the  
B: But I mean  
C: the workers feel.  
B: Say that you did ( ) the contract. I mean, how're you ever going to get this resolved. And the management team would say, "Well, we don't accept what the arbitrator says."  
C: Yeah. Somebody's gonna have to give in.  
B: [It could just go on and on and on. You gotta get a compromise somewhere. I don't even know if-I haven't really read too much of this, but I don't know if] the issue's just the pay cut?  
E: I think that's where we have to  
C: The issue's just the pay cut. That what I get  
B: That's what the arbitrator was brought in for -- just the wage dispute.  
C: Because this is happening all over with  
E: Uh hunh.  
C: a lot of companies, where they're  
E: What I-yeah, what I ('ve) found in the-I looked up for the industry, and the wages have-have declined. So, I mean, as a whole. And I-Were they willing to take any kind of pay cut?  
B: I don't really know.  
F: What are the days on (those)( )?  
B: This was  
C: You wanna see it?  
B: October in '84 when the arbitrator came in, or when they decided to have the arbitrator  
D: I read somethin' last Wednesday in the paper  
B: I mean, there's [a lot of articles  
C: [There was something?  
B: [if you can just get the  
C: Yeah, I saved that one.  
B: microfilm. It seems to be out [all the time.  
F: [That's just-Well, that's just it. I was looking for-through the rolling kinds of things and I didn't even know where to start.  
B: Well, I went upstairs. They have a-a big catalogue of Star and Tribune or every article that's ever been written for the year.  
C: Where is that? At Wilson?  
B: Yeah.  
C: On the first floor?  
B: It's a big white catalogue.  
C: Or is it in the basement?  
B: Well, the catalogue's upstairs. The microfilm's  
A: Boy, this is really crazy.  
B: downstairs. So you gotta kinda

C: ask around  
B: Yeah. Well (run)( ). Plus for this you gotta have a (ton of-) you gotta have a newspaper, the article, the page, the column, the author \* an' if you forget to do that you gotta run back and forth.  
C:  
D: Oh yeah. I was wondering -- Remember I told you those book shelves that're there?  
F: Yeah.  
D: The very first on, the bottom shelf, there's two big thick white books. It's a trip -- all the (reading). (That's where)  
E: In Wilson that is?  
D: I wonder what more information [we need.  
B: [I mean there's a ton [of ( )  
E: have to come up with a -- just with a [question first.  
[This is just the top.  
E: I mean, once we get that, yeah, we've just gotta come up with a question. That's-That should be no problem  
C: Well, don't you think the question we had was pertinent then to this?  
E: What was it? What did we have before?  
D: Yeah.  
C: You know, and I found out about those two words, "useful" and "purpose." You know, they both sort of mean the same thing, so you could use any one. Are the unions useful? I mean, it doesn't look like the union is being very  
B: efficient anyways  
C: Yeah. Right now. I mean, it's  
D: Yeah, but the-it's  
C: We can address it just to-If we do, we should address it just to Hormel though.  
D: Yeah.  
E: 'Cause Hormel's the  
C: Specifically  
D: Didn't they have a ques [tion after the ( )?  
B: [But they shoulda (seen)  
E: Yeah, but I  
F: Well wait. Didn't she say to generalize it and then after we ask the question we should narrow it down through our discussion we should say, "Well let's take an example. Let's use Hormel."  
E: No.  
D: That was in the format.  
E: That was-that was in the format after we address the-we-Our question's gotta be pretty specific, but then we can use an example, or we can start out just in our discussion starting out general and then work it down, you know, and focus on what we intended to start out with. But  
B: Right here it says the arbitrator ruled that Hormel violated it's contract with the union ( ) cutting the wages, but said the company had the right to reduce wages now, because the unions (at other) meatpacking companies have accepted  
C: the reduction.  
B: Yeah, so all the other ones are-Yeah  
C: And this one won't. And that's part of the problem.

{ D: ( )  
 E: ( )  
 D: ( )  
 ?: \*  
 D: ( )

C: \* I think, anyway.

B: That's why the union's divided up, I mean, divided. Some of 'em are accepting the wage cuts an' this one isn't.

C: Um hum. And I think that's one of the reasons that Hormel he-in Austin is threatening to just close down that plant is because this union here

B: 's standing

C: Um hum. What they want

E: So it's basically this local here that's the one that's puttin' up the big fuss.

C: Yeah.

B: But they have (a plant)-Well, I mean, from what it sounds, this one's a really productive plant compared to other ones.

?: \*

C: Huh.

B: It said that -- I can't remember -- that-but I think the profits were like 9% or something.

?: \*\*\*

B: ( )

C: ( ) some of these

B: Their forth quarter profit or third quarter profit

?: \*

B: But one of the reasons why profit went up in the forth-the third quarter is because they did cut the wages.

{ C: Um hum. And also they are starting to use,

B: To get out ( ) the problem.

{ C: um, di-making different products -- more (fast food) things, which-which is part of the reason -- for the company's

B: To (get) outline the problem

{ E: ( )

D: Yeah.

