

## **At the intersection of stance-management and repair: Meta-pragmatic claims as a practice for disarming disaffiliative responses**

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### *English Abstract*

This article offers an in-depth analysis of one particular type of meta-talk. It looks at how speakers use the meta-pragmatic claim to have previously communicated ('said' or 'meant') the same as, or the equivalent of, what their interlocutor just said. Through detailed sequential analyses, it is shown that this claim is frequently used as a practice for disarming disaffiliative responses and thus to manage (and often resolve) incipient disagreement. Besides unpacking the precise mechanisms underlying this practice, the paper also takes stock of the various (and partly variable) lexico-morpho-syntactic, prosodic and bodily-visual elements of conduct that recurrently enter into its composition. Since the practice essentially rests on the speaker's insinuation of having been misunderstood by their co-participant, its relationship to the organization of repair will also be discussed. It is argued that the practice operates precisely at the intersection of stance-management (agreement/disagreement) and repair, and that it exhibits features which reflect this intersectional character. Data are in English.

*Keywords:* meta-talk, (dis)affiliation, (dis)agreement, stance, repair, Conversation Analysis.

### *Abstract*

Dieser Beitrag widmet sich der Verwendung eines spezifischen Typs meta-sprachlicher Äußerungen. Er untersucht wie SprecherInnen des Englischen meta-pragmatische Behauptungen, zuvor das „Gleiche“ kommuniziert (,gesagt' oder ,gemeint') zu haben wie ihr Gesprächspartner, verwenden. Mit Hilfe detaillierter sequenzieller Analysen wird gezeigt, dass diese Behauptungen oft verwendet werden, um disaffiliative Erwidierungen zu entkräften und somit aufkeimende Meinungsverschiedenheiten aufzulösen. Neben der Beschreibung der Mechanismen, die dieser Praktik zu Grunde liegen, werden die verschiedenen verbalen, para- und non-verbalen Ressourcen, die bei der Verwendung dieser Praktik (teils variabel) zum Einsatz gebracht werden, inventarisiert. Abschließend wird das Verhältnis dieser Praktik zu anderen Gesprächspraktiken diskutiert. Da sie grundlegend darauf fußt, dass ein Missverständnis auf Seiten des Gegenübers insinuiert wird, kann sie an der Schnittstelle von Praktiken zum Management von Einstellungen bzw. Haltungen und Reparaturen verortet werden.

*Keywords:* Metasprache, Affiliation/Disaffiliation, Reparaturen, Konversationsanalyse

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## 1. Introduction

By way of preliminary exposition, allow me to begin with what I take to be a fairly obvious and perhaps somewhat trivial observation: Every once in a while it may happen that a participant to an interaction more or less explicitly refers to or comments on the linguistic, communicative or pragmatic properties of the talk produced in the ongoing interaction, thereby engendering what linguists (and other language scholars) would classify as *meta-discourse*, *meta-communication* or *meta-talk* (cf. Schiffrin 1980; Bublitz/Hübler 2007; Lucy 1993; Janier/Reed 2017; see also Bateson [1955] 1972; Jakobson 1960; Lyons 1977). The following examples show that meta-talk of this kind can either be directed towards the co-participant's talk (as in lines 02 and 12 of fragment (1)) or towards the speaker's own talk (as in line 16 of fragment (2)).

### Fragment (1): 'You sound happy' (TG, 00:24-00:35)

01 Bee: whAt's the <<creaky> mAtter with>=  
 02 -> =you <<f> sou[nd ↑HA:Ppy;> ]  
 03 Ava: [ <<p> NOthing.> ]  
 04 (0.2)  
 05 Ava: i sound HA:P[py?]  
 06 Bee: [ ^YE ]E:UH.  
 07 (0.3)  
 08 Ava: NO: ,  
 09 Bee: N:O:?  
 10 Ava: <<p> NO.>  
 11 (0.7)  
 12 -> Bee: °hh you [sound sorta ] CHEERful?  
 13 Ava: [ ( <<pp> Anyway.> ) ]

### Fragment (2): 'Bonito' (NBII:5:R:4, 03:53-04:14)

((In lines 10-14, Emma is talking to her husband Gus, off the phone.))

01 Lot: was kinda FO:Ggy,  
 02 (.)  
 03 we got twEnty three boNIto but.  
 04 (.)  
 05 Emm: [eh hoh hoh ho hoh ]  
 06 Lot: [gO:d we had mO:re da]:mn FU:N.  
 07 Emm: oh: LO:ttie;=  
 08 =no:[ KIDding.]  
 08 Lot: [n-hn-no K]IDding;=  
 09 =w[e g o t]  
 10 Emm: [gu:s;=th]ey got tw(h)Enty three boNIto.  
 11 at GEO:Rge's boa:t.  
 12 GU:S,  
 13 (1.2)  
 14 Emm: <<falsetto, h> twEnty THRE?>  
 15 °hh °hh °hh Oh did uh::  
 16 -> <<l, all> nOt (to) change th' su(b)=  
 17 =budjih KNOW;>  
 18 ↑PHIL went out on tha:t (.) dEa:l with the gu  
 A:NGling club;=  
 19 ='n hE won a ↑PRI::ZE;=  
 20 =did he TELL you?

From a Conversation Analytic (CA) perspective, it is much more important that both speakers in the above examples *do* something with these comments; they carry out certain actions with them or use them to manage specific local exigencies of the interaction. In fragment (1), for example, Bee's meta-linguistic observation *you <<f> sound ↑HA:Ppy;>* is proffered as an account for, and a disambiguating elaboration of, her question in line 01 (*whAt's the <<creaky> mAtter with> (you)*). With this appended account her initial question is now more specifically hearable as inquiring into the grounds for what Bee treats as an accountable and remarkable way of talking on Ava's part (cf. Jefferson 2003). When Ava subsequently resists and ultimately rejects this characterization (lines 05, 08, 10), Bee proffers a second, more tentative and cautious meta-linguistic description in line 12. While this is hearable as backing down in the face of Ava's resistance to Bee's earlier characterization, it also defends the relevance of Bee's initial inquiry by maintaining a similar, albeit slightly weaker version of that characterization (*you sound sorta CHEERful?*). In fragment (2), the parenthetically inserted meta-pragmatic comment *nOt (to) change th' su(bject)* (line 16) signals Emma's awareness of, and alerts her recipient to, the fact that what she is about to introduce next is topically non-fitted and sequentially disjunctive with what went on before (viz. with Lottie's telling about her boat trip). And indeed, Emma subsequently proffers a topic-nominating informing about a mutual acquaintance (*Phil*) and probes for its 'tellability' as news (lines 18-20; cf. Button/Casey 1985). In this respect, meta-talk is evidently no different from other forms of talk. For the participants, such meta-comments figure as practices for the accomplishment of actions-in-interaction (cf. Garfinkel/Sacks 1970); and so this is how they will be approached here analytically.

That said, we can note that participants' meta-comments occasionally concern the (pragmatic or communicative) relationship between the speaker's own talk and the co-participant's talk. A speaker may for example claim that what s/he was about to say has just been pre-empted by the co-participant (cf. C. Raymond, in prep., see also Deppermann 2014:319-322 on a related practice in German), like Fran does in line 07 of fragment (3).

**Fragment (3): 'Call' (NB:III:1:R:7, 05:34-05:46)**

01 Fra: °hh would i HAVE to give you cA:l1 before we co:me;  
 02 Ted: m\_NO:?  
 03 (0.3)  
 04 Fra: n[O:?[=you?]  
 05 Ted: [we?=[we m]ight be down t' the BEA:CH;=  
 06 =[<<p, dim> though you KNOW;=>]=  
 07 -> Fra: =[ i w'z g'nna SA:Y;]=  
 08 =you'd prOllly be GO::NE.  
 09 so maybe i'd better give you a CALL;=  
 10 =when I decide to come DO:WN.=

Another shape which meta-comments of this sort can take is that a current speaker issues the claim to have previously communicated the same as (or the pragmatic equivalent of) what the co-participant has forwarded in the immediately preceding turn. By way of illustration, consider fragment (4), in which Katrina Pierson, who was Donald Trump's national campaign spokeswoman at the time, and Angela Rye, the former executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus, are discussing a

speech Trump gave during his election campaign. In line 07, Katrina Pierson uses the appendor relative *whIch is what i SAID* to issue the meta-pragmatic claim that she had already addressed the point that Angela Rye is trying to make here in one of her previous turns (on appendor clauses, see Sacks 1995a:528 & 647-664). Notably, such meta-pragmatic claims can be contested, which is precisely what happens in the present example. In line 09, Angela Rye rather forcefully rejects Pierson's claim by responding with a corresponding, negatively formatted meta-pragmatic counterclaim.

**Fragment (4): 'Access to capital' (*Your Money, Your Vote*, 04:44-04:57)**

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01   Rye:    let's:: TA:LK about.
02           what donald trump could Acsh'lly be saying to blA:ck
           PEO:ple;
03           tha' would rEsonate and be based in TRUTH.
04           (0.3)
05           so there's an Access to CA:pital issue.
06           °h pEOple like donald trump take
           advA:nt[age of the fact tha? ]
07 -> Pie:    [whIch is what i SAID;]
08           (0.2)
09(->)Rye:    n? (0.2) no;=that's nOt what you said at ^A:LL;

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By the looks of it, the participants in this example appear to quarrel over what was said in the preceding interaction. Inasmuch as what is said in an interaction is publicly and thus equally available to *all* co-present participants, the fact that such quarrels occur is remarkable in and of itself. Moreover, it suggests that these claims about what was said and who said it accomplish special interactional work; and we may therefore ask what is it that gets done with them?

Exploring this issue represents one of the major aims of this paper, which offers an in-depth analysis of meta-pragmatic claims of the type exemplified by Katrina Pierson's turn in fragment (4) above.<sup>1</sup> After a review of prior CA research on (the use of) meta-talk in interaction (Section 2) and an overview of the data utilized for this study (Section 3), I will show that participants can use such claims as a practice for managing (and often resolving) incipient disagreement or disaffiliation (Section 4). Since there is some variability in terms of the lexico-syntactic formats that are being used to make these meta-pragmatic claims, I will then consider the compositional features of the practice in more detail and elaborate how they render the practice effective (Section 5). In this section, I will also take note of a few non-verbal and vocal features that recurrently enter into the composition of the practice to enrich it pragmatically. In Section 6, I will discuss the relationship of the practice to other practices and larger organizations of practice. Specifically, I will argue that the practice operates at the intersection of stance-management (agreement/disagreement) and repair, and that it exhibits features which reflect this 'ambivalent' status. The paper will end with a summary and conclusions that may be drawn from this study (Section 7).

<sup>1</sup> I will not be dealing with corresponding counterclaims as exemplified by Angela Rye's turn in line 09 of fragment (4). Nor will I be dealing with other negatively formatted meta-pragmatic avowals, like *that's not what I said* or *that's not what I mean* for instance. For a consideration of the latter, see Schegloff (1992).

## 2. Prior CA research on meta-talk in interaction

While meta-talk or (the use of) meta-communicative practices in interaction have rarely been addressed as topics in their own right in CA, they have often figured more implicitly in work on phenomena in other domains. So meta-talk has often been dealt with as an epiphenomenon of other practices. A considerable number of practices for initiating and doing repair, for instance, involve the use of forms of meta-talk (cf., e.g., Kitzinger 2013; Schegloff 1992; Hayashi/Raymond/Sidnell 2013; see also Schiffrin 1980:213-215 & 217; Wooffitt/Allistone 2008). Since repair practices are used to deal with problems in speaking, hearing or understanding (cf. Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks 1977), it is not really surprising that they often involve the use of self-reflexive language and forms of talk with which speakers more or less explicitly address themselves to prior talk. The practice of *you mean*-prefacing candidate understandings to initiate repair on more distal, i.e., non-adjacent/non-contiguous, earlier talk is a case in point (cf. Benjamin 2012).

Another prolific area of study that deals with meta-talk (in a broad sense) is the study of *formulations* (see Deppermann 2011). Formulating was first described as a practical action by Garfinkel/Sacks (1970:350-351), who noted that

[a] member may treat some part of the conversation as an occasion to describe that conversation, to explain it, or characterize it, or explicate, or translate, or summarise, or furnish the gist of it, or take note of its accordance with rules, or remark on its departure from rules. [... So] along with whatever else may be happening in conversation it may be a feature of the conversation for the conversationalists that they are doing something else; namely, what they are doing is saying-in-so-many-words-what-we-are-doing (or what we are talking about, or who is talking, or who we are, or where we are). We shall speak of conversationalists' practices of saying-in-so-many-words-what-we-are-doing as formulating.

Garfinkel/Sacks' (1970) initial observation was later picked up and developed further by Heritage/Watson (1979, 1980) who focused specifically on formulations with which speakers summarize the gist of prior talk or draw out its upshot or implications (see also Deppermann/Helmer 2013; Deppermann 2015). These types of formulations are meta-communicative by definition, and they may involve the use of prefaces which explicitly mark them as such, like *so you're saying that...*, *so what you're saying is...* or *are you saying that...* for example (cf. Vásquez 2010; Antaki/Barnes/Leudar 2005). Such types of formulations have been found to be particularly common in talk in institutional settings (cf. Drew 2003; Heritage/Clayman 2010), where they can typically be shown to fulfill setting-specific tasks (see *inter alia* Heritage 1985; Antaki/Barnes/Leudar 2005; Antaki/Leudar/Barnes 2007; Barnes 2007; Hak/de Boer 1996; van der Houwen 2009; Vásquez 2010). In ordinary conversation, gist and upshot formulations are often used to bring topics, sequences or even entire conversations to a close, because of their capacity to "provide a gloss on 'what we are talking (have talked) about'" (Heritage/Watson 1980:255).

