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THE SYNTAX AND SEMANTICS OF SOME ENGLISH INTERJECTIONS

by
Deborah Marjorie James

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Linguistics)
in The University of Michigan
1973

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This dissertation will be an examination of the grammatical characteristics of several English words which have traditionally fallen into the class of "interjections". Interjections are among the most little studied of language phenomena; as one looks for references to them in the works of linguists, one is struck by the fact that they are very rarely mentioned, and that where they are mentioned, it is usually only briefly and cursorily. Moreover, certain basic assumptions about them recur; in particular, that they are used only to express strong emotion, and that they do not bear any grammatical relationship to other elements in the sentence to which they may be attached. The following are some typical quotations from grammarians and linguists on the subject of interjections. First, Curme (1947) defines interjections as follows: "An interjection is an outcry to express pain, surprise, anger, pleasure, or some other emotion, as Ouch! Oh! Alas! Why! In general, interjections belong to the oldest forms of speech and represent the most primitive type of sentence." (p. 30). He then goes on to say: "Although they are often used alone as independent sentences, they are often embodied in modern sentences without any grammatical relations to the other words, but expressing here, as elsewhere, emotion of various kinds." (p. 149). Thus, Curme claims that interjections simply express emotion, that they do not enter into grammatical relationships with other elements in a sentence, and that they are

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"primitive". Jespersen (1923) says the following: " . . . the usual interjections are abrupt expressions for sudden sensations and emotions; they are therefore isolated in relation to the speech material used in the rest of the language. 'Between interjection and word there is a chasm wide enough to allow us to say that the interjection is the negation of language, for interjections are employed only when one either cannot or will not speak' (Benfey Gesch 295)" (p. 415). Thus, he says that interjections merely express a sudden emotion and are non-communicative, and supports the view that they are "the negation of language". Sapir (1921), on p. 5, discusses cries made instinctively to express an emotion, and gives "Oh!" as an example. He then says "Such instinctive cries hardly constitute communication in any strict sense . . . If they convey certain ideas to the hearer, it is only in the very general sense in which any and every sound or even any phenomenon in our environment may be said to convey an idea to the perceiving mind." Then, on page 6, he says "Interjections are among the least important of speech elements. Their discussion is valuable mainly because it can be shown that even they, avowedly the nearest of all language sounds to instinctive utterance, are only superficially of an instinctive nature." (He means here that the phonetic form of interjections is conventional, rather than instinctive.) Sapir is saying, then, like Jespersen, that interjections are merely cries to express emotion; and that they are of no interest to linguists except in that they can be used as evidence in arguing that all of language is conventional, and no part of it instinctive. Bloomfield (1933) has the following to say about interjections:" . . . The

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second more specialized type of connotation that deserves to be pointed out, is intensity. The most characteristic intense forms are exclamations. For these we have in English not only a special secondary phoneme [!], but also certain special speech-forms, interjections, such as oh! ah! ouch! These forms all reflect a violent stimulus, but differ in connotation from an ordinary statement in which the speaker merely says that he is undergoing a strong stimulus" (p. 156); and "Some forms occur predominantly as minor sentences, entering into few or no constructions other than parataxis [parataxis= "a construction . . . in which two forms united by no other construction are united by the use of only one sentence pitch" (p. 171)--DJ]; such forms are interjections. Interjections are either special words, such as ouch, oh, sh, gosh, hello, sir, ma'm, yes, or else phrases (secondary interjections), often of peculiar construction, such as dear me, goodness me, goodness gracious, goodness sakes alive, oh dear, by golly, you angel, please, thank you, goodbye" (p. 176). Thus, he seems to be defining interjections in two different ways; first, as cries which express strong emotion ("reflect a violent stimulus"), and second, as words or phrases which do not enter into grammatical relationships with other elements in the sentence of which they are a part. He is rather unclear, in that he gives the impression in his quote from page 156 that all interjections "reflect a violent stimulus", but it then appears from his quote from page 176 that he intends these to be only a subset of the interjection class which he then sets up on the basis of lack of grammatical relationships with other elements. Fries (1952) emphasizes, again, that interjections are expressions of sudden

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emotion, and says that they are therefore non-communicative and have no real meaning; he defines "noncommunicative utterances" as "utterances characteristic of situations such as surprise, sudden pain, prolonged pain, disgust, anger, laughter, sorrow" (p. 53), saying in a footnote (no. 26) that "Some of these forms are conventionally included in the 'exclamations' or 'exclamatory sentences'. Sometimes they are classed as 'interjections' ". He gives as examples "oh, wow, damn, oh oh, my God, goodness" and says that in the corpus he is using they usually occur when the speaker is alone; he then says "All these expressions seem to be spontaneous reactions to situations suddenly confronting the speakers . . . They may, of course, be overheard by a listener, and the hearer gains some impression of the kind of situation to which the speaker is reacting. In this sense they have "meaning". These forms, with meanings inferred from the situations in which they usually occur, are not used to elicit regular responses from those who hear them. Their purpose is not communicative." (p. 53). He also says, in footnote 26, "It seems to me very desirable to make a sharp division between the many utterances that have a communicative purpose and the few that have not."

Of more recent linguistic works, extremely few make any reference to interjections. It appears that the general view of linguists as regards interjections has been the same as that expressed by Curme, Jespersen, Sapir, Bloomfield, and Fries, and that interjections have thus been considered not worth study. However, there are some exceptions; in particular, Quang Phuc Dong's insightful articles into expressions such as "damn", "shit", and "fuck", which have been traditionally included in the interjection class, and

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Robin Lakoff's article "Questionable Answers and Answerable Questions", in which she discusses the interjections "well" and "why", and proposes some interesting generalizations to describe how they are used.

However, the general attitude remains that interjections simply are expressions of emotion, and that they have no grammar. It has been tacitly assumed that they are a part not of competence, but of performance, as defined by Chomsky (1965).

It is interesting that people have always held the view that interjections are only expressions of emotion, because in fact, even a cursory look at some of the words which would normally be included in the interjection class indicates that this is not necessarily true. For example, well, oh, and say in the following sentences could not, in the traditional system, be called anything but interjections, but it is certainly not clear that they express emotion:

(1) Well, the sun's shining.

(2) I think I'll buy . . oh . . some apples.

(3) Suppose Mona lived on, say, Forrest Street.

Moreover, although the general view is that interjections do not relate grammatically to other elements in the sentence of which they are a part, cases like the following indicate that they do, in fact, interrelate with such elements:

(4) On Tuesday, oh, several people left

(5) *Quietly, oh, several people left

(6) Sam drives cars carefully, but Max does so, well, recklessly

(7) *Sam drives cars carefully, but Max does, well, so, recklessly

(8) Mary might give me a picture of, say, a ship

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(9) *Mary might give me Gloria's picture of, say, a ship

Thus, the acceptability of an interjection is at least in part dependent on its position in the sentence and on what other elements occur in the sentence. Sentences (1)-(9), then, indicate that interjections are more complicated than has been supposed.

In this dissertation, I undertake to study a few interjections in detail. I do this for the following reasons. First, interjections have been studied very little, and the generalizations which have been made about them are clearly not correct. Thus, it is interesting to find out what kinds of syntactic and semantic generalizations can accurately be made about at least the interjections to be studied here. Secondly, it is interesting to examine interjections from the point of view of the way in which their semantic and syntactic behavior is interrelated, and from the point of view of the importance of presuppositions and context--both linguistic and non-linguistic--in describing their behavior. Thirdly, it is interesting to examine interjections from the point of view of seeing whether their behavior casts light on other phenomena in language.

I am assuming here as my basic framework the theory of Generative Semantics, as developed in numerous articles and books by J. R. Ross, Paul Postal, George and Robin Lakoff, James McCawley, and others. There are two assumptions associated with Generative Semantics which are particularly relevant to this study. One of these is that there is no separate, abstract level of structure which corresponds to Deep Structure, as defined by Chomsky (1965). Rather, the ultimate structure underlying the surface form of a sentence is its semantic structure, and there is no dividing line

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between the rules, or derivational constraints, which are more semantic in nature, and those which are more syntactic in nature. Moreover, the forms of the constraints are the same in type throughout the derivation. Syntax and semantics are not separable, then, in Generative Semantics. This will be assumed throughout this study; in fact, it will become evident that no other assumption would be sensible. For example, take sentence (7) above. It will be shown that well (or any other interjection) cannot occur before a morpheme such as so in this sentence for semantic reasons. In Generative Semantics, the syntactic ill-formedness of this sentence follows from the its semantic ill-formedness. In a theory in which syntax and semantics were regarded as entirely separate systems, however, not only would this semantic generalization have to be captured, but in addition some syntactic rule would have to be given to explain why (7) is not a syntactically well-formed surface structure; and such a purely syntactic rule would inevitably be ad hoc, since, as will be shown, the real reason for the unacceptability of well in (7) is semantic. This is clearly a less satisfactory way of dealing with the facts than that of Generative Semantics. Alternatively, it would be necessary to say that (7) is well-formed syntactically, but not acceptable semantically; however, it would clearly be rather odd to claim that (7) is well-formed syntactically.

The second assumption of Generative Semantics which is important to this study is that presuppositions and the context in which the utterance is said--both linguistic and non-linguistic--must be taken into account in order for one to be able to describe language adequately. It will be shown that it is, in fact, impossible to

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give an adequate characterization of virtually any interjection described here, in any usage, without bringing such factors into account.

The interjections to be studied are oh, ah, uh, say, and well. The study is limited to these for reasons of space; to examine more would have resulted in a considerably more lengthy and time-consuming work. These words were chosen, first, because they are all very commonly used words, and thus deserve to be studied; second, because they are, in various ways, related to each other semantically and syntactically, and it is interesting and revealing to compare them; and third, because they can all occur in various positions inside sentences, as opposed to only sentence-initially or standing alone, and thus they interrelate with other types of grammatical phenomena to a greater degree and in a more complex and interesting way than do interjections which occur only sentence-initially or by themselves (such as, for example, why or now).

This dissertation is, then, a detailed examination of the syntactic and semantic characteristics of the words oh, ah, uh, say, and well. (In the case of well, however, a detailed semantic characterization will not be given; I refer the reader to R. Lakoff (1970) for this.) Chapters 2 to 5 will deal with the following topics:

Chapter 2 will be an examination of those usages of the interjections discussed here which occur primarily or only sentence-initially or by themselves. These are the following. First, the word oh has two distinctly different usages, which I shall call oh_1 and oh_2. Oh_1 occurs primarily sentence-initially or by itself, oh_2

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primarily sentence-internally. For example, in the following sentences, (10) contains $\underline{oh}_1$, (11) $\underline{oh}_2$:

(10) Oh, John's bought some apples!

(11) (=(2)) I think I'll buy . . oh . . some apples.

Likewise, the word say has two distinctly different usages, which I shall call $\underline{say}_1$ and $\underline{say}_2$; $\underline{say}_1$ occurs only sentence-initially or by itself, $\underline{say}_2$ only sentence-internally. Examples of these are (12) and (13); (12) contains $\underline{say}_1$, (13) $\underline{say}_2$:

(12) Say, Mona lives on Forrest Street!

(13) (=(3)) Suppose Mona lived, say, on Forrest Street.

And thirdly, the word ah occurs mainly sentence-initially, although it can also occur sentence-internally; it does not, however, vary in meaning according to its position, as do oh and say. This chapter will be an examination of the semantic characteristics of $\underline{say}_1$, $\underline{oh}_1$, and ah, and of their syntactic characteristics when they are sentence-initial.

Chapter 3 will be an examination of the semantic characteristics of $\underline{oh}_2$, uh, and $\underline{say}_2$ (and the closely related let's say); these are the interjections, out of those studied (except for well), which occur primarily or only sentence-internally.

Chapter 4 will take all of the interjections which can occur sentence-internally, and examine the question of what they can "refer to". This involves the following concept. When one says an interjection such as $\underline{oh}_2$, $\underline{say}_2$, uh, ah, or well in the middle of a sentence, one is normally stopping to select one thing to mention over other things, to try to think of the best way to describe something, or to try to remember something, etc. In each case one is stopping to

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think about some element which occurs in the sentence. I will say that the interjection "refers to" that element. There are various interesting syntactic constraints on what an interjection can refer to, which will be discussed.

Chapter 5 will examine a variety of situations, involving different types of grammatical phenomena, in which the presence of an interjection--in some cases, any interjection out of those discussed here, in others only certain interjections--renders the sentence unacceptable or restricts the possible meanings it can have or possible contexts it can occur in. The types of phenomena discussed in this connection will include performative verbs, Pronominalization, idioms, preposed adverbials, Negative Raising, negative polarity items, tags, Sluicing, islands, presupposition-suspending *if*-clauses, parentheticals, sentential adverbs, and Yiddish-Movement. With all of these phenomena, the presence of an interjection affects the acceptability of a sentence or its appropriateness in certain contexts. The possible causes of this will be examined.

I will here summarize the main conclusions reached in each chapter, and in the dissertation as a whole.

Chapter 2

It is shown that the words *oh*$_1$, *ah*, and *say*$_1$, which normally occur sentence-initially, are all used to indicate that the speaker has just become aware of something. For example, he can have just become aware of some fact or piece of information; he can have just become aware of a strong emotion; or he can have just become aware of something which he should do verbally (that is, a speech act which he should perform). *Oh*$_1$, *ah*, and *say*$_1$ differ in the following

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ways. First, ah always indicates either pleasure on the speaker's part, or that the speaker finds the information learned, the thing he has thought of, etc., significant or interesting. Oh_1 need not express any emotion. Say_1 indicates interest on the speaker's part when the speaker has just become aware of a fact or of something he should do, but can indicate any emotion when it is used to express a strong feeling. Moreover, when these words are used to indicate that the speaker has just become aware of a strong feeling, oh_1 and ah differ from say_1 in the following respect: say_1 can only be used when it is followed by a relatively explicit statement of the speaker's feelings; it then serves to intensify, in some sense, the expression of those feelings. Oh_1 and ah do not need to be followed by a statement of the speaker's feelings in order to express emotion.

When these words are used to indicate that the speaker has recently become aware of a speech act which he should perform, oh_1 and ah again differ from say_1. Whereas say_1 can indicate that the speaker is in some sense deliberately and pre-meditatedly performing the speech act, oh_1 and ah cannot do this; they indicate, rather, that the speaker has only just at that very moment thought of performing it. Also, the use of say_1 in this case indicates that the speaker considers the addressee to be his equal or inferior. Oh_1 and ah do not necessarily indicate this.

In addition, there are a number of other more minor differences between oh_1 and ah on the one hand, and say_1 on the other. For example, oh_1 and ah can be used to indicate pleasure or interest on the speaker's part over the fact that he has managed to remember something; say_1 cannot. Oh_1 and ah can be used to preface a statement

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which is an echo of something which the speaker has just learned; $\underline{say}_1$ cannot. Also, $\underline{oh}_1$ and ah can stand by themselves more easily than can $\underline{say}_1$.

One might ask why these interjections pattern in this way; what connection is there, for example, between the fact that $\underline{say}_1$ cannot precede an echo, and the other facts about $\underline{say}_1$? I have, unfortunately, no explanation. Also, what sorts of underlying logical structures do these words have? And how might the informal generalizations made here about these interjections be formalized? I have no real suggestions; these would be good topics for future research.

In any case, it is clear that these interjections are a good deal more complicated semantically than has been supposed; and that numerous aspects of the total social situation must be involved in order for their use to be appropriate.

It will also be shown that $\underline{oh}_1$, ah, and $\underline{say}_1$ must be described as bearing a syntactic relationship to other elements in the sentence to which they are attached; in particular, it will be illustrated that although they can "refer to" a proposition which is in an embedded sentence--that is, they can indicate that the thing which the speaker has just become aware of is that proposition--they cannot refer to propositions which are embedded inside islands; that is, in some sense they obey Ross's well-known constraints (Ross, 1967). Thus, these interjections are syntactically as well as semantically quite complex. Also, it should be noted that it is not possible to separate syntactic from semantic facts here, since it is specifically in their possible meanings that these interjections obey these syntactic constraints.

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Chapter 3

First, the words uh and oh_2 are compared. It is shown that uh indicates that the speaker is hesitating in order to think of the best or most accurate thing to say next. Oh_2, on the other hand, indicates that the speaker is choosing one out of several alternatives, and that he feels that there is no one correct or accurate alternative. Thus, for example, in the sentences

(14) I saw, uh, Bill Green

(15) I saw, oh, Bill Green

uh in (14) normally implies that the speaker is hesitating in order to think of or remember exactly who he saw; there is no implication that he saw anyone else. Oh in (15), on the other hand, implies that the speaker is stopping to choose one person to mention out of several whom he saw; that Bill Green is only one example of a person whom he saw. The use of uh, then, indicates that "Bill Green" is the one correct description of who the speaker saw; while the use of oh indicates that "Bill Green" is not the one correct description, but rather only one possible one.

Because oh_2 has the meaning that it does, it also tends to imply a casual attitude, while uh does not.

These words are hesitation markers, which have been regarded as quintessential examples of phenomena which are part of performance rather than competence; it is shown that they must, on the contrary, be considered very much a part of competence.

Say_2 and the phrase let's say are then studied. Say_2 can have two different meanings, which can be paraphrased as "for example" and "let's imagine". The former is exemplified in (16), the latter

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in (17):

(16) Yes, I'm going shopping today. I might buy, say, a pair of shoes.

(17) Imagine you're going shopping. You go to Hudson's, and you buy, say, a pair of shoes.

Let's say can have five different meanings; two of these are the same as those of $\underline{say}_2$, and two others can be paraphrased as "I'll say for the sake of kindness (or convenience, etc.)", and "I suggest that we say this (to some third person)". In the remaining type of meaning, let's say indicates that the speaker is making an explicit choice. Which meaning let's say can have is partially dependent on whether it is sentence-initial or sentence-internal.

When $\underline{say}_2$ or let's say has the "let's imagine" reading, the hearer is being asked to hypothesize a situation.

The "for example" reading of these words only occurs in situations which can be described as hypothetical; it cannot occur in a description of an act or state which the speaker views as definite or factual. Let's say and $\underline{say}_2$ differ in their "for example" readings, in that let's say implies that the speaker is personally involved in the decision being made; $\underline{say}_2$ does not imply this.

Words such as $\underline{oh}_2$, uh, $\underline{say}_2$, and let's say have not previously been studied at all, to my knowledge; it seems to have been assumed, particularly in the case of $\underline{oh}_2$ and uh, that they are semantically uninteresting, and, as mentioned above, not a part of competence. This chapter illustrates that they are semantically considerably more complicated and interesting than previously supposed, and that various kinds of presuppositional and contextual factors must be brought into consideration before any adequate description of them

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can be made. Again, it is not clear what kinds of logical structures might underlie these words, or how the generalizations made here might be formalized in a theory of language.

Chapter 4

The main points made in Chapter 4 are as follows. First, an interjection can be described as "referring to" a certain specific element in the sentence. What this element can be is grammatically constrained. One such constraint is that it seems (although it is not clear exactly what the correct generalization is) that the element has to be a constituent. For example, in the following sentences, the interjection can refer to the doubly underlined element, but not to the entire element which is underlined; that is, the speaker, in saying the interjection, can be stopping to think about how to say, or what to say to fill the slot of, the doubly underlined element, but not the entire element which is underlined:

(18) The girl who said she liked, well, Vivaldi dried the dishes

(19) Bill believes, oh, Mary to have left yesterday

The larger elements which are underlined in (18) and (19) are not constituents.

For this reason, the behavior of interjections can be used as a test of constituent structure.

Then, whereas interjections normally can only refer to elements which follow them, the interjection say_2 can also refer to elements which precede it. Moreover, it can refer to stressed elements some distance away. In its "for example" reading, however, it is then constrained in that the element it refers to must command all of the material between itself and say. For example, say can

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mean "for example, Phil" in (20) but not in (21). Underlining indicates strong stress.

(20) That girl I told you about, who Phil might like, say, is standing over there.

(21) That girl I told you about, who Phil might like, is standing over there, say.

The "let's imagine" reading of say_2 does not have the same constraint, although it is constrained in other ways.

Lastly, it is the case for all of the interjections discussed that if they are inside a noun phrase, including embedded sentences, they cannot refer to anything outside of that noun phrase. For example, ah in (22) cannot indicate that the thing which the speaker has remembered or thought of is "Abilene":

(22) The secretary who takes care of--ah!--the homestay program is going to go to Abilene.

Thus, it is clear that the behavior of these interjections is governed by syntactic rules. It should also be noted, as was noted in the summary of Chapter 2, that syntax and semantics are inseparable here, since it is specifically the possible things which the interjections can refer to in their meanings which are governed by syntactic constraints.

Chapter 5

First, it is shown that an interjection is only acceptable in a sentence when there are possible alternatives to the thing that the interjection refers to; that is, when the speaker could have said something other than what he does say; when there is, thus, a reason for him to stop to think. For this reason, interjections can

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never refer, for example, to words in fixed idioms, or to pronouns when there is no possible alternative to the pronoun (e.g., so in "do so", as in (7)). In the cases of uh, oh_2 and well, the speaker can be stopping to think of the best way of saying what he has to say; but in the cases of say_2 and ah, the speaker must be stopping to choose an alternative which is substantially different in content from other possible ones. For this reason, say_2 and ah are acceptable in considerably fewer contexts than are uh, oh_2, and well. Examples of contexts in which uh, oh_2, and well are acceptable but say_2 and ah are not, are: contexts involving Negative Raising, negative polarity items, islands, presupposition-suspending if-clauses, parentheticals and sentential adverbs.

With certain kinds of constructions, it is less clear why the presence of an interjection renders a sentence odd or unacceptable, and the cause seems to lie at least in part in some factor in the nature of the construction involved. However, in most of these cases, what precisely this factor is is not clear. For example, it remains to be explained why interjections are only acceptable after certain kinds of preposed adverbials and not others; why interjections are odd in sentences in which the rule of Sluicing has taken place; why they tend to be unacceptable in picture noun environments, although they are generally acceptable in other types of islands; why they behave in the way they do before parentheticals and before sentential adverbs; and why they tend to be odd in sentences in which Yiddish-Movement has applied. In all of these cases, the unacceptability of the sentence cannot obviously be ascribed to the fact that there are not sufficient possible alternatives to the thing which the interjection

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refers to. Consequently, we must conclude that the behavior of interjections reveals some interesting characteristics of the phenomena listed above, although no clear explanation of them is forthcoming.