E: That's what we have to do -- is to come up with that right away.

D: ( ) do research and other things. We don't even know the direction we're goin', so how can we do it?

C: Is what?

D: { We have to state the problem.

E: { We have to come up with this-yeah, we have to state the problem right.

C: Well, do you feel that we have enough information?

D: { Yeah.

E: I think we do, yeah. I think we have ea[sily enough right now.

C: { Do you think this union is useful?

E: Is all {that a mask?

C: { Is effective?

D: It-ju-I think it should be something like -- are they \*\* looking at the other side, management side, \*\* sort of. 'Cause I mean, if it's not-what-maybe they can't pay them any more.

?: \*

C: How do you determine that?

D: You'd have to look at the-like that arbitrator did -- look at the balance sheet, an', see if they're makin' an extra profit, or more than they should

be making.

B: So should they have their wages, I mean, say they make the 9% profit, just take all that 9% and have it just break even?

?:  
D: No, they shouldn't break even. I said a fair profit,  
B: Yeah.

D: but I mean if they're makin'

B: But I mean, why do you need a profit if they everybody's paid-well? You don't really need a profit.

D: Well, [who's company is it though?  
C: That's not the way business is.

B: Yeah, I know it.

D: Who's company is it? 't's the shareholder's, right?

B: Yeah.

D: Well [they're not gonna  
B: ( )  
D: invest in it if the thing doesn't ever pay off.

B: Well they already got their stock.  
\*: \*  
D: But -- what happens if everybody sells it?  
B: Somebody will have to buy it, \* to sell it.  
C: Yeah, what's that guy who wrote that book? \* Buy Low, Sell High? [laughter]  
?: \*  
E: (Great) words there.  
C: Hunh?  
E: Real [\* in depth-  
B: I know  
E: in depth words there, boy. It must have taken a lot of time to think that  
( )  
D: I know, I saw that in the newspaper too -- Investor's Guide: Buy Low, Sell High. I go "Hum. Boy, you're tellin' everybody a lot."  
B: But you're right. I mean, they do have to show, I mean, increase their profit every year to keep their [stock price goin' up  
C: Yeah. The trouble is, the company couldn't stay in business.  
E: I don't know. To me it seems like the issue's just-is that the union locally is -- somethings's wrong there. I don't know so much that they're \* You can't look at a union h-or analyze a union how they're lookin' at the management, 'cause none of them do. They're really [not, I mean, they're all  
C: can't look at a union,"  
E: and judge them, or focus on them, on how they, uh, look at the management or how they, uh, feel that the management's treating them, because all unions are just -- they're just gonna go for all the workers. They're gonna go for all the workers. They're gonna go for what they feel they can get.  
C: What's the purpose of the union if [they (aren't getting)  
D: Oh, they weren't flexible  
E: They're for their own-they're for their own-their own cause, aren't they?  
B: Maybe.  
E: I mean, that's what I would-that's what I think.  
C: Well they're-they're for their own cause, but they still have to look at the administration and the company before they can determine anything for themselves.

E: But I don't think that's their main objective [to do that  
C: You don't think this union is  
doing this

D: No, or any of them. *rep.* *rep.*

E: No, I don't think any-I don't think-but I don't think this one's that much different from any of them in that respect.

??: \*

B: I think

C: *rep.* I'm not sure if I'm clear

B: I think the problem is that, you know, you got this big union, but then you got dissention in this little union, I mean, where they totally deviate from what the-the main union wants. 'Cause (if) all the other meatpacking plants are taking

C: Have accepted the cut.

B: Yeah.

??: \*

D: Hunh.

B: So when you got that goin' on, why even have a union, I mean, why not just have a bunch of little unions

C: Um hum.

B: instead of one big one?

??: \*

C: See 'cause [Hor-

E: Yeah

C: Hormel is just not, I mean, that's a big company that's just not enough to (( ))

B: I don't think they just-they're running around with-like chickens with their heads cut off, because they don't have the support of the

C: of the

B: all the meat packers. They only got support of their little [family. *their own*

E:

B: employees.

E: So it's-it's this local that's-that's 'causin' all the

C: Un hunh.

B: 'Cause ( ) just

D: (Well) that's gonna make it really tough to phrase the question.

E: No, I think that'd make it easier

C: How?

E: Well, you could address it at just that-at this local an-'s-an' we could outline it, as what they're doing differently from the rest of 'em, and that's why-that's why there're problems there.

B: 'Cause that's where

E: You know that, just like you said, you know that they haven't done this and this and this. And that's what makes 'em so much different (( ))

B: That's the sole reason why the arbitrator sided with the -- Hormel. Because he looked at all-what all the other companies were doin' an' he said, "Well \* this justifies what they're doin'

??: \*

C: Did you find anything on where they filed a chapter eleven?

B: I-I just breezed through this, so-but there's a ton of information in it.

C: Un hunh.

B: In the Minneapolis Star for in-If you could get your hands on the micro-film though, it seems like the most recent months are gone \* all the time.