This leads us to another way in which meta-communicative practices have commonly figured in prior interactional research. As Schiffrin (1980) has shown, meta-talk is often used to bracket units of talk (i.e., as a discourse-structuring device). Hence, meta-pragmatic comments and other meta-communicative forms often surface in CA and CA-informed linguistic studies when practices that tend to occur at sequence boundaries are considered. Regarding sequence-initiating practices, for

example, Jefferson (1978) has shown that one device speakers routinely use to launch story-tellings is the *speaking of X* format. This meta-pragmatic comment works to secure the prospective story-teller the turn-space for an upcoming telling by invoking the telling's particular topical fit with the immediately preceding talk as a warrant for its introduction then-and-there in the interaction. More generally, devices that are used to project further talk, so-called 'projector phrases' (cf. Günthner 2011a, 2011b), which work to secure the speaker an extended turn-space for the production of a multi-unit turn, often involve meta-pragmatic references (e.g., *here's what I say/mean, what I'm saying is..., this is what I'm saying*). In line with Schiffrin's (1980) observation, multi-unit turns are also often bounded off with very similar meta-pragmatic comments at their other end (e.g., *so that's all I'm saying, so that's what I mean*, or the virtually vacuous *so that one's that*, cf. Barnes 2007:285).<sup>2</sup>

Similar, but slightly more specific meta-pragmatic characterizations of stretches of talk can also be implicated in the sequential projection of action (cf. Deppermann 2014:313-314). Here, the device that Schegloff (1980) has described as *pre-pres* offers itself as a prime example. In their prototypical form, *pre-pres* feature a meta-pragmatic characterization of the projected base action as an integral part of their design (e.g., *Can I ask you a question?, Can I ask you a favor?, Let me tell you something*). It is precisely this advance meta-pragmatic characterization that allows what follows a possible 'go-ahead' response to the *pre-pre* (like *sure*) to be heard *not* as the projected base action, but as dealing with or introducing further preliminaries to it.<sup>3</sup>

Interactional research which more pointedly focuses on practices with which speakers meta-characterize their own talk in terms of, or by reference to, other communicative practices is surprisingly scarce. It seems clear, though, that participants

<sup>2</sup> Such meta-pragmatic comments are occasionally also deployed as designedly janus-faced, transitional devices with which speakers construct topical or pragmatic junctures *within* multi-unit turns. Consider the following example, in which Deena and Mark are talking about recent developments on the job market, when Mark states his opinion that changing jobs is not a reasonable thing to do at their age (line 01). In line 05, Deena uses the meta-pragmatic comment *this is what I keep sayin'* to transition from her prior agreement with Mark's assessment (lines 02-03) to reporting a plan regarding her job which involves just the sorts of considerations Mark had previously mentioned (lines 06-07).

**Fragment (5): 'Too late to mess around' (Field:May88:2:4, 20:16-20:33)**

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01   Mar:   no it's a bit late to mess about NO:[W,]
02   Dee:                                     [i ]t ^I:S;=
03           =exACTly;=
04           =an' you know (.) it (.) ih it MUST be;=
05 ->      =i mean this is what I keep sayin';=
06           =i'd like to um °hh (0.4) um ((cough)) sort of (0.6)
           pA:ck up (0.3) FULL time,=
07           ='n go: ummm (0.8) PA:RT ti[me;]=
08   Mar:                                     [YE:]=[ :S;      ]
09   Dee:                                     =[ (but i) salid to RON;=
10           =well cErtainly not THIS year;=
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<sup>3</sup> That this meta-pragmatic characterization does special interactional work in displacing the projected base-action 'doubly' becomes particularly evident if what follows the go-ahead to the *pre-pre* is of the same 'type' as the projected base action. For example, if a(nother) question is asked after a go-ahead to a *pre-pre* like *Can I ask you a question?*, this question will typically be heard as a preliminary to the 'real question', i.e. the projected base action (cf. Schegloff 1980:110-113).

typically (seek to) accomplish special interactional work when doing this. With respect to the possibility of members formulating their activity in the conversation as 'doing describing', for example, Heritage/Watson (1980:247) note that

describing is such an all-pervasive activity that it is seldom turned into a topic as such without 'other interactional activities' being incorporated therein. In this sense, formulating one's activity as 'describing' is often a vehicle for doing other interactional work [...]

In a more recent study, Weatherall/Edmonds (2018) have shown that, when speakers formulate their talk as 'being interruptive', they are not necessarily oriented to turn-taking violations. Instead, such meta-formulations often display the speaker's orientation to their contributions as being disruptive on other levels of sequential organization, such as the proper ordering of activities, the organization of topics or of adjacency pair-parts. Not only do these meta-formulations display the speaker's awareness of the sequential 'out-of-place-ness' of their contributions and the moral accountability of introducing them nevertheless then-and-there-in-the-interaction, they may also be used to invoke certain interactional (e.g., institutional) roles as well as the specific rights and responsibilities that are associated with those roles.

Similar observations have been made by Szczepek-Reed (2017), who investigated participants' use of various forms of meta-turn-taking strategies, such as *Can I say something?*, *Let it out*, or *Let me stop you now*. She found that these can be used to secure and legitimize turn-space for oneself, to prompt or facilitate next actions from a co-participant, or to initiate repair and manage turn-transitions in repair-related environments. She also demonstrates that these devices, if they are deployed, are commonly deployed as a 'last resort', after other, implicit turn-taking strategies have failed, and that they have the potential to invoke asymmetrical power relations between participants.

So the few studies that have explicitly dealt with (the use of) meta-talk in interaction suggest that, for the participants, it is not routine; it is typically invested with additional interactional meaning and may thus reinforce an already omni-relevant concern about utterances in conversation, viz. "why that, now?" (cf. Schegloff/Sacks 1973:299; see also Schegloff 1980). This may be even more true for the meta-pragmatic claims that constitute the focus of this paper, because the target of these meta-pragmatic claims is not the speaker's own talk (as it is with many of the practices considered above), but the co-participant's immediately preceding talk.

### 3. Data

The data for this study consist of audio- and video-recorded interactions between native speakers of English in a variety of settings,<sup>4</sup> relevant portions of which have been transcribed or re-transcribed according to the GAT 2 conventions for English (cf. Couper-Kuhlen/Barth-Weingarten 2011).<sup>5</sup> The oldest recordings in the data set date back as far as the early 1960s and the latest ones come from 2018. In terms of

<sup>4</sup> Access to the recordings can be obtained upon request directly from the author.

<sup>5</sup> I have made one minor modification to the GAT 2 conventions. In general, the IPA symbol for glottal stops (ʔ) is used to indicate glottal cut-offs. Superscripted glottal stop symbols before and after intra-turn silences (pauses), however, are used to indicate glottal holds spanning across these pauses.

their settings, the data can be divided into two major subsets or types. The vast majority of the data has been recorded in informal settings and is of the 'everyday' type. This first subset comprises audio-recorded telephone calls between friends and family members as well as video-recordings of dinner conversations and other joint activities. The second subset consists of interactional material from TV broadcasts (from the 2000s to 2018). It includes interviews as well as unscripted discussions between journalists, professional analysts, celebrities and the like. Most of the data in this set come from programs which are aired at regular intervals (daily, weekly, etc.), but the set also includes a few special broadcasts. The kinds of programs that are represented in this subset also vary. Among others, it includes political programs, entertainment/talk shows, and postgame sports talk programs.<sup>6</sup>

In the following, I will indiscriminately draw on data from both sets to illustrate more general points and to describe relatively context-free characteristics of the practice (i.e., ones that hold across the different settings; cf. Heritage 2010). However, as we will see, the practice also exhibits context-specific features, which I will explicitly point out in the text.

The practice itself is relatively infrequent, and so the present account is based on a collection of "only" 15 instances (4/15 come from data of the 'everyday' type, 11/15 from the broadcast data). However, the overall low frequency of occurrence of the practice as well as its uneven distribution across the different data types appear to reflect aspects of its use (i.e., they can be explained by reference to the ways in which the practice works and the sequential environments in which it is used). They are therefore taken to corroborate rather than to invalidate the analysis (cf. Robinson 2007).

#### **4. Meta-pragmatic claims as a practice for disarming disaffiliative responses**

As was laid out at the end of the Introduction, the present analysis will focus on sequences in which one participant issues the explicit meta-pragmatic claim to have previously communicated the same as, or the equivalent of, what another participant just forwarded in the immediately preceding turn. Through detailed sequential analyses, I will show that (and how) speakers can use these claims as a practice for disarming disaffiliative responses and thus to manage incipient disagreement. Consider fragment (6) as a first example. The excerpt is taken from *The View*, an American talk show featuring a panel of female co-hosts who discuss all sorts of current issues and 'hot topics'. This particular episode aired on the day of the first presidential debate between Barack Obama and John McCain, and the women are trying to

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<sup>6</sup> Because prior research has shown that modulations in the organization of turn-taking considerably shape the practices available to participants for the management of basic interactional tasks, such as the management of disagreement (cf. Greatbatch 1992; Montiegel/Robinson 2019), it might be worth noting at this point that, unlike panel interviews or political debates, which center around an interviewer or moderator, the talk shows considered here are typically not organized around a single host or anchor(wo)man. Instead, they often have a set of rotating but, apart from that, permanent co-hosts who are relatively on a par with each other. Although one of them usually *is* responsible for leading through the program, the discussions are often less strictly 'chaired' compared to talk shows that are organized around an individual host. This is especially true for the allocation of turns.



assess which of the two presidential candidates has the better prospects of winning the debate. One of the co-hosts, Elisabeth Hasselbeck (Has), who positioned herself clearly as pro-McCain, has brought up Obama's lack of international experience as something that could give McCain an edge in the foreign policy debate. After some back and forth about whether McCain really has more international experience than Obama, and what counts as international experience in the first place, co-host Whoopi Goldberg (Gol) launches a turn with which she argues that comparisons of this sort are actually pointless and do nothing but enervate the American public (*but* ↑*hE:re's why people are S:ICK of this*, line 02).

**Fragment (6): 'Experience' (*The View*, 01:57-02:35)**

01 Has: [ (xxx) ]  
 02 Gol: [<<h, f> but ↑*hE:re's why people are* S:ICK of  
 this.=  
 03 =°h is because you CA:N'T make a stAtement that  
 sAys\_sju knOw,=  
 04 =°h neither ONE o'\_these guys have the KI:ND of  
 expErience;=  
 05 =that a prESidentia:l °h (.) !PE:R!son.=  
 06 =someone who's BEEN president;=  
 07 =°h will HA:VE;=  
 08 =↑NONE of them [had it. ]=  
 09 Has: [but they]=  
 =[haven't been PRESident] yet.  
 10 Gol: [=°h bill cli ]  
 11 -> Gol: but that's my ↑*^POI:NT*;  
 12 Has: [SU:RE;]  
 13 -> Gol: [that's] what i'm ↑*^SAY:ing*;=  
 14 =so °h instead of going head to HEAD about;=  
 15 =who's got thIs an' who's got THAT;=  
 16 =the pOint simply I:S;=  
 17 =as bill SAID;  
 ((10 lines of transcript omitted, in which they make jokey remarks  
 about Goldberg's somewhat 'too casual' first name-only reference  
 to President Bill Clinton in line 17))  
 28 Gol: but HIS point is is what  
 29 somethin' wha i been say:in: (.) for fe:r: a long  
 TIME;=  
 30 =is that NO: one (.) is rEady for this ^JO:B.

In this excerpt, Goldberg produces two turn-constructive units (TCUs) that issue the type of meta-pragmatic claim that we are interested in: *but that's my* ↑*^POI:NT* in line 11 and *that's what i'm* ↑*^SAY:ing* in line 13. Both of these are designed to be responsive to Hasselbeck's turn in line 09, which constitutes the referent of the demonstrative pronoun *that* in both of Goldberg's TCUs. In addition, the nearly identical prosodic design of the two TCUs in lines 11 and 13 (see the high pitch peak on the accented syllable and the rising falling contour on ↑*^POI:NT* and ↑*^SAY:ing*, respectively) suggests that Goldberg treats them as mutually elaborative, if not equivalent and interchangeable (i.e., as saying and doing pretty much the same thing twice). We can then note that the turn to which both of these TCUs respond, Hasselbeck's *but they haven't been PRESident yet* in line 09, is itself responsive to Goldberg's prior turn in lines 02-08. Specifically, Hasselbeck's turn is

designed as a disaffiliative and challenging response (see the *but*-preface), which attempts to undermine Goldberg's argument that, as first-time candidates, neither Obama, nor McCain have *the KI:ND of expErience;=that a prEsidentia:l °h (.) !PE:R!son.=someone who's BEEN president;=°h will HA:VE* (lines 04-07). Ironically, Goldberg's argument logically entails that the two candidates would be neophytes in office, which is what Goldberg points out with her two meta-pragmatic comments in lines 11 and 13. She thereby holds Hasselbeck accountable for having failed to register (or see) the substantive equivalence between her (Goldberg's) statement regarding the inexperience of both candidates vis-à-vis a defending incumbent (lines 04-07) and Hasselbeck's 'counter-argument' that they haven't been president yet (line 09). In other words, she insinuates (i.e., she makes the tacit attribution) that she has been misunderstood by Hasselbeck (cf. Deppermann 2015), which undermines the latter's 'counter-argument' and disarms its designedly disaffiliative character. And so Hasselbeck ultimately finds herself agreeing with Goldberg (see her *SU:RE* in line 12), although her designedly disaffiliative response in line 09 had suggested otherwise. By allowing the speaker to retrospectively point out the actual substantive equivalence between their own earlier talk and the co-participant's subsequent disaffiliative response, then, these meta-pragmatic claims work to resolve incipient disagreement.