This chapter points out, then, certain interesting characteristics of interjections, and of numerous other grammatical phenomena, as revealed by their interaction with one another.

In summary, the following conclusions are made. First, interjections, contrary to general belief, are semantically complex, interrelate grammatically with other phenomena, and must definitely be considered part of a native speaker's competence. Secondly, in order to describe the characteristics of interjections adequately, it seems that one cannot separate syntax and semantics, and that one must bring into account presuppositions and the total context, linguistic and non-linguistic, surrounding the speech act. Thirdly, examining the interrelationship of interjections with certain other types of grammatical phenomena reveals interesting (and difficult to explain) characteristics of those phenomena.

The following would be valuable topics for future research in this area. First, there is the question of what sorts of underlying logical structures these words have, and of how the informal generalizations made here might be formalized in a theory of language. I have made no attempt to go into these problems here, and it is very unclear to me what the solutions might be; certainly, however, these are very important problems. As another suggestion for future research, it would be interesting to examine other interjections--for example, why, you know, now, oho, aha, there--to compare their usages with those of the interjections discussed here, and to see what

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sorts of constraints there are on them, and to what extent they can shed light on other phenomena. Also, it would be interesting to study the usages of oh, ah, uh, say, and well in other cultural dialects within English, from the point of view of comparison; and it would be interesting to study the ways in which similar interjections in other languages are used, in order to find out what sorts of characteristics such interjections have in common between languages.

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CHAPTER 2

The Grammar of Some Sentence-Initial Interjections: $\underline{\text{Oh}}_1$, Ah, and $\underline{\text{Say}}_2$

In this chapter I shall examine some of the usages of the words oh, ah, and say; in particular, those usages which they have when they are sentence-initial or occur by themselves. I will begin with an overview of the uses of oh, and isolate those uses which will not be discussed in this chapter; then, I will examine in more detail the other uses of oh, at the same time comparing them with the uses of ah. Say will then be discussed. Finally, I will examine an aspect of the uses of oh, ah, and say in which they are interrelated with syntax.

Beginning with oh, then, a typical context in which one might use oh is the following. One is going to visit a friend. As one approaches his house, one sees him outside on a stepladder covering the front of his house with a coat of paint. One might then say (1):

(1) Oh, you're painting your house!

The first thing we might note is that one could only say this if one had just at that moment realized that the friend was painting his house. It would not, for example, be appropriate to wait five minutes watching the friend paint and then say (1). If a person were to say (1) under such conditions, it would imply that during the five minutes his mind had been elsewhere and that he had, in fact, only just realized within a few seconds of saying (1) that the addressee was painting his house.

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As another example, let us look at (2):

(2) Oh, Polly wanted squash!

This might be said, for example, if the speaker had bought some groceries at the supermarket for Polly, but, on the way out, remembered that she had also wanted squash, which the speaker had forgotten to get. Clearly, he could only say (2) as soon as he realized that she had wanted squash; he could not say this after waiting several minutes. And likewise, in (3):

(3) Oh, the sun's shining!

The speaker must have only just realized or found out that the sun was shining.

What else does oh indicate in these sentences? Does it indicate emotion? I believe that these sentences may not necessarily reflect any particular emotion; for example, one could say (1) perfectly casually, without feeling any particular emotion about the addressee's painting his house. (In this case, the sentence would be written with a period instead of an exclamation mark.) More commonly, these sentences might also indicate mild surprise. They could also, of course, reflect other emotions, such as pleasure or anger. The intonation of the sentences would indicate which emotion, if any, was being expressed. Thus, oh cannot necessarily be equated with the expression of emotion; what it does seem to indicate, however, is that the speaker has just become aware of something he was not aware of before.

Oh is also typically used as a response to a piece of new information, as in, for example, (4):

(4) A. Bill's gotten a job at last.

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B_1. Oh.

(cf. B_2. Yes.)

Here, in saying oh, the speaker is acknowledging that he did not know the information before; that he has just come to know of it. This seems to be essentially the same use of oh as that in (1)-(3). "Yes" contrasts with oh as a response; "yes" would indicate that the speaker already knew that Bill had gotten a job. Oh here need not express anything other than that the speaker did not know the information before. However, with various different kinds of intonation, various emotions could also be expressed in saying "oh". In all of (1)-(4), then, oh in itself does not seem to indicate any particular emotion; if certain intonation contours are attached to it, however, then an emotion is expressed. The expression of emotion seems to have more to do with intonation than with the word oh itself.

Oh is, however, the normal word one would use if one suddenly felt a strong emotion. Thus, if one saw something startling, one might cry "Oh!". This would indicate surprise. Similarly, if one felt exasperated with someone, one might say "Oh, you idiot!"; or if one felt a strong feeling of pleasure at the weather, one might say "Oh, what a lovely day!". This usage of oh is related to the usage in (1) to (4) in that just as in those cases oh indicates that the speaker has just become aware of some fact, in these cases oh indicates that the speaker has just become aware of a strong feeling. The element of just having become aware of something is present in both sets of cases, and this, I believe, is basically what oh indicates in them. Often, a particular use of oh may reflect both things; for example, in (1) the speaker may be saying oh both because he has just realized that the

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addressee is painting his house, and because he has been struck by a feeling of, say, pleasure over this. Another, slightly more complicated, example is (5):

(5) A. Bill's gotten a job at last.

B_1. Oh, I know.

(cf. B_2. Yes, I know.)

While "Yes, I know" is a neutral, polite response here, indicating simply that the addressee already knows the information, "Oh, I know" tends to be somewhat rude. I think this is because with "I know" following, oh can only indicate surprise on the speaker's part that the addressee did not realize that the speaker knew that Bill had gotten a job. Thus, oh here reflects the speaker's having just become aware that the addressee does not realize this, and also reflects a feeling of surprise at this fact.

Another way in which oh is used is in sentences like the following:

(6) (turning to a friend) Oh, did you hear that Bill and Sue have gotten engaged?

Oh here indicates that the speaker has just thought of telling, or remembered to tell, the addressee this. Similarly, one might say

(7) Oh, shut the door after you, will you?

(8) Oh, by the way, did you remember to fill up my gas tank?

In (7) and (8), as in (6), oh indicates that the speaker has just thought of making the request or asking the question. This use of oh is clearly related to the uses we have been discussing; it indicates that the speaker has just become aware of something he should do (perform a particular speech act).

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There are, however, uses of oh which do not reflect becoming aware of anything, be it a fact, an emotion, or something the speaker should do; for example, (9) and (10):

(9) I think I'll get . . oh . . some apples.

(10) I saw, oh, Bill Fetlock at the party.

In (9), the speaker is hesitating in order to decide what to get. In (10), he is hesitating in order to decide who to mention that he saw at the party. There is no element of having just found out, realized, or become aware of anything; rather, oh in (9) and (10) indicates that the speaker is hesitating in order to decide on something. This element of making a decision is not at all present in (1)-(8). Moreover, normally very different kinds of pronunciation and intonation would be attached to oh's in sentences such as (9) and (10), and oh's in sentences such as (1)-(8). In particular, oh's in sentences such as (9) and (10) would tend to be pronounced in a somewhat longer and more drawn-out way than those in sentences such as (1)-(8), and to be pronounced in an even tone; typically, the following element would be pronounced on a lower tone, although also an even one. Oh in (9) and (10) could also be pronounced on a rather high tone (significantly higher than that of the preceding element), with the following element dropping sharply in tone after it. The oh's in sentences such as (1)-(8) would normally not be said on an even tone; beyond this, they can have a variety of different intonations, depending on the emotion, if any, being expressed. The oh's in (9) and (10), with their relatively fixed intonations, could not and do not express any particular emotions. Since these usages seem significantly different, I will give them different names; the usage of oh found in (1)-(8) I will call oh_1, and the usage of oh found in

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(9) and (10) I will call $\underline{oh}_2$. The meanings and usage of $\underline{oh}_2$, which are fairly complicated, will be discussed not here but in Chapter 3.

$\underline{Oh}_2$ typically occurs inside sentences, and $\underline{oh}_1$ typically occurs either by itself or sentence-initially. However, $\underline{oh}_2$ can occur sentence-initially, and $\underline{oh}_1$ can occur sentence-internally. As an example of the latter, take (11):

(11) I saw--oh, Bill Fetlock!--at the party.

One might say this, for example, if one suddenly forgot the man's name in mid-sentence, paused, and then managed to remember it. Oh would indicate that one had just then managed to remember it, and might also indicate, for example, that one was pleased to have remembered it.

$\underline{Oh}_2$ can occur sentence-initially in sentences such as the following:

(12) A. Is that Bach you're playing?

B. O-oh, you're pretty close.

Here, B is hesitating to decide what exactly to say. There is no element of having found out anything, and no emotion would normally be being expressed.

There are some contexts in which oh can be used, however, in which it does not seem to indicate either any particular deciding process or that the speaker has become aware of something he was not previously aware of. For example: suppose two people have organized a party, and not many people have so far showed up for it. The following dialogue ensues:

(13) A. There sure aren't very many people here.

B. Oh, more people will probably come.

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Oh here seems to indicate more of an attempt at casualness than anything else. It is not at all like oh_1, since B has not found out or become aware of anything. It is closer, I believe, to oh_2, because one could almost (although not quite) regard it as indicating that B has stopped to think of the best thing to say, and because oh_2 tends to indicate casualness (for example, (14):

(14) A. Well, Fetlock, do you want to be punished for your crime next Tuesday or Friday?

B_1. I'd prefer, oh, Friday.

(cf. B_2. I'd prefer, uh, Friday.)

B_1's response in (14) seems to reflect a much more casual attitude than B_2's, in which uh is used.)

Another example like (13), in which oh seems to be used primarily to express a casual attitude, is (15):

(15) A. How did you do on your exam, Clifford?

B. Oh, I flunked.

I would like now to examine further the uses of oh_1, and compare them with those of ah. Let us start by comparing (16) and (17):

(16) Oh, you're painting your house!

(17) Ah, you're painting your house!

(17), like (16), would only be said if the speaker had only just realized that the addressee was painting his house. However, (17) also conveys an impression which (16) does not necessarily convey; that is, that the speaker is feeling one of two things: either he feels pleased that the addressee is painting his house, or, he feels that it is significant or important that the addressee is painting his house (e.g., "Ah, you're painting your house! So that explains

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why we haven't seen you much lately!" or, "Ah, you're painting your house. I warned you I would break up with you if you did this, John. This is it."). Compare also (18) and (19):

(18) Oh, Bill's leaving!

(19) Ah, Bill's leaving!

While both could only be said when the speaker has only just learned that the addressee is leaving, (19) conveys the impression that either the speaker is pleased that Bill is leaving ("Ah, Bill's leaving! Thank God!") or that he feels that it is somehow significant that Bill is leaving ("Ah, Bill's leaving! That must be why he's been acting so busy lately!"). Oh could also be used to convey the same emotions, given the appropriate intonation, but I believe ah must convey these, while oh can also convey others, or convey no particular emotion.

Ah can also occur as a response to a statement, like oh:

(20) A. Bill's gotten a job at last.

B_1. Oh.

B_2. Ah.

While oh here need only acknowledge that B_1 did not previously know the information, ah does more than this; ah implies that either the speaker is pleased, or he thinks it is particularly interesting or significant that Bill has gotten a job (e.g. "Ah. Then I can go and borrow some money from him.").

Further examples illustrating this difference between oh and ah are the following. First, imagine that a student is taking an oral exam:

(21) A. Well, Fetlock, what was the significance of the third



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clause of the Treaty of Utrecht?

B_1. Oh.

B_2. Ah.

Oh and ah convey, I believe, rather different impressions here. Oh gives the impression that B_1 had not expected the question and is thrown a little off-balance by it. Ah, on the other hand, gives the impression that B_2 is pleased that A has asked him this question, and is quite prepared for it. Similarly, take (22):

(22) A. . . . So this argument proves that Quantifier-Float must be global.

B_1. Oh.

B_2. Ah.

Oh here gives the impression that the speaker had not expected the argument to prove that Quantifier-Float was global; only the addressee's actually saying it has made him aware of it. Ah, on the other hand, gives the impression that the speaker does not find this unexpected, but on the contrary understands it and appreciates it.

Compare also the answers in (23):

(23) A. I wish my family would just give me money for my birthday. You can get what you like then.

B_1. Oh.

B_2. Ah.

Oh here implies that the speaker hadn't expected the addressee's reasoning to work in this way; he is just learning of it. Ah, on the other hand, implies that the speaker understands and appreciates what the addressee has said; implies that it is indeed significant; that the speaker is glad to agree.

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Oh in (21) through (23) definitely seems to indicate that the thing which has precipitated the use of oh on the speaker's part is something which he had not expected, which he has just become aware of for the first time. This seems to correspond to the usual use of oh. Ah, on the other hand, tends to imply that the precipitating thing is not too unexpected; and moreover, that the speaker finds the thing which has precipitated the ah significant or good. In both (21)-(23) and (17), (19) and (20), ah indicates that the thing the speaker has become aware of is significant or good; this, then, appears to be a distinguishing characteristic of ah. In (16), (18) and (20), it would also be possible for oh to indicate the same things, with certain particular kinds of intonation, although of course it need not do this. In (21)-(23), however, it seems to me that it would not be possible for oh to indicate pleasure or significance, regardless of the intonation, for some reason; I do not know why this should be. It is also interesting that oh indicates greater unexpectedness than ah in (21)-(23). I suspect this may be precisely because ah indicates pleasure or significance; for example, in (21), if the speaker is pleased, it implies he expected the question. Oh, on the other hand, which does not indicate pleasure, simply indicates the question was unexpected.

Ah, then, indicates that the speaker has just become aware of something, and that he thinks it is good or significant. Might one want to say that ah basically indicates pleasure; or basically indicates significance or importance? For example, if one finds out something significant, one is normally pleased to have found it out; is pleasure then basic? I think not, because there are cases in which

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one may not be pleased to find out something significant or important (e.g., "Ah, my father's died. I've been afraid of this."). Moreover, it does not seem right to say that ah basically indicates significance, since being pleased does not necessarily indicate that the speaker thinks the thing involved is significant or important (e.g., "Ah, what a cute puppy!").

Ah, like oh, can indicate a sudden strong feeling. Thus, for example, one can say "Ah, the open road!", "Ah, how beautiful!", or "Ah, what a lovely day!". Ah in these sentences seems to indicate a strong feeling of pleasure. It is interesting to compare oh and ah when used in this way. For example, take the following dialogue:

(24) A. How was the movie?

B_1. Oh, it was awful!

B_2. Ah, it was awful!

B_3. Oh, it was so-so.

B_4. Ah, it was so-so.

In B_1 and B_2, oh and ah seem to reflect a burst of emotion on the speaker's part on being reminded of how he found the movie. However, there is an interesting difference between them; while oh in B_1 reflects the speaker's dislike of the movie, the only natural interpretation of B_2 seems to be that ah reflects pleasure, and that thus the speaker must love awful movies. Similarly, with these sentences:

(25) Oh, how ugly that building is!

(26) Ah, how ugly that building is!

while oh reflects revulsion, ah seems to reflect pleasure, or at least some sort of fascination with the building's ugliness.

Going back to (24), B_3 is a perfectly acceptable response; but

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I believe the oh in it must be interpreted as indicating that the speaker is hesitating in order to decide on how to describe the movie--that is, this is an oh_2 use of oh. B_4 is quite odd. My feeling is that this is because ah must indicate a strong feeling of pleasure, but it is simply very implausible that one could love movies which are "so-so"; in fact the term in itself implies a lack of strong feelings on the speaker's part.

Another type of example contrasting oh and ah in this regard is the following:

(27) A. Bill's gotten a job at last.

B_1. Oh, I know that.

B_2. Ah, I know that.

Oh here, as discussed earlier, can indicate that the speaker has been struck by a strong feeling of surprise. Ah cannot be indicating this here, however. Rather, it can only mean that the speaker has realized that this is something which he knows and is pleased that he knows it. Similarly, (28):

(28) A. Is Quantifier-Float global?

B_1. Oh, of course it is, stupid!

B_2. Ah, of course it is, stupid!

Although oh simply indicates surprise at the addressee's asking the question, ah doesn't seem to be able to do this, and seems quite strange in this context; although it would be fine in the following context:

B_4. . . . Ah, of course it is, because otherwise (such-and-such) would happen!

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Here, the speaker pauses to think, and then a reason for Quantifier-Float's being global strikes him, and he says "Ah!", indicating that this is something he is pleased to have thought of, or which he thinks is significant. (Oh could also be used in B_4, of course, with the same or a similar meaning.)

Thus, it appears that although ah can indicate that the speaker has become aware of a sudden emotion, it can only be used when this emotion is pleasure; it cannot be used when the emotion is revulsion or surprise. Still further examples are (29) and (30):

(29) Oh, read your damn book if you want to!

(30) Ah, read your damn book if you want to!

Oh in (29) seems to indicate the peak of a feeling of very strong anger or exasperation on the speaker's part. It also seems to be partially being used in the "I-just-thought-of-performing-this-speech-act" sense discussed earlier. The speaker throws out this sentence with the intent of ending the conversation and dismissing the subject. But it doesn't seem that the speaker can be doing these things with ah in (30). In (30), the speaker cannot be using ah to express anger or exasperation; rather, he has to have just realized or remembered that it would be good or important for the addressee to read his damn book if he wants to; or else, he has to be pleased, or to feel that it's important, that he's thought of telling the addressee to do this. In either case, one somehow seems forced to interpret "read your damn book if you want to" as a sincere order, rather than a petulant exclamation, as it is in (29). Thus, it would appear that ah cannot indicate anger or exasperation, as can oh. But given the construction of the sentence, particularly since it contains the expression "your

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damn book", only the petulant exclamation reading seems very plausible; and since ah does not allow this reading, it is thus inappropriate in a sentence such as (30).

A related pair of examples is the following:

(31) Oh, who the hell will come?

(32) Ah, who the hell will come?

"Who the hell will come?" is a question which in itself implies that the speaker believes that no one will come. (31), with oh, would occur if the speaker was struck by a sudden burst of annoyance.[1] (32) seems much stranger than (31), because it seems that some feeling of pleasure, or of the importance of something, must be present; for example, my first reaction would be to interpret ah as meaning that the speaker is pleased to have remembered to ask the question. However, since it is not a genuine question, this intepretation is odd, and I cannot think of any other context in which (32) could occur. This further indicates, then, that ah cannot indicate anger or exasperation--only pleasure, or that something is significant or important.

As discussed earlier in connection with oh, and as indicated immediately above for ah, both of these interjections can be used to indicate that the speaker has just thought of performing or just remembered to perform some speech act. For example, suppose one has known some fact, say that Bill has left, for some time. One turns to one's friend and says:

(33) Oh, Bill's left, did you know?

(34) Ah, Bill's left, did you know?

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One would say (33) if one had just at that moment thought of telling the friend this. One would likewise say (34) under the same conditions, but moreover, other conditions must also, I believe, be present. Specifically, I believe one must have been feeling it was important to let the friend know about this; one suddenly remembers to tell him, or thinks of telling him, is pleased to have remembered, and says (34). Thus, again, the elements of pleasure or significance must be present for ah to be used appropriately. In the case of oh, however, these are not necessary; oh need indicate no more than that the speaker has just thought of telling the addressee that Bill has left. Other examples with other types of speech acts are the following:

(35) (Oh) (Ah), could you lend me $2 until tomorrow, Sue?

(36) (Oh) (Ah), open the window, Jeeves

(37) (Oh) (Ah), I promise I'll write that letter for you, Sam. I'm sorry I forgot to let you know before.

In these sentences, ah can only be used if the speaker has just remembered to perform or thought of performing the act and thinks that it's a good thing, or that it's important, that he has remembered or thought of it.

Neither oh nor ah can be used with very serious or important speech acts, e.g.

(38) (Oh) (Ah), I pronounce you man and wife

(39) (Oh) (Ah), I christen this ship the Queen Margarita

This would appear to be because both oh and ah indicate that the thought of performing the action has only just entered the speaker's

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head, which is inappropriate for obvious reasons in these sentences.

Oh and ah often occur in the following, related context also. The speaker has been wanting to see some particular person in order to tell him something, or ask him something, etc. Suddenly this person appears; the speaker might then say, for example,

(40) Oh, Ron, I've been looking for you. I want to let you know about next weekend.

(41) Ah, Ron, have you read my paper yet?

Oh and ah seem to occur here not because the speaker has just decided to perform the speech act, but rather because he has suddenly seen the addressee; he has suddenly become aware of the addressee's presence. Ah, as is usual, indicates, moreover, that the speaker is pleased to see the addressee.

The morpheme ah does not seem to have any meaning remotely equivalent to that of oh_2. That is, one can say a sentence such as

(42) I saw--ah, Bill Fetlock!--at the party

and this would mean that the speaker had forgotten, and then managed to remember, who it was that he had met, or perhaps what his name was, and was pleased to have remembered it; but I do not believe it could have any other sort of meaning in this sentence, even with different intonation. When I say this, I am assuming that this word is being pronounced [a]. It is, of course, perfectly possible to have a sentence such as (43), containing a word prounced [ə], which I will spell "uh":

(43) I saw, uh, Bill Fetlock, at the party

but there is no reason to call [a] ("ah") and [ə] ("uh") the same word in these sentences.

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It was mentioned earlier that oh can sometimes be used to indicate no more than casualness, seemingly (as in, e.g., (13) and (15). Ah, as we might expect, cannot be used to indicate casualness. For example, in (44) the B_1 response is fine, but the B_2 response is odd:

(44) A. There sure aren't very many people at our party.

B_1. Oh, more people will probably come.

B_2. Ah, more people will probably come.