C: You mean checked out  
B: Yeah.  
?: \*  
B: Or else uh somebody must've took the stack of the catalogues. You know, you got a monthly catalogue that's of every article that was written in the paper an' the only one left in there was January's -- today, so somebody else must've took them to some table an' was pagin' through 'em or somethin'  
C: ( ) just keep goin' there, an' checkin'  
B: Yeah.  
?: \*  
E: (We won't) go P 9 to this.  
?: \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \*  
A: There musta been a change ( ) It says ( ) reduce vacation ( ), differential pay, health insurance, ( ). So it's not only the wages that they  
B: Yeah, benefits too.  
A: that they wanna cut ( )  
C: Benefits can cost the company an awful lot of money.  
?: \* \*  
A: (Do you think) so?  
B: But, I mean, that kinda-if you got good benefits you're willin' to take cuts.  
C: A cut.  
B: (So it pays.)  
C: Yeah, and maybe, and I think that that's  
?: \*  
B: 'Cause that actually is part of the wage, really.  
C: Un hunh. That's part of the pr-'Cause when you go look for a job, you not only look for the-how much you're goin' to get, but you look to see what your benefits are-are they gonna [compensate]  
B: [I mean, if you got ten dollars an hour an' had to work 365 days a year, or something like that, or no vacation time  
C: an' no benefits, it wouldn't be  
B: or like you had to pay for your own insurance, an' things of that nature, you'd probably say, ["I need 15 or 20 an hour.  
C: An' [laughter] An' on eight dollars an hour, it would be difficult for any family to provide themselves with those kinds of benefits  
?: \* \*  
D: Well, should our question just be why they don't go along with the main union?  
C: I don't think we can pose a question stating why.  
D: Well, I was just getting general  
C: Oh.  
D: Is that the direction? \* Or do we wanna talk about the unions in particular, or this one not followin' 'em?  
?: \* \*  
C: I can't think of any other unions that's done this \* Is there any other union this big? I don't know.  
E: I'm su-I don't even think this union's all that huge, but if, you know, it's  
A: But if we cut it down to just this union, I mean, wouldn't that be like, how'll we, um \* \* (I mean, can we-) like we're supposed to be gettin' a point across to our audience, right? So, how would this be doin' that, I

mean, if we were just talkin' about like-don't we have to make it-like this is a problem of unions? Like don't pose the questions as just Hormel, because, I mean, so that's not applying to everyone else, so, you know, so who cares?

?:

E: Because you're saying, I mean, well, I don't know how

C: Well, she has a real good point, because this is happening all over with lots of unions, right? All across the country

D: What?

A: So we have to pose a question that

C: Unions are

A: that's

C: unions are [having similar problems to these

A: pertaining to all of them-to all of [the

B: ( )

A: problems that unions are having, but the only thing that we're using, the example we're using is Hormel.

C: Right.

D: But the only problem is these guys are goin' against what the main union says. You know, unions're made up of a whole bunch of different chapters an' one chapter's deciding not to follow the-the huge center, right?

B: Um hum.

D: So one chapter's deciding not to follow the strategy. So you can't really generalize it 'cause this [is an exception

A: So -- couldn't we say what would happen if \* um \* unions don't stick together? Or the problems that can arise?

E: That's [not bad, yeah.

B: ( ) [or you could say something

C: (but they do lose) their power then.

B: Our union's strength is due mainly to its numbers, I think

C: Um hum.

B: (in) per [suading to ( ) \* ( )]

E: Ya-Yeah, that's a good point. What would happen if \* if all the unions uh \* if they broke down into the locals, or-an' the locals ran themselves \* 'Cause tha-that's basically-yeah, that's what this is

A: (They're) just deviating from one another

E: doing, right? That's

C: Because look when the automobile ah unions were having such a problem. You know, that's a big union [-- also

B: [Un hunh.

C: an' there were lots of problems then with -- the local unions there. Who was going to ( ) So that always is a problem.

F: Well, could we just ask a question ( ) What should be done about what ( ) dissention in unions?

?:

E: I don't think we know what could be done though.

F: No.

D: I don't think this is common either

E: [I-I (wouldn't know)].

B: The thing is, you know, when you gotta big union that's lookin' out for everybody, you got people that're willing to take lower pay down in the south, because their cost of living might be a little lower than it is up here, or somethin' like that. An' you gotta take the same cut up here that they ke-do down there.

C: Yeah. And the other issue, you know, something is always better than nothing, an' if they don't accept this then, they're gonna end up pretty much with nothin'

B: But I mean, if they (vote) to, they um, if this union decided that they're gonna stand fast -- I mean, who's to say that \* they just close that plant down.

C: And it -- right now that's what Hormel's threatening to do -- is just to close the plant down if -- because, you know, ( ) he-essentially it seems like they're sayin' that they can-you know, their other companies are as profitable, an' could be more profitable.

A: So it only this -- local

C: Um hum.

A: that's (getting)( )? It's not all of Hormel.

E: No, it says -- that's what it's ( ) here.