Before moving on with more intricate deployments of this practice, we should take a moment to register the co-constitutive role of the sequential context in which such meta-pragmatic TCUs are produced to our understanding of their import. To see this, we can compare the previous case with another one in which virtually the same meta-pragmatic TCU as the one Goldberg produced in line 13 of fragment (6) is used in response to a different action (i.e., in a different sequential environment) and consequently does a different action (cf. Schegloff 1997). The following excerpt is taken from a joint interview with two professional mixed martial arts fighters, UFC welterweight champion Tyron Woodley (Woo) and then-championship contender Stephen Thompson (Tho). They got together for this joint interview after their first title fight had ended in a majority draw. Thompson has just accused Woodley of not having acted like a true champion, because after their title fight had ended in a draw, Woodley was immediately asking for other fights instead of offering Thompson a rematch. Woodley has accounted for that by claiming that he had already "moved on". The transcript starts with the interviewing host Cari Champion (Cha) launching a *so*-prefaced summary of the gist of both of their positions (cf. Heritage/Watson 1979; G. Raymond 2004). She begins with a formulation of Woodley's position on the matter (lines 01-04), before turning to Thompson's point of view in line 05 (both of these formulations are accompanied by pointing gestures toward the respective participants).

**Fragment (7): 'UFC Champ' (ESPN SportsCenter, 04:47-04:58)**

01 Cha: <<h> so YOU dis>=  
 02 =yOu in YOUR mind;=  
 03 =you('re) like i WON;=  
 04 =so yOu wanted to move O:N.=  
 05 =and in YOUR mind;=  
 06 =a world CHA:Mpion wouldn'a wouldn't have sAid;=  
 07 =oKAY;=

08 Tho: [↑^YEA:H; ]  
 09 Cha: =i'm [(.) i'm HA]Ppy with a dra:w.  
 10 Tho: [ exA:CTly. ]  
 11 Cha: [i'll TAKE a dr]a:w.  
 12 Tho: exA:CTly.  
 13 Cha: <<to Woo> your T[AKE.>]  
 14 -> Tho: [ thA]t's what i'm SAYin'.=  
 15 =thAt's why we [wanted (it) BA:CK.]  
 16 Woo: [ MY take I]:s-

Early on in Champion's formulation of his position, Thompson comes in with a series of confirmation tokens (lines 08, 10, 12) to ratify its accuracy (cf. Heritage/Watson 1979, 1980; Heritage 1985). Although Champion explicitly selects Woodley as the next speaker with *your TAKE* in line 13 (and a minimal pointing gesture toward him, which slightly precedes her turn), Thompson goes on to produce yet another, lexico-syntactically more substantial confirmation with the meta-pragmatic *thAt's what i'm SAYin'* (line 14). This is followed by a TCU which retroactively upgrades this position to an account for demanding a rematch from Woodley (line 15). Now since Thompson's turn is sequentially deleted by Woodley, who skip-ties over it and addresses himself to Cari Champion's turn in line 13 by re-using its lexico-syntactic format with *MY take I:s* (line 16, cf. Sacks 1995a:718), it is hard to assess the potentially distinct interactional consequences that Thompson's use of this meta-pragmatic format for doing another, more substantial confirmation might have (or what might have occasioned its use).<sup>7</sup> Still, we can note that in this sequential environment, post a formulation of one's own position, meta-pragmatic comments of this sort have quite a different pragmatic import than they have if they are used after designedly disaffiliative responses (i.e., it is a result of placement considerations, cf. Schegloff/Sacks 1973). In the former context, an assertion of the substantive equivalence between what a co-participant just said and what the speaker previously said works to confirm the understanding asserted by the co-participant's formulation (as in fragment (7)), whereas in the latter, its pragmatic effect is essentially the reverse. There, it invokes the co-participant's *misunderstanding* of the speaker's earlier talk (as in fragment (6) above).

As we will see in the following examples, speakers routinely use such meta-pragmatic claims to retroactively invoke their co-participant's *misunderstanding* of their prior talk in attempts to undermine and effectively disarm designedly disaffiliative responses. However, compared to fragment (6) above (where indeed a *misunderstanding* on Hasselbeck's part seems to have been in play), the matter will become much more complex as we proceed, because the invoked 'misunderstandings' become less and less transparent, up to a point where they appear to be mere imputations. In other words, as we go along, the co-participants will have an increasingly stronger basis for their disaffiliative responses, and so the speaker's meta-pragmatic claims (and the invocations of *misunderstandings* done with them) seem to become increasingly less legitimate and defensible.

<sup>7</sup> It may well be that Thompson is doing this in an attempt to subtly highlight his original authorship of the formulated position. By re-indexing that it is indeed something he is saying, he may block any hearing of this position as something the host inferred from his talk and that he is 'merely' accepting as an appropriate rendition of his opinion.

Consider next the following excerpt, which is taken from a political panel talk show on Fox News Channel called *The Five*. In the present episode, the panel members are discussing an article which appeared in the Washington Post to commemorate the first anniversary of the 2016 shooting at a gay night club in Orlando, FL, for which ISIS had claimed responsibility. Prior to this excerpt, one of the panel members, Dana Perino, has expressed her 'surprise' and 'disappointment' at the fact that the article framed the incident as an act of gun violence and did not topicalize the attacker's motives and the underlying (Islamic) ideology at all; a point which had already been raised by the anchorman Greg Gutfield (Gut) in introducing the discussion segment. The transcript begins with Gutfield providing an assessment of the possible consequences that such a (in his view) 'too liberal' coverage of terrorist attacks may have. The other contributing participants in this sequence are Juan Williams (Wil), who is the only Democrat in this panel and used to work for the Washington Post, and Jesse Watters (Wat).

**Fragment (8): 'Fighting ISIS' (*The Five*, 04:14-04:50)**

01 Gut: °h you know WHAT;  
 02 if we ↑cAn't? [ (0.4) ] ?kIll] these GHOU:LS;  
 03 Kim: [why (did) they ] (xxx)]  
 04 Gut: °h if we keep blA:ming their (.) their (0.6) A:cts on  
 other THINGS;=  
 05 =it will weaken our reSO:LVE.  
 06 °h you can't  
 07 you know i? it just kEeps you fro?  
 08 °h and mAybe that's WHY:;  
 09 (0.3)  
 10 whe' we're FI:GHting Isis,=  
 11 =we're not fIghting it to our fullest capaBility;=  
 12 =because we keep THINking,=  
 13 =°h <<animated> O::h maybe they have a POINT.>  
 14 Wil: i thInk we ARE fighting isis to our fullest  
 capaBility,=  
 15 =especially\_(n)  
 16 °hh i would THINK,=  
 17 =that people who are TRUMP suppOrters,=  
 18 =would say we're fIghting them more aggrEssively  
 than ↑'E`ver;  
 19 Wat: NO:W we Are;  
 20 -> Wil: ok? o? that's what i just <<creaky> ↑SAI:D;>  
 21 oKAY;  
 22 so i don't know where THA:T comes from.=  
 23 =but °hh to MY mind,=  
 24 =i think the washington POST was fOcused o:n-  
 25 the SA:Dness--=  
 26 =the loss of lIfe for those FAM'lies;=  
 27 =and the people who were KI:LLED.

In his portrayal of the possible consequences that a 'trivializing press coverage' like the Washington Post's, with its alleged 'biased misclassification' of such events, may have, Gutfield alludes to the possibility that it may lead to unwanted sympathies with the ideology of ISIS, a position he caricatures with his sardonic enactment *O::h maybe they have a POINT* in line 13. Further, he presents this as a possible account for what he perceives to be a reduced determination in America's fight

against ISIS (lines 08-12). Embedded into this is the claim that *we're not fighting it to our fullest capability* (line 11), to which Juan Williams addresses himself in the next turn. With *i thInk we ARE fighting isis to our fullest capability* in line 14, he ties back to and explicitly contradicts this claim (note the extensive repetition and the narrow focus accent on *ARE*, which foregrounds his removal of the negative in this repetition; see also Coulter 1990; Goodwin 2006). He then continues with something that might have been on the verge of becoming *especially NOW* (line 15). However, Williams abandons this right after the onset of the alveolar nasal /n/ and continues instead with an assertion of his belief that *people who are TRUMP supporters, =would say we're fighting them more aggressively than ↑'E`ver* (lines 17-18). Unlike the stance conveyed in his earlier disagreement with Gutfield's claim (see line 14 again), Williams ascribes the stance reported in this part of his turn to a specific part of the population (viz. Trump supporters), rather than presenting it as his own (compare, e.g., *I think we're fighting them more aggressively than ever*). While the relative clause construction with which he formulates the relevant part of the population as *people who are TRUMP supporters* is in itself indeterminate as to whether it includes himself or not, the epistemically hedging modal constructions he uses in formulating this position as something he *would think* (line 16) this group of people *would say* (line 18) suggest that he is distancing himself from the reported position. At the very least, and in stark contrast to the other panelists, he avoids siding with the Trump administration or its policies, perhaps in an attempt to display a journalistically more adequate 'neutralistic stance' towards the matters discussed and, specifically, the policies under discussion (cf. Clayman/Heritage 2002).<sup>8</sup>

At this point, Jesse Watters comes in by adding *NO:W we Are* (line 19). This turn, while furnishing perfunctory agreement, imposes a temporal constraint on the validity of Williams' preceding description. Inasmuch as Watters' addition of this temporal constraint treats this as information that is relevantly missing in Williams' turn and holds him accountable for not having provided it, Watters' response is hearable as a disaffiliative remark. Furthermore, in this context, his juxtaposition of the present situation (see the focus accent on *NO:W*) with an unspecified past is clearly hearable as comparing the policies of the new Trump administration with those of the preceding Obama administration, and indexes a stance of favoring the former over the latter. Thus, by undermining Williams' prior attempt at avoiding an on-record endorsement of the Trump administration's policies, Watters' response may even be hearable as a challenge. What we can observe here, then, is a local 'tug-of-war' between Williams and Watters with respect to how 'on-record' Williams goes with his stance towards the Trump administration and its policies.

Williams, who initially launches two attempts at *okay*, indexing his readiness to move on with a next point (cf. Beach 1993), eventually chooses to respond to Watters' interpolated remark. He does so with the meta-pragmatic comment *that's what i just <<creaky> ↑SAI:D>* (line 20), with which he claims to have just previously verbalized the equivalent of what Watters forwarded in his disaffiliative and challenging remark. Taken literally, this claim is evidently a bit of an overstatement, because Williams did not say this in so many words (regardless of how close he

<sup>8</sup> These observations lend further support to the idea that line 15 was arguably on its way to becoming *especially NOW*. With this, Williams *would* have endorsed the Trump administration and its policies, which is something he traceably tries to avoid in his subsequent talk.

might have been to articulating *especially NOW* in line 15). By claiming to have done so nonetheless, Williams holds Watters accountable for having failed to register a relevant *implication* of his earlier talk (cf. Schegloff 2003). Specifically, the expression of his belief that *people who are TRUMP supporters, =would say we're fighting them more aggressively than ↑'E'ver* (lines 17-18) allows for the inference that he is referring to the time since Trump took office. By holding Watters accountable for not having registered (or for having missed) this implication, Williams defends his earlier assessment of the situation, insinuates that Watters (perhaps deliberately) misunderstood it and effectively disarms the disaffiliative and challenging character of the remark with which Watters had chipped in. Notably, Watters does not contest this claim and the attributions that are associated with it. And so, after having produced a full version of what is hearable as an acknowledging *oKAY* (line 21),<sup>9</sup> Williams is able to continue his turn with a *so*-prefaced expression of bafflement about Gutfield's earlier claims regarding America's reduced determination in fighting ISIS (*so I don't know where THA:T comes from*, line 22) and an assessment of what the Washington Post article was about (lines 23-27).

So far, all of the examples were taken from TV broadcasts in which the participants were engaged in political discussions. However, the deployment of this practice is not confined to such settings. We can also find it in data from ordinary conversation, which suggests that what we have here is a generic practice of speaking.<sup>10</sup> The following excerpt comes from a telephone call between two women called Chloe (Chl) and Claire (Cla). Both participate in an informal group whose members take turns in hosting regular joint parties at which they play card games, mostly bridge and tripoly. They have already spent a good deal of the call reviewing the last party as well as a number of remarkable plays together. In what follows, they are talking about a particular, apparently disputable bridge move ('opening with fourteen') which seems to have been at issue there. Berna is another woman participating in these parties.