However, it would be quite appropriate to say:

B_3. Ah, more people will probably come, because I just remembered that a lot of people have gone to that concert at Fetlock Auditorium, which doesn't end for another half-hour.

Clearly, ah in the B_3 response is appropriate because it indicates that the speaker has just thought of something important; ah in the B_2 response is inappropriate because it is not possible to construe ah in this way, and because it cannot indicate simply a casual attitude, as can oh. Similarly, take (45):

(45) A. How did you do on your exam?

B. Ah, I flunked.

Ah here could only be interpreted as indicating a feeling of strong pleasure on the speaker's part that he flunked. Likewise, (46):

(46) A. I feel so insecure about my future, Max.

B_1. Oh, you'll do all right, Sam.

B_2. Ah, you'll do all right, Sam.

Again, ah seems odd in the context of (46); while oh is quite appropriate, and seems to indicate an attempt at casualness.[2]

In summary, one can make certain generalizations about the ways

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in which oh and ah are used. Oh has two main types of usage, which I have chosen to call oh_1 and oh_2. Oh_2, which will be discussed in the next chapter, seems to be used to indicate that the speaker is making a decision or choice. Oh_1 is used when the speaker has just become aware of something; this can be a piece of information, a sudden strong emotion, or that he should perform some speech act. In addition, oh can be used to indicate what seems to be simply a casual attitude; this is perhaps a usage more closely related to oh_2 than oh_1.

Ah, like oh_1, is used when the speaker has just found out, remembered, or thought of something, become aware of something he should do, or become aware of a strong feeling. However, ah seems to always indicate either pleasure on the speaker's part, or a feeling that the thing which he has just found out or thought of is in some way significant or important. It cannot ever be used to indicate casualness, or to indicate, like oh_2, that the speaker is making a decision.

These facts about oh_1, oh_2, and ah are summarized in the chart on the following page.

I would now like to turn to another interjection which commonly occurs sentence-initially: say. Say is in some ways quite similar to oh and to ah, and in other ways rather different. Let us begin by considering the case of the person who, on arriving at his friend's house, finds him painting it. He says:

(47) Say, you're painting your house!

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FIGURE 1

	(indicates that one has) just become aware of information	just become aware of a strong emotion	just become aware of something one should do
(can) indicate pleasure/ significance	oh$_1$ ah	oh$_1$ ah	oh$_1$ ah
need not indicate pleasure/ significance	oh$_1$	oh$_1$	oh$_1$

indicates "casualness" — oh (oh$_2$?)

indicates a decision process — oh$_2$

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As in the cases of oh and ah, he can only say this if he has just at that moment realized that the friend is painting his house; he cannot say (47) after, for example, several minutes. Say in (47) also seems to indicate a certain amount of interest. Similarly, take (48):

(48) Say, Bill's leaving!

The speaker can only say this when he has just found out that Bill is leaving;[2] and moreover, as in (47), say indicates interest.

In a context such as that of (49):

(49) A. Bill's got a job at last!

B. Say!

say again indicates that the speaker has only just learned the news, and that he finds it interesting. One should also note that say in these examples can only be said with a certain kind of intonation; I will not attempt to describe it, but will mention only that it would be very strange to give it the kind of intonation that would require one to write a period instead of an exclamation mark after it in (49). Oh and ah would be fine with such intonation, however. Say thus appears here to be more of an exclamation (whatever that means) than oh and ah. This is not true of say in all of its usages, however, as we shall see later.

In (47), (48), and (49), say indicates that the speaker has just found out from some external source some information which he finds interesting. It can also be used when the speaker has just realized something interesting by himself, as in (50):

(50) Sam and Flossie are going to Martinique for their vacation . . . Say, that's the place my aunt went two years ago, that she didn't like because it rained the whole time!

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Here, the speaker has suddenly realized that the place where Sam and Flossie are going on their vacation is the same place that his aunt went to; and since her vacation was ruined because it rained, Sam and Flossie's may be also. Say is being used again here with something which is a significant or interesting fact.

Oh and ah could also be used in this context, and would mean more or less the same thing as say; however, they seem slightly different in connotation, in a way which is difficult to pinpoint. In the following example, however, the differences between them seem more clearly distinguishable:

(51) A. I wish my family would just give me money for my birthday. You can get what you like then.

B_1. Oh.

B_2. Ah.

B_3. Say!

Say here gives the impression that the speaker is surprised to hear the addressee say this--that it is an unexpected (although obviously right) chain of reasoning--and moreover, that he finds it very interesting. Oh gives the impression that the speaker finds the chain of reasoning unexpected, but does not necessarily imply that he finds it interesting. Ah, as discussed in connection with sentence (23), tends to imply less of a feeling of unexpectedness and more of a feeling of appreciation and interest.

One might note that say by itself seems odd as a response to the remark in A--the following response, for example, would be a more acceptable one:

B_4. Say, that's right!

I do not know why it is that say by itself seems appropriate in (49),

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but somewhat inappropriate in (51). It seems likewise to be always inappropriate by itself in responses to questions; e.g.,

(52) A. Who discovered Newfoundland, Peter?

B_1. Say! . . . Well, I think it was . . .

B_2. Say, that's a question I didn't expect! . . . Well, I think it was . . .

Say is rather odd in B_1, but fine in B_2.

Although I think it is fairly clear from the examples given above that say does not indicate particular pleasure, as does ah, this can be further illustrated by looking at the behavior of say in (53):

(53) A. How was the movie?

B_1. Ah, it was awful!

B_2. Say, it was awful!

The B_1 response implies that the speaker is pleased to recall the movie--that he loves awful movies. The B_2 response does not necessarily imply this at all; thus, I think we can conclude that say does not usually indicate pleasure (although it may do so in certain circumstances). (The particular way in which say is being used in (53), incidentally, will be discussed later).

Say does, however, appear to be similar to ah in that it indicates particular interest on the speaker's part--like ah, it indicates that he finds the newly learned information significant in some way.

One interesting difference between say on the one hand and oh and ah on the other is that while oh and ah can be used to indicate no more than that the speaker has just remembered something, it does not appear to be possible to use say in this way. For example:

(54) A. Who was it that was going to cook Saturday?

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B_1. Let's see . . . oh, it was Polly!

B_2. Let's see . . . ah, it was Polly!

B_3. Let's see . . . say, it was Polly!

In the B_1 and B_2 responses, oh and ah can be indicating simply that the speaker has just managed to remember that it was Polly, and, at least in the case of ah, that he is pleased to have remembered it. Say cannot be interpreted in this way, however. One could only use say if one remembered that it was Polly and then realized that it was interesting for some other reason that it was Polly (e.g., "Let's see . . . say, it was Polly! Why, she's gone away for the weekend, so she can't cook!"). The basic problem here seems to be that say always indicates interest; and whereas ah, indicating pleasure, can indicate that the speaker is pleased to have remembered the fact, say, indicating interest, cannot indicate that the speaker finds it interesting that he has remembered the fact; he can only be finding the thing he has remembered to be interesting for some other reason. Thus, while it is possible for oh and ah to indicate no more than that the speaker has remembered the fact concerned, it is not possible for say to do only this; the fact must have some other significance as well. Another example is (55):

(55) A. Do you know when the Turks captured Constantinople?

B_1. . . . Oh, 1453!

B_2. . . . Ah, 1453!

B_3. . . . Say, 1453!

In the B_1 and B_2 responses the speaker could be indicating only that he has managed to remember the date and is pleased that he has done so, but he cannot be doing this in the B_3 response. In fact, the B_3 response by itself is rather odd; the following would be better:

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B_4. . . . Say, 1453! Why, that's the year my family came into the title!

Thus, in this example also, say can only be used when the speaker has realized that there is something in particular which is interesting about the year, other than simply that he has remembered it (and other than that it was the year that the Turks captured Constantinople).

There is, however, a special context, in which say does indicate that the speaker finds it interesting that he has remembered something: specifically, suppose the speaker suffers from amnesia. He says:

(56) What is my name? . . . Say, it's Harry!

Here, the speaker is indicating enthusiasm over the fact that he has managed to remember his name; he is indicating that it is really significant that he has remembered it. But this can only be the case in this special context; say cannot normally have this type of meaning, as ah and oh can.

Another, rather odd, fact about say as compared to oh and ah is that while oh and ah can precede a statement which echoes the thing which the speaker has just learned, say does not seem to be able to do this as easily; e.g.,

(57) A. Sam's gotten married, did you know?

B_1. Oh, he's gotten married!

B_2. Ah, he's gotten married!

B_3. Say, he's gotten married!

The B_3 response seems much stranger than the B_1 and B_2 responses. I do not know why this should be the case.

So far, then, we have seen that say indicates that the speaker has realized, found out, or remembered, something which he finds interesting for some reason.

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As in the case of oh and ah, it also seems to be possible to use say to indicate a sudden strong feeling. However, there are constraints on the ways it can be used, which will be illustrated shortly. Some typical examples of this sort of use are (58)-(61):

(58) A. How did you like the movie?

B_1. Say, it was terrific!

B_2. Say, it was awful!

B_3. Say, it was so-so.

Just as with oh and ah, say in B_1 and B_2 seems to reflect the speaker's becoming aware again of the strong feelings he had about the movie. Say in these sentences seems to act as an extra way of expressing the speaker's feelings--it in some sense intensifies the statement about his feelings which he then makes. Thus, say indicates that the speaker liked the movie strongly in B_1, and that he disliked it strongly in B_2. Say in B_3 seems quite out of place; this is clearly because no strong emotion is being expressed in it.

Other examples of say being used to reflect a strong feeling of the speaker's are the following:

(59) A. Is Susie a good ping-pong player?

B_1. Say, she sure is!

or B_2. Say, you'd better believe it!

(but odd: B_3. Say, she's O.K., but nothing to write home about.)

(60) A. What do you think of the scandal?

B_1. Say, isn't it fascinating?

B_2. Say, I'm just glued to the papers!

(61) I've been watching you from the other side of the room, and say, I just love the way you walk!

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Say in this sort of usage is typically said on quite a low, even tone.

There are, however, a number of other cases in which it would be appropriate to use oh or ah but not appropriate to use say. For example, one can use oh and ah in such contexts as these:

(62) Ah, the open road!

(63) Oh, damn the President!

But it seems quite odd to say (64) and (65):

(64) Say, the open road!

(65) Say, damn the President!

In (65), for example, one has the feeling that the sentence is to be taken as a literal imperative. However, it would be quite appropriate to say (66), which means exactly what (64) should mean, and (67), which means what (65) might typically mean, were it acceptable:

(66) Say, how great travelling is!

(67) Say, I just hate the President!

Thus, it is the construction of sentences (64) and (65) which seems to be causing the problem, and not their semantics. As another example, and this is a case similar to that of (63) and (65), we noted earlier that one can say sentences like

(68) Oh, read your damn book if you want to!

Oh reflects a strong feeling of anger here. One cannot, however, say:

(69) Say, read your damn book if you want to!

We have seen that ah cannot occur in this context because it must reflect pleasure or significance. However, this is not the case with say; as we have seen, say seems to be able to reflect any

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emotion (an example involving anger is (67), or (70):

(70) A. Are you angry at Jane?

B. Say, I'm just furious at her!)

Still another example in which say contrasts with oh in this sort of usage is (71):

(71) A. Bill's gotten a job at last.

B_1. Oh, I know that.

B_2. Say, I know that.

Oh here, as discussed above, can indicate surprise that the addressee did not know that the speaker knew this. Say cannot mean this, however. The only possible interpretation it can have is that it indicates that the speaker has just realized that this is a fact that he knows, and that the speaker is mildly surprised, and finds it interesting or significant, that he knows this fact. This is the kind of usage described in (47)-(56). In the B_2 response, then, say cannot indicate surprise at the addressee; however, it can in the following B_3 response:

B_3. Say, I know that; I'm surprised you didn't realize I knew it.

Here, say does indicate surprise at the addressee; it is acting as an intensifier of the statement "I'm surprised you didn't realize I knew it".

One might suppose, then, that say can only be used in this "intensifying" sense when it is followed by a specific statement of the speaker's feelings. This certainly seems to be the problem in the B_2 response of (71), since "I know that" certainly is not a statement of the speaker's feelings, if in fact he is surprised at

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the addressee. Similarly, the phrase "the open road" in (64) does not by itself give any hint of the speaker's feelings, and it is probably for this reason that say is odd with it. Even when the sentence following say states the speaker's feelings, but in a not entirely explicit way, however, say cannot always be used; certainly, the sentences in (65) and (69) reflect anger on the speaker's part, although he does not specifically say that he feels angry, and yet they are not acceptable. Might we want to say that the sentence following say must contain a very explicit statement of feeling, then? But this cannot be the case; for example, the B_2 response of (60), and (72) and (73) below, are perfectly acceptable, but it is not clear that they could be described as explicit statements of feeling (in fact, it is not clear how one would define an "explicit statement of feeling").

(72) Say, what a cute baby!

(73) Say, how ugly that collage is!

Thus, it is evident that the sentence following say must at least make it clear (whether explicitly or by implication) what the speaker is feeling, for say in this usage to be appropriate; it is not clear, however, why say is not acceptable in sentences such as (65) and (69).

In some contexts, say seems to be being simultaneously used both in this "intensifying" sense and in the sense in which say indicates that the speaker has found out something interesting; e.g., in (74):

(74) Say, what a beautiful view!

Say here could indicate that the speaker has just become aware of

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something impressive he was not aware of before (the view), or it could simply be an indication of the strength of the speaker's feelings, or both. The two usages are clearly closely related, since in the "intensifying" usage, the speaker has in some sense been struck by a strong feeling, become aware of a strong feeling, just as in the usage described earlier he has become aware of some fact or state.

Say can also be used, like oh and ah, and in fact is very commonly used, to indicate that the speaker has just decided to perform a particular speech act--to tell or ask someone something, or to request or order something of someone, etc. For example:

(75) Say, could you fetch me that notebook?

(76) Say, open the window, Chuck, will you?

(77) O.K., so I'll come to your house at 8:00 . . . Say, do tell me what you think of the new chairman.

(78) (walking up to a friend) Say, I hear you're going to California for a vacation--is that right?

One typically uses say in this way when one wants to introduce a new subject rather abruptly; for example, one might want to change the subject in a conversation, as in (77), start a conversation, as in (78), or abruptly make a request or order, as in (75) and (76). In fact, when an utterance follows naturally from the context--when the speaker is not introducing a new subject--say cannot have this meaning, that is, it cannot indicate that the speaker has just decided to perform the speech act. For example, in (71):

((71) A. Bill's gotten a job at last!

B_2. Say, I know that!)

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say cannot be interpreted as meaning that the speaker has decided to inform A, is deliberately informing A, that he "knows that"; it can only mean that he has just realized that he "knows that" and finds it rather surprising and interesting. Similarly, in (79)

(79) A. There sure aren't very many people at our party.

B. Say, more people will probably come, I guess.

say cannot be interpreted as meaning that the speaker has decided to inform the addressee that more people will probably come, he guesses (and moreover, no other interpretation is possible). In these cases, the responses follow naturally from the original comments or questions; no new subject is being introduced; and this seems to be the reason why say cannot have the "decided-to-perform-speech-act" interpretation.

Another type of example illustrating these points is (80):

(80) Say, Mrs. Black, are you planning on killing your husband?

This question seems odd in that it seems far too off-hand and casual. I believe the reason for this is that the question in (80) is somehow asked too abruptly; the use of say implies that--in fact, say can only be used when--the speaker has suddenly introduced the subject, suddenly asked Mrs. Black this without leading up to it. It is interesting also to look at sentences such as (81) and (82):

(81) Say, I pronounce you man and wife

(82) Say, I christen this ship the Explanatory Adequacy

While (80) could certainly occur in a context in which the speaker had a very casual attitude about the killing of husbands and did not hesitate to introduce the subject suddenly, (81) and (82), I believe, could never occur. I believe that this is because these speech acts

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could never represent the introduction of a new subject; they would always be exactly what one would expect to be said and done in the contexts in which they occurred. Thus, these examples support the view that say cannot occur with an utterance which follows naturally from the context and does not represent new material; it can only be used when a new subject is being introduced.

We observed earlier, of course, that oh and ah can also be used to preface a speech act, indicating that the speaker has only just thought of performing it. It is interesting to compare oh and ah with say. The main difference seems to be that say can be used when the subject is introduced in a manner which is in some sense deliberate and pre-meditated, while oh and ah cannot be; they can only be used when the speaker performs the speech act spontaneously. For example, imagine a scene at a bus station. Someone is sitting on a bench thirty feet away from the window behind which an official stands. This person suddenly gets up, walks thirty feet to the window, and says to the official

(83) Oh, when is the next bus to Indianapolis?

(84) Ah, when is the next bus to Indianapolis?

(85) Say, when is the next bus to Indianapolis?

(85), I believe, is perfectly appropriate, but (83) and (84) are distinctly odd. My feeling is that (83) and (84) are odd because the use of oh or ah indicates that the speaker has just at that very moment thought of asking the question; in this case, that the speaker has only thought of asking the question just as he arrived at the window. The length of time it would take for him to walk from the bench to the window is too long for the use of oh or ah to

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be appropriate if he had thought of asking the question while still sitting on the bench. This is not the case for say, however; with say, it is possible for the speaker to have thought of asking the question while on the bench, walked the distance, and asked the question, prefacing it with say. Thus, with speech acts with say, there is not so much of a time limit on when the speaker can have thought of performing the speech act; and we can conclude that speech acts with say are, or at least can be, in some sense deliberate and premeditated. Oh and ah, on the contrary, indicate that the speech act is being performed spontaneously.

Another example which illustrates the difference between oh and ah on the one hand and say on the other is the following. Imagine that our speaker sees someone whom he thinks might be the well-known anthropologist Sandra Baxter. He stands about wondering about this and trying to get up the courage to speak to her for five minutes or so. He then finally goes up to her and says:

(86) Oh, are you Sandra Baxter?

(87) Ah, are you Sandra Baxter?

(88) Say, are you Sandra Baxter?

(88) is, I believe, perfectly appropriate in this context; (86) and (87), on the other hand, are quite inappropriate. However, imagine the following context: the speaker and Sandra Baxter (whom the speaker does not realize to be Sandra Baxter) are having a casual conversation. She says something which makes him realize that it is possible that she might be Sandra Baxter. He then immediately asks her whether that is who she is; in doing this, he can say any of (86), (87) or (88), perfectly appropriately. (86)

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and (87) are acceptable here because the speaker has just at that moment learned that the addressee might be Sandra Baxter and decided to ask the question. This condition is not satisfied in the context described earlier, in which some five minutes have passed during which the speaker wondered whether the addressee was Sandra Baxter and thought about asking the question. Thus, in the second context, the question is uttered rather spontaneously and oh, ah, and say are thus all appropriate; but in the first context, the question is asked deliberately--non-spontaneously--and thus only say is appropriate.[4]

Another example illustrating that there is a difference between say and oh is the following. Note that one can say sentences such as (89):

(89) Oh, say, could you bring me that jar of pickles?

Thus, both oh and say can occur in the same sentence. Oh seems to indicate here, as we might expect, that the speaker has only just at that moment thought of asking the addressee this. What then is the role of say in (89)? Let's compare (89) with (90):

(90) Oh, could you bring me that jar of pickles?

Although it is not easy to pinpoint the difference in meaning between (89) and (90), my feeling is that (89) gives more the impression "I really want you to do this", "it's important for me that you do this" than does (90). I think there is a close relationship between this fact and the fact that say can be used with speech acts which are deliberate rather than spontaneous; if say indicates that the speaker really wants to perform the speech act or feels that it is important that he perform it, this would tend to mean that it is

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this interjection rather than oh which is used with speech acts which are performed very deliberately. (Of course, ah also indicates significance; and yet it cannot be used, like say, with very deliberate speech acts. I do not know quite why this should be the case.)

We might note that in at least one of the two other main ways which we have looked at in which say can be used, that discussed on pp. 37-43, in which say indicates that the speaker has just become aware of some fact or piece of information, say always indicates that the speaker finds the information learned interesting or significant. The use of say discussed here also indicates that the speaker finds the subject he is introducing an interesting or significant one; thus, this aspect of the meaning of say carries through both of these somewhat different types of usages of the interjection.

In spite of the fact that say in the usage discussed here tends to indicate deliberateness, it has casual overtones--it is not particularly polite. For example, it would be considerably more polite, in the context in which one goes up to someone wondering whether they are a well-known anthropologist, to say (91) than to say (88):

(91) Excuse me, are you Sandra Baxter?

(88) Say, are you Sandra Baxter?

And say is inappropriate in any situation in which one is trying to be very polite--e.g., it is fine to say casually to a friend

(92) Say, have some of this cake, why don't you. I know you love cake

but rather odd to say to someone

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(93) Say, have some of this cake, please, won't you?

since "please, won't you" is an exceptionally polite form. Similarly, while a student might say

(94) Say, have you read my paper yet?

to a fellow student with whom he was on equal terms, he would hardly say this to a much older professor whom he respected and was somewhat afraid of. Say is too casual for this. It seems that one would use say with a person whom one was treating as an equal (or inferior), but not with a person whom one was treating as a superior (whether in order to be conventionally polite, or because the other person actually was superior in some sense, as in the case of the professor and the student in sentence (94)). Oh and ah do not seem to have the same restriction; for example, the sentences

(95) Oh, have you read my paper yet?

(96) Ah, have you read my paper yet?

could, I believe, be said to a person one considered a superior, given that one had only just thought of saying them; they do not have the same connotations of casualness as say.

At this point, let us summarize the uses of say which we have so far looked at. First, say can be used to indicate that the speaker has just become aware of some fact or piece of information which he finds interesting. It seems to always indicate interest; it does not seem to be possible to use it when the speaker feels no particular emotion about the fact which he has just become aware of. Comparing say with oh and ah, it should be noted that oh can be used in the latter case. Ah, like say, cannot. Ah differs from say, however, in that it can indicate not only interest or significance, like say,

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but also pleasure. Say cannot normally be used, like oh or ah, simply to indicate that the speaker is pleased or thinks it is interesting that he remembered something; and it cannot be used, like oh or ah, to preface a statement which is an echo of the thing the speaker has learned. Moreover, while oh and ah can perfectly acceptably occur by themselves when the speaker is indicating that he has just become aware of some piece of information, it is less acceptable for say to do this.