C: Well it's all of Hormel that has been in labor dispute, an' the s-salaries have been cut. \* An' benefits apparently have been cut. I'm not too sure of that though so don't

A: ( ) in all of Hormel

B: But this is the one that's makin' the big fuss  
( ) Th-they're rejecting (it)

C: Yeah

A: Just ( ) this is the only one [that's -- not a problem  
C: will not agree.  
A: not ( ). O.K.

??: \* \*

C: We can't come to any terms, really  
??: \* \* \*

C: 'cause here it says [they don't  
E: (I think) you can ( ) (something like) what would happen if \* if all the large unions -- uh -- or if the locals didn't stick together, \* s-phrase it somehow like that. 'Cause that's what ha-that's what we're lookin' at, I think, is the whole union an' it's breakin' apart. Or one union's-one local's just not gonna stick by it-what the rest of the union has agreed [on  
A: (I think we should say) what-what-what would happen or  
E: what could [happen  
A: [show what would ha-show what is happening.  
E: Yeah.

F: But then we gotta find a solution too, as to how to keep (it) together.  
??: \*  
A: (Well) does [that  
E: or  
A: mean we have to do that-we have to come up with a solution [pertaining  
F: Yeah  
A: to them anyway. I mean, I think that would be easier than tryin' to -- solve a whole union's problem.  
??: \* \*  
D: I don't know (if) you can just take one though, an' what would happen if they break apart. "Cause this doesn't happen that much. I think that's  
E: ( ) (but) but that's the point, it's-it's happening now. that's  
C: Yeah.  
D: But it's not hurting the union in general. 't's just hurtin' [this  
E: Well you

D: [-this section of the (employees)  
C: ( ) (split 'em) ( )  
E: Well [you don't know what-yeah, you don't know that.  
A: Well, yeah-Well yeah. Exactly. What happens if other people started  
doing this? Union system would be useless. \* There wouldn't be a union.  
C: So, you [know, here  
E: ( ) or each little area would have it's own union which  
would mean nothing. Each plant would be a union.  
D: Un hunh.  
?: \*  
E: You know, so there's no power there then.  
C: Um. So you know, the other-because of the economics, there's an economic  
problem with-(your)-I've got here economics -- um. Are unions paying  
attention to the realities?  
?: \*  
C: What's happening . . .  
D: That's what I'ud think 's the key point.  
C: Yeah.  
D: See, like the industry's goin' down -- an' they still want a raise, even  
though the money isn't there. \* You know, if it's not profitable, they  
can't keep gettin' raises.  
E: That was the question we had last time, wasn't it?  
D: Right.  
E: ( ) we come up with?  
D: Are they being inflexible wi-in regard to the  
?: \*  
C: 'Cause yu-they have to pay attention to the realities. None of that-What  
else do I have? um  
?: \*\*  
D: I mean, we could focus on either one, but which would be a better  
discussion?  
?: \*  
C: An' I'm sure that they're worried. Just like what happened with um \* Was it  
General Motors? Now General Motors asked their automobile employees to  
take-asked their workers to take a cut, right? An' so then the company got  
healthy again, an' the administrators were getting these horrendous  
salaries.  
E: An' they weren't boostin' the wage up again.  
C: An' they were not then, giving it back to the workers \* \* So, you know, I  
think that can be said.  
?: \*  
E: The way I'm-the way we might want to look at it too is -- we're not-we're  
not experts on this fi-you know, on all this, so if we uh -- if we can come  
up with one that we could just talk, you know, just common sense-wise, (just  
like) being able to discuss it for a-any length of time, that might help  
too.  
C: Um hum.  
?: \*  
E: I just-we gotta come up with something that can-that [we can talk about  
A: I mean if we looked  
at-the deviation of the union, you know, dividing up ( ) goin' into  
sections. I mean, that's all personal -- opinion anyway. I mean, anything  
you'd say about it like, what would happen -- to it? -- That's all, um \* \*  
let me think a minute \* \* \* It's just -- personal opinion on the whole

thing. I mean, -- what would happen? \* I mean, would the union be worth keeping? Or would-or is the union worth it? \* Is it purposeful?