**Fragment (9): 'Opening with fourteen' (SBL:2:2:3:R:21, 28:03-28:32)**

01 Chl: i DO: think\_uh  
 02 now like BERNa says;=  
 03 =well if ↑I'VE got fourtEen==  
 04 =↑I don't O:pen,=  
 05 =°hhh (1.0) WELL?  
 06 (0.3)  
 07 Chl: then yOu don't know the ↑COUNT.=~clAi:re,  
 08 Cla: °hhh well BOY;=  
 09 =↑I Open;=  
 10 =howEver;=  
 11 =the BOOK sAys.=  
 12 =that if YOU:? (.)  
 13 u:hm like yOu're the ↓Opener.

<sup>9</sup> By virtue of being positioned *after* the meta-pragmatic claim, the accepting acknowledgment that this *oKAY* conveys is no longer hearable as potentially conceding a point. With regard to the integrity of Williams' argument, it is therefore 'unproblematic'. Reflexively, the fact that Williams can (now) 'unproblematically' accept Watters' point (as a point he had allegedly already taken into account) further contributes to disarming the challenging character of Watters' remark.

<sup>10</sup> It is perhaps worth mentioning at this point that both my initial noticing of the target phenomenon and my first description of it as a practice go back to data from ordinary conversation.

14 (1.0)  
 15 Cla: you hA:ve t eh uh  
 16 you should HAVE a <<creaky> rEbi:d.=  
 17 =with FOURtee:n.>  
 18 Chl: ~YA:[:H?]  
 19 Cla: [°hh]h A:N'\_uh:m:-  
 20 uh? the FOURTH ha::[nd;]  
 21 Chl: [ WE]:LL?=  
 22 =but thA:t's where your short ↑CLUB  
 comes in.=[see,]  
 23 Cla: [u\_YE]A:H;=  
 24 -> =thAt's what i SAY;=  
 25 =i Always use a short ↑CLUB to?=  
 26 =an'\_thEn i can go bA:ck to my biddable ^SUI:T.=  
 27 =if i [<<creaky> CA:]N.>  
 28 Chl: [ ^Y E A H ; ]

As we can see, Chloe disagrees with Berna about the playing practice of 'opening with fourteen'. Whereas Chloe *would* open with fourteen, Berna would not and would have a rebid instead. Chloe initiates her disagreement with a turn-constructive unit that carries a marked focus accent on *DO* and thus projects the introduction of a contrasting opinion (*i DO: think\_uh*, line 01, cf. C. Raymond 2017). However, she then abandons this unit and chooses to introduce her disagreement with turn-components that are less strongly hearable as a personal and subjective opinion. In lines 02-04, she first formulates Berna's position on the matter (*now like BERna says;=well if ↑I'VE got fourEen=↑I don't O:pen,*), and then goes on to state an unfavorable consequence of this behavior with *°hhh (1.0) WELL? (0.3) then yOU don't know the ↑COUNT.=~clAi:re*, (lines 05-07).<sup>11</sup> This clearly conveys Chloe's view that one *should* open with fourteen.

Claire begins to respond with a long pre-beginning in-breath (cf. Schegloff 1996a) and a turn-initial preface *well BOY* (line 08). Both of these elements arguably project an upcoming multi-unit turn and indicate Claire's stance that the matter is complex. Following this preface, Claire first states her own handling of this situation, which is in agreement with Chloe's position, as she, too, *would* open with fourteen (*↑I Open;*, line 09), before she continues with what is introduced as a contrasting point (*howEver*, line 10). In what follows, Claire then warrants Berna's position on the matter as being justified under certain conditions (viz., 'if you're the opener', lines 12-13). Moreover, she does so by making reference to a playbook or a rule book (*the BOOK says*, line 11). So these turn-components validate a position that is in disagreement with Chloe's take on the matter, and Claire displays an orientation towards the social delicacy of this action (cf. Pomerantz 1984; Sacks 1987). This is suggested by the several pauses, delays and restarts that accompany these turn-components, and most notably the repair from a binding and rule-like formulation of what the book says with the modal construction *you have t[o have a rebid with fourteen]* (line 15) to a more 'norm-like' formulation with the modal verb *should*, which conveys less obligation (*you should HAVE a <<creaky> rEbi:d.=with FOURtee:n.>*, lines 16-17). These design features of Claire's turn suggest that she is engaging in an attempt at 'concessive partitioning' by distinguishing between the 'official rules' as stated by the playbook/rule book and a set of more

<sup>11</sup> Apparently, knowing the count is important, or at least beneficial, in bridge as it enables players to anticipate or 'read' the distribution of their opponents' cards (see Walker 2002).

'informal rules' that are appropriate for their parties (cf. Couper-Kuhlen/Thompson 2000). (The upshot of this attempt could read: 'These are the official rules, but, since we are playing informally and just for fun, we might as well eschew them'.)

As it turns out, this attempt at 'concessive partitioning' is ultimately lost upon Chloe, who initially receipts Claire's turn with a continuer-like, preliminary acknowledgment *YA::H?* (line 18). However, when Claire subsequently embarks on addressing another aspect of this rule with her turn-continuation in lines 19-20, which deals with the fourth hand rather than the opener, Chloe interrupts her with a turn that is clearly designed as a disaffiliative and challenging counter-argument (lines 21-22). First, Chloe's turn begins with a prosodically prominent version of *WE:LL?* with high rising final intonation which secures her the turn and prefigures her upcoming disagreement (cf. Heritage 2015). Then there's the *but*-preface, which indexes the delivery of a contrasting point or counter-argument. And finally, there's the tag-positioned *see*, which demands or invites conceding acknowledgment of Chloe's point that "the short club" plays an important role in this situation. These design features do not only contextualize Chloe's turn as a challenging counter-argument, they also display that she understood Claire to be siding with Berna on the matter of whether or not to open with fourteen. Given that Claire cited a playbook/rule book as an official authoritative source and that her agreement with Chloe's position is rather minimal (*I Open*;, line 09) compared to the substantial justification that Berna's position receives in lines 10-17, as well as the ordering of these components, one possible basis for Chloe's reaction is that she heard Claire's entire turn from lines 08-17 as instantiating the quite common [pro-forma agreement + disagreement] pattern (cf. Pomerantz 1984; Barth-Weingarten 2003). In any case, Chloe attends to Claire's preceding turn as implicative of disagreement and her disaffiliative response escalates the disagreement further.

At this point, Claire responds with the *yeah*-prefaced meta-pragmatic comment *thAt's what i SAY* (lines 23-24), claiming that what Chloe just forwarded as a disaffiliative counter-argument is in fact congruent with what Claire herself has said in her preceding turn. She thereby undercuts the 'counter-argumentative' force of Chloe's turn and simultaneously implies that Chloe has misunderstood the pragmatic import and the sequential implicativeness of her preceding response (cf. Schegloff 1987). Taken at face value, Claire's meta-pragmatic claim is again a bit of an overstatement, as she did not explicitly mention the short club (which might have triggered Chloe's disaffiliative introduction of this point). However, like Juan Williams in the previous example, she ultimately does have a legitimate basis for this claim (just like Chloe has a solid basis for hearing it the way she does). After all, Claire did say that she personally *would* open (line 09), apparently taking for granted that Chloe would be able to infer that she would do so by using the short club. Claire can thus substantiate her meta-pragmatic claim by reverting to the fact that she did previously say something that would have allowed Chloe to infer the pragmatic equivalent to what she then raised as a counter-argument (and hold her accountable for having failed to do so). As we can see, this is precisely what happens in her turn-continuation, in which she explicates her personal playing practices and indirectly juxtaposes them (again) with what the book says and what Berna does or advocates (lines 25-27). And so Chloe eventually approves of Claire's position with the *^YEAH* in line 28. As a consequence, the incipient, manifest disa-



greement about how to view the disputable bridge move is resolved and transformed into agreement on this matter. And the meta-pragmatic claim embodied by Claire's *thAt's what i SAY* (line 24) plays a major part in accomplishing this outcome, as it enables her to invoke a misunderstanding of her earlier talk on Chloe's part, which is used to disarm Chloe's disaffiliative response. However, as I have tried to point out, here we have a case in which the invocation of a co-participant's misunderstanding is fraught with risk, because in the sequential structure and the turn-design of Claire's talk, there are plausible bases for both 'readings', Claire's and Chloe's. Still, what Claire's meta-pragmatic claim does is to redirect Chloe's attention to her earlier talk in order to inspect it for a *possible* alternative 'reading' (cf. Schegloff 1992, 2006); one that would warrant or be consistent with her meta-pragmatic claim.

In fact, it may be quite decisive for the further development of the sequence whether the co-participant is able to locate a possible basis for the speaker's meta-pragmatic claim or not, for it is their ability to (at least) *recognize* this alternative reading which serves as the basis for the transformation of the surfaced incipient disagreement into subsequent agreement. A failure to do so may lead to co-participants' overt rejection of the speaker's meta-pragmatic claim and the associated implicit attribution that they have misunderstood the preceding talk, where this may escalate the incipient disagreement (see fragment (4) above).<sup>12</sup>

Yet, as the following example shows, the basis for the speaker's meta-pragmatic claim may on occasion remain quite opaque. While this arguably has a bearing on the particular kind of meta-pragmatic claim that the speaker forwards in this case (see also Section 5 below), the sequence still develops in a way that is remarkably similar to the other cases considered so far. As context, Dinah is complaining to Beatrice about a third party who has borrowed money from her, but has yet to repay the loan.