Secondly, say can be used to indicate that the speaker is expressing a strong feeling. It can only do this, however, when it is followed by a statement of the speaker's feelings. It then serves to intensify, in some sense, the expression of those feelings. It does not indicate any one particular feeling, as does ah (which always indicates pleasure, or perhaps interest), but rather can express any feeling, like oh. However, neither oh nor ah is restricted in the same way as say; oh and ah can express an emotion by themselves, either standing alone or with an unrelated statement following them; they do not have to be followed by a specific statement of the speaker's feelings.

Thirdly, say can indicate that the speaker has recently (but not necessarily just at that moment) decided to perform a particular speech act. This speech act must introduce a new subject, and it is possible for it to be being performed in quite a deliberate and premeditated manner. In this respect say differs from oh and ah, in that they can only indicate that the speaker has just at that very moment thought of performing the speech act; that it has been performed spontaneously. Moreover, say indicates that the speaker

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views the addressee as an equal. Oh and ah do not necessarily indicate this.

As in the cases of oh and ah, these three types of uses are related, I believe, in that in all of them the speaker has become aware of something new; in the first use, he has become aware of some new information; in the second, he has newly become aware of, or been reminded of, a strong feeling, and in the third, he has recently thought of a new subject which he should introduce. Thus, the element of something new being introduced into the speaker's consciousness is present in all three uses. Moreover, the element of interest or significance links the first and the third uses. Just as, in the first use, say indicates that the piece of information the speaker has become aware of is one which he finds interesting, similarly, in the third use, say indicates that the subject he is introducing is one which is interesting and significant to him. It is for this reason, I believe, that say in the third use indicates deliberateness; one would only make a particular point of introducing a certain subject--plan beforehand to introduce it--if one felt it was an important or interesting subject.

This element of interest or significance does not appear to be present in any clear way in the second use described; in this use, say can simply express any emotion.

In some contexts, it is not easy, or perhaps relevant, to distinguish whether a particular use of say is one use or another. For example, imagine that someone has just at that moment found out that Bill may be leaving. He says to someone else:

(97) Say, is Bill leaving?

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The speaker could be using say here because he has just found out that Bill is leaving and is surprised and interested; or he could be using it because, having learned this and being interested, he has decided to ask his friend about it, and is using say to introduce the subject. In some sense, he is using say in both ways at once. Similarly, in (98):

(98) Say, Bill's leaving, how great!

the speaker could be using say because he has just found out Bill is leaving, or he could be using say as an indication of his strong feeling of pleasure; probably he is doing both. And in (99), if he says to someone:

(99) Say, isn't it great that Bill is leaving?

he is using say both to introduce a new subject, and as an indication of his feeling of pleasure.

Given what we have said about the ways in which say can be used, we can predict why say cannot be used, as can oh, in a context like the following:

(100) A. There sure aren't very many people at our party.

B_1. Say, more people will probably come, I guess

We can predict that say is inappropriate because the speaker has become aware of no new information; he cannot be deliberately introducing a new subject, since B's remark follows naturally from the context; and he cannot be using say to express a strong emotion, since no strong emotion is expressed in the proposition. We would predict, however, that the B_2 response would be quite appropriate:

B_2. Say, more people will probably come, because I just realized that that concert at Fetlock Auditorium isn't going to be

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over for another half an hour, and I know that a lot of people we invited are at it.

In this response, say would be indicating that the speaker has just thought of something significant and interesting; this is, of course, an appropriate way to use say.

This example also goes to show that say cannot, as can oh, be used to indicate nothing more than a casual attitude (although, as mentioned above, under some circumstances one of the things say indicates is a certain amount of casualness).

The following chart is designed to encapsulate the meanings of oh_1, ah, and say, and the differences between them. Where a dash occurs, it means "does not apply" (for example, the question of whether an interjection has an "intensifier" sense only applies when the interjection is being used to express a strong emotion, and not when it is being used to indicate that the speaker has just become aware of a piece of information, or that the speaker has just become aware of something he should do.) Where a gap occurs, it means that the interjection which should occur there cannot occur with the two characteristics described (e.g., there is a gap where ah and oh_1 should be under "just become aware of a strong emotion" and "intensifier sense only"; this indicates that ah and oh_1 cannot have these two characteristics in conjunction.)

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FIGURE 2

	(indicates that one has) just become aware of information	just become aware of a strong emotion	just become aware of something one should do
always indicates pleasure or significance	ah	ah	ah
always indicates interest	say		say
can indicate any emotion (or none)	oh_1	oh_1 say	oh_1
can indicate pleasure/ interest at having remembered something	oh_1 ah	- - -	- - -
can be used before echoes	oh_1 ah	- - -	- - -
stands by itself easily	oh_1 ah	oh_1 ah	- - - 5
"intensifier" sense only	- - -	say	- - -
can indicate deliberateness	- - -	- - -	say
implies addressee is an equal or inferior	- - -	- - -	say
has "casualness" sense	oh (oh_2?)		
indicates a decision process	oh_2		

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This description does not exhaust the meanings of say. There are still other ways of using say which are quite different from those so far described. In the uses of say which we have discussed, say always occurs either by itself or sentence-initially. When one looks at occurrences of say inside a sentence, a different set of meanings emerge. For example, take (101) and (102).

(101) I have to buy a wedding present for Julie and Dave. I am thinking of getting, say, a cheeseboard.

(102) O.K., imagine you're on Mars. You're standing next to a canal, say.

Say in (101) means something like "for example". Say in (102) means something like "let's imagine". In both sentences, instead of say once could have "let's say". In (101) and (102), there is no element present of having just found out something; no strong emotion is being expressed; and the speaker is not indicating by say that he is deliberately introducing a new subject. And looking back at the usages of say which we have been discussing, in those cases, say never means anything like "for example" or "let's imagine"; and it is never paraphraseable as "let's say". Thus, the say's in (101) and (102)--which are typical of say when it occurs sentence-internally--seem quite different from say when it occurs by itself or sentence-initially. I will therefore, for convenience, refer to sentence-initial say, which we have been discussing here, as say_1, and to sentence-internal say as say_2. The semantics of say_2 will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. This difference parallels the difference between oh_1 and oh_2, mentioned earlier; oh_1, like say_1, occurs primarily sentence-initially; oh_2, like say_2,

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occurs primarily sentence-internally. $\underline{\text{Oh}}_1$ is somewhat similar in meaning to $\underline{\text{say}}_1$, as we have seen, although there are differences; and $\underline{\text{oh}}_2$ is somewhat similar in meaning to $\underline{\text{say}}_2$ (for example, say in (101) (although not in (102)) could be replaced by oh, with very little difference in meaning).

Up until this point, then, I have examined the behavior of the interjections oh, ah, and say, and made tentative generalizations to describe their behavior. I think it is clear from this examination that they are semantically far more complex and interesting than has been supposed. Moreover, it is quite evident that a true semantic characterization of them must include not only a logical representation, but also must bring into account the total social situation, including the attitudes and emotions of the speaker, rules of conversation, and rules of politeness. I will not make any attempt here to formalize what these characterizations would be like, since I consider myself quite unable to do this. It is to be hoped that some future researcher will be able to determine what the form of such characterizations would be.

I would now like to turn to another, related topic: specifically, I will examine one respect in which these interjections we have been looking at seem to bear an interesting relationship to things which have been considered purely syntactic phenomena, in particular, Ross's constraints on movement rules (Ross, 1967).

We have noticed of $\underline{\text{oh}}_1$, $\underline{\text{say}}_1$ and ah that when they are used to indicate that the speaker has just found out or thought of something, they will often be followed by a statement of the thing he has just found out or thought of; e.g., in these sentences:

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(103) Oh, you're leaving!

(104) Ah, you're leaving!

(105) Say, you're leaving!

the thing which the speaker has just found out about is the statement which follows--"you're leaving". Of course, such a statement may not necessarily follow the interjection. Clearly, whatever is the primary thing being asserted in such a statement--the main piece of information the speaker wishes to convey--will likewise be the thing which the speaker has just found out about and is expressing pleasure at, interest in, etc. For example, in (106):

(106) (Oh)
(Ah) , Clara is surprised that the fish died!
(Say)

it is presupposed that the fish died. The thing the speaker is asserting is that Clara is surprised at this. Likewise, the thing the speaker has just found out and is exclaiming about in his use of the interjection can only be that Clara is surprised at this; it cannot be that the fish died. Obviously, this is because it is presupposed that the fish died. But take also a sentence such as (107).

(107) (Oh)
(Ah) , Clara is leaving, because it says so here!
(Say)

It is not presupposed here that "it says so here"; this is asserted. However, the primary thing being asserted is clearly that Clara is leaving; the because-clause merely gives the reason for why the speaker knows this. Oh, ah, and say here express the speaker's pleasure at, etc. the fact that Clara is leaving. They do not express the speaker's pleasure at, etc. the "fact" that "Clara is leaving, because it says so here". The meaning of ah, for example,

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could be paraphrased "I have just come to know that Clara is leaving, because it says so here, and I am glad that (or, I think it is significant that) Clara is leaving". Ah could not mean "I am glad that Clara is leaving, because it says so here" or, for that matter, "I am glad that it says so here". Thus, in a sense, interjections such as these pick out in their meanings the primary thing being asserted--the primary thing the speaker is trying to convey--in the following statement, assuming that it is in fact a statement of what the speaker has just come to know. This is interesting in that it serves as an aid in picking out what the primary assertion in a particular kind of sentence can be. This is particularly interesting with regard to Ross's constraints on movement rules. Ross claims that certain kinds of syntactic constructions form "islands", and that elements cannot be moved into them or out of them by rules; moreover, it also appears that islands have unusual characteristics even when movement is not involved (e.g., negative polarity items cannot occur inside islands when the element which would otherwise trigger them is outside of the island). Looking at the possible meanings of an interjection when it initiates a sentence containing an island is rather interesting. Let us start by looking at (108), which does not contain an island:

(108) Ah, it's reported by Newsweek that the world record in high jumping has been broken.

Ah here could indicate either of two things. The first is that the speaker has found out, and finds it significant or interesting, that the world record in high jumping has been broken. Newsweek merely is the source of the knowledge. The second is that the

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speaker has found out, and finds it significant or interesting, or is glad, that Newsweek reports this information; he may already know the information, for example, but have doubted that Newsweek would print it. Clearly, these two different interpretations of the meaning of the interjection correspond to two different interpretations of what the primary thing being asserted in the sentence is. The stress and intonation of the sentence would also differ depending on which of these things the speaker was primarily asserting.

Now compare (109), with a sentential subject, which is an island:

(109) Ah, that the world record in high jumping has been broken is reported by Newsweek.

Ah here can only indicate that the speaker has just found out that, and finds it significant that, Newsweek reports the information. It cannot mean that he has found out that, and finds it significant that, the world record in high jumping has been broken. This would tend to indicate that in fact the material in the sentential subject in (109) cannot be the primary assertion in this sentence; that the primary assertion must be that this information is reported by Newsweek. When one looks further at sentential subjects, one realizes that it does in fact seem to be true of them that the proposition they contain cannot be the primary assertion in a sentence. For example, take (110)-(113):

(110) It is quite likely that the world record in high jumping has been broken.

(111) That the world record in high jumping has been broken is quite likely.

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(112) It is maintained by several people that the world record in high jumping has been broken.

(113) That the world record in high jumping has been broken is maintained by several people.

If one wished to inform the addressee for the first time that it was possible that the world record in high jumping had been broken--in the case of the second pair of sentences, at the same time informing him of the reason why one says this ("several people maintain it")--one could only, I believe, use (110) and (112). On the other hand, if both speaker and addressee were aware that the world record might have been broken, and if the speaker wished to let the addressee know how likely it was that this had happened, he could use any of (110)-(113). I believe that (111) and (113) could only be used in this context; that is, that they imply that speaker and addressee are both aware that it is possible that the world record in high jumping has been broken. Thus, the main assertion in these sentences of necessity has to do with what degree of likelihood there is that this has happened,--the sentential subject cannot be the primary assertion.

Let us also look at what happens with coordinate structures. For example, take (114):

(114) Say, the sun's shining and there's not much wind

Note that it would not be possible here for the speaker to mean: "I have just realized that, and it's interesting that, the sun's shining, and also I'm telling you (I've known this for some time) there's not much wind". Rather, he must have just realized both conjuncts and find both interesting. Similarly, in (115)

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(115) Say, the car engine's going and I can see Ashish approaching

the speaker could not be meaning by this "I have just realized that, and it's significant that, the car engine's going, and also I'm telling you (and this is not new or significant information) that I can see Ashish approaching". And he certainly could not be meaning "I've just realized that, and it's significant that, I can see Ashish approaching, and also I'm telling you (and this is not new or significant information) that the car engine's going." The former interpretation would be more plausible if there were a heavy pause after "going"; but even then I feel that the attitude conveyed by say must also carry over to the second conjunct, that it cannot be restricted to the first. This would indicate that in sentences with coordinate structures such as these, both conjuncts are asserted to an equal degree; that neither can be the primary assertion in the sentence. This in fact seems intuitively correct.

It has been noted by Ross (1967) that one type of exception to the Coordinate Structure Constraint is that an element which occurs in each conjunct can be moved out of all of the conjuncts. For example, one can say:

(116) That's the book that Harry bought and Jane liked.

It is interesting to note that while in (117)

(117) Ah, it's reported in Newsweek that Thompson is susceptible to bribery and it says in Time that Stolenski had nothing to do with it

the ah cannot mean only "I have just found out that, and it is significant that, Thompson is susceptible to bribery", in (118)

(118) Ah, Newsweek reports that Thompson is susceptible to bribery, and Time does so too

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the ah can mean this. Here, "Thompson is susceptible to bribery" occurs in both conjuncts. It is interesting, then, that just as an element which occurs in only one conjunct cannot be moved, but an element which occurs in each conjunct can be moved, similarly, an interjection cannot "refer to" an element which occurs in only one conjunct, but can "refer to" an element which occurs in each conjunct. (By saying an interjection "refers to" an element, I mean that it is that element which the speaker has just found out about and (frequently) has some emotional attitude towards, as indicated by the interjection.) One might moreover suppose that it would be possible for a proposition occurring in each conjunct to be the primary assertion in a sentence--the main thing the speaker is wishing to convey--and that this would not be possible for a proposition occurring in only one conjunct; comparing (117) and (118), I think this is clearly the case.

Another type of exception to the Coordinate Structure Constraint, also discussed in Ross (1967), has to do with sentences such as the following, in which the two acts described are somehow closely connected:

(119) John went to the store and bought 550 dollars' worth of stuff yesterday

One can move "550 dollars' worth of stuff" out of this sentence, e.g.,

(120) That's the 550 dollars' worth of stuff that John went to the store and bought yesterday

Similarly, take (121) (and I should add that this type of sentence, with interjections, has also been discussed in Morgan (1972):

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(121) Oh, John went to the store and bought 550 dollars' worth of stuff yesterday

In (121), it is possible that the speaker already knows that John went to the store, and is not, say, surprised, at that in itself, but that he has just found out, and is surprised at, the fact that he bought 550 dollars' worth of stuff. Thus, just as an element can be moved from the second conjunct in (119), oh can refer to the second conjunct only. And we might note also that in a sentence such as (119) or (121), it is also the second conjunct which is the most important one--which is the main piece of information the speaker is telling the addressee. Thus, again, the meaning of the interjection reflects what the primary assertion in the sentence can be, and both seem to be tied up with the concept of islands in an interesting way. An interjection cannot refer to, and the primary assertion in a sentence cannot be, a proposition embedded inside an island. The only exceptions are those cases which are in general exceptions to island constraints.

Let's examine now complex noun phrases, another type of island. We will look first at complex noun phrases of the Det+N+S type. In these cases, when the determiner is the or a possessive noun--as in "the report that Bill hit Sam"--there is a presupposition involved; in this example, it is presupposed that a report exists that Bill hit Sam. It then clearly could not be being asserted in a sentence containing this phrase that Bill hit Sam; and an interjection clearly could not indicate that the speaker had just found this out (and was surprised, etc., at it). For example, in a sentence such as (122):

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(122) Oh, the mayor believes the report that there's corruption in the police force

the interjection cannot indicate that the speaker has just found out that there is corruption in the police force and is surprised at it; and moreover he cannot be asserting at all that there is or may be corruption in the police force. It is not so clear, however, that these facts hold with a sentence such as (123), where the determiner is a and there is no presupposition involved:

(123) Oh, the mayor believes a report that there's corruption in the police force

Here, it seems more possible to get the interpretations above, although they still do not seem entirely felicitous. It is interesting to note that in general Det+N+S constructions with indefinite articles seem less island-like than those with definite articles or possessive nouns;[6] for example, it seems slightly more acceptable to say "It's Sam that the mayor believes a report that Bill hit" than to say "It's Sam that the mayor believes the report that Bill hit". Thus, again, there seems to be a correspondence between islandness, and what an interjection can refer to or what can be a primary assertion; the less island-like the construction, the easier it is for an interjection to be able to refer to it or for it to be the main assertion in a sentence.

Let's also look at relative clauses; for example, take (124):

(124) Ah, the man who says that Thompson may be susceptible to bribery has won the tennis tournament

Here, ah cannot mean that the speaker has just found out, and finds it significant, that Thompson may be susceptible to bribery; and

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moreover, this cannot be the main thing the speaker is asserting. However, of course the complex noun phrase here is headed by "the man", and thus it is presupposed that there is a man who says that Thompson may be susceptible to bribery; thus, obviously the speaker could not have just found out this fact and be asserting it.

In (125), the is replaced by a:

(125) Ah, a man who says that Thompson may be susceptible to bribery has won the tennis tournament

Is it possible here for ah to be indicating that the speaker has just found out, and finds it significant, that Thompson is susceptible to bribery? I think that it is more possible than in (124)--which we might expect, since there is no presupposition involved here--but that it is still rather difficult to get this interpretation. Similarly, I believe it is more possible in (125) than in (124) to get the interpretation that the primary thing the speaker is asserting is that Thompson is susceptible to bribery; but that this is nevertheless a rather unacceptable interpretation. (However, one might note that one could interpret (125) as meaning that the speaker is primarily asserting that there exists a man who says that Thompson may be susceptible to bribery; and one could interpret ah as indicating that the speaker has just found out, and finds it significant, that there exists a man who says this.)

When the relative clause occurs at the end of the sentence, as in (126):

(126) Ah, a man has won the tennis tournament who says that Thompson is susceptible to bribery!

it seems much easier than in (125) to get the interpretation that

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the speaker is primarily asserting that Thompson is susceptible to bribery, and that the ah means that he has just found this out and finds it significant. We might note, however, that Morgan (1972) has pointed out that extraposed relative clauses are less island-like than nonextraposed ones in a number of situations; one such situation, for example, concerns the behavior of sentence fragments as responses to questions.

While the data I have given here provides some interesting facts about interjections, I believe that these facts follow from the facts about what can be the primary assertion in a sentence. Some other evidence concerning the question of what can be the primary assertion in a sentence is provided by Morgan (1972), although he does not describe it in those terms. He points out that while the (a) sentences of the following set are appropriate as answers to the question "Why was Angela arrested?", the (b) sentences are not:

(127a) (=Morgan's (50a)) It was reported in the Times that she bought some guns

(127b) That she bought some guns was reported in the Times

(128a) A man moved in next door today who thinks she bought some guns

(128b) A man who thinks she bought some guns moved in next door today

(129a) The Times says she bought some guns

(129b) The Times says she bought some guns and it's going to rain

I suggest that the reason why the (b) sentences are odd as answers

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to the question "Why was Angela arrested?" is that only a sentence in which the proposition "(that) she bought some guns" was the main assertion could be an appropriate answer; and in each of the (b) sentences, this proposition is in a construction such that it is not permissible for it to be the main assertion in the sentence. Thus, it would appear that if a proposition is inside an island it will tend to be impermissible for it to be the main assertion; but the less strongly island-like the construction is, the more permissible it will be.

Returning to the subject of interjections, whether or not the facts about interjections do actually follow from the facts about what can be the primary assertion in a sentence, it is nevertheless clear that oh, ah, and say are in their meanings interrelated with such syntactic phenomena as Ross's constraints in an interesting way. Thus, the traditional assumption that interjections do not relate syntactically with any other element in the sentence is shown to be false. The falseness of this assumption will be further illustrated in Chapters 4 and 5.

In conclusion, then, the material in this chapter has shown that the interjections oh, ah, and say are semantically far more complex and interesting than has been assumed, and that any adequate characterization of them must bring into account a number of aspects of the social situation; and that, moreover, in at least some situations, they are interrelated syntactically with the rest of the sentence to which they are attached.

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Footnotes

1. However, it is interesting to note that although one can say (a)

(a) I wonder who the hell will come

and it means something similar to "who the hell will come?", (b), with oh (as well as (c) with ah) seems rather odd, to me at least. It is quite unclear to me why this should be the case.

(b) Oh, I wonder who the hell will come

(c) Ah, I wonder who the hell will come

2. One might note, however, that although ah cannot indicate casualness in these contexts, it can sometimes indicate a general feeling of comfortableness with a situation; this is because it can be used to indicate simply a strong feeling of pleasure. For example, suppose one is feeling very comfortable and contented in the company of one's friend Susie. One might lean back in one's chair and say "Ah, Susie!". This would indicate a general feeling of pleasure and of being at ease. This was pointed out to me by John Lawler.

3. Except in circumstances where he is deliberately telling someone else the news ("Say, Bill's leaving, did you know?"). In this situation, he may have known the information for any length of time. This way of using say will be discussed shortly.

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4. One might note also that because of these facts, it is generally more appropriate, or at least more polite, to open a conversation with say than with oh. (This was pointed out to me by John Lawler.) For example, it is fine to walk up to a friend on the street and say:

(a) Say, I hear you're going to California for a vacation--is that right?

but rather less appropriate, or at least less polite, to say (b):

(b) Oh, I hear you're going to California for a vacation--is that right?