?:  
C: Worth keeping?  
A: Yeah.  
?:  
C: Well Hormel's executives are s-saying no, 'cause they are certainly threatening them closing down the plant. \* \* \* \* So it's lost, essentially this union is really losing power -- and losing face. They're losing their effectiveness because they -- are not-they're not able to come to any kind of realistic terms  
A: So that's a point ( )  
D: But you never do come up with a realistic--you know when they start negotiating, they're always so far off, an' to me it ju' seems like a standard -- battle over wages. I mean, it doesn't seem any different, does it really? I mean, there is no quick solution. An' just because you have a big union, you don't go, "O.K., this is what we want." You gotta come in, ["O.K.-- sure --" ( ) arguments. prep?  
C: I'll tell you why it seems different to me. It seems different to me now, because our economy is different. An' our economy has affected unions an' companies. An' that's-been-where unions have really lost a lot of power. \* Is because the economy has changed, just turned things around.  
E: In what way?  
C: In that a lo-companies were losing money, and couldn't-therefore couldn't pay their employees -- those high wages anymore.  
E: ( ) not all they were, or not now? Or-what you-is that all you mean?  
C: Be-yeah, the-because the economy-[sic] the economy an' inflation -- companies had to ask their employees to take a cut in wages. Otherwise -- you know, companies were just gonna -- fold under.  
?: \*  
E: So in a-so the unions-That-that would mean a question of uh, they're not realistic.  
C: Right.  
E: They're not lookin' at  
C: They're not being realis [tic  
E: They're not lookin' at the whole picture. They're too, uh, dogmatic.  
C: Um, s-you know, an' there are both sides [to it.  
B: Good word.  
C: [laughter] There are two sides to it, 'cause you have to look at the company, an' you have to look at the needs of the employees too. \* You know, an' I'm sure it's frustrating on both sides.  
E: Oh yeah. It's -- you know, you got two-two groups of people who want the best for themselves, an' someone's gotta give -- an' no one wants to. \* Yeah, that-I don't know, it \* \* what's-what do you think? What's everyone else think?  
?: \*  
C: Don't you think the e [comony [sic] is affected unions? Hunh?  
E: The camera's on ( )  
F: Yeah, that's why I'm looking over there.  
?: [group laughter]  
?: \*

E: That isn't-O.K., yeah, that's not a (camera). That's just the ( ) \*  
Hi mom.  
?: [group laughter]  
?: \* \* \*  
A: ( )  
?: \* \* \* \*  
A: Well then is the problem-the union itself? Or is it just this local?  
?: \* \*  
E: Sounds like it's the local, for this one, but  
A: So if we're gonna use this (union)  
E: it can be the whole, it can be the whole union-picture as a whole, because  
the other -- Ya, like these articles are good, but they don't -- you'd have  
to read them all at once or get the whole [background, because they're ( )  
B: Well there's so many more  
E: took a dollar cut [ (I could've done another one) ( ) but  
B: so this is a two dollar cut. \* Maybe those other plants wouldn't 've taken  
a two dollar cut, you know  
D: so that's  
E: They only took a dollar cut. So, I mean, maybe, if that was posed to them  
"two dollars or nothing" -- you know, they might've done the same thing.  
We don't know that, do we?  
D: 'Ca-'Cause the union goes, "Yeah, the one plant took \$8.75 (they're) down to  
one \$9.25, 'n' one \$8.25. They mixed those up and came to the \$8.25.  
C: How do you know what those wages were before that, in those other places,  
though?  
A: Yeah, it doesn't say if [ (they're the same).  
D: Well if it's the union, there's-the union has  
standard wage rates. ['Cause it's the same union  
( ): Yeah, now that  
E: Yeah, but they're different-[different costs of living  
C: but different areas.  
E: they're gonna [ be different.  
C: Yeah. That's how they base it on.  
?: \*  
E: Like in that one it said that the Dallas plant an' the-some other ones what-  
wasn't there like five of 'em in there -- in that pair? \*\* With the one  
dollar an hour r-ra-O.K., it's-O.K., it doesn't say those two, I thought it  
said two dollars \*\* O.K., they're gettin' cut two bucks, but this one do-it  
says, O.K. one dollar an hour raise -- next year.  
C: Where's that at?  
E: There's like uh six other Hormel plants. But it doesn't say how much they  
had to-they uh approved of the first cut.  
?: \* \*  
D: Where did you get that this chapter's goin' against the whole union? Did  
you read that somewhere?  
B: Yeah.  
C: Yeah, it's in all the papers though. It's in this one  
?: \*  
D: But it  
B: (There was) an article that I think I screwed up. Uh, I looked in the book,  
an' I marked the wrong date 'n' it just said -- somethin' like, "Local  
Union -- 's Against," or "The Main Union's Against the Local Union." It was  
a headline.

D: ('Cause) I haven't read that anywhere.

C: Yeah, well, that's why they got the striker in here -- this professional striker -- That's because this union is opposing the decision of the main union. \* \* But I think you have to look at what the base problem is for all union (an' it) has been economics.

D: Well that's -- better [ ]

B: Um, it says "The campaign aimed at Hormel stockholders and it's banker, First Bank System, is opposed by the 1.3 million member UFCW -- International, the nation's largest food workers union. \* The International said it prefers a nation-wide boycott against Armour Foods, which pays the lowest wages among the major packers. \* The union says it doesn't want to confuse the issue with the simultaneous campaign against Hormel."

E: Is Arm--is Arm-is Armour a uh union plant?

B: Yeah. Same [u-(I mean) same union

E: Same union.

B: different plant \* but [they

D: So they

B: -they wanna make the Armour plant more the issue than-than International -- Food Union instead of just, you know, Hormel which pays the highest wage.

D: Right. They're worried about the lower (pay) which makes sense. \* So this union is just like all unions in, really, they just want to get ahead [for) themselves,

B: wanna get a

D: and they don't care about the lower guys.

C: So they're greedy.