**Fragment (10): 'Money' (SBL:1:1:11:R:1, 00:07-00:24)**

```

01   Din:   =i haven't GOT it_yEt.=
02         =but at lEaSt she SAID something <<creaky> abOut it.>
03   Bea:   uh_HUH,
04         (0.3)
05   Bea:   <<laughing> so thAt makes you feel EA:sier;>=hehe
06         (.)
07   Din:   WE:LL;=
08   Bea:   [ (xxx) ]
09   Din:   =I[:? (.)] ?wasn't wOrried about the five Dollars->=
10         =Only e?
11         <<h> i do[n't knOw what there I]S> abOut it,=
12   Bea:   [I k n o w w h A t]
13   Din:   =that (0.4) an↑NOYS you:--
14         =to thInk that=
15 -> Bea:   =w'lll ↑thAt's what i ^MEA:N.=
16         =it Isn't the: MOney;=
17         =as [mUch as]
18   Din:   [no MOney] doe:s didn't mean anything?
           ((talk segues into a complaint story))

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<sup>12</sup> Of course, it needs to be acknowledged that, especially in the context of broadcasted political discussions, such rejections may also have to do with a co-participant's *unwillingness* to concede a possible alternative reading of an 'opponent's' prior talk, rather than with an actual failure to recognize it.

In lines 01-02, Dinah reports that the money-borrower hasn't repaid the loan yet, but that she mentioned the debt. Beatrice initially receipts this with a continuer to signal reciprocity for a possible continuation from Dinah (Schegloff 1982). When this is not forthcoming for 0.3 seconds, Beatrice re-receipts Dinah's report in line 05 with an upshot formulation, i.e. a conclusion she inferred from it: *so thAt makes you feel EA:sier* (cf. Heritage/Watson 1979, 1980; G. Raymond 2004). With this B-event claim/assessment (cf. Labov/Fanshel 1977; Heritage 2013), Beatrice formulates a feeling of relief on Dinah's part (and on her behalf) toward the fact that the money-borrower, by mentioning the debt, can be seen to have on her radar that she still owes Dinah the money. The formulation itself is designed to be taken humorously, or perhaps so as to convey irony (along the lines of 'that doesn't buy you anything' or 'a fat lot of use that is to you'), by being delivered with interspersed within-speech laughter (Potter/Hepburn 2010) and a post-completion invitation to laugh (Jefferson 1979). Nevertheless, it implies that Dinah is concerned about receiving the money back. Especially in light of the fact that the outstanding debt amounts to merely five dollars (see line 09) this implication is potentially problematic, because it suggests an immoderate concern for money on Dinah's part.

It is precisely this possible import of Beatrice's response that Dinah seeks to rebut in her next turn (lines 07, 09-11, 13-14). Dinah declines the possible laugh invitation and talks seriously on the matter (cf. Jefferson 1979). In her response, she explicitly objects to the possible implication of Beatrice's response (line 09), stating that she is not annoyed by the borrower's conduct out of a concern for money, but because leaving loaners chasing after their money seems to index an unfavorable character trait (such as untrustworthiness, unreliability), albeit one that Dinah claims cannot easily be pinned down (lines 10-11, 13-14).

Early on in Dinah's disaffiliative rejection of this implication, Beatrice tries to pre-empt her continuation (see the onset of what would presumably have become *I know whAt [you mean]* in line 12). However, she does not get the turn, until Dinah indeed encounters minor problems in formulating what it is that annoys her. In line 15, Beatrice interrupts Dinah's turn-in-progress with *w'll ↑thAt's what i ^MEA:N*. With this, Beatrice claims that Dinah's objection to what Beatrice's earlier comment can be taken to have implied is in fact congruent with what she 'intended to convey' or 'meant' with that comment in the first place. This particular meta-pragmatic claim differs from the others considered so far, in that it does not explicitly direct the co-participant's attention back to anything she *said* before (although, of course, implicitly it does, since she can only have meant substantively 'the same' with something she said earlier). However, just *like* the other meta-pragmatic claims in the previous examples, Beatrice's turn invokes a possible misunderstanding of the pragmatic import of her prior turn on her co-participant's part in a context in which that prior turn was met with overt disagreement from its recipient. And again, this leads to subsequent agreement on the matter (see lines 16-18).

Now it is interesting to note that it is not at all clear how Beatrice could *not* have meant to imply a concern for the money on Dinah's part. Especially in response to Dinah's report of the debtor having mentioned the debt (*it* in lines 01-02), Beatrice production of *so thAt makes you feel EA:sier* is almost unavoidably hearable as implying Dinah's interest in 'receiving the money back', even if it was intended to be ironic or a jokey remark. So it is not clear how this 'is not about the money'. Yet,

this is what Beatrice claims (lines 16-17), and with the preceding meta-pragmatic comment, she implicitly attributes a misunderstanding of her prior talk to Dinah (cf. Depperman 2014:316-317).

What is more, she even contextualizes this as somewhat self-evident or readily transparent by using a *well*-preface and an intonation contour that is hearable as 'reproachful' to accompany her  $\uparrow thAt's\ what\ i\ ^{ME}A:N$ .<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless – and this might attest to the effectiveness of the practice – Dinah treats Beatrice's incipient explication of her claim (lines 16-17) as very agreeable (see line 18). And since she uses this agreement as a basis for moving into the telling of another complaint story (data not shown), the talk turns to different matters and Beatrice's claim ultimately remains uncontested.<sup>14</sup>

By way of summary, apart from the obvious difference with respect to the particular meta-pragmatic claim that is being forwarded in fragment (10) and apart from the subtler gradations in terms of the legitimacy and defensibility of these claims throughout examples (6), (8), (9) and (10), they all run off in remarkably similar ways, both sequentially and pragmatically. In all of these instances, the meta-pragmatic claims are used to manage incipient disagreement, and they occur as part of a larger sequential pattern which can be construed as consisting of three major parts (P1, P2, and P3).

The first step in this three-part sequential structure (P1) consists of one participant making a contribution, typically some sort of assertive action (such as a statement, a claim, an assessment, an account, etc.). This contribution (or parts of it) turn(s) out to be 'interactionally problematic' in that it is met with overt disagreement, an objection, a challenging remark, or some other type of designedly disaffiliative response from its recipient (P2). The meta-pragmatic TCU is then produced in third position (P3) relative to the 'problematic' turn or turn-components in P1.<sup>15</sup>

Now, it is analytically important to adequately capture the relative positioning of the practice. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the meta-pragmatic TCUs in P3 are clearly *marked* as third-positioned objects. That is, as part of their design, they (indexically) locate at least *two* prior utterances that they are dealing with: The speaker's own earlier talk and the co-participant's response to that earlier talk (see Section 5 below, cf. Sacks 1995b:557-558; Jefferson 2017:353-354 on marking third-positionedness). Sequentially, however, they are not really third-positioned objects. As will become clear later (Section 6), they are more adequately conceived of as (parts of) *next-positioned* turns relative to the co-participant's disaffiliative response, i.e. as second-positioned items. What they then do is to set a retroactive operation in motion, whereby the disaffiliative response in P2 is substantively

<sup>13</sup> I thank Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen (p.c.) for bringing this to my attention. Interestingly, very similar intonation contours can be heard on Whoopi Goldberg's *but that's my*  $\uparrow^{POI}:NT$  and her *that's what i'm*  $\uparrow^{SAY}:\text{`ing}$  in fragment (6), as well as on Juan Williams' *that's what i just*  $\ll\text{creaky}\gg\ \uparrow^{SAL}:D>$  in fragment (8) above. So it seems that this is a recurrent and perhaps systematically available formatting option for this practice (see also Section 5 below).

<sup>14</sup> For what it's worth, this topic shift may itself be another resource to manage the surfaced disagreement and to get out of a state of incipient disaffiliation (cf. Maynard 1980).

<sup>15</sup> Although, in the present data sample, all three turns are usually placed adjacently, the assertive turn/action in P1 may occasionally be found at some distance from the designedly disaffiliative response in P2 (2/15 cases, both in the broadcast data). Special tying procedures are then required for the disaffiliative response in P2 to locate the assertion it is taking issue with. The meta-pragmatic claim (P3), however, is *always* adjacent to the disaffiliative response (P2).

linked to the speaker's earlier contribution in P1.<sup>16</sup> More specifically, with the TCU in P3, its speaker issues the meta-pragmatic claim to have previously communicated (i.e., verbalized or implied, *said* or *meant*) substantively 'the same' as what their co-participant just forwarded as a designedly disaffiliative response. Therefore, the contribution in P1 only becomes recognizable *as* P1 of this sequential pattern in retrospect, viz. once the meta-pragmatic TCU (P3) has been forwarded (cf. Deppermann 2015). Figure 1 summarizes this sequential pattern schematically.

<b>A:</b>	assertive action/contribution (e.g., statement, claim, assessment, account)	[P1]
<b>B:</b>	designedly disaffiliative response (e.g., disagreement, challenge, objection)	[P2]
<b>A:</b>	<b>meta-pragmatic TCU/claim</b> [+ volunteered explanation/substantiation]	[P3]

**Figure 1.** Schematic representation of the sequential pattern

As we have seen, speakers' claims to have previously *said* 'the same' as what their co-participant just uttered in the immediately preceding turn should not always be taken at face value, as they often did not previously produce a verbatim rendition of what the co-participant just forwarded as a designedly disaffiliative response. By claiming this nonetheless, speakers hold their co-participants accountable for having failed to register a *possible* alternative hearing of their prior talk or for having failed to draw a relevant inference from it (cf. Schegloff 1987, 2003, 2006). And this effectively undermines and disarms the designedly disaffiliative (e.g., disagreeing, challenging, objecting) character of the co-participant's response. At the same time, this instructs the co-participant to return to the speaker's earlier talk and to inspect it for a possible alternative 'reading'; one that would warrant such a claim, and which may therefore serve as the basis for the transformation of the incipient disagreement into agreement on the matter.

Especially in environments in which the meta-pragmatic claims appear to be less legitimate and potentially contestable, speakers often follow up on them with volunteered attempts at unpacking them (e.g., by means of offering subsequent explanations, elaborations, substantiations, specifications; see fragments (9) and (10)). That is to say that these meta-pragmatic claims are in principle accountable. From an interactional perspective, this accountability is entirely rational. Without it, the practice (especially in the form of *That's what I mean*) would be much like an interactional panacea, because – given the fundamentally and irredeemably indexical character of natural language (cf. Garfinkel/Sacks 1970) – one could perhaps always revert to the claim of having meant 'the same' or something equivalent with an earlier turn in the face of incipient disagreement or disaffiliation (as already

<sup>16</sup> In this respect, the meta-pragmatic claims considered here strongly resemble the German response particle *eben* (Betz/Deppermann 2018) and some uses of the Finnish response particle *nii* (see Sorjonen 2001: 195-199). However, due to their greater indexicality, these particles may have fundamentally different affordances for accountability than the meta-pragmatic claims considered here. This issue could be explored in greater detail by language-internally comparing such particles with functionally similar, but more explicit forms available in a given language. For German, one could, for example, compare uses of the response particle *eben* with avowals of prior communicative intention like *Ich wollte damit sagen*, as discussed by Deppermann (2014), or the meta-communicative formats mentioned in footnote 20 below.

problematicized by Wittgenstein [1953] (2001) in his *Philosophical Investigations*). The general accountability of such claims constrains their use and prevents an over-extensive and abusive deployment of the practice (at least to some extent), since it requires its producer in principle to be able to substantiate their meta-pragmatic claim by explicating just *how* their earlier talk can be seen to have conveyed roughly 'the same' as their co-participant's disaffiliative response.

As is evident in the above examples, there is some variability in terms of the turn-formats with which these meta-pragmatic claims can be made. However, the fact that sequentially and pragmatically all of the above cases run down in astoundingly similar ways suggests that, on a certain level of granularity, we are basically dealing with different 'formal' instantiations of the same general practice. Moreover, the observed compositional variability seems to revolve around a range of more or less specifiable turn-formats, which have a number of core features in common. Those features that are subject to variability, on the other hand, appear to reflect the flexible adaptability of the practice in that they are either dealing with local exigencies of the interaction, or nuance it pragmatically by laminating additional stances or subtle layers of 'meaning' onto it. The following section will be devoted to taking stock of this observable format variability and to carving out the central compositional features of the practice.

## 5. Compositional features of the practice

In the present data sample, speakers used three basic turn-formats for their meta-pragmatic claims. Grammatically, one of these basic formats consists of a simple main clause (*that's my point*) and two of them consist of bi-clausal structures. The two observed bi-clausal formats are structurally very similar. On the one hand, there is the appendor relative format (*which is what I say*). The other format begins with the demonstrative pronoun *that*, which is then followed by a (typically cliticized) 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular present tense form of the copular verb *be* and a subordinate clause. The subordinate clause begins with the *wh*-word *what* and continues with the clausal element *I say* or *I mean* or an inflected variant thereof. This lexico-syntactic structure is well-attested in the linguistic literature, where it has typically either been classified as a kind of cleft sentence (e.g., Collins 1991; Lambrecht 2001), or as a distinct type of cleft, viz. a demonstrative *wh*-cleft (Biber et al. 1999:961; Calude 2007, 2008; but see Küttner 2016:176-182 for a critical discussion of this classification).<sup>17</sup>

These three basic turn formats have a number of core features in common. First, they all begin with a pronominal element which enables its speaker to make anaphoric reference to the immediately preceding turn, and more specifically its substance. This pronominal element can either be a relative pronoun or a demonstrative pronoun, and while the present data set does not contain an instance of a mono-