I believe this is because say implies that the speaker is deliberately opening the conversation, and thus that he wants to open the conversation; oh, on the other hand, seems too abrupt; it implies that the speaker has only just at that very moment thought of speaking to the addressee--and thus, perhaps, that if he had not just now thought of a particular thing that he wanted to say, he might not have bothered to speak to the addressee at all.

It would, however, be fine to say (c):

(c) Oh, Jack, I hear you're going to California for a vacation--is that right?

I think oh is more appropriate here because it indicates that the speaker has just seen the addressee, just become aware of the addressee's presence; this is the type of usage exemplified earlier in example (40).

(d), with ah, seems more appropriate than (b) in the context given:

(d) Ah, I hear you're going to California for a vacation--is that right?

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My feeling here is that ah indicates that the speaker has just seen the addressee. Why ah by itself can indicate this with no difficulty, while oh seems to have to be accompanied by the addressee's name to indicate it, I have no idea.

5. Under some circumstances, one could describe oh, ah, or say as standing alone when they indicate that the speaker has just become aware of something he should do; for example, one could say "Say! Open the window, could you, Sam", where say is from the point of view of intonation a separate sentence from "open, etc.". I am ignoring this possibility here.

6. This was pointed out to me by George Lakoff.

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CHAPTER 3

A Study of the Semantics of the Sentence-Internal Interjections $\underline{Oh}_1$, $\underline{Ah}$, and $\underline{Say}_2$

This chapter will be concerned with the semantic characteristics of certain interjections which typically occur inside sentences: $\underline{oh}_2$, $\underline{say}_2$, and $\underline{uh}$. These words clearly do not normally express emotion, although it has been traditionally said that interjections express emotion; however, words such as these, which could also be described as hesitation markers, could only be classified as interjections under the traditional system. These words are hesitation markers in that when the speaker says them, he is hesitating, often, although not necessarily, in order to think of what to say next. It has always been considered that all there is to say about hesitation markers is that they indicate hesitation; it has been assumed that they have no semantics or syntax, and that they are a part of performance, not competence. I will illustrate in this chapter that these assumptions are quite false, and that these sentence-internal interjections, like sentence-initial interjections, are in fact semantically quite complicated and interesting.

I will begin by examining the differences in meaning between $\underline{oh}_2$ and $\underline{uh}$. Let us look at the following sentences.

(1) Leonard went to, oh, Paris, on his business trip.

(2) Leonard went to, uh, Paris, on his business trip.

From (1), I think, we would always infer that Paris was not the only place Leonard went to on his business trip; that it was one out

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of several places he went to. From (2), however, we would not normally infer that he went to any other places besides Paris. This tells us immediately, then, that oh and uh are not merely noises made while the speaker hesitates; that they do convey semantic information, and that oh and uh convey different information.

Now, let us look at (2) in a little more detail. Under what circumstances exactly would one be likely to use (2)? One obvious situation would be that one has temporarily forgotten the place that Leonard went to, and is hesitating while trying to remember it. Another possible situation would be that one has reason to believe that the addressee will have a negative reaction to the news that it is Paris Leonard went to, and one is hesitating because one is reluctant to reveal this fact, which one knows will upset the addressee. A particularly clear example of this latter type of reading which uh can have can be found in the following sentences: imagine a policeman telling a woman the following:

(3) Madam, your son has, uh, just been arrested for possession of a stolen car.

(4) Madam, your son has, oh, just been arrested for possession of a stolen car.

In (3), the policeman is hesitating because of the bad news he has to tell; in (4), this cannot be the situation. (4) implies that this is only one of several things which has happened to the addressee's son (and, moreover, that the policeman has a very casual attitude concerning the son's arrest. The casual overtones associated with oh here will be discussed later).

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I think it is clear, then, that (1) cannot ever have the reluctance-to-speak reading of (2). As for the trying-to-remember reading, I do not have an extremely strong feeling that (1) could not have it, but I feel that oh would not normally be used in such a context; rather, uh would be used. It seems to me that normally, in saying oh, the speaker is consciously selecting one out of several possibilities he might mention.[1]

One important point that should be brought up has to do with the possible intonation patterns in (1) and (2). It seems to me that there are two main patterns which are possible in (1); in one (which we may call (a)) oh is said on a high tone, Paris on quite a low tone; in the other (which we may call (b)), oh is said on about the same tone as the preceding went to, Paris is said with the first syllable on a low tone, the second on a rising tone. In both cases, the oh indicates the same meaning, namely that the speaker is choosing one out of several possible places he might mention. In the case of (2), I think the most natural intonation pattern (let's call it (c)) would be one in which uh is said on the same tone as the preceding went to, and Paris is said with a rather high tone on the first syllable, and a falling tone on the second. (1) I find rather odd, although perhaps not impossible, with this intonation; with (c), it would, in any case, retain the meaning it has with intonations (a) and (b). (2) strikes me as odd with either intonation (a) or intonation (b). However, there is a further intonation pattern (2) can have; in this uh is on the same tone as went to, and Paris on a uniformly low tone (rather similar to (a), but with a different tone on the interjection). With this intonation,

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interestingly, I think (2) means the same thing as (1), namely that the speaker is selecting one of several possibilities. It seems, then, that the meanings conveyed by the interjections and the meanings conveyed by the different intonation patterns are interrelated in a rather complex way; certain intonation patterns are appropriate with oh, and certain other ones with uh, and the patterns appropriate with oh are not appropriate with uh, and vice-versa; but there is at least one intonation pattern which, combined with uh, gives it the meaning normally conveyed by oh.

Although the meanings conveyed by intonation patterns and their interrelationships with other phenomena are clearly very interesting and important, I will not attempt to go any further into the data concerning intonation here.

Now let us look at some more cases where oh and uh can be compared. For example, take:

(5) Bill is going to visit, uh, Jane.

(6) Bill is going to visit, oh, Jane.

(7) Bill might visit, uh, Jane.

(8) Bill might visit, oh, Jane.

(5) and (6) could be either descriptions of a future event, like (1) and (2), or they could be orders. Let's think of them first as descriptions of an event. In this case, (5) would be typically said when the speaker has forgotten the person Bill is going to visit and hesitates to try to remember, or, when he is reluctant to tell the addressee who the person is (in other words, the same kinds of context as (2)). One would say (6), on the other hand, when one is choosing one person to mention out of several people Bill is

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going to visit (just as in (1)). Now let's look at (5) and (6) when they are orders. In this case, the uh in (5) can have the same readings as when (5) is the description of an event, and in addition can have a third interpretation: it can indicate that the speaker is at that moment stopping to decide who to have Bill visit. When (6) is an order, the oh either indicates that the speaker is selecting one out of several people to mention whom he has previously decided he wants Bill to visit, or, it can indicate that he is at that moment stopping to decide who to have Bill visit--that is, it can indicate the same thing as uh in its third interpretation. (Note that in both cases, oh indicates that the speaker is choosing one of several possibilities.) It is interesting that uh and oh can mean almost exactly the same thing when (5) and (6) are orders; they are even in this case not synonymous, however, because oh has overtones of casualness that uh does not (a fact which will be discussed in more detail shortly).

(7) represents another type of case where uh can have the same three interpretations that it can in (5) when (5) is an order; that is, in addition to the usual two readings, uh can indicate that the speaker is stopping to decide who Bill might visit. Oh in (8) can likewise have the same interpretations as oh in (6) when (6) is an order. And, similarly, in those readings of uh and oh which indicate stopping at that moment for the first time to decide, oh seems more casual than uh.

(7) and (8), of course, are not descriptions of some definite event which has happened or is going to happen. Neither are (5) and (6) in their order readings. (1) and (2) are, however, and

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(5) and (6), in their non-order readings, are also. Clearly in any description of an event or state which the speaker sees as factual and definite (even if it hasn't happened yet), the speaker cannot decide in mid-sentence what has happened or will happen in that event. Thus, uh and oh cannot have the reading where the speaker decides what happens in the event in (1) and (2), and (5) and (6) in their non-order readings. However, it is plausible for the speaker to make such decisions in (7) and (8), and (5) and (6) in their order readings, since he is only talking about something which might happen or which he wants to happen.

Both oh and uh can be used to indicate that the speaker is stopping to decide on the most appropriate description of something. For example:

(9) Q. What's Polly's weight like these days?

A_1. She's, oh, rather plump.

A_2. She's, uh, rather plump.

(10) Q. What colour are your kitchen walls?

A_1. They're, oh, a kind of chartreuse colour.

A_2. They're, uh, a kind of chartreuse colour.

The uh in these sentences can have the trying-to-remember and the reluctance-to-speak readings, and can also mean the speaker is trying to think of the most appropriate description. The oh would indicate that the speaker is trying to think of the most appropriate description; thus, oh and uh are very similar in meaning in these sentences. We might note again, however, that oh seems to indicate rather a casual attitude, while uh does not; more specifically, one has the feeling in both A_1's that the speaker is not making too much

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of an effort to give an accurate description; that he is being fairly vague and inaccurate; while in the A_2's the speaker may be really trying to give an accuarte description. I think (11) gives perhaps a clearer example of this:

(11) Q. What are you writing your paper on?

A_1. Oh, this and that.

A_2. Uh, this and that.

In A_1, the speaker seems to be giving what is the most convenient description for him; one feels that the speaker cannot be bothered to give any clearer an answer. A_2 strikes me as rather an odd response; with uh, we expect the speaker to try to give an accurate answer, but "this and that" is obviously not an accurate answer. (One possible reading for A_2, though, one might note, is that the speaker does not want to tell the addressee what he is writing on, and first hesitates with uh, then deliberately gives an answer which tells nothing.)

This distinction between oh and uh, that is, that oh tends to indicate vagueness and casualness in choice of description, while uh does not, shows up particularly clearly when these words occur in front of numbers and certain other quantifiers such as every and all. Notice that in (9) and (10), in which oh and uh seemed quite similar in meaning, they occurred in front of the expressions rather and a kind of. These are quantifiers, but indicate rather vague and nonspecific amounts. Numbers and such quantifiers as every and all, on the other hand, indicate very specific amounts. Now, look at (12) and (13), imagining them as responses to the question "How many people were there at the party?"

(12) There were, oh, twelve people there.

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(13) There were, uh, twelve people there.

From (13), one would always conclude that there were exactly twelve people there; from (12), however, I think one would always conclude that there were approximately twelve people there (and that the speaker did not know the exact number, or could not be bothered to figure it out.) In a similar pair of examples to (12) and (13), look at (14) and (15), as responses to the question "Who did you talk to at the party?"

(14) I talked to, oh, everybody.

(15) I talked to, uh, everybody.

(15) would not be a true statement unless the speaker had in fact spoken to every person present; however, this is not the case with (14); (14) is true even if there are several people the speaker did not talk to; in other words, it indicates "approximately everybody". Thus, in (14), the speaker has chosen "everybody" as the most convenient description he could give (more convenient, for example, than listing all the people he talked to). The presence of the oh lets us know that this is what he has done, and that the everybody is therefore not to be taken literally.

If it is true that oh, when used in sentences such as (12) and (14), always indicates that the figure following is approximately the right one (in the speaker's opinion), rather than being the exact figure, we'd expect oh to be odd before some large and detailed figure such as, for example, 1,293. I think this is in fact the case; imagine (16) and (17) as responses to the question "How many people were there at the rally?"

(16) There were, oh, 1,293 people there.

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(17) There were, uh, 1,293 people there.

(17) is fine, and might be used, for example, when the speaker is stopping to try to remember the exact figure. (16) is odd, however; one has the feeling that the speaker is guessing the figure, but normally, when guessing, one gives a rounded-off figure (e.g., "1300" would be fine in (16)). Consequently, I think (16) is odd for the same reason as the sentence "My guess is that there were approximately 1,293 people there" is odd.

We mentioned earlier that oh normally indicates that the speaker is choosing one out of several alternatives which he might mention. I think there is a further generalization to be made about oh which would explain the behavior of oh with these quantifiers, and would also explain other aspects of the behavior of oh. This is that when oh is used, there is an assumption that of the alternatives to be chosen from, no one alternative is the correct, or the right, or the accurate alternative. For example, in (1), "Paris" is just one place which the speaker could have mentioned, and one has the feeling that he is choosing rather arbitrarily. In (3), one has the feeling that being arrested for possession of a stolen car is just one of the things that has happened to the addressee's son, and that the policeman has rather randomly decided to mention this instead of something else. In (9), the speaker has chosen "rather plump" as perhaps the most appropriate description, but one does not feel that he is giving this as the accurate description; it is just approximate. And in examples (12) through (15), the alternatives chosen, even though we might expect them to be accurate, cannot be interpreted as accurate descriptions, only approximate ones. In (16), one is forced to

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consider "1,293" as accurate rather than approximate, because it is so specific; and (16) is odd, with oh. With uh, however, one normally does assume that the speaker is trying to think of the right, the accurate, the correct alternative (in the trying-to-remember reading of uh, at least). Thus, one expects the numbers in (13), (15), and (17) to be accurate; and one expects "this and that" in (11) to be a really accurate response, which of course it is not. Similarly, in (2) one expects "Paris" to be the correct description, and there is no presupposition that there are other alternatives involved, i.e., that Leonard visited other places.

I think that these generalizations about oh perhaps also explain why oh so frequently indicates casualness. The use of oh will tend to indicate that the speaker feels there is no one correct or right choice to be made; and in contexts in which one might suppose he should feel there was one correct choice, this will tend to indicate that in fact he does not care which alternative he picks, and thus, that he has a casual attitude. Thus, for example, in (4), although one might suppose that the addressee's son being arrested is an important event, and that therefore this should be the correct thing for the policeman to report, oh gives the impression that on the contrary, the policeman is picking this particular event to mention rather randomly--that as far as he is concerned there is no one particular reason why he should tell the addressee about this event rather than some other. This, then, gives one the feeling that he has a very casual attitude about the addressee's son being arrested. I will give a few other examples in which oh indicates a casual attitude. Imagine a student being asked which date he would prefer to give an oral

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presentation to the class on; November 12th or December 8th. Compare (18) and (19) as responses:

(18) Uh, December 8th.

(19) Oh, December 8th.

(19) definitely implies that the speaker does not care particularly which date he is to give his talk on; he is choosing more or less arbitrarily. (18) does not give an impression of casualness at all; it indicates a serious choice. I suggest that one gets this impression of casualness from (19) because oh indicates that there is no one alternative which is the right one, as far as the speaker is concerned; one then assumes that this is because he doesn't care which date he is to give his presentation on.

Similarly, imagine the hero in the story of the Lady and the Tiger. He and the Princess are in love, but are forbidden to marry. He has to choose between two doors, behind one of which is a fierce tiger, behind the other, a woman whom he would have to marry. The Princess, unseen by everyone but the hero, indicates to him the left-hand door. Compare (20) and (21) as his next statement:

(20) I choose . . uh . . the left-hand door.

(21) I choose . . oh . . the left-hand door.

Clearly, I think, (21) implies that the speaker is choosing rather randomly; that he does not care particularly which door he chooses. (21), therefore, would be a very odd sentence in such a context. I think, again, that (21) would indicate that even in announcing his choice, the speaker did not really feel that the door he was choosing was necessarily the best one; therefore, one would deduce that he did not really care which door he chose.

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As another example, imagine a quiz show. The contestant will win $25,000 if he can say what the capital of Chile is. He says:

(22) The capital of Chile is, oh, Buenos Aires.

Clearly, there is only one city which is the capital of Chile, so one would expect there to be one correct response. However, nevertheless (22) gives the impression that the speaker is not really trying to think of the correct answer; he is just more or less picking "Buenos Aires" randomly out of the air. This, of course, gives the impression that he has a very casual attitude, which is odd, since one would suppose that he would take the situation very seriously and would try hard to think of the correct answer.

Let me summarize the uses of uh and oh_2, then. Uh indicates that the speaker is hesitating to try to think of the best or most accurate thing to say next. Its use tends to imply that he believes that there is one thing which it is best to say. It can, then, be used not only in sentences such as (7) ("Bill might visit, uh, Jane"), where he is stopping to think of someone who Bill might visit, and in sentences such as (9), ("She's, uh, rather plump"), where he is stopping to think of the best way of describing Polly's weight, but also in situations where he is trying to remember something, and in situations where he is hesitating because he does not really want to say what is to follow. Moreover, uh is very commonly used when the speaker has any uncertainty at all about what he is saying, or about whether he is using the right words, or even about how his addressees are reacting to him; under these conditions, uh may occur strewn all over his sentences.

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$\underline{oh}_2$, on the other hand, indicates that the speaker is choosing one out of several alternatives, and that he feels that there is no one correct alternative. Thus, in a sentence such as (1) ("Leonard went to, oh, Paris, on his business trip"), oh implies that "Paris" has been chosen out of several alternatives; uh here, on the other hand, would imply that "Paris" was the one correct thing to say. Similarly, before numbers or words such as "every" or "all", oh implies that the quantifier is only approximate, that there are other things which the speaker could have said; uh implies that the quantifier is accurate. In sentences in which there is no obvious right thing to say, as in sentences (7) and (8), or (9) and (10), uh and oh are similar in meaning, but while uh tends to imply that the speaker is making a real effort to say the best or most accurate of the alternatives, oh tends to imply that he does not care too much which alternative he chooses--that he really does not see any one as being any better than any other. For this reason, oh in general tends to indicate a casual attitude.

This data illustrates that uh and oh are far from being meaningless elements; they are used in specifically different contexts and convey specifically different meanings to the hearer. What the underlying logical forms of these words would be is quite unclear, although $\underline{oh}_2$ at least would probably have a performative like "choose" underlying it, since when one uses $\underline{oh}_2$, one is performing the act of making a choice. How this would fit in with the rest of the logical structure of the sentence of which $\underline{oh}_2$ was a part, however, I have no idea. The fact that $\underline{oh}_2$ can only be used when the speaker feels that there is no one correct or accurate thing to say, while uh can only normally

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be used when the speaker feels there is one correct or accurate thing to say, could not, I believe, in any clear way be put into the logical structure and would have to be considered as a presupposition conditioning the use of these words. Thus, the facts concerning oh_2 and uh, in addition to the facts concerning the interjections discussed in the last chapter, must join the large body of facts already assembled which indicate the great importance of presuppositions in language.

I would like now to discuss the meanings of the word say_2, and the phrase let's say. First, let's look at the following three sentences:

(23) Let's say Tom gives lectures on black dialects.

(24) Tom gives lectures, say, on black dialects.

(25) Tom gives lectures, let's say, on black dialects.

Sentence (23) has two somewhat different readings. The first, which I will be primarily concerned with at the moment, can be paraphrased more or less as "Let's imagine (or, "let's suppose") that Tom gives lectures on black dialects." The second might be paraphrased as "This isn't quite correct really, but let's say for the sake of convenience that Tom gives lectures on black dialects". This seems similar to the first reading, but is in fact semantically rather different, as will be illustrated later on.

Sentence (24) is also ambiguous, although not in the same way; it can have either the "let's imagine" reading of (23), in which case (23) and (24) are very close in meaning, differing only perhaps in focus, or it can have another reading, in which the say is more or less paraphraseable as "for example". The latter reading might occur

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in the following context: Tom teaches sociolinguistics in general. Someone says, "I'm thinking of going to a lecture of Tom's--what kinds of things does he talk about?" One might answer by (24). This reading becomes clearer if the sentence contains a modal--e.g., in the sentence "Tom might give a lecture, say, on black dialects", say is most naturally interpreted as meaning "for example". (24) cannot, I think, have the second possible reading of (23).

Sentence (25), I think, can have either of the two readings of (23), or the "for example" reading of (24); in other words, it can either be very similar in meaning to (23) (in either reading), or be very similar in meaning to (24) (although in no case is it quite identical, as I will illustrate later).

I will start by discussing in a little more detail the "let's imagine" reading as compared to the "for example" reading. When one says sentences such as (23)-(25) in the "let's imagine" reading, one is hypothesizing a situation; one is not asserting anything. In other words, in (23) it is not being asserted that Tom gives lectures on black dialects; rather, the hearer is being asked to imagine such a situation. In fact, if the statement involved is something generally accepted as true, say or let's say is quite odd with it. For example, one can imagine a situation where someone might say (26):

(26) Let's say the moon is made of green cheese.,

even though it is known for a fact that this is not true; but it would be odd to say (27):

(27) Let's say two and two are four.,

because the fact that the speaker is asking the hearer to imagine it indicates that he does not consider it to be an obvious fact that two and two are four.

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When one uses say and let's say sentence-internally in the "for example" readings, however, something is being asserted. For example, in (24), in the "for example" reading, it is being asserted that Tom gives lectures on black dialects; and it is also being asserted that black dialects are not the only thing he gives lectures on. Similarly, while (26) asserts nothing, in (28):

(28) The moon might be made, say, of green cheese

it is being asserted that the moon might be made of green cheese (and it is also being asserted that it might be made of some other material--green cheese is only one example of a material).[2]

Having indicated the main differences in meaning between the "let's imagine" and "for example" readings (which in any case are probably fairly obvious to the reader), I would like to point out that there are some environments in which say and let's say can have only the "let's imagine" reading, and not the "for example" reading, and to examine why this is the case.

Here I will use only say, and not let's say, in examples, because of the fact that while they are in general the same in meaning, there are some differences, which will be discussed shortly. To begin with, notice that while (29) is fine:

(29) Max might buy, say, a scarf.,

(30) seems quite odd in the "for example" reading:

(30) Max bought, say, a scarf.

In this sentence say can only have the "let's imagine" reading ("Let's imagine Max bought a scarf"). Similarly, say is odd in the "for example" reading in sentences with the present progressive tense, e.g., (31):

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(31) Sue is moving to a new apartment, say, because she prefers the location

although, again, this could have the "let's imagine" reading.

Of course, it's quite possible to say (32) or (33):

(32) Max bought, for example, a scarf.

(33) Sue is moving to a new apartment, for example, because she prefers the location.

Therefore, say is not simply a paraphrase for "for example"; there are places where "for example" can occur, but not say.