D: Right.

B: Well I think (the) international thinks they have a better case against Armor. I mean, or \* what they're arguing \* \* \* Cause they got more support, I mean, 1.3 million's a few more people than 1,300 at Hormel.

C: And that's just at this (plant) though,

B: the 1,300.

D: Yeah. We could go either way ( ) \* Either one'd be good. \* You know, um, are they being inflexible with the wages?

B: Well I think [they

D: or are they just, or are they ruining it with the solidarity?

I mean,

B: I think the union has to go in it all for one and one for all, not just

E: How 'bout, like a question like a, 'Should unions,' or, yeah, 'Should unions change with the time or,' I think that's, you're claiming the economy's changing, right?

C: Um hum.

E: And I agree with that too, that a lot of companies just can't make it, so they're forced, instead of keeping the wages the same or raising them, \* sooner or later it's comin' down to a point now where a lot of places just can't make it anymore.

?:

C: Yes.

E: I mean, isn't that-that's the point though, right? They're just not changing. They're not looking at the whole picture. They're staying on one course and the economy says we gotta do something else.

C: Yeah, I mean, I could imagine how painful it'd be for me to work someplace and all of the sudden they're asking me to cut my salary \* \* and that would just be, that'd be overwhelming. I'm sure it's overwhelming (for) a big

company also. \* But at the same time, and as hard as it would be, something is still better than nothing. And if they go on strike, they're not gonna have anything.

A: (If) they close the plant, they're out of a ( ) job.

E: Yeah. \*\* So I mean that-that's one question we could  
?: \*\*

C: So, and I think essentially

E: that

C: too, that unions are losin' their power -- because of the economy.

E: Well, yeah, because a lot of, it's-it's happened before. Companies just, you know, they've-they've folded. They have folded. And there's a lot of people, you know, they talk a mean line, but when it comes down to it, you know, you uh \*\* you guys take a cut or you have no job, most people are gonna take the cut. \* I mean you can say what you want, but most people are gonna take that cut 'cause they want some money.

C: Um hum. And [I

E: and that's why they're gonna lose [some power.

C: afraid too, because of what has happened at GM \*\* at Crysler. (It's) Crysler [I was looking at.

E: Yeah.

C: I mean, the fat cats got healthy and the fat cats got (-take in the)

B: (Yeah)

D: Four thousand a year's a big cut.

E: But, yeah but, O.K., you might not take the cut. You're-you're gonna say I'm gonna band together with the union, but there's always about five other guys opposed to you that are, that are, they don't care. You know. Once it comes down to the, to the money, they're gonna take what's there. They're not gonna risk a, you know, a shot at all or nothing. You know, meaning keeping your same wage or-or nothing. (Uh) They're gonna play it safe or take a little cut, or, you know, not so much little, but \* smaller than if you lo-lose it all. \*\* Don't you think so?

D: Yeah. But I mean, they look at it just like, heah, I'm gonna be losing four thousand a year. That's why they're

E: They're gonna be mad, but when it comes right down to it, I think people are gonna take the cut. And that why u-unions are losin' they're power.

B: I th[ink]

E: [eep.] The guys, they're not stickin' together.

B: Yeah, I think

D: [ ( ) ]

E: [ ( ) ]

B: the union instills a false hope in all the(ir) employees. Like, O.K., we're gonna get this an' this an' this, so keep with us, and then pretty soon, bang, the plant's gone an' you guys are in the soupline.

C: Yeah, this striker's not really being realistic,

B: Um hum.

C: 'cause he's makin' money off [them any how.

B: [He's sayin' how there's no way this plant'll ever close down an' stuff like that \* [ ( ) ]

D: [Seems like] they always wanted a fair share of the profits, but then when the profits go down \* they don't want their fair share of taking

E: [they don't wanna go down, yeah

D: Losses with the thing.

C: Yeah.  
B: Yeah.  
D: That seems to be the key point.  
B: It's just greed.  
E: But they're just, they're not changing. They're just not-they're stayin' on one course an' the  
?: \*  
C: 'Cause we could look at the union (in) this corporation as being just another group, who has to work \* together cooperatively and effectively.  
?: \*  
B: (Oh) there is his [ ( ) ] [laughter] What?  
A: That was good.  
B: That (the) professional: Ray Rogers, Labor Consultant.  
?: \* \* \* \* \*  
C: Now the rank and file's a big issue. I mean, what does happen to the rank and file, but  
?: \* \* \* \*  
F: Now we're back to flexibility again \* and  
B: But like they're payin' that- that stupid consultant like  
C: a hundred  
B: three hundred dollars and he hasn't even been on the ( ) six months ( ) any of the employees ( )  
C: And the union, this union is payin' him that. \* \* Did you guys hear this?  
E: ( ) that's what it's gonna be  
D: (I think that-like)  
A: ( ) going to help ( ) economic an'  
E: Yeah, that's-exactly. We should have no problem, only we have to word it the right way-which we should do today.  
A: We should start doing something.  
E: Right. We only have two-two more meetings. (No, three more).  
A: Well, can we have ( ) Wednesday meeting? Can we hand them in? A paper in Wednesday, we're allowed to hand them in a week after?  
C: You can, [yeah, a week later]  
E: Yeah, right.  
C: Yeah, 'cause we didn't, we couldn't write on  
A: Well, we could write on (Wednesdays).  
E: You have to have one in Wednesday 'cause you have all three (left) for four of us.  
C: So do I, Erin. [laughter]  
E: So let's-let's get a question here.  
?: \* \* \* \*  
D: [Are union's only  
E: ( )  
D: looking for a  
E: That's, I'm gonna write these down. Who wants to, [I'm not a good/fast writer.  
D:  
E: Who's a fast writer?  
?: \* \*  
A: I'll write (this one).  
D: I'll type it.  
?: \* \*  
E: Right. Go ahead.  
C: [laughter]