<sup>17</sup> All of these 'basic turn formats' may of course contain additional, grammatically optional, modifying elements (e.g., adverbs). For the bi-clausal formats, this can concern the subordinate clause as in *That's what I just said* (cf. fragment (8) above), the main clause as in *That's exactly what I said* (see fragment (12) below), or possibly also both (*That's/which is exactly what I just said*). Pragmatically, these modifying elements typically work to more specifically locate the earlier talk that serves as the basis for the speaker's meta-pragmatic claim and/or to intensify this claim.

clausal format that begins with the relative pronoun (i.e., *which is my point*), it is conceivable that such forms may be found in a larger data sample. So for the participants the demonstrative pronoun *that* and the relative pronoun *which* may be standing (or paradigmatic) alternatives, at least as far as this particular practice is concerned. Second, the initial pronominal element is followed by a 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular present tense form of the copula verb *be*, with which the speaker establishes an 'equative' semantic relation (i.e., of sameness, correspondence, or at least congruence) between what has been referred/tied back to with the initial pronominal element (i.e., the substance of the preceding turn) and the subsequent predication. And third, this subsequent predication makes reference to the speaker's *own* prior talk or the meaning of that talk (*my point, what I say, what I mean*). Taken together, this expresses the speaker's take that there is substantive equivalence between what the co-participant just said and what the speaker him-/herself communicated before. Table 1 on the next page summarizes this schematically (note again that some combinations are empirically unattested in the present data sample).

With this schematic representation, I do not wish to imply that the observable lexico-syntactic variability is 'meaningless' or analytically irrelevant. The two initial pronominal elements, for instance, are not necessarily in free variation. The appendor relative variants of the practice may have the added benefit that they can be tagged on to any clausal TCU. With them, speakers can begin a turn with what is recognizably a 'non-beginning' (cf. Schegloff 1996a), which may have the effect that the meta-pragmatic claim comes off more like a background comment, much like an aside or an addendum. And this may enable a speaker to comment on part(s) of a turn that can otherwise be considered as ongoing. So this format may be particularly useful to make meta-pragmatic claims about parts of a turn that will projectably become a multi-unit turn, without coming off as intruding into the other's turn-space (see fragment (4) above in this regard, where Angela Rye has projected a complex multi-unit turn in lines 01-03 and the appendor relative format is used to make a meta-pragmatic claim about the first part of that multi-unit turn). The point then is that, on a certain level of granularity, these formats pragmatically work in ways that are similar enough to warrant a treatment of them as a more general practice of speaking.

What is more, this abstract representation renders visible that the bi-clausal variants only map onto the core compositional elements in different ways (i.e., the final predication can be phrasal or clausal). But both the mono- and the bi-clausal variants allow its speaker to make the meta-pragmatic claim *within* a single TCU. That is, without allowing an interjacent transition-relevance place (TRP) to occur, where the surfaced incipient disagreement that the practice is used to deal with, could potentially be escalated further. Note in this regard that, apart from the occasional use of turn-initial prefaces (like *well* and *yeah*), the meta-pragmatic TCU is also typically deployed as the *first* TCU in the speaker's turn.

<b>Central compositional elements</b>	initial pronominal element	copula verb	phrasal or clausal predication with reference to speaker's own prior talk or its meaning
<b>Lexico-syntactic variants</b>	<i>That</i> <i>Which</i>	<i>is</i> (normally cliticized after the demonstrative pronoun <i>that</i> )	<i>my point.</i> <i>what I SAY.</i> <i>what I MEAN.</i>
<b>Functional contribution</b>	makes reference to prior turn's substance	establishes 'equative' semantic relation	provides 'material' that is 'equated' with the referent of the initial pronominal element
<b>Gloss</b>	'what you just said'	'corresponds to'	'what I communicated or intended to convey with my earlier talk'

**Table 1.** Schematic representation of the central compositional elements of the practice, their lexico-syntactic variants, their functional contribution, and a gloss of their functional import. The small caps on the verbs *SAY* and *MEAN* indicate that these are abstracted forms, which may be subject to inflectional variability.<sup>18</sup>

Another remarkable feature of turn-design is how speakers apparently fine-tune the *kind* of meta-pragmatic claim they issue to what went on in prior talk. To see this, let us consider the choice of the predicate in the subordinate clause of the bi-clausal formats (*say* vs. *mean*). While it was pointed out above that speakers' claim to have previously *said* the same as their co-participant should not (necessarily) be taken literally, it is often *in* what they said earlier in the interaction that a legitimate basis for their meta-pragmatic claim can be derived from. To briefly recap, Claire in fragment (9), for example, did indeed say that she would open with fourteen (however minimal that saying might have been). And apparently, this can be taken to presuppose the use of the short club, which forms the basis for her claim to have previously *said* – albeit not in so many words – what Chloe forwarded as a challenging counter-argument. By way of contrast, it was noted above that Beatrice in fragment (10) does not seem to have a comparable basis for making a meta-pragmatic claim of the same sort. So instead, she makes a slightly 'weaker' meta-pragmatic claim. Her *that's what I mean* more openly invokes the indirect (and indexical) relationship

<sup>18</sup> This schematic representation should not be taken to suggest that participants actually decompose the lexico-syntactic format and individually parse its constituent elements this way in interaction. As Selting (2010) points out, social interaction is a semiotic event and linguistic patterns are therefore likely to be interpreted holistically, and not in a modular fashion. Their decomposition into constituent elements is thus an analytic act which allows the analyst to reconstruct how, or in what way, each of those elements contributes to the formation of recognizable action(s) and/or the management of interactional tasks in specifiable sequential environments (cf. Schegloff 1996b, Deppermann 2007). Accordingly, Table 1 is merely supposed to facilitate an understanding of the contribution that each element of the lexico-syntactic structure makes to its overall semantic-pragmatic import and thus ultimately to its deployment as a practice of speaking in interaction.

between linguistic forms and their (contextually possibly relevant range of) meanings (cf. Garfinkel/Sacks 1970; Heritage 1984a). While this type of meta-pragmatic claim may therefore be more freely applicable (i.e., usable in a broader range of contexts), it may also not be as defensible as a comparable claim that explicitly redirects the respondent's attention to something that was *said* earlier in the interaction. In fact, this may be why Whoopi Goldberg in fragment (6) produces two meta-pragmatic claims in immediate succession. While her first one operates on the level of 'meaning' (*that's my point*), the second one more strongly points to what she has been verbalizing before (*that's what I'm saying*). If we recall that Goldberg has a very strong basis for her meta-pragmatic claims, as she did say something that logically entails Hasselbeck's counter, her second meta-pragmatic claim is conceivably an upgrade of the first. So these lexico-syntactic choices may be seen to reflect participants' orientation to the differential accountability of their specific meta-pragmatic claims.

The above cases also exhibit some noteworthy variability (as well as some equally noteworthy invariability) on the morphological level. This concerns speakers' selection of particular tense-aspectual configurations in the verb phrases of the meta-pragmatic TCUs. The copular verb following the initial pronominal element is invariably in the simple present tense (i.e., *That's/which is my point/what I...*) and never in the past tense (i.e., never *That/which was what I...*). This seems to be explainable on semantic-pragmatic grounds. As was shown in Table 1 above, the copula verb is used to establish an 'equative' semantic relation between what is referenced with the initial pronominal element and what is introduced in the subsequent subordinate clause. In other words, the speaker uses it to assert that 'substantive equivalence' holds between two utterances. By using the simple present, this assertion is claimed to be valid at the moment of speaking, rather than in some undefined past, and is thus indexed to have current or ongoing relevance.

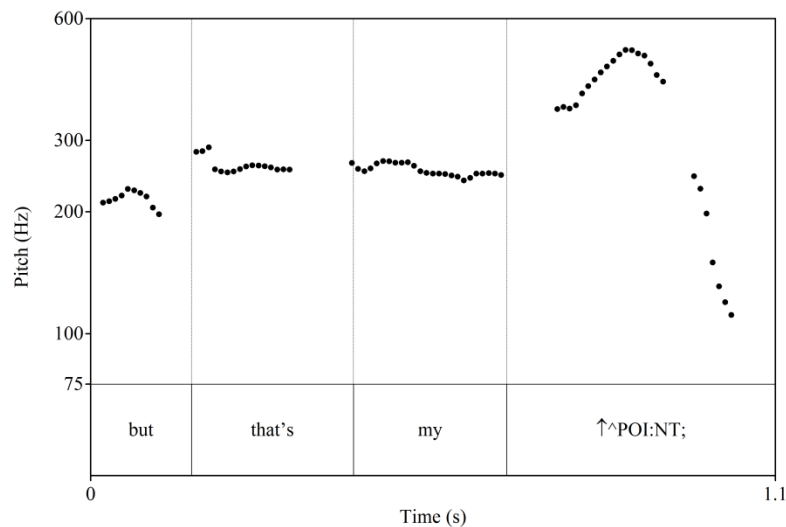
The more interesting tense-aspectual choices are made in the subordinate clauses of the bi-clausal variants. Here, we can observe that a broad range of forms are being used. Besides the simple present (*that's what I say/mean* in fragments (9)-(10)), we find speakers using the present progressive (*that's what I'm saying* in fragment (6)), but also the simple past (*that's what I just said* in fragment (8)). While further research on the precise interactional import of such tense-aspectual choices is certainly necessary (see C. Raymond, in prep.), these choices appear to calibrate (upgrade or downgrade) the strength of the speakers' meta-pragmatic claims. Juan Williams' use of the past tense in fragment (8), for example, renders his assertion that he previously (in fact, *just*) said the 'same thing' as Jesse Watters a statement of fact. The 'factuality' that is invoked by the past tense contributes to upgrading the strength of his claim and makes it come off as settled and slightly confrontational. The same can be said about Katrina Pierson's use of the past tense in fragment (4) (*which is what I said*, line 07). As was noted above, Angela Rye's forceful rejection of this claim leads to further disagreement, testifying to the potential for escalated confrontation that making such strong claims may bring with it.

By way of comparison, using the present progressive or the simple present makes comparable claims come off as less confrontational. The two present tenses do not invoke, or indexically point to, the participants' jointly experienced interactional history (i.e., prior talk) as strongly as the simple past does. As a consequence, the



speaker's insinuation that their co-participant has misunderstood the import of their prior talk comes off as less 'factual'. In this sense, these meta-pragmatic claims are softer and more openly register that the meaning of the speaker's prior talk is negotiable and that this negotiation is currently in progress.<sup>19</sup> In this regard, it is interesting to note that the simple past is only used in cases from the TV broadcast subset. Specifically, it is typically used in contexts in which more confrontational activities like disputing and arguing are a pre-designed and co-constitutive feature of the interactional setting (e.g., in political discussions).

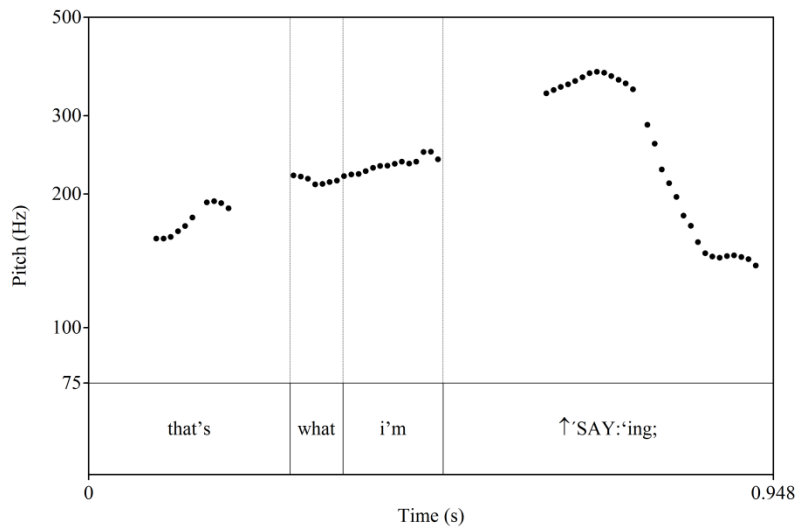
In addition to these lexico-grammatical features, there are a number of (more optional) para- and non-verbal elements that recurrently enter into the composition of the practice. Prosodically, it is striking that quite a number of these meta-pragmatic claims are done with similar-sounding intonation contours. These contours typically feature a marked pitch accent on the final meta-communicative lexical item, typically a wide-spanning rise-fall (see Fig. 2-4 below), but sometimes also a high fall. Occasionally, the first part of the utterance is equipped with dynamic pitch movements, too (see Fig. 4). As was noted in passing above, this makes the meta-pragmatic TCUs sound somewhat 'reproachful' (cf. Günthner 1996) and may be seen to communicate the speaker's stance that the 'substantive equivalence' of their talk should be obvious or apparent to the co-participant.<sup>20</sup> As such, this, too, would be a way of upgrading the strength of the meta-pragmatic claim and the speaker's insinuation of having been misunderstood that is associated with it. Interestingly, this prosodic design is also more common in the TV broadcast data than in the data that come from everyday conversation.



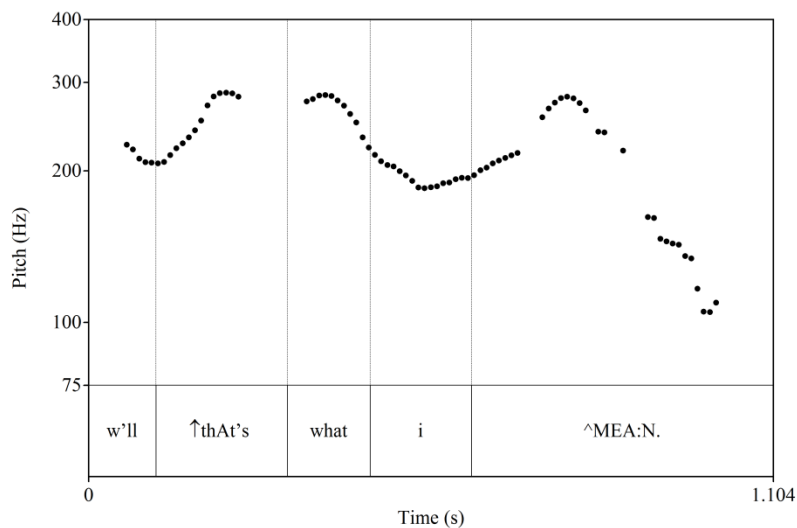
**Figure 2.** Pitch trace of Whoopi Goldberg's *but that's my ↑^POI:NT* (line 11 of fragment (6))

<sup>19</sup> The currently ongoing character of this negotiation may in fact be foregrounded further by using the progressive aspect, which highlights that the speaker is in the 'middle of saying something' and is going to continue (see fragment (6) above).

<sup>20</sup> In German, this stance could be indexed with a modal particle like *doch* (or perhaps *ja*), as in (*Das*) *hab ich doch/ja gesagt* or *Sag ich doch/ja!* (Schwitalla 2012: 154-155).



**Figure 3.** Pitch trace of Whoopi Goldberg's *that's what i'm ↑SAY:ing* (line 13 of fragment (6))



**Figure 4.** Pitch trace of Bea's *w'll ↑thAt's what i ^MEA:N* (line 15 of fragment (10))

A final observation with regard to the features of conduct that recurrently enter into the composition of the practice concerns a gestural/bodily-visual component. In cases in which the co-participants are co-present in the data, the meta-pragmatic claim is commonly accompanied by an open-hand gesture, with the palm facing upwards, the hand either being slightly arched or stretched, and the arm being slightly extended into the direction of the addressed co-participant. This gesture can be done with one hand or two hands, and, depending on the prior placement and shaping of the gesturing hand(s), it may require external rotation of the forearm. While a more detailed description of this gesture and its placement in relation to the meta-pragmatic claims is beyond the scope of this paper, we can note that it commonly co-occurs with the 'reproachful' prosodic design described in the preceding paragraph. Thus, it seems plausible to assume that this gesture serves to metaphorically underline or contextualize the speakers' appeal to the 'apparentness' of their

claim, as if it lay bare in front of their recipient (cf. Müller 2004; see also Kendon 2004:264-265 and Cooperrider/Abner/Goldin-Meadow 2018).

These then are basic features of conduct that recurrently enter into the composition of the practice and which contribute to its pragmatic and interactional effectiveness. At its core, the practice is a linguistic one, consisting primarily of a range of flexibly adaptable lexico-syntactic formats that are used in specific (and specifiable) sequential environments. However, we have seen that speakers can draw on a set of additional (paralinguistic/vocal, non-verbal/bodily-visual) compositional resources that contribute to the semiotic enrichment of these meta-pragmatic claims in ways that appear to be relatively recurrent and stable.