Oh_2 is also often paraphraseable by "for example".[3] If one replaces say by oh in (29), the resulting sentence, (34), means something very similar to (29):

(34) Max might buy, oh, a scarf.

However, oh is fine with past and present progressive tenses, e.g.,

(35) Max bought, oh, a scarf.

(36) Sue is moving to a new apartment, oh, because she prefers the location.

Compare also (37) and (38), in which the action is in the future:

(37) Max is going to buy, say, a scarf.

(38) Max is going to buy, oh, a scarf.

To my feeling, there is a difference in meaning between (37) and (38); specifically, in (38) the speaker is asserting that Max is actually going to buy a scarf (among other things),[4] while in (37) he is asserting merely that Max might buy a scarf.[5]

Another example of the same type of difference in meaning as is manifested by (37) and (38) is exemplified in (39) and (40):

(39) I promise to build you, say, a treehouse.

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(40) I promise to build you, oh, a treehouse.

In (39), the speaker is promising to build the addressee something, and saying it might be a treehouse--a treehouse is an example of what he might build; in (40), he is promising to build the addressee several things, and one of them will be a treehouse.[6] It seems almost as if there is a notion of possibility built into say; a treehouse is an example of something the speaker might build, a scarf is an example of something Max might buy--whereas with oh, this is not the case; in (38), a scarf is an example of something Max will buy, in (40) a treehouse is an example of something the speaker will build.

Notice that if the past or present progressive tense is used as the main tense in a sentence, as in (30) and (31), it normally describes some definite and factual situation or event. Although I do not know exactly what the correct generalization is, the crucial difference between situations in which say can be used and situations where it cannot seems to have to do with the notion of something definite and factual versus something hypothetical and non-factual. Thus, for example, (30) should describe some actual event, and say is odd; the same holds for (31); and (37) can only be used when the speaker is not in fact certain of what Max will buy. In (41), however, where the verb is negated and no actual event is described, say is quite appropriate (as contrasted with (30)):

(41) Max didn't buy, say, a scarf.

Here, the speaker is giving "a scarf" as an example of something Max did not buy.

Another type of example of a situation in which say is inappropriate, and in which the same vague generalization made above seems to

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hold, is sentences with overt performative verbs. For example, compare (42)-(44) and (45)-(47):

(42) I choose, oh, the third door to the left.

(43) I promise, oh, to build you a treehouse.

(44) I order you, oh, to do a double somersault.

(45) I choose, say, the third door to the left.

(46) I promise, say, to build you a treehouse.

(47) I order you, say, to do a double somersault.

(42)-(44) are fine; (45)-(47), however, can have only the "let's imagine" reading.[7] For example, in (42), the speaker is making a real choice; in (45), however, somehow, he cannot be making a real choice. There seems to be a clash between the definite action which is involved in a performative verb, and the condition that say can only be used, in the "for example" reading, in a situation which is hypothetical and does not describe a definite action.

As we would expect from the oddness of (45), with the overt performative "I choose", say cannot be used in the "for example" reading in any situation in which the speaker is making a definite choice (regardless of whether there is any verb indicating this present). For example, (48):

(48) Q. Would you like vanilla or chocolate ice cream?

A_1. Oh . . . chocolate.

A_2. *Say . . . chocolate.

Similarly, say is odd in any order, with or without an overt performative, e.g., (49):

(49) Q. I've finished that job, boss--what do you want me to do now?

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A_1. Oh . . . carry all these crates into the other warehouse.

A_2. *Say . . . carry all these crates into the other warehouse.[8]

Say in the "for example" reading, then, seems to be only useable when one is talking about a hypothetical situation. It is typically found with modals such as might, could, would, and in if-clauses, all of which specify a hypothetical situation, and in any sort of counterfactual or non-factual situation; the following are a few typical examples of its use, in addition to those which have been given above:

(50) If Mary liked, say, Fiats, buying her a car would be no problem, since Bill is selling his Fiat dirt cheap.

(51) I wish we had, say, some cookies, I feel like eating something sweet.

(52) I wanted to get, say, a Cougar, but my dad went and bought me a Fiat.

In discussing oh it was noted that as a subcase of the general use of oh (that is, indicating that the speaker is choosing one out of several possibilities, none of which is the one right one), oh indicates in some cases, in particular before quantifiers, that the speaker is picking out either the most appropriate or the most convenient description of something. For example, one can say (53):

(53) Tom gives lectures on, oh, anything which comes into his head.

Note that although one can say (24), ((24): Tom gives lectures, say, on black dialects.), it is odd to say (54) (in the "for example" reading):

(54) ?*Tom gives lectures on, say, anything which comes into his head.

And although one can say (55):

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(55) Q. Who are you going to talk to?

A. I'll talk to, oh, everybody.

it is odd to say (56):

(56) Q. Who are you going to talk to?

A. *I'll talk to, say, everybody.

Similarly, compare (57)-(60):

(57) I'm going to write my paper on, oh, some aspects of modals.

(58) I'm going to write my paper on, say, some aspects of modals.[9]

(59) I'm going to write my paper on, oh, this and that.

(60) *I'm going to write my paper on, say, this and that.[10]

I think we can conclude from this that say, unlike oh, can only be used when the speaker is about to give a specific example of something; it cannot be used when the speaker is about to give some description which is the most convenient or most appropriate one. For example, everybody in (56) and this and that in (60) are general descriptions rather than examples of who the speaker will talk to or what he will write his paper on; (56) and (60) are therefore starred. (They are, however, of course, grammatical in the "let's imagine" reading).

I would like to bring up one other area of difference between say and oh; and a rather subtle one. Take the following example. Suppose there is a discussion (with Sue present) about what people should get Sue for her birthday. Sue says to Bill: "You could get me, for example, an art book." Someone else could then report this statement as:

(61) Sue said Bill could get her, say, an art book.

Thus, it is possible to simply rephrase the "for example" made by Sue into say.

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Now compare (62):

(62) Sue said Bill could get her, oh, an art book.

I find this sentence somewhat odd in this context. I think this is because I feel that oh reflects a choice being at that moment made by the speaker; and no choice is being made by the speaker in this context. However, this condition does not seem to have to be present with say--say can reflect a choice earlier made by another person, who, along with his words or thoughts, is mentioned in the sentence. However, if Sue had said the following sentence: "You could get me an art book, or a record, or a pair of roller skates", then I feel (62) would be a perfectly appropriate way of reporting her statement--the speaker would be choosing one out of the three things referred to by Sue to mention. (61) would also be quite appropriate if Sue had said the above sentence; say here would reflect a choice being made by the speaker, rather than a choice earlier made by Sue, however.

As another example, suppose a painter, talking about the picture he is going to paint, says "I might put, for example, a tree in this corner". One might report this as

(63) Martin says he might put, say, a tree in the top left-hand corner.

This is fine, but I think (64) is not as appropriate:

(64) Martin says he might put, oh, a tree in the top left-hand corner.

However, if Martin had said "I might put a tree, or a skipping rope, or maybe a bag of sugar in this corner", (64) would be perfectly appropriate.

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Thus, I think oh always reflects a choice being made by the speaker, while say need not; say can reflect a choice made by another person whose words, or thoughts, etc., are being reported.

I would now like to go on to discuss the difference in meaning between say and let's say in the "for example" reading. First, we should note that they are very similar; for example, just as one can say (63), one can say (65):

(65) Martin says he might put, let's say, a tree in the top left-hand corner.

(63) and (65) mean almost exactly the same thing. However, there is a subtle difference between the ways say and let's say are used. For example, take the following sentences:

(66) Fred's thinking of running, say, for drain commissioner.

(67) Fred's thinking of running, let's say, for drain commissioner.

Now, anyone could say (66), even if he knew Fred only slightly and had nothing whatsoever to do with Fred's running for office. However, such a person could not, I think, say (67); to my mind, (67) would be said by Fred's campaign chairman, by a member of his family, or by a close friend--that is, by someone who is either personally involved in the decision, or has a great personal interest in it. Similarly, I think anyone could say (68):

(68) Sue's going to write her dissertation, say, on syntactic dialects.

But suppose the speaker knows nothing about syntactic dialects or any aspect of linguistics, and doesn't care particularly what Sue writes her dissertation on. He could then conceivably say (68) in response to a question as to what Sue is going to write on, but I think it

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would be quite odd for him to say (69):

(69) Sue's going to write her dissertation, let's say, on syntactic dialects.

To me, (69) implies that the speaker is closely involved with Sue and closely involved in the decision as to what she will write her dissertation on. For example, the professor she primarily works with might say (69). A casual friend, who was studying engineering, however, would not. Thus, the use of let's say in the "for example" reading seems to indicate personal involvement of the speaker in the decision being made. This comes out particularly clearly in cases where the speaker is reporting someone else's statement, in which some sort of decision was made, and the speaker disagrees with the decision. For example, it's fine to say (70):

(70) Bill says we ought to give Sue, say, a jigsaw puzzle, but I think that would be a rotten idea.

but odd to say (71):

(71) ?Bill says we ought to give Sue, let's say, a jigsaw puzzle, but I think that would be a rotten idea.

Similarly, imagine that Bill, John, and Max are roommates and have jointly invited Fred to dinner. They are thinking about what to serve him. Bill adores all vegetables of the okra family, and suggests having a vegetable of this family to John. John then goes to Max and says:

(72) Bill is wondering if Fred would like, say, okra. I guess I'd better tell him Fred hates okra.

(73) ??Bill is wondering if Fred would like, let's say, okra. I guess I'd better tell him Fred hates okra.

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(72) is fine, but (73) seems very odd to me. Likewise, suppose there is a party to which Polly is invited. The speaker knows for a fact, however, that Polly is not coming to the party. He then reports something said by Don to someone else:

(74) Don said he thought Polly might come, say, at 10:00.

(75) Don said he thought Polly might come, let's say, at 10:00.

I think that if the speaker knows Polly is not coming, it would be fine for him to say (74), but odd for him to say (75).

Thus, the speaker has to be either personally participating in the decision being made, or has to agree with the decision made by the other person, for let's say to be appropriate. This no doubt has to do with the presence of the us ('s) in let's say, as opposed to the simple say, in which there is no us.

Now, let's look at a few other differences between say and let's say. First, compare (45) and (76):

(45) I choose . . say . . the third door on the left.

(76) I choose . . let's say . . the third door on the left.

Both of these, of course, can have the "let's imagine" reading. Neither can have the "for example" reading. However, there is a third type of context, in which (76) is possible, but not (45). That is, let's say in (76) can indicate, for me, that the speaker is at that moment deciding what thing to choose. Say, as in (45), cannot be used in this way. In this context, choose in (76) is a real performative, and an act of choosing is being performed. (45), however, can under no circumstances be an act of choosing. It is quite unclear to me why let's say should have this usage, while say does not. Similarly, (77) can be a real order, while (47) cannot:

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(47) I order you . . say . . to do a double somersault.

(77) I order you . . let's say . . to do a double somersault.

As we would expect from the possibility of this usage in (76), one can give the A_2 response in (78):

(78) Q. Would you like vanilla or chocolate ice cream?

A_1. *Say . . chocolate.

A_2. Let's say . . chocolate.

However, oddly enough, one could not give the A_2 response in (79):

(79) Q. I've finished that job, boss--what do you want me to do now?

A_1. *Say . . carry all these crates into the other warehouse.

A_2. *Let's say . . carry all these crates into the other warehouse.

I do not know why this should be the case.

There is still a further type of use of let's say which say cannot have. This is the usage mentioned at the beginning of the discussion of say and let's say, as the second possible reading of sentences in which let's say is initial. Let's say can also have this reading when it is internal. For an example of it, take the following dialogue:

(80) Q. How was the movie?

A_1. *It was, say, interesting.

A_2. It was, let's say, interesting.

Say clearly cannot have the "for example" reading in A_1 because the sentence is in the past tense and describes a non-hypothetical situation. The "let's imagine" reading is also impossible, because of the context. Let's say in A_2 is fine, however. It could not be meaning "let's imagine" here, not only because of the context, but because

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in the "let's imagine" reading, a sentence is never being asserted; and A_2 does involve a real assertion. Rather, what A_2 means is something like "This isn't exactly the right description, but I'll say for the sake of convenience (or kindness, or something else), that the movie was interesting". A similar example can be found in (81):

(81) Q. How's Frances's weight these days?

A_1. *She's, say, rather plump.

A_2. She's, let's say, rather plump.

Again, A_2 means something like "This isn't quite the right description, but I'll say for the sake of kindness that she's rather plump." It does not mean "Let's imagine that she's rather plump." Thus, when let's say is used in this sense, it is meant to indicate that the description given is not very far away from the truth, but is not quite the truth. (It often indicates, in particular, that the speaker is being ironic.)

Notice that if the description given is one which would normally reflect a strong feeling on the part of the speaker (and which one would therefore usually conclude was sincere), let's say, in this reading, becomes rather implausible:

(82) Q. How was the movie?

A_1. It was, let's say, unspeakably awful.

A_2. It was, let's say, fabulous.

One would be unlikely to hear such responses because these expressions, "unspeakably awful" and "fabulous", are strong enough expressions of emotion that it is difficult to imagine another state of feeling which would be close, but not quite the same as either of these.

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Also, let's say in this usage is odd with vague, general descriptions, presumably because it is hard to think of something close to, but not quite the same as, a vague, general description; e.g.,

(83) ??I wrote my paper on, let's say, this and that.

(84) ??John used to give lectures on, let's say, any old thing.[11]

We noted that when let's say is initial, as in (23) ("Let's say Tom gives lectures on black dialects") it can have either the "let's imagine" reading, or the "I'll say for the sake of . . ." reading we have just been discussing. I might just comment that there is also another, rather obvious, reading which let's say has when it is initial, that is, that reading which means more or less "I suggest that we say this (to some third person)". However, we might note that this reading does not seem to be possible in any position other than initial; e.g., in (85)

(85) Lucrezia likes, let's say, strong-willed men

I can interpret the let's say as either "let's imagine", or, "I'll say for the sake of kindness (actually, the correct description is that she likes sadists)", but I have considerable difficulty interpreting it as "I suggest that we say this (to all those people down the street--why not spread lots of gossip about her, even though it's not true?)" Similarly, in (86)

(86) John, let's say, used to eat a lot

let's say, for me, can have the "let's imagine" or "I'll say for the sake of . . ." readings, but not the "I suggest that we tell Bill this" reading.

Thus, not only does let's say have two possible meanings when it is internal which it does not have when it is initial ("for example",

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and explicitly choosing something), but it also has one possible meaning which it can only have when it is initial, and not when it is internal.

Let me, then, summarize the uses of $\underline{\text{say}}_2$ and let's say which I have described here. $\underline{\text{Say}}_2$ occurs only sentence-internally, and has two different meanings; one may be paraphrased as "for example", the other as "let's imagine". Let's say can occur either sentence-initially or sentence-internally. In the former case, let's say can mean either "let's imagine", "I'll say for the sake of kindness (or convenience, etc.)", or "I suggest that we say this (to some third person)". Let's say sentence-internally can mean either "let's imagine", "I'll say for the sake of kindness (convenience, etc.)", "for example", or, it can indicate that the speaker is at that moment explicitly choosing something (in sentences with (overt or covert) performatives such as "choose" and "order", as in, e.g., (98)). We might notice the parallels here. Let's say initial, let's say internal, and say can all mean "let's imagine". Let's say initial and let's say internal can both mean "I'll say for the sake of . . .", but say cannot. Only let's say initial can mean "I suggest that we say this (to some third person)". Say and let's say internal can both mean "for example", but let's say initial cannot.[12] Only let's say internal can have the explicitly-choosing-at-that-moment sense, as in sentences such as (98). These facts can be summarized in the following table:

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FIGURE 3

	Sentence-internal	Sentence-initial
"for example"	say, let's say	
"let's imagine"	say, let's say	let's say
"I'll say for the sake of . . ."	let's say	let's say
"I suggest that we say this"		let's say
explicitly-choosing	let's say	

Why these meanings pattern in this way is quite unclear to me.

When say or let's say has the "let's imagine" reading, nothing in the sentence is being asserted; rather, the hearer is being asked to hypothesize a situation.

The "for example" sense of say and let's say only occurs in situations which can be vaguely described as hypothetical; in particular, it cannot occur in a description of an act or state which the speaker views as definite, certain, or factual. It can only be used when the speaker is about to give a specific example of something; it cannot be used, as can oh, to indicate that the speaker is about to give the most appropriate or convenient description of something. Say can also be used to reflect a choice made by someone else (unlike oh, which must represent a choice made by the speaker).

Let's say and say are slightly different in meaning in the "for example" reading; specifically, let's say implies that the speaker is personally involved in the decision being made, while say does not. This is no doubt related to the presence of the first person pronoun us in let's say. Also, we might note that the behavior of say here is consistent with the fact that say can be used to reflect a choice made by another person, without the speaker's being involved.

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When let's say has the "I'll say for the sake of . . ." reading, it indicates that the description given is not too far away from the true situation, but is not quite the true situation. This reading is odd with vague descriptions and with descriptions which reflect a strong emotion.

We can conclude, then, that say and let's say are far more complicated semantically than has been supposed; and that various kinds of presuppositional and contextual factors have to be brought into consideration before any adequate description of these words can be made. Examples of these are that say or let's say in the "for example" reading can only be used in hypothetical or non-definite situations, and that let's say can only be used when there is speaker involvement in the decision indicated by let's say. It would be impossible to describe or explain these facts in a grammatical model which did not include in it considerations of context and presuppositions. As to the question of what deeper structures might underlie sentences containing these words, I cannot give any suggestions; I have, unfortunately, no idea what they would be like.

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Footnotes

1. At this point, I think it would be useful to compare $\underline{oh}_2$ and $\underline{oh}_1$ as they occur sentence-internally. Thus, compare (a) with (1) in the text:

(a) Leonard went to--oh, Paris!--on his business trip.

(a) would usually be said in a context where the speaker suddenly forgets the name of the place, then manages to remember it. It is, then, semantically quite different from (1). Notice that the oh here is preceded by a pause, and Paris is followed by a pause; whereas in (1) there are no pauses. Moreover, in (1) the speaker normally makes the oh rather long and drawn out; in (a), the oh is always short and quick. Also, the possible intonation patterns are quite different. (1) and (a), then, are phonologically as well as semantically different. The oh in (a) is, I believe, semantically the same as $\underline{oh}_1$, that oh which usually occurs sentence-initially or by itself and which indicates that the speaker has become aware of something; the oh in (a) does indicate that the speaker has just remembered something. Ah can also be used sentence-internally in this way; e.g., one could say

(b) Leonard went to--ah, Paris!--on his business trip.

(b) would be similar in meaning to (a), but the ah indicates, in addition, that the speaker is pleased to have remembered what the place was.

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2. I should note here that the "for example" uses of say and let's say are typically good when a modal such as may, might, or could is present in the sentence; their "let's imagine" readings are typically less good when such a modal is present. For example, I find (a):

(a) The moon is made, say, of green cheese

somewhat odd in the "for example" reading, and (28) somewhat odd in the "let's imagine" reading. I think that perhaps the latter is the case because such modals tend to be redundant or semantically inappropriate with the "let's imagine" reading; however, I won't go into this further here. The possible reasons for the "for example" reading being particularly appropriate with modals will be discussed shortly.

3. Although it is true that oh is often paraphraseable by "for example" (e.g., "Leonard went to, oh, Paris" is quite similar in meaning to "Leonard went to, for example, Paris"), this is not always the case--e.g., "I saw, oh, twelve people there" is not paraphraseable as "I saw, for example, twelve people there", and "I wrote on, oh, this and that" is not paraphraseable as "I wrote on, for example, this and that". Moreover, the overtones of casualness often present in oh are not, of course, present in "for example".

4. Of course, (38) could also be said, with a long-drawn-out oh, in a context in which the speaker was actually deciding on the spot what Max was going to buy--in which case, it would be the only thing that Max was going to buy. Oh in this context would of course not

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be paraphraseable by "for example" and would mean something quite different from say.

5. Moreover, note that the scarf in (38) can be referential, while the scarf in (37) cannot; for example, I find (a) bad, (b) fine:

(a) *Max is going to buy, say, a scarf. He saw it hanging in the window of Jacobsen's; it's purple with green stripes.

(b) Max is going to buy, oh, a scarf. He saw it hanging in the window of Jacobsen's; it's purple with green stripes.

6. Except, of course, in the type of context described in footnote 4, in which the speaker says oh as he stops to decide (at that moment) what (one) thing he will build. In this type of context, as I mentioned in footnote 4, oh and say are quite different.

7. It may be a little difficult to visualize how one would get the "let's imagine" reading. Imagine someone making up a story, however. He says: "I find myself in a huge long corridor with lots of doors down each side. I have to choose one. I choose, say, the third door to the left . . ."

8. It would, of course, be possible for the boss to say "Say, carry all these crates into the other warehouse, will you?" This would be say_1, however.

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9. Note that (57) and (58) differ in the same way that (37) and (38), and (39) and (40), do; that is, in (57), the speaker is asserting that he is actually going to write on some aspects of modals (either this is a convenient description, or this is one of several things that he will write on), but in (58), the speaker is clearly not certain what he will write his paper on--it might be some aspects of modals.

10. Of course, (60) would be fine if the speaker were thinking of writing on the actual words this and that; I am excluding this reading.

11. These would, however, be O.K. if there was some kind of double entendre involved (a fact pointed out to me by A. L. Becker).

12. As an example showing that let's say initial cannot have the "for example" reading, take these sentences:

(a) Lots of things happened at the party. For example, Bill and Fay danced the mazurka.

(b) Lots of things happened at the party. Let's say Bill and Fay danced the mazurka.

Let's say initial in (b) cannot have the "for example" reading; and, in fact, given this context, none of its normally possible readings are very appropriate.

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CHAPTER 4

Some Grammatical Constraints on Sentence-Internal Interjections

I will discuss in this chapter the question of what kinds of things sentence-internal interjections can "refer to"--a phrase of which the meaning will become clear shortly. I will be looking at say, oh_2, ah, oh_1, uh, and well. The meaning and usage of well is discussed in R. Lakoff (1970). Basically, well indicates that not all of the information which the hearer might need, given the situation, is present in what the speaker is saying. I will not go further into its meaning here; I refer the reader to Lakoff's work for this.