E: Are unions  
C: Yeah, let's see you type on that. "Chu, chu, chu"  
A: I've got, "Are unions".  
E: Are unions  
D: You scared me the minute you said you're writin' it down.  
E: [laughter] We've gotta come up with one here.  
D: Are unions just lookin' for higher wages \* Wait. See? I wanna say that, you know, are they, do they want their share of the profits that's fair, or are they just lookin' to build up their wage base? You know, are they just lookin' for more money without any justification?  
F: Are unions greedy?  
?: \*  
C: Does the existant cost the employer more money  
?: \* \* \* \*  
E: I think we ought, we should bring/include something like a change that's- that something's changing. So, are unions changing?  
A: Flexible with the times  
?: \*  
C: because of the [economy].  
E: Yeah. Well that's, yeah, I know, but that'd be one of our arguments then. That would just be one of our arguments.  
A: Right. See, that way if we don't make too, see if we just say \* \* \* because of the economy, if we put that in the question, then that's what we have to stick to. \* But if we make the first question general enough with the phrase, that would make, let us bring in  
D: Yeah.  
A: [the economy, and if they're greedy, you know, we could bring in those few aspects that we've been talkin' about.  
?: \*  
C: You can't say they're greedy. That's  
E: No, no, not [in the class  
?: [laughter]  
A: ( ) (question)  
E: (that's) all we can ( ). Like, you know, "are unions, are unions changing with the times?"  
A: Just a general, pretty, general term  
F: Or, "should the unions change, changing with the times?"  
E: Yeah.  
?: \* \*  
C: Do you think unions are still necessary?  
?: \* \*  
A: Personally? \* \* \* I don't know.  
D: Are they necessary?  
E: I think they are in some-some are and some aren't. That's my opinion, but \* \* \* \* "Are unions," what was the phra-"are unions changing with the times," or whatever? We gotta come up with some ideas. You're out.  
D: He has ten minutes.  
E: Look at the camera.  
D: First deadline.  
F: No. Get the camera away from me, all right? Um \* somethin' 'bout flexibility.  
A: "Are unions flexible with the times?" That's what I put down.  
?: \* \* \*  
F: Um \* Well, "Should unions adapt to the economy?"

?:: \*

D: That's not bad.

C: That's a good question, yeah.

?:: \*\*

E: (You did) good

F: Thank you.

E: under pressure

A: Under pressure, cameras on, everything.

D: We got a new technique now.

E: [laughter]

A: Adapt to changing times?

E: Change in the economy.

F: Change in the economy. \* To the changing economy.

?:: \*\*\*\*\*

A: I helped with the first one.

C: [laughter]

A: I pass

?:: \*\*

: O.K.

?:: \*\*\*\*\*

F: [humming] ta, ta, ta-ta-ta-ta

?:: [laughter]

E: Both those are very close to what we need, I think though.

A: Um hum.

E: "Should unions" \* Well, what's gonna be easier to answer? 'Should' or 'are'?

When we [ ]

C: Well, you can't start a question out with 'should'

E: Should

C: Hun un.

F: Because

C: You just can't.

F: it sounds [ ]

E: You [ ] say [ ]

A: It won't even be a debate. Yeah. It'll be  
(able to) come to a decision right now.

C: But I ju-I just figured for right now.

D: You could just put 'aren't'.

E: Yeah, we [can just

A: We can always change

E: We can flipflop. "Are unions adopt-adapting . . ."

A: ( )

C: Because the word 'should' is a judgement. 'Shoulda, woulda, coulda'

?:: \*

A: Right.

?:: [laughter]

E: "So are unions adapting to the changing economy?"

C: Yes. \* Um hum.