## 6. Discussion: The practice at the intersection of stance-management and repair

Up unto this point, I have characterized the practice as one for disarming disaffiliative responses. As such, it would cluster with other practices that are implicated in doing stance-management (i.e., practices for doing, or for handling matters pertaining to, agreement/disagreement or affiliation/disaffiliation). However, it must be acknowledged that an alternative view may also be held. Inasmuch as the speakers of the meta-pragmatic TCUs invoke a co-participant's *misunderstanding* of some piece of their earlier talk, it may be argued that the practice is better conceived of as belonging to an organization of practices that is known as 'repair', i.e. the practices that participants use for dealing with problems or trouble in speaking, hearing, or understanding (cf., e.g., Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks 1977; Hayashi/Raymond/Sidnell 2013). This view is given further appeal by virtue of the following two facts. First, as was noted in section 2 above, a number of practices for initiating and doing repair involve the use of meta-talk. Conversely put, forms of meta-talk have 'repair' as one general domain of use (see also Schiffrin 1980:213-215, 217). Second, as was shown in section 4, it is often (though not always) possible to locate turn-components in the speakers' earlier talk that render their meta-pragmatic claims legitimate and defensible in that they *could*, in principle, have been understood to have previously conveyed 'the equivalent of' what the co-participant then forwarded as a designedly disaffiliative response. So is the practice indeed better conceived of as a repair practice? And is it therefore perhaps better described in terms that are relevant to the organization of repair? For conversation analysts, addressing these questions is important, because, ultimately, CA is not so much about studying individual practices, but about developing a better understanding of the larger organizations of practices that undergird human social interaction as a whole (cf. Schegloff 2010; Heritage 2010; Hoey/Kendrick 2018), and this involves developing a sense of the possible 'boundaries' or 'areas of overlap' between these organizations (cf. Schegloff 1997).

In order to be able to properly address these questions, it is at first necessary to establish the most proximate relative of the focal practice in the domain of repair. The practices of repair are generally distinguished with respect to who initiates the repair (the speaker of the trouble source/'self' vs. somebody else/'other'), who does the repair ('self' vs. 'other'), and when/where the repair is initiated and/or carried out relative to the trouble source (e.g., in the same turn, in the transition space following the trouble source turn, in the next turn, in the turn after the next turn, etc., see

Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks 1977; see also Kitzinger 2013 and Sidnell 2010:110-138 for concise overviews). Going back to the sequential pattern provided in Figure 1 above, we can see that the practice considered here is produced in third position ([P3]) relative to the turn or turn-components that proved to be 'interactionally problematic' ([P1]). Prima facie, then, the practice seems to bear some resemblance to third-position repair (or 'repair after next turn'). Schegloff (1992:1303) describes the sequential organization of third-position repair as follows:

It happens that a speaker of a turn, T1, 'releases' it as adequate, and its recipient finds in it no problem that warrants initiating repair in the next turn position. Accordingly, its recipient produces a next turn, T2, sequentially appropriate to his or her understanding of what the speaker of the prior turn was doing in T1 and reflecting his or her understanding of what the prior speaker may have been referring to by various referring terms in T1 [...]. And T2, built to be and understood as 'responsive' to T1, thus regularly displays to the speaker of the prior turn the understanding that has been accorded it – an understanding that the speaker of T1 may treat as problematic.

After such meant-to-be-sequentially appropriate next turns, in what we can term third position (where the misunderstood talk's turn is first and the responsive next turn is second), the speaker of the problematically understood talk – the trouble source – can undertake to address the trouble by engaging in some operation on the source of the trouble, that is, the talk in T1.

Further, Schegloff (1992) identifies four basic (and partially optional) components that enter into the composition of third-position repair. Most commonly, third-position repair consists of the following three components: An initiation component (such as *oh*, *no* or a combination of the two), a subsequent rejection component (e.g., *I don't mean X*, where X is typically a referential expression, or *I'm not X-ing*, where X is a formulation of an action), which is followed by the 'repair proper' (e.g., *I mean Y* or *I'm just Y-ing/I'm just doing Y*). This pattern is summarized in Figure 5, where square brackets with subscripts are used to denote the individual components (<sub>ini.</sub> for the initiation component, <sub>rej.</sub> for the rejection component and <sub>Repair</sub> for the 'repair proper').

[(*Oh*) *No*]<sub>ini.</sub> [*I don't mean X/I'm not X-ing*]<sub>rej.</sub> [*I mean Y/I'm just doing Y*]<sub>Repair</sub>

**Figure 5.** Most common composition of third-position repair as described by Schegloff (1992).

An example of a third-position repair with an omitted initiation component can be seen in lines 03-04 of fragment (11), which is taken from Schegloff (1992) and in which "the press relations officer in a Civil Defense headquarters is asking the chief engineer for information to be distributed to the media" (p. 1303):

**Fragment (11): 'Shelters'** (CDHQ, I, 52, taken from Schegloff 1992:1303)

01 Annie: Which one::s are closed, an' which ones are open.  
 02 Zebrach: Most of 'em. This, this, [this, this ((pointing))  
 03 -> Annie: [I 'on't mean on the  
 04 -> shelters, I mean on the roads.  
 05 Zebrach: Oh!  
 06 (0.8)  
 07 Zebrach: Closed, those're the ones you wanna know about,  
 08 Annie: Mm[hm  
 09 Zebrach: [Broadway...

Now since Schegloff (1992:1307) mentions that *That's not what I mean* can act as a rejection component in third-position repair, it is perhaps tempting to analyze a meta-pragmatic TCU like *That's what I mean* as a repair proper component, and to treat the practice considered here as an abridged version of third-position repair. However, such an analysis would rest on formal and sequential similarities that are only superficial and would have to be viewed as inadequate, once a second, more penetrative look is taken (cf. Schegloff 1997).

It is important to bear in mind that with third-position repair, the speaker performs a repair operation on his/her *own* prior talk, most commonly by means of contrasting, reformulating, specifying, or explaining the trouble-source item (cf. Schegloff 1992:1308-1313). In other words, when performing third-position repair, speakers treat some element of their own prior talk as the trouble source and aim to resolve the resultant misunderstanding by trying to 'improve' aspects of the design of their earlier talk (cf. Schegloff 1992:1303; see also Deppermann 2015:79-80). Moreover, by attending to their own prior talk as the trouble source, they take over responsibility for the surfaced problem (cf. Robinson 2006).

By contrast, with the practice considered here, speakers effectively persist on the adequacy of their own prior talk and do not perform any repair operation on it. This is particularly evident in fragment (12), which is taken from *Inside the NBA*, a post-game show for NBA basketball on TNT. Here, former NBA basketball players Shaquille 'Shaq' O'Neal (Sha), Charles 'Chuck' Barkley (Chu) and Kenneth 'Kenny' Smith (Ken), along with the host Ernest 'Ernie' Johnson Jr. (Ern) are discussing a postgame press conference statement from Paul George, a star basketball forward who played for the Indiana Pacers at the time. The Pacers had just lost their first playoff match against the Cleveland Cavaliers, the reigning champion back then, in what turned out to be a very close (viz. a one-point) game. A role player called C.J. Miles had taken the last shot attempt and potential game-winner for the Pacers but missed it. During the postgame press conference George then forcefully asserted that it is his (i.e., George's) prerogative to take the last shot in tight games like this one. The experts on the show are now discussing this assertion and the question of whether it is legitimate or not. Relevant excerpts from the press conference and a double replay of the missed shot attempt have just been re-aired and commented on by the participants to the discussion. In line 01, Charles Barkley is finishing a complaint about Paul George's bodily-visual, public display of "histrionic injustice" (Barkley's words) right after Miles had missed the shot.

**Fragment (12):** 'The last shot' (*Inside the NBA*, 02:18-02:41 & 02:58-03:23)

01 Chu: †hE don't have to get the la:st SHOT?  
 02 Sha: yes he DO:ES;  
 03 cut it OU[T. ]  
 04 Chu: [†nO;]=he †DOESn't?  
 05 (0.4)  
 06 Sha: it's an unwritten RULE;  
 07 that on every great TEAM;  
 08 †h the bEst player gets the last SHOT.=  
 09 Chu: =<<h> he took the bAll out of his  
 †HA:NDS;=sh[aq?>]  
 10 Sha: [ †oK]AY;=

11 =but (0.3) BUT;  
 12 if you watch the play CLOSEly;  
 13 he coulda gave it BACK to 'im.  
 14 i think °h i think if <<l> you know> pAul woulda got  
 the BALL back-  
 15 they DOUBled;=  
 16 =he kIck it TO 'im;=  
 17 =°h for the last SHOT. \*  
 17a \*launch of another replay  
 18 he wouldn'a made those COMments.  
 19 but right HERE;=  
 20 =WATCH.

((26 lines of transcript omitted in which Sha comments on the re-  
 play and continues to argue with Chu about whether C.J. Miles  
 could have, and should have, passed the ball back to Paul George  
 instead of taking the shot.))

47 Sha: =[ev]ery grEAt player on a team takes the la[st ]  
 48 Chu: [thA]t's  
 [not TRUE?]  
 49 Ern: [but mi? ] [mIchael ]  
 50 Sha: [yes it IS,]  
 51 Chu: [a?]  
 52 Ern: [mI]chael hit steve ~KE:RR,<sup>21</sup>  
 53 (0.9)  
 54 Ern: RIGHT? \*  
 54a \*replay ends  
 55 michael gave the ball up t' steve ↑KERR;  
 56 Sha: oKAY;=  
 57 Ern: =to hIt the big SHOT.  
 58 -> Sha: that's what i just SAID;=ernie,=  
 59 =i? if <<l> you know> paul george woulda GOT  
 the ball;=  
 60 =DRIBble,  
 61 dEfense CAME;=  
 62 =then he KICKED it;=  
 63 =he wouldn'a SAID anything.  
 64(->) that\_'sActly what i SAID.  
 65 (0.5)  
 66 Ken: [well]  
 67(->)Sha: [exAC]Tly what i said.  
 68 Chu: that's tha? [n]  
 69 Ken: [w]ell i? i? i was  
 70 a? as ey ((= "a")) °hh nO:n-SUPerstar.  
 71 (1.5)  
 72 Ken: paul george was absolu'ly INCorrect.  
 73 Chu: THANK you-

Although disagreement already figures prominently in the sequence well before the meta-pragmatic claim is produced, the properties of the practice as it has been described here remain intact. In lines 06-08, Shaq sides with Paul George by making reference to an unwritten rule of basketball, viz. that the team's best player should

<sup>21</sup> This is a reference to game 6 of the 1997 NBA finals in which Michael Jordan – by many considered to have been the greatest basketball player of all times – drew a double team defense and passed the ball to his open teammate Steve Kerr, who then hit the game-winning shot against Utah and secured the Chicago Bulls the 1997 championship.

get the last shot in close games. When Charles Barkley counter-argues (line 09), Shaq goes on to argue that C.J. Miles could have passed the ball back to Paul George, so that he could at least get an attempt at taking the last shot. Shaq further claims that if, in the face of strong defense, George had *then* decided to pass the ball back to C.J. Miles (*he kIck it TO 'im;=°h for the last SHOT*), he would not have made any of those comments (lines 14-18). He finishes off this line of reasoning by restating the 'unwritten rule' he had mentioned before (line 47). While Charles Barkley continues to contest this claim by denying its truth (line 48), the host Ernie Johnson brings up a famous historic counter-example to the 'unwritten rule' that Shaq has referenced to support his stance on the matter (see footnote 21 for an explanation). His turn is clearly designed as being disaffiliative with Shaq's stance. Not only does he formulate it as a counter-example through the *but*-preface (*but mi? mIchael mIchael hit steve 'KE:RR*, lines 49 and 52), after a 0.9 second gap, in which Shaq doesn't acknowledge this point, he also demands a conceding acknowledgment by adding the tag-positioned *RIGHT?* (line 54). Moreover, he subsequently upgrades the initial formulation of his counter-example to *michael gave the ball up t' steve ↑KERR* (line 55), where *to give the ball up* more strongly foregrounds the player's 'letting go of the ball' than *to hit somebody (with the ball)* does. Following an initial conceding acknowledgment from Shaq (*oKAY*, line 56), Johnson even continues to upgrade the relevance of this counter-example for their argument by pointing out that it was *the big SHOT* that secured the Chicago Bulls the championship (and not just any 'last shot').

This is when Shaq forwards the meta-pragmatic claim *that's what i just SAID;=ernie* (line 58) to disarm Ernie Johnson's disaffiliative response. With it, he holds Johnson accountable for having failed to register a relevant portion (or implication) of his earlier argument, namely that George should only have gotten the ball back for an *attempt* at taking the last shot, with the option of passing it back to C.J. Miles in the face of pressured defense. This is what Shaq points out in the subsequent explication of his meta-pragmatic claim (lines 59-63). What is remarkable about this subsequent explication is that, rather than to substantiate his claim, Shaq basically only re-states what he had said before (compare lines 59-63 to lines 14-18). By using pretty much the same words as he did before, he not only insists on the validity of his argument, he also treats the terms that he had selected for the first description of this alternative scenario as having been adequate and sufficiently implicative of his point. In other words, this re-stating with a substantial amount of lexical recycling is 'doing insistence'. It embodies the claim that Shaq had previously considered Ernie Johnson's counter-argument and that Ernie Johnson could (and perhaps should) have been able to infer this from Shaq's earlier description. This, in turn, would have enabled Johnson to not forward this counter-example in the first place, because he *could* have found that it does not invalidate Shaq's point. In this regard, it is also interesting to note how Shaq ultimately upgrades his meta-pragmatic claim by adding the adverb *exactly* (*that 'sActly what i SAID*, line 64) and then by repeating the relevant portion of this claim for a third time with a shift of the main accent to the intensifier (*exACTly what i said*, line 67).

The upshot of this for the present discussion is that, in contrast to third-position repair, where the speaker of the first turn takes responsibility for the surfaced 'trouble' and works on his or her own prior talk to resolve it, the speakers of the practice considered here do not do this. Instead, they tacitly attribute a 'misunderstanding',

and thus responsibility for the 'trouble', to their co-participant (cf. Robinson 2006). So despite the fact that the meta-pragmatic claim is produced in third position relative to the 'troublesome' turn/turn-components in P1, it functions more like a next-turn initiated repair on the co-participant's response in P2, or more precisely on the understanding displayed by that response (cf. Deppermann 2014:316-317; Deppermann 2015:78-83). If anything, the speaker's meta-pragmatic claim makes a repair operation on part of the co-participant relevant, as it targets his or her understanding of the prior speaker's talk and 'demands' a revision of that understanding (or at the very least 'a return' to that earlier talk to inspect it for possible alternative readings, cf. Heritage/Watson 1979:250, 1980:128). In this regard, the practice considered here is in fact more similar to 'other corrections' or next-turn initiated other-repair (cf. Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks 1977). And as such, it would represent a systematic *alternative* to third-position repair. In fact, Schegloff (1992) was musing about this possibility, when discussing the multiple repair space of conversational turns and the fact that speakers – in selecting certain repair formats – might be seen to be choosing which *position* to speak from (rather than the position governing the selection of a specific repair format). He states (Schegloff 1992:1331):