It has been generally held by linguists that interjections, including hesitation markers, do not have any syntax; that is, that they bear no grammatical relationship to the rest of the sentence of which they are a part. I would like to give a number of examples in this chapter to show that this is not the case; that interjections do relate grammatically to the rest of the sentence of which they are a part.

To begin with, we should note that there is one thing which all of these interjections which occur sentence-internally have in common; in each case their use implies that there are at least two possible alternatives as to what the speaker could say. Oh_2 seems to always indicate that the speaker is choosing one alternative to say out of several possible ones. Uh indicates that the speaker is

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thinking of what he should say; if there were not conceivable possible alternatives, uh could not be used. Say, in its "for example" use, also involves choosing one thing out of several possibilities as an example; and in its "let's imagine" use, there must likewise be other possible alternatives to the state of affairs the speaker is suggesting the hearer imagine (otherwise, the suggested state of affairs would have to be the actual one). Ah and oh_1, when used sentence-internally, usually indicate that the speaker has suddenly forgotten something, and then managed to remember it--this again implies that there must be conceivable possible alternatives to the thing the speaker has remembered.

This means that in situations where there is only one conceivable thing the speaker could say--whether for grammatical or semantic reasons--an interjection is inappropriate. I will be giving a number of examples of this type of situation in Chapter 5; what I would like to look at in this chapter is the question of what kinds of grammatical restrictions there are governing what elements in the sentence the speaker can be choosing (or remembering, etc.). Let me start with what is, I think, a very clear example:

(1) The girl who said she liked, oh, Vivaldi dried the dishes

One immediately interprets the oh here as indicating that Vivaldi is one composer whom the girl said she liked. It is conceivable that the oh could be indicating that the speaker has chosen to say "Vivaldi dried the dishes" over, for example, "Bach helped Jane move the furniture"; in fact, however, the sentence could never be interpreted in this way. Let me at this point, then, introduce the

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definition of "refer to"; one can say that oh here "refers to" "Vivaldi"; and that it does not (and cannot) "refer to" "Vivaldi dried the dishes". To say that an interjection refers to something, then, means that it is that thing which, while pausing and saying the interjection, the speaker is selecting to mention over other things, trying to think of the best description of, or trying to remember, etc.

It can easily be shown that other interjections have the same restriction here--e.g.,

(2) The girl who said she might like, say, Vivaldi might dry the dishes

(3) The girl who said she liked, uh, Vivaldi dried the dishes

(4) The girl who said she liked (--oh!--) (--ah!--) Vivaldi dried the dishes

(5) The girl who said she liked, well, Vivaldi dried the dishes

In none of (2)-(5) can the speaker be hesitating between "Vivaldi dried (might dry) the dishes" and something else; he can only be hesitating between "Vivaldi" and someone else--that is, in each case the interjection can only refer to "Vivaldi".

There is, of course, an island boundary between "Vivaldi" and "dried the dishes" in these sentences. In other sentences containing islands, we find similar restrictions on what an interjection can refer to. For example, in

(6) That Kay is thinking of opening a Treasure Mart in, say, San Francisco is surprising

say indicates that the speaker is selecting "San Francisco" over other cities as an example; it cannot indicate that he is selecting "San Francisco is surprising" over "Des Moines is regrettable".[1]

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Similarly, in (7):

(7) That Kay is thinking of opening a Treasure Mart in--ah! --San Francisco is surprising

the speaker can only be indicating that he has forgotten which city it was--he cannot be indicating that he has forgotten which city it was and that the statement is surprising.

However, it is not only the presence of an island boundary which makes the proposed referents of the interjections in (1)-(7) unacceptable; there are many other cases where an interjection cannot refer to a conceivably possible referent, although no island boundary is present. For example, take (8):

(8) Rick persuaded, oh, Wendy that she shouldn't come

The natural interpretation of this sentence is that the speaker is selecting Wendy to mention over other people, e.g., Susan and Frances. I think that it cannot be interpreted as meaning that the speaker is choosing between "Wendy that she shouldn't come" and, for example, "Fred that the party would start late". Similarly, in (9)

(9) Rick urged, well, most of the people there to do the cha-cha

I think the speaker must be choosing "most of the people there" over, e.g., "about half of the people there" as the best description; I don't think he can be choosing "most of the people there to do the cha-cha" over "about half of the people there to stop sitting about and dance or something". However, if the sentence were

(10) Rick urged, well, that most of the people there do the cha-cha

I think the <u>well could</u> quite conceivably be interpreted as indicating that the speaker has chosen to say "that most of the people there do

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the cha-cha" over, for example, "that about half of the people there stop sitting about and dance or something".

A generalization which would explain this data is that an interjection can only refer to a constituent. In (1)-(9), the unacceptable proposed referents of the interjections are in each case not constitutents. However, the proposed referent in (10) ("that most of the people there do the cha-cha") is a constituent and is therefore acceptable.

Further examples indicating that an interjection cannot refer to something which is not a constituent are (11) and (12):

(11) Princess Anne, oh, launched a ship and Prince Charles went to a reception

The only plausible reading of (11) is that in saying oh the speaker is selecting one of the things Princess Anne did; he cannot be, for example, selecting whether to say "launched a ship and Prince Charles went to a reception" or "opened an agricultural show and the Queen Mother reviewed the Twelfth Hussars". Thus, oh cannot refer to something which consists of a conjunct plus part of another conjunct. (This looks as if the coordinate structure constraint should be involved; however, no island boundaries are crossed, as they are in (1)-(7)). In any case, the unacceptable proposed referent is not a constituent.

Then, take (12):

(12) I was told that the office wanted, say, a piñata by Mrs. Horrobin

(I intend (12) to have the reading "I was told by Mrs. Horrobin that the office wanted, say, a piñata", rather than the reading in which

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it is Mrs. Horrobin who made the piñata.) Here, the speaker can only be selecting "a piñata" as an example--he cannot be selecting "a piñata by Mrs. Horrobin" over "a clown by Mr. Botts". If he were doing this, say would be referring to something which was not a constituent.[2]

In all of the examples given above, the proposed referents of the interjections which are not acceptable are not only not constituents, but contain an internal sentence boundary. It can be shown that this is not a crucial factor, however; examples can easily be put forward of non-constituents which do not contain internal sentence boundaries, but which also cannot be the referents of interjections. In the following sentences, imagine that the thing which the speaker is hesitating in order to think of--whether he is choosing it out of several other possible alternatives, trying to think of the best way to describe it, or trying to remember it--is the underlined element:

(13) The well, doctor opened, the door

(14) John might, say, like the, movie

(15) Atalanta could, oh, run as, fast as the wind

(16) You might, say, win all, the prizes, if you're lucky.

(17) Did, well, you get your book back?

(18) They saw an, oh, man with a, blue hat on

In none of these cases could the interjection be referring to the underlined element. In (13), for example, in saying well, the speaker could be thinking of the most appropriate way of describing the man ("the, well, doctor") but he could not be thinking of the most appropriate way to describe both the man and what he did to

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the door, at once. It is certainly possible that he might need to find descriptions for both of these things; but he would in that case be likely to say, for example:

(19) The, well, doctor, well, opened, the door.

I think he would never say (13) when he meant to indicate that he was uncertain in his description of both doctor and opened.

In (14), it would be plausible for the speaker to be selecting the verb like as an example of what John's feelings might be towards the movie. However, he could hardly be choosing "like the" over, for example, "tolerate a" or "enjoy some". This is simply not possible.

In the case of (16), if the sentence were "You might, say, win all, if you're lucky" ("win all" would here have the idiomatic sense which it has in some dialects of "win everything"), say would quite naturally refer to "win all"--which would be a constituent. In (16) as it stands, "win all" is not a constituent--the constituents involved are "win" and "all the prizes". It is possible to have a situation in which the speaker wishes to say the addressee might, for example, win, and that he might win, for example, all the prizes. However, this could not be conveyed by (16). It would have to be said as something like

(20) You might, for example, win, say, all the prizes, if you're lucky.

In the other sentences, similarly, the interjection cannot refer to the underlined element. All of these can be explained by the hypothesis that interjections can only refer to constituents.

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I would like now to look at several types of sentences in which the constituent structure is uncertain or disputed, and examine the behavior of interjections in such sentences, with a light to seeing whether their behavior provides evidence for one type of constituent structure as opposed to another.

First, let us examine sentences which involve the rule of Raising. Take, for example, (21):

(21) Bill believes, oh, Mary to have left yesterday

It is widely held by linguists that "Mary" has been raised here (e.g., Postal (1972)) and is a constituent of the higher sentence, not the lower one; this would mean, of course, that "Mary to have left yesterday" is not a constituent. The question is, what can the oh refer to? Can the speaker be choosing whether to say "Mary to have left yesterday" or, for example, "Susan to be arriving tomorrow"? Informants agree that it cannot; that the speaker can only be choosing "Mary" to mention, over, say, "Susan" or "Gwendolyn". John Lawler and Charlie Pyle have pointed out that the following sentences are also quite odd:

(22) Bill believes, uh, Nixon to be a good president

(23) Bill believes--ah, the earth to be flat!

One would expect the interjection to refer to the whole proposition which follows, but somehow this doesn't seem possible. Thus, the behavior of interjections indicates that the lower sentence and its subject no longer form one constituent (since otherwise an interjection would be able to refer to this constituent) and that therefore there must be a rule of Raising which has applied.

Second, let us look at the behavior of interjections with regard

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to auxiliary verbs. For example, take these sentences:

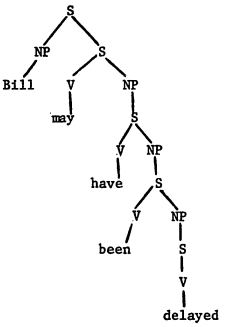
(24) Bill, oh, may have been delayed

(25) Bill may, oh, have been delayed

(26) Bill may have, oh, been delayed

According to the analysis of auxiliaries which is traditional in generative grammar (Chomsky (1957)), these phrases following oh in (24)-(26) are not constituents--"may have been" is one constituent (Aux) and "delayed" is another (VP). In the auxiliaries as main verbs analysis (Ross (1969)), however, each auxiliary is held to be a main verb, the subject "Bill" being successively raised by either sister-adjunction or Chomsky-adjunction to the S-node above the one which immediately dominates it. If one takes the view that the subject is Chomsky-adjoined to this S-node, the sentence "Bill may have been delayed" would have this surface structure (simplified):

FIGURE 4



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This would mean, of course, that "may have been delayed" is a constituent, "have been delayed" is a constituent, and "been delayed" is a constituent. Now note that in each of (24), (25), and (26), oh can refer to the whole phrase which follows--e.g., in (24), the speaker can be choosing "may have been delayed" over, for example, "probably had some other pressing engagement"; in (25), he can be choosing "have been delayed" over "be stuck in a traffic jam somewhere"; in (26), he can be choosing "been delayed" over "gotten lost". In each sentence, then, oh is referring to the whole phrase which follows. If it is really true that interjections can only refer to constituents, then this would indicate that these phrases are in fact constituents, and that the auxiliaries as main verbs analysis is more adequate than the more traditional one for describing the facts of language.

I would now like to look at some other, more complicated and more problematic, cases. The first of these has to do with verbs which take a surface subject, indirect object, and direct object, the latter being not a sentence but some physical object, or spiritual quality, etc.; for example give, lend, sell, and buy. Specifically, let's look at:

(27) Gertrude might sell, say, the Fiat to Max.

What can say refer to in this sentence? At first glance one might suppose it can only refer to "the Fiat"; however, suppose someone asks "What might Gertrude sell, and to whom?" One could answer: "She might sell, say, the Fiat to Max, or the Toyota to Bill Jenkins, or the Datsun to Suzanna . . ." Here, say seems to be clearly referring to the phrase "the Fiat to Max". The problem here

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concerns whether this phrase is a constituent. Traditional analyses have said that it is two constituents, not one. However, it has also been suggested, in particular by Georgia Green (1971) that verbs with indirect objects have rather complex underlying structures; Green suggests that verbs of the buy, sell, give, and lend class have the underlying structure "Subject CAUSE indirect object to HAVE direct object (in accordance with condition i)" (p. 135). If true, this could conceivably mean that the indirect object and direct object do in fact form one consitutent in derived structure. I do not know of other arguments for or against these elements forming one constituent; the evidence concerning interjections would indicate that they do. We cannot, of course, posit a global rule here (namely, that an interjection can refer to something which was a constituent at an earlier level of structure) because then we would not be able to explain why an interjection cannot refer to the combination of a raised subject and the sentence from which it has been raised (which are, of course, one constituent at an earlier level of structure), as in (21).

If evidence were to appear that the combination of a direct object and indirect object does not form one constituent, this would be a counterexample to the generalization that interjections refer only to constituents, and would indicate that the generalization would have to be revised; I have no suggestions as to how this might be done.

Other verbs taking indirect objects seem to show the same behavior as do verbs of the sell class; the same problems, and the same possible solutions, seem to be present in these cases.

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Another set of problematic cases has to do with constructions such as the following:

(28) She watched herself (win / winning)

(29) She wanted herself to win

Let us take (28) first. (28) is an example of a construction which only occurs with certain perception verbs, e.g., watch, see, hear, feel. What the constituent structure here is is not clear. The reflexive form of "herself" would tend to indicate that it is a clausemate of "she watched"; however, since there are cases of reflexives which do not occur in the same clauses as their antecedents (e.g., picture nouns), this cannot be regarded as condusive evidence that "herself" is a clausemate of "she watched". The fact that one can say sentences such as

(30) She watched it (rain / raining)

indicates that the noun phrase following the main verb does not originate in the higher sentence (since the dummy "it" here can only occur underlyingly as the subject of a predicate such as "rain"). It may be that this noun phrase is moved into the higher sentence by Raising; but it is not clear that this is the case.

Informants agree that it is possible to say (31):

(31) She watched, oh, herself (win / winning), and Bob (get / getting) the second prize, and Phyllis (compete / competing) in the sack race.

Oh here, then, can refer to the phrase "herself (win / winning)", since it is being contrasted with other similar phrases. The question is, is this a constituent? If not, then our generalization that an interjection can only refer to a constituent is wrong. However, this data may be construed as evidence that such a phrase as

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"herself (win / winning)" in (31) is a constituent.

Let us now look at (29). (29) can be contrasted with the sentence "She wanted to win"; these two sentences exemplify the difference between participant viewpoint and observer viewpoint, as discussed by Lakoff (1968). (29) represents observer viewpoint. Again, we have a reflexive pronoun here, which would normally indicate that the pronoun is a clausemate of "she wanted", and one would thus normally assume that "herself" and "to win" in (29) do not form one constituent, "to win" being a lower sentence. We might note that "herself" in (29) cannot originate in the higher sentence, since it is acceptable to say such things as "She wanted it to rain", where the "it" must originate in the lower sentence; one might suppose, then, that "herself" in (29) has been moved up by Raising. However, note that one can say (32) and (33) ((33) containing the verb "expect", which can occur in the same construction):

(32) She wanted, oh, herself to win, and Bob to get second prize, and Susie to get third prize.

(33) She might expect, say, herself to win, or Boris to get the booby prize, or . . .

Informants find these sentences acceptable. Thus, the interjections here are referring to the whole phrase "herself to win". This means either that such sentences in fact have a different structure than has been supposed, or that our generalization that interjections cannot refer to non-constituents is incorrect.

Compare also sentences with the verb "catch", such as (34):

(34) I caught Johnny stealing a cookie.

It is fairly clear that "Johnny" in (34) originates in the higher sentence, since it is semantically anomalous to say sentences such

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as (35):

(35) I caught it raining.

Thus, it would appear that the "Johnny" in (34) and "stealing a cookie" cannot at any level together form one constituent. However, take a sentence such as (36):

(36) I caught, oh, Johnny stealing a cookie, and Mary leaving a roller skate on the stairs, and . . .

While a few speakers (including myself) find this sentence odd, most find it perfectly acceptable. This is thus a very problematic situation, since it indicates either that a phrase such as "Johnny stealing a cookie" in (36) is, contrary to all other evidence, a constituent, or, that the interjection is in fact referring to something which is not a constituent; in this case, what the correct generalization governing what an interjection can refer to would be is quite unclear.

One other odd thing we might note concerning the construction exemplified in (34) (this construction also occurs with other verbs, such as "find") is that if the NP following the verb is reflexive, it seems quite odd to have an interjection refer to it together with the following predicate; e.g.,

(37) You might catch, say, yourself lying about your weight, but I doubt that you'd catch Bill eating between meals.

For some reason (37) seems most odd. Why this should be the case, when a non-reflexive noun phrase would be acceptable, I have no idea.

It is clear, in any case, that sentence-internal interjections do semantically refer to certain elements within the sentence, and that there are syntactic restrictions on what they can refer to (although what the correct generalization or generalizations are is

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not entirely clear). It is obviously not the case, as has been supposed, that interjections bear no grammatical relationship to the sentence of which they are a part.

Let us continue to look at what interjections can refer to, turning now to specific interjections. We might notice that there is a basic difference between say and other interjections in this matter. Say can refer to things which either precede or follow it, while other interjections can only refer to things which follow them. Take, for example, the following sentence:

(38) My neighbour might wait for me for ten minutes, (say / (*uh / (*oh / (*well / (*--ah! / (*--oh!)

Say in (38) clearly refers to the preceding "ten minutes", meaning "for example, ten minutes", or "let's imagine, ten minutes". All of the other interjections are unacceptable, however; none of them can refer to the preceding "ten minutes".

There is not normally any ambiguity as to whether say refers to something which precedes or follows it, because the intonation is different. For example, in (39):

(39) Tom might give a lecture, say, on black dialects

my intuitions are that if say refers to what follows--that is, if black dialects is an example of what Tom might give a lecture on--say will be said on the same tone as lecture; if it refers to what precedes--that is, if a lecture is an example of what Tom might give--lecture will be said on quite a high tone, say will be said on quite a low one, and there will be a slight pause after say.

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There is an interesting set of facts concerning say when it refers to something preceding, and contrastive stress. It seems that say can refer to an element which does not immediately precede, but which is contrastively stressed. For example, take (40) and (41):

(40) Bill, say, might go and get the Christmas tree.

(41) Bill might go and get the Christmas tree, say. (underlining indicates stress)

I think that (40) and (41) mean almost exactly the same thing; in both of them say means "Bill, for example, might go and get the Christmas tree".[3] (I will be talking from here on about the "for example" sense of say. The "let's imagine" sense does not behave in exactly the same way as the "for example" sense; this will be illustrated later.) We can say, then, that say refers to Bill in (41) as well as (40). Say seems to be able to refer to a contrastively stressed word no matter how far away from it that word is; e.g.,

(42) Bill might have found out that everybody was going to quit class and file a complaint against the professor, say.

I think this can mean "Bill, for example, might have found out that everybody was going to quit class and file a complaint against the professor." But there are restrictions on this phenomenon. For example, (43) and (44) mean more or less the same thing:

(43) That girl I told you about, who Phil, say, might like, is standing over there.

(44) That girl I told you about, who Phil might like, say, is standing over there.

But (45) cannot mean the same thing at all:

(45) That girl I told you about, who Phil might like, is standing over there, say.

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In (43) and (44), say means "for example, Phil"; but in (45), say cannot refer to "Phil". Similarly, in (46) and (47), say refers to "a bicycle", but in (48) it cannot:

(46) A bicycle, say, might be what Yoshiko wants, and I know Mei Ying wants a scooter.

(47) A bicycle might be what Yoshiko wants, say, and I know Mei Ying wants a scooter.

(48) A bicycle might be what Yoshiko wants, and I know Mei Ying wants a scooter, say.

Likewise, take (49)-(51):

(49) To discover that it was Fred, say, that Sue had gotten engaged to would be quite a surprise.

(50) To discover that it was Fred that Sue had gotten engaged to, say, would be quite a surprise.

(51) To discover that it was Fred that Sue had gotten engaged to would be quite a surprise, say.

In (51), say cannot refer to "Fred", while in (49) and (50) it can.

One might suppose from this data that the problem is that in the unacceptable cases the stressed item is inside an island (a relative clause in (45), a coordinate structure in (48), and a sentential subject in (51)). However, there are other cases in which the stressed element is not inside an island, but say still cannot refer to it. For example, take (52) and (53):

(52) It would be quite a surprise to discover that Sue had gotten engaged to Fred, say, because she doesn't like Germans.

(53) It would be quite a surprise to discover that Sue had gotten engaged to Fred, because she doesn't like Germans, say.

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I think say cannot refer to "Fred" in (53). And similarly, take (54)-(56):

(54) I was told Sue, say, might leave by Mrs. Black

(55) I was told Sue might leave, say, by Mrs. Black

(56) I was told Sue might leave by Mrs. Black, say

In (54) and (55), say means "I was told Sue, for example, might leave by Mrs. Black"; but (56), I think, cannot mean this.

We might tentatively conclude from this that when say refers to a contrastively stressed phrase which precedes it, that phrase must command all of the material between itself and say; that is, say can immediately follow the phrase, or can follow the simple sentence of which the phrase is a part (or, it may occur in certain positions inside the simple sentence, as I will describe later). Thus, if embedded sentences intervene between say and the phrase which are commanded by the phrase, as in (42), say can still refer to the phrase; however, if the phrase is in an embedded sentence and material in a higher or coordinate sentence intervenes between it and the interjection, as in (45), (48), (51), (53), and (56), say cannot refer to that phrase. As we shall see shortly, however, it is not a sufficient condition that the stressed phrase command all of the material between itself and say; there are further constraints beyond this on the positions of say and the stressed phrase.

This generalization seems to be only true for the "for example" reading, and not, interestingly, for the "let's imagine" reading. For example, (56) cannot mean the same thing as (54) and (55) in the "for example" reading, but take the following sentences:

(57) Imagine this situation: Bill was told Sue, say, left by Mrs. Horrobin.

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(58) Imagine this situation: Bill was told Sue left by Mrs. Horrobin, say.