D: Economic conditions

F: Economic [ ]

E: Read it out

?:: [laughter]

?:: \*\*\*\*

D: An' we could always refine it too. [It gets pretty  
C: Oh yeah, we're just thinking  
D: See, now at least we know the direction  
F: 'Cause  
D: we're headed, and what we need -- Now we can just go back, an' if we don't  
quite like-like that, we can make minor changes. It's --  
E: Yeah.  
D: it's a lot ( ) later on  
C: (Let's see now.) "Should unions work effectively with corporation or the  
company?"  
?: \*  
D: I saw tons [lately on that  
F: "Should they," or "can they?"  
A: Well that's, yeah, that's ( ) isn't that?  
?: [laughter]  
C: Well, I can't think right. Should's all right for now, isn't it?  
?: \*\*  
C: I mean, isn't that the whole issue? If you're not  
A: Wouldn't that just be referring to Hormel though? I mean, because isn't  
that basically the only time you've seen (the rep), I mean, I really don't  
know much about unions.  
C: Hunh. Unions and companies are always fighting.  
E: But then the companies say they like the union bein' there. A lot of com-  
panies say that.  
C: Yeah.  
D: Why is that?  
E: Well they just, yeah, [I think it's the PR an'  
F: It's just that  
E: They think it's a stability there then for the workers. (They're) all gonna  
want the same thing an' -- they-they [claim that  
D: ( )  
E: I don't believe it. No one believes it, I don't think, because they, I'm  
sure they'd much rather have no union than-then they'd have full control of  
everything.  
D: But it is low turnover though, I mean, it's really steady.  
E: That could be, [yeah  
D: Along that line \* can't see 'em wanting it, but  
?: \*\*\*  
C: Well  
?: \*\*\*  
A: I don't know. \* \* (I'm just) tryin' to (reword this).  
?: [cough]  
D: Well, in five minutes we can't really go much farther than  
E: Are the, are unions  
?: \*\*  
?: [laughter]  
E: It's two o'clock almost.  
C: Yeah.  
D: Should we wrap it up then, or  
E: Well-well what should we have done for Wednesday, then what  
C: Should we make notes and should we try to devise questions, an'  
D: I think we should work down the sheet on Wednesday.  
E: Why-why don't I, should we do it on our own before the thing, and then bring  
all the ideas together?

?: [ ( ) ]  
E: I just think we're runnin' out of time, 'cause we gotta organ-we gotta organize the meeting [and the  
F: Yeah  
E: or the discussion.  
F: An' we gotta make a practice ( ) time  
D: If you want, it wouldn't hurt to throw ideas down about it. \* You don't really have to, but it'd be a good  
?: \*  
A: Well, if we just go through that  
F: Well, I think if, yeah, if each of us, if we (don't) have time to go through this like steps -- the step two for sure, "analysis of a problem," I mean, go through and just get ideas about it  
C: You know, an' the  
F: research a little bit  
C: I'm sorry. The other issue is-is also that we, if need be, we don't have to just use our class time. We might have to  
E: Yeah.  
C: take extra time  
F: Oh yeah.  
C: and use it  
E: But I mean  
A: I'm not gonna come (extra time)  
?: [laughter]  
D: You're not gonna [what?  
E: No, that's what I want, no one wants to do, you know, we'd rather not do that, so if we have, the more we get done before the meeting  
C: Yeah.  
E: or whatever, on our own, \* but  
D: Well, I would. I think we should meet two hours a day \* [and three hours ( )] We  
E: could [do that  
D: Yeah.  
E: We could do that.  
D: From eight to ten at night  
C: Because it is [sort of \* anxiety producing to just meet  
E: just ( )]  
D: No, Friday and Saturday we should go four hours  
E: O.K. Eight to twelve?  
F: Um hum. Now, we should at least  
B: We should at least (put in) one hour a day  
F: Ten 'til two, ten 'til two  
A: Yeah, in the library  
F: in the library.  
B: An' then I'll [just go to ( )]  
D: You can't ( )  
B: then come back  
D: O.K. Then ( ) go out either.  
?: [laughter]  
E: That's why ( )  
F: Thanks, you're swell.  
D: I know, I'm a nice guy. What can I say?  
E: How 'bout if we just say we'll look, we'll read 'em over.

C: Um hum.  
E: And we'll all be dedicated, and we'll read these over.  
A: Right.  
E: An' then jot something down. So try, I don't know, we should at least, don't write out a sentence or anything, or write out paragraphs, but just, <sup>reop</sup> I don't know, read it over so we, so we know what we're doin' for next time.  
D: Are these presentations next week?  
E: Considering that [we got  
B: Yeah.  
E: the-those questions right there  
C: So that's why we're gonna have to [meet some  
B: Wednesday perhaps, Wednesday.  
A: What is?  
B: Our [presentation  
C: These  
D: We only have one day left to [work on it  
A: a week from this Wednesday  
E: No, she have us one more.  
She gave us next Monday also. It wasn't on the syllabus,  
D: Oh.  
E: but  
A: We only have a week from Wednesday then.  
E: Yeah.  
F: Yup.  
D: Think we need anymore, [uh  
A: This week [end  
E: I don't know, we don't, we don't do a, we go the following Monday though, don't we?  
F: Oh, do we?  
B: She cha[n]ged that  
A: Oh yeah, it has to be 'cause we're the second  
E: I like to ch-yeah, 'cause we're the second day. No, we're the, maybe we are the  
D: We're the last.  
E: Oh, are we?  
B: Yeah.  
D: We're the last.