The speaker of the misunderstood turn may be in a position to initiate either (1) third position repair on his or her own prior turn or (2) next-turn initiated repair on the prior turn, the one which stands in a problematic relationship to the misunderstood turn.

Moreover, he suggests that, given the preference for self-correction in conversation (cf. Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks 1977), the second option (i.e., doing next-turn initiated repair on the prior turn) can be expected to be dispreferred (Schegloff 1992:1331):

Between these two alternatives, the preference for self-correction (were it to be operating here as it does between same-turn and next-turn repair) would issue in a preference for third position repair, for that form of repair involves the repairer initiating repair on his or her own talk rather than on the talk of another.

The overall low frequency of occurrence of the practice considered here, especially in data of the conversational type, in which only a handful of cases could be found, could be seen to support – or at least be consistent with – this supposition. However, while the low frequency of occurrence of the practice in ordinary conversation may suggest that it is dispreferred (cf. Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks 1977:362), it does not necessarily follow that it is dispreferred by reference to its character as a *repair* practice (i.e. that it is infrequent and/or dispreferred by reference to the preference for self-correction). Indeed, a number of observations cast doubt on such a repair-related account. First, unlike other forms of other-initiated repair, the practice does not seem to be systematically delayed (so as to increase opportunities for self-correction). And if it is delayed in the speaker's turn, this is commonly done with turn-initial elements which appear to be primarily implicated in the management of agreement/disagreement rather than being occupied with the signaling of repair (see, e.g., the *yeah*-preface in fragment (9) above). And second, the practice is not systematically modulated in form (e.g., through uncertainty markers or interrogative syntax, such as *I think that's what I said, Isn't that what I said?* or *Didn't I say that?*), which is a feature of turn-design that commonly accompanies next-turn initiated other-repairs or other-corrections (cf. Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks 1977:387f.).



Besides, we have seen that the meta-pragmatic claims are systematically produced in response to turns that are designedly disaffiliative. Their systematic placement after disaffiliative responses exhibits a degree of 'particularization' that is unusual for repair practices, which are generally less strongly constrained in terms of their possible contexts of occurrence, given that nothing is, in principle, excludable from the class of repairables (cf. Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks 1977:363).

With regard to the question of what constitutes the relevant organizational domain for the practice considered here, these observations seem to yield a somewhat blurry picture. In some respects, the practice bears considerable resemblance to next-turn initiated other-repair, whereas other features of its deployment suggest that participants primarily use it for doing stance-management. However, these findings are consistent with the observation that "[t]he organization of repair is intricately involved with that of agreement/disagreement and preference/dispreference" (Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks 1977:380, fn. 28; see also Schegloff 1997, 2007), and that there seems to be a particularly strong convergence between other-correction and disagreement (cf. *ibid.*, see also Jefferson 1987; Goodwin 1983; Sidnell 2010:113-114). It appears, then, that the practice operates precisely at this intersection of stance-management and repair.

Inasmuch as the speaker's meta-pragmatic claim invokes a misunderstanding and re-directs the co-participant to the speaker's earlier talk to inspect it for an alternative reading or interpretation that may warrant such a claim, the practice is in principle capable of occasioning a revision of a prior understanding (and in this regard, it is similar to next-turn initiated other repair). However, these meta-pragmatic claims are not normally attended-to as such. Next turns from their recipients generally do not show any indications of a revision of their understanding of the speaker's earlier talk (e.g., through the production of a change-of-state token *oh* or similar composite forms such as *oh right*, cf. Heritage 1984b, Deppermann 2015:83-86). Instead, recipients typically either remain silent, or, if they choose to and are given the space to respond, they generally do so with agreement or disagreement (see fragments (9) and (10) for restored agreement and fragment (4) for continuous disagreement). So participants do not normally treat the turns containing the meta-pragmatic claims as having occasioned a 'correction' or 'revision' of their earlier understandings and thus do not primarily orient to them as being repair-related. This does, of course, not mean that such a revision has not taken place tacitly, but it is not displayed interactionally and thus remains opaque.<sup>22</sup>

In essence, then, the invocation of a misunderstanding is used as a resource for doing stance-management; a (possibly minor) disruption in mutual understanding is invoked for the sake of restoring interpersonal agreement or affiliation (see also Robles 2017). Yet, the stance-managing affordances of this practice come with a price. Because the speaker who is forwarding the meta-pragmatic claim insists on the adequacy of his/her own prior talk, trouble responsibility (i.e. responsibility for the invoked misunderstanding) is essentially attributed to the co-participant. This is

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<sup>22</sup> This may, of course, have to do with the fact that what they previously produced was *designedly* done as a disaffiliative response. Openly registering a revision of the understanding that this disaffiliative response was premised upon is not only tantamount to 'giving in' to the other's position and recognizably withdrawing the prior disaffiliative response, it also calls the disagreeing party's attentiveness to the prior talk into question and leaves them vulnerable to being perceived as 'having disagreed for the sake of disagreeing'.

a socially rather delicate (and arguably dispreferred) move, which may account for the overall low frequency of occurrence of the practice. On the other hand, this implicit attribution of a misunderstanding to the co-participant affords speakers an effective means to ward off designedly disaffiliative responses and to reconcile hearably 'discrepant' or divergent positions without having to back down from what they said earlier. By enabling its speakers to turn their co-participants' designedly disaffiliative talk back against themselves, which is a very common and highly effective argumentative strategy (cf. Coulter 1990; Goodwin 2006), the practice can serve as a powerful resource in the context of antagonistic argument. The particularly low frequency of occurrence of the practice in conversational data, where escalated disagreement and antagonistic argument is typically something the participants try to avoid (cf. Sacks 1987; Pomerantz 1984), can be seen to reflect this. Conversely, its higher frequency of occurrence in the TV broadcast data is compatible with the fact that the exchange and management of divergent stances or positions is often an integral part of the overall activity framework in this setting. The general preference for agreement that operates in ordinary conversation (cf. Sacks 1987; Pomerantz 1984) is typically relaxed (and may even be reversed) when participants deliberately engage in activities such as arguing, debating and disputing (Kotthoff 1993). In the context of these activities, actions which are otherwise dispreferred (such as counter-arguing or challenging and contradicting the other) are commonly and unproblematically done in a preferred format, and participants are normatively expected to defend their positions, rather than conceding to the other's position too readily (cf. *ibid.*). This may furnish more opportunities (i.e., possible contexts of occurrence) for the deployment of such a stance-managing practice. Moreover, it needs to be borne in mind that broadcasted talk is generally produced with an orientation to the overhearing audience (cf. Heritage 1985; Clayman/Heritage 2002; Heritage/Clayman 2010). So the discussants are not normally exchanging arguments with the goal of persuading their 'opponents' of their positions so much as to present and represent (e.g., defend) their position for the overhearing broadcast audience. That is, they are not necessarily *personally* invested in the discussions that take place in these institutionalized and professionalized settings. Social or inter-personal relationships are therefore less strongly at stake than they are in ordinary conversation and the deployment of such a practice may be less problematic.

## 7. Summary and conclusions

Human social interaction is fundamentally pro-social in nature. The organizational structures of talk-in-interaction reflect, and at the same time serve to maintain, this character (see Stivers/Mondada/Steensig 2011:19-20); they are essentially biased towards promoting social solidarity (cf. Heritage 1984a). One facet of this pro-social bias is that the practices deployed in human social interaction "exhibit systematic asymmetries that serve to maximize opportunities for affiliative actions and minimize opportunities for disaffiliative ones" (Kendrick/Torreira 2015:256-257; see also Heritage 1984a, Lindström/Sorjonen 2013). The general preference for agreement that has been shown to ordinarily operate in everyday conversation is a case in point (cf. Sacks 1987; Pomerantz 1984). However, human social interaction also involves individual agency (cf. Enfield 2011, 2013), and so the occurrence of disagreement or other disaffiliative actions (objections, challenges and rejections

among them) is always a possible interactional event. If they occur, people have ways of dealing with their occurrence and with the threat to social solidarity they pose. Most of the practices we know of are aimed at resolving or at least minimizing this threat, rather than escalating it (although such practices exist as well), and to do so as quickly as possible. Changing the topic, for example, is one practice that speakers may use to swiftly get out of states of continuous disaffiliation (cf. Maynard 1980; Coulter 1990). States of disaffiliation can also be handled in more subtle ways. Speakers can draw on a set of practices that establish 'concessive' discourse relations, which also serve to minimize the discrepancy between opposing arguments, conflicting stances or divergent positions as well as the interactional exposure they receive (Couper-Kuhlen/Thompson 2000; Barth-Weingarten 2003).

This paper has shed light on one further practice interactants have at their disposal to manage the occurrence of disaffiliative responses. The practice consists of issuing the meta-pragmatic claim to have previously communicated ('said' or 'meant') the 'same' or the pragmatic equivalent of what the co-participant has just forwarded as a designedly disaffiliative response. With this, speakers hold their co-participants accountable for having failed to register a relevant alternative hearing of their earlier talk (the talk that has been met with the co-participant's disaffiliative response) and thus insinuate that they have been misunderstood by their interlocutor. This indirect attribution of a misunderstanding is possible, precisely because natural language is fundamentally and irredeemably indexical and people routinely (have to) mean more than they can say in so many words (cf. Garfinkel/Sacks 1970). Therefore, it is often possible to arrive at alternative (and sometimes even divergent) readings for a single utterance. So the indexicality of natural language forms the foundation for this practice.

The precise mechanisms underlying this practice point to the deep interrelatedness between the organizations of preference, repair and agreement/disagreement, as first mentioned by Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks (1977:380, fn. 28). Insofar as the meta-pragmatic claims are used to undermine the understanding displayed by the co-participant's disaffiliative response, they are in principle capable of occasioning a (tacit) revision of the understanding that this response was premised upon. In this regard, the practice bears some resemblance to next-turn-initiated other-repairs in third position and represents a systematic (and arguably dispreferred) alternative to third-position repair as described by Schegloff (1992). However, the invocation of a misunderstanding serves to disarm designedly disaffiliative responses is thus mobilized as a resource for doing stance-management. This suggests that the practice operates precisely at the intersection of repair and stance-management, and the ambivalent features it exhibits testify to this intersectional character.

The fact that such intersectional practices exist has important practical implications for research on intersubjectivity in interaction. It lends support to the idea that intersubjectivity is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, with mutual understanding and (dis)affiliation representing two deeply interwoven dimensions of it (cf. Enfield 2006; Sidnell 2014). Their interrelatedness suggests that, analytically, these dimensions should not be addressed in isolation or independently from each other. As we have seen, they are not completely independent domains for the participants, who are able to mobilize one in service of managing aspects of the other. With the practice considered here, speakers invoke a disruption of mutual understanding to re-

store affiliation (see also Robles 2017). This is accomplished by using a meta-pragmatic claim to the effect that two seemingly divergent positions are actually congruent, once an 'alleged' underlying 'misunderstanding' is resolved. However, participants may have various other ways of bringing these dimensions to bear on each other. As Jefferson (2017) has shown, speakers may, for example, co-list counterposed items or positions to impart co-class membership to them and to propose that they are actually equivalent alternatives. She calls this practice 'colligation' and shows that it constitutes a useful interactional resource for minimizing other-correction or disagreement by masking or camouflaging that this is what is being done.

Undoubtedly, the relationships that hold between these different dimensions and organizations of practice are complex. But it is my firm conviction that if we, as analysts, become (or remain) aware of the fact that conversational practices may figure in more than one analytic domain at a time, it will be possible to disentangle and elucidate these relationships; and this will bear fruit for our understanding of both individual practices of talk-in-interaction and social interaction at large.

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