I think that in both of these sentences say indicates "let's imagine it's Sue who, Bill was told by Mrs. Horrobin, left". Similarly, take (59) and (60):

(59) They discovered that Sue had gotten engaged to Fred, say, because they talked to her mother.

(60) The discovered that Sue had gotten engaged to Fred, because they talked to her mother, say.

I think (59) and (60) both mean "let's imagine it's Fred they discovered Sue had gotten engaged to, because they talked to her mother".

Perhaps, however, the explanation for these facts is that say in the "let's imagine" reading does not refer to the stressed element in the same sense as say in the "for example" reading does. In the "for example" reading, the use of say indicates that the speaker is picking out one particular thing to give as an example. However, take (59) and (60). If these sentences did not contain a say, they might be paraphrased as "It's Fred they discovered Sue had gotten engaged to, because they talked to her mother". The presence of say simply adds "let's imagine" to the front of this paraphrase; it simply makes the whole sentence hypothetical. Perhaps the following is the case, then: that when say has the "let's imagine" reading, its presence indicates that the whole sentence is being hypothesized rather than asserted. This sentence may or may not contain a stressed, emphasized element. One might hypothesize that if such an element is present, say can occur immediately after it (or before it), and that it makes no difference as to the meaning of the sentence

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whether say occurs there or at the end of the sentence, since say in this reading refers to the whole sentence in any case.

This hypothesis is not correct as it stands, however, because in certain situations, the position of say in the sentence does seem to make a difference in the meaning of the sentence. Take, for example, relative clauses, as in (61), (62), and (63):

(61) A blonde girl, who Phil, say, liked, was standing near the door.

(62) A blonde girl, who Phil liked, say, was standing near the door.

(63) A blonde girl, who Phil liked, was standing near the door, say.

Let's ignore (62) for the moment. (61) and (63) do not seem to mean quite the same thing. To begin with, (61) could occur in a context in which it is being asserted that a blonde girl was standing near the door, and hypothesized that it was Phil who liked her. In (63), it must always be the whole sentence which is being hypothesized. (61) can also occur in a context in which the whole sentence is being hypothesized; however, even then, the emphasis would have to be that one is being asked to imagine that it was Phil who liked the girl; whereas in (63), the emphasis is that one is being asked to imagine that it was the girl who Phil liked who was standing near the door. Thus, the emphases in the sentences are different. (62), I think, can have either meaning; this is probably because say can be interpreted either as following the entire noun phrase (in which case it would have the same reading as (63)), or as being a part of the relative clause (in which case it would have the same reading as (61)).

Let's also look at adverbial clauses. Take (64) and (65):

(64) Jane wanted cake because Fred, say, did.

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(65) Jane wanted cake because Fred did, say.

These sentences are again slightly different in meaning from each other. (64) could be paraphrased: "Let's imagine it's Fred of whom it was the case that because he wanted cake, Jane wanted cake". (65), I think, would more closely be paraphrased "Let's imagine that it was because it was Fred who wanted cake that Jane wanted cake". There is, I believe, a real though subtle difference, and it seems parallel to the difference in meaning between (61) and (63). Notice also that (64) seems slightly less acceptable than (65); a possible reason for this will be brought up later.

Let's look also at sentential subjects:

(66) That Sue had married--a hippie, say--was at one point believed by several people.

(67) That Sue had married a hippie was at one point believed by several people, say.

Both of these sentences seem quite acceptable, although (66) perhaps slightly less so than (67), just as (64) seemed less acceptable than (65). Their meanings seem very close, but not quite the same, in a way that it is difficult to pinpoint; I believe, however, that the difference parallels that seen in the sentences containing relative clauses and adverbial clauses--that is, when say is right next to or in the same simple sentence as the stressed element, somehow, that element is being more focussed on than it otherwise would be.

Compare also complex noun phrases of the Det+N+S type; e.g., (68) and (69):

(68) The rumor that Sue had married a hippie was at one point believed by several people, say.

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(69) *The rumor that Sue had married--a hippie, say--was at one point believed by several people.

(69) seems semantically anomalous. In (69), the only possible interpretation is that the hearer is being asked to imagine that it was that rumor (rather than any other possible one) which people believed, it cannot be interpreted as indicating that the hearer is being asked to imagine it was a hippie (rather than anyone else) that people believed the rumor that Sue had married (this paraphrase, of course, is ungrammatical). To the extent that (69) has a reading, note that it has only the second, and not the first, reading; otherwise, it would not be semantically unacceptable. The presence of the definite article "the" is a crucial factor in the anomaly of (69)--the use of "the" presupposes the existence of that particular rumor. Thus, it is anomalous in (69) to stop in the middle of describing a particular rumor of which the existence and nature are presupposed in order to invent some part of it--here, that it was a hippie who Sue married. These sentences are then further indication that when say in this reading occurs next to a stressed element, the focus is more strongly on that element than is the case when say occurs at the end of the sentence. Compare to (68) and (69) (70) and (71), with indefinite articles.

(70) A rumor that Sue had married a hippie was at one point believed by several people, say.

(71) A rumor that Sue had married--a hippie, say--was at one point believed by several people.

In (70) and (71), no presupposition is present, and both sentences are acceptable. However, (71) to me, seems a little less acceptable than (70), in much the same way that (66) seems less acceptable than (67);

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and there seems to be a slight difference in meaning between the two which is again parallel to the difference between (66) and (67), and other pairs of sentences we have looked at.

Now let's look at coordinate structures. Note that (72)

(72) Princess Anne launched a ship and Prince Charles went to a reception, say.

cannot mean "let's imagine it was Princess Anne who launched a ship and Prince Charles went to a reception". However, this is natural, since with or without a say it would be odd to have "Princess Anne" the one stressed, emphasized element in this sentence, e.g.,

(73) Princess Anne launched a ship and Prince Charles went to a reception.

although it would be quite natural to have both subjects stressed, e.g.,

(74) Princess Anne launched a ship and Prince Charles went to a reception

and then, say would be quite appropriate--

(75) Princess Anne launched a ship and Prince Charles went to a reception, say

meaning "let's imagine it was Princess Anne who launched a ship and Prince Charles who went to a reception". It is also, I think, somewhat odd to have say in this reading inserted after a noun phrase, e.g.,

(76) Princess Anne, say, launched a ship and Prince Charles went to a reception

The thing which seems odd about this sentence, I think, is that it is rather difficult to interpret both conjuncts as hypothetical, and if only the first conjunct is interpreted as hypothetical, it is odd to combine a sentence which is being hypothesized and a sentence which is

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being asserted as true with "and". I believe that it is generally the case that while the presence of say in the "let's imagine" reading in a simple sentence always renders that simple sentence hypothetical, it does not as readily render other sentences (higher or coordinate) hypothetical. This would explain why (76) is odd, and I think this is the reason, for example, why (66) seems less acceptable than (67), and (71) less acceptable than (70); it is somehow difficult to interpret these sentences as meaning that it is being hypothesized that several people at one point believed (a rumor) that Sue had married a hippie. Similarly, this would explain why (64) seems less acceptable to me than (65); it seems harder in (64) than in (65) to interpret "Jane wanted cake" as hypothetical. In (61) also, I think it is natural and perhaps preferable to interpret the sentence as indicating that only Phil's liking the girl is being hypothesized, and not the girl's standing near the door. Also, take (57) without the initial phrase "imagine this situation". My intuitive feeling is that it is somewhat more difficult in (57) than in (58) to perceive the whole sentence as hypothetical.

Say in the "let's imagine" sense then behaves in a quite different way from say in the "for example" sense. To begin with, when say in the former sense is at the end of a sentence, it seems to refer to the entire sentence, in that it renders the entire sentence hypothetical. Thus, for example, in (67), if say were not present, the sentence might be paraphrased as "It's a hippie that several people believed that Sue had married"; with say present, it would be paraphrased as "let's imagine it's a hippie that several people believed that Sue had married". Here, say simply adds the hypothetical

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element to the sentence. If say in the "let's imagine" sense is inside a sentence, however, the situation is (or rather, can be) different. To begin with, as discussed above, if say is within an embedded sentence, it renders that sentence hypothetical, but it is more difficult than it otherwise would be to interpret the hypotheticalness as extending to the entire sentence. Secondly, if say occurs next to an element or within the same simple sentence as a stressed element (but even then, only if it is in certain positions in the same simple sentence, as we shall see shortly), it tends to force one to interpret that element as the focus, so to speak, of what is being hypothesized. This shows up the most clearly in relative clauses and adverbial clauses; but it also seems to be a factor in sentential subjects and Det+N+S constructions. Moreover, it explains why (69) is anomalous; "a hippie" is the focus of what is being hypothesized in (69), and this is anomalous because of the presupposition involved; in (68), in which say is at the end of the sentence, "a hippie" is not being focussed on in the same way, and the sentence is therefore acceptable. All of these cases in which I have described differences in meaning involve the presence of say in islands. Looking at (57)-(60), which involve embedded sentences but not islands, I do not believe there is any difference in meaning between (57) and (58), and between (59) and (60); so it may be that it is only islands that are involved in this matter; but since these judgments are so subtle, I will draw no further conclusions.

Clearly, then, the normal situation is that the "let's imagine" reading of say can refer only to sentences, and not to other constituents, as the "for example" reading can. However, it does nevertheless

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seem to be the case that the presence of say can cause certain elements to be "focussed on" more than they otherwise would be. Although this is clearly not quite the same concept of reference as in the case of the "for example" reading of say, I will speak below on the "let's imagine" reading as "referring to" these elements.

I would now like to go on to examine a further facet of the conditions under which say can refer back to a stressed element. In the discussion of the "for example" sense of say, it was noted that say can either immediately follow the phrase which it refers to, or can follow the simple sentence of which that phrase is a part; and it was mentioned that it seemed that say could also occur in some positions inside that simple sentence (while still not immediately following the stressed phrase). We can partially investigate this by looking at the following sentences. With "might not lend", say is intended to have the "for example" reading. With "didn't lend", it is intended to have the "let's imagine" reading. In the case of the "let's imagine" reading, what is being investigated is the positions say may have in the sentence which do and do not allow "Frances" to be focussed on (i.e., "let's imagine it's Frances who . . ."). [2]

(77) Frances, say, (didn't / might not) lend her homework to Ed.

(78) Frances might, say, not lend her homework to Ed.

(79) Frances (didn't / might not), say, lend her homework to Ed.

(80) Frances (didn't / might not) lend, say, her homework to Ed.

(81) Frances (didn't / might not) lend her, say, homework to Ed.

(82) Frances (didn't / might not) lend her homework, say, to Ed.

(83) Frances (didn't / might not) lend her homework to, say, Ed.

(84) Frances (didn't / might not) lend her homework to Ed, say.

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According to my intuitions, the "for example" and the "let's imagine" readings behave in the same way here; (84) can be synonymous with (77), as we would expect; and furthermore, (82), for me, can mean the same thing as (77). (78) is marginal in this respect; and (79) and (80), and in particular (81) and (83), could not under any circumstances mean the same thing as (77). Some of the judgments involved here are rather subtle, and I expect they might differ from person to person; others, in particular those in (81) and (83), are, I think, quite clear, and I will be commenting on them again shortly.

I think say cannot, in either the "for example" or the "let's imagine" sense, ever occur inside an embedded sentence and refer to something in a higher sentence. For example, (and here, with "discovered" say is intended to have the "let's imagine" reading, with "might discover" the "for example" reading):

(85) Bill, say, (discovered / might discover) that Sarah wouldn't dance with Phil.

(86) Bill might, say, discover that Sarah wouldn't dance with Phil.

(87) Bill (discovered / might discover), say, that Sarah wouldn't dance with Phil.

(88) Bill (discovered / might discover) that, say, Sarah wouldn't dance with Phil.

(89) Bill (discovered / might discover) that Sarah, say, wouldn't dance with Phil.

(90) Bill (discovered / might discover) that Sarah wouldn't, say, dance with Phil.

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(91) Bill (discovered / might discover) that Sarah wouldn't dance, say, with Phil.

(92) Bill (discovered / might discover) that Sarah wouldn't dance with, say, Phil.

(93) Bill (discovered / might discover) that Sarah wouldn't dance with Phil, say.

Here, for me (93) can mean the same thing as (85), as we would expect, and (87) can, and possibly (86). None of (88)-(92) can, however.

As another example, take these sentences:

(94) Dorothea, say, likes the man who knows Jane.

(95) Dorothea likes the man who, say, knows Jane.

(96) Dorothea likes the man who knows, say, Jane.

I think in neither (95) nor (96) can say refer to "Dorothea".

Thus, it seems that if say occurs inside a sentence and refers back to a preceding stressed element, that element must not be in a higher sentence. Note also that in (88)-(92) and (95)-(96), say is not only in an embedded sentence, but in a noun phrase (the complement sentence in (88)-(92) being dominated by NP, and the relative clause in (95)-(96) being part of a noun phrase). In (81) also, say is inside a noun phrase ("her homework") and cannot refer to anything outside that noun phrase. (In (83) also, say is inside a prepositional phrase, and cannot refer to anything outside of it; one might note that prepositional phrases are considered by some to be noun phrases at a deeper level.) It seems to be the case, looking not only at the data in which say refers backwards but also in the data in which say and other interjections refer forwards, that when an interjection is inside a noun phrase such as those in (88)-(92), (95)-(96), and (81),

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it cannot refer to anything outside it; I will be illustrating this further later.[4] As for the other data we have been discussing--e.g., say's being able to refer to "Frances" in (82), being able to marginally in (78), and not being able to in (79); and say's being able to refer to "Bill" in (87), but being able to so only marginally in (86)--the judgments involved here are really quite subtle and I do not see any clear generalizations which can be made.

Let us now turn to the question of what happens when say refers to something which follows it; can it refer to a stressed element some distance away? Let's look first at situations in which the stressed element is in an embedded sentence, and say in a higher one. When say has the "for example" reading, it seems that it cannot refer to the stressed element in this situation; e.g. (and consider say as referring forwards here):

(97) Tom discovered that Frances might not dance with, say, Phil

(98) Tom discovered, say, that Frances might not dance with Phil

(99) Bill decided that Sarah's a girl that, say, Phil would like

(100) Bill decided, say, that Sarah's a girl that Phil would like

While say means "for example, Phil" in (97), it cannot, I think, mean this in (98); it can only have the "let's imagine" reading, and refer to the whole sentence. Similarly with (99) and (100); say cannot mean "for example, Phil" in (100). Thus, at least in the "for example" reading, it seems that say cannot refer forwards to a stressed element in an embedded sentence. (Note, however, that this may be viewed as following from the generalization made above that say cannot refer to a stressed phrase unless that phrase commands all of the material intervening between itself and say. If one views the complementizer "that" as being in a higher sentence and not commanded by "Phil", e. g.,

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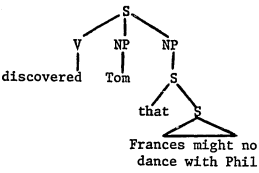
FIGURE 5



then we would expect from the generalization that say could not refer to "Phil" in (98) and (100).) The situation is more confused in the "let's imagine" reading. Take (101)-(104), for example, which are like (97)-(100), but in which there are only past tenses, in an attempt to make the "let's imagine" reading stand out more:

(101) Tom discovered that Frances had danced with, say, Phil

(102) Tom discovered, say, that Frances had danced with Phil

(103) Bill decided that Sarah was a girl that, say, Phil liked

(104) Bill decided, say, that Sarah was a girl that Phil liked

To begin with, I do not find (101) and (103) terribly acceptable, because of the fact that in them say is in the embedded sentence and it is thus difficult to interpret the entire sentence as hypothetical. However, disregarding this, (102) and (104) seem to mean more or less the same thing as (101) and (103). It is not clear whether say (in the "let's imagine" reading) in this position refers to the entire sentence, or whether it can be described as referring specifically to "Phil" (or, causing "Phil" to be "focussed on").

It seems that say (in either reading) can refer to a stressed element which follows in the same simple sentence when there is no sentence boundary intervening,[5] but, just as in (77)-(84), only under certain conditions. For example:

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(105) Bill (gave / might give) that old book, say, to Sue

(106) Bill (gave / might give) that old, say, book to Sue

(107) Bill (gave / might give) that, say, old book to Sue

(108) Bill (gave / might give), say, that old book to Sue

(109) Bill might, say, give that old book to Sue

(110) Bill, say, (gave / might give) that old book to Sue

I find that (110) can mean the same thing as (105), and I think (109) can also (although it is not as good), but the rest cannot. The two different readings of say seem to behave in the same way here. One might note that it seems particularly the case in (106) and (107)--in which say is inside the noun phrase "that old book"--that say cannot refer to Sue--or to anything other than the element immediately following it. We also should look at say when it refers forwards and is inside other kinds of noun phrases, e.g., embedded sentences; however, since it is easiest to treat all the interjections which refer forwards at the same time, I will simply include say in that more general discussion of what happens when an interjection is inside an embedded sentence, which will take place shortly.

Let us now, then, turn to the other sentence-internal interjections and see whether they can refer to stressed elements some distance away. As we have noted, the other interjections only refer forwards. Let's look first at these two sentences, which are the same as (101) and (102) except for the interjections:

(111) Tom discovered that Frances had danced with (well, / uh, / oh, / --ah!-- / --oh!--) Phil.

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(well,)
(uh,)
(oh,)
(112) Tom discovered, (--ah!--) that Frances had danced with Phil.
(--oh!--)

My feeling is that with ah and oh_1 (that is, --oh!--), and, I think, uh, (112) means the same thing, more or less, as (111). With oh_2 and well, however, my feeling is that (111) and (112) do not mean the same thing. For example, in (111) oh_2 indicates that Phil was one of the people Frances had danced with. In (112), oh_2 indicates that Frances's having danced with Phil is one of the things Tom discovered. Look also at the following sentences:

(well,)
(113) Bill gave one of his old books, (uh,) to Sue.
(oh,)
(--ah!--)
(--oh!--)

(well,)
(uh,)
(114) Bill gave, (oh,) one of his old books to Sue.
(--ah!--)
(--oh!--)

(well,)
(uh,)
(115) Bill, (oh,) gave one of his old books to Sue.
(--ah!--)
(--oh!--)

Again, the situation is not clear here. In (114), my feeling is that with ah and oh_1, (114) can mean the same thing as (113); with well and oh_2 it cannot; with uh I am not sure. In the case of (115), with ah and oh_1 (115) can mean the same thing as (113); and with the other three interjections I am not sure. Looking at (114), (115) and (112), there are some consistent things; ah and oh_1 seem to be able to refer to the stressed element in all cases; oh_2 and well are less free; and uh is in between. However, my intuitions are not extremely clear in any of these cases.

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The following, however, is a much clearer case:

(116) Bill gave one of, (well, / uh, / oh, / --ah!-- / --oh!--) his old books to Sue.

Under no circumstances, I think, can any of the interjections in (116) refer to "Sue". Here, the interjection is inside a noun phrase, and cannot refer to any element outside the noun phrase. In the following sentences, the interjection is also inside a noun phrase (except for (122); there, we might note, it is in a coordinate structure) and cannot refer to anything outside it; for example:

(117) The secretary who takes care of the homestay program, (say, / well, / uh, / oh, / --ah!-- / --oh!--) is going to go to Abilene

(118) The secretary who takes care of, (say, / well, / uh, / oh, / --ah!-- / --oh!--) the homestay program is going to go to Abilene

(119) That John wears a blue hat was surprising, (say, / well, / uh, / oh, / --ah!-- / --oh!--) to Sue.

(120) That John wears, (say, / well, / uh, / oh, / --ah!-- / --oh!--) a blue hat was surprising to Sue.

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(121) Peter is going to buy kohlrabi and he's going to do it,

(say,)
(well,)
(uh,) on Tuesday.
(oh,)
(--ah!--)
(--oh!--)

(say,)
(well,)
(122) Peter is going to, (uh) buy kohlrabi and he's going to
(oh,)
(--ah!--)
(--oh!--)

do it on Tuesday

(say,)
(well,)
(123) I was told that Sam acquired a parkeet by, (uh,) Arlene.
(oh,)
(--ah!--)
(--oh!--)

(say,)
(well,)
(124) I was told that Sam, (uh,) acquired a parakeet by Arlene.
(oh,)
(--ah!--)
(--oh!--)

With none of the interjections can (118) mean the same thing as (117); (120) the same as (119); (122) the same as (121); or (124) the same as (123). I think that we can probably conclude, then, that if an interjection is inside any noun phrase--or, inside one member of a coordinate structure--it cannot refer to anything outside that constituent.

In summary, the main points I have tried to make in this chapter are the following. First, an interjection can be described as "referring to" a certain specific element in the sentence. What this element can be is grammatically constrained. One important constraint is that it appears that the element must be a constituent. For this reason, the behavior of interjections can be used as a test of constituent structure.

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Further, whereas interjections normally can only refer to elements which follow them, the interjection say can also refer to elements which precede it. Moreover, it can refer to stressed elements some distance away. In its "for example" reading, however, it is then constrained in that the element it refers to must command all of the material between itself and say. The "let's imagine" reading does not have the same constraint, although it is constrained in other ways.

Lastly, it is the case for all of the interjections discussed here that if they are inside a noun phrase, including embedded sentences, they cannot refer to anything outside of that noun phrase.

Many things are left unclear here. For example, it is not clear under what conditions, if any, oh_2, well, and uh can refer to non-adjacent stressed phrases. Moreover, the rules governing when say, and the other interjections, can refer to stressed phrases in the same simple sentence are very unclear. This data, at any rate, shows one thing very clearly: that the behavior of interjections is very definitely governed by syntactic rules.[6]

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Footnotes

1. In this sentence, it is also the case that if the _say_ had the proposed referent, part of the referent would be a presupposition, part of it an assertion; this is clearly an impossible situation. If one replaces the factive predicate "is surprising" by a nonfactive one, such as "is considered possible by Bob", however, _say_ still cannot have the proposed referent, i.e., the speaker cannot be selecting "San Francisco is considered possible by Bob" over "Des Moines is regarded as reasonably certain by her mother".

2. I do not know whether it has been noticed that in sentences such as this, that is, with the _by_-phrase at the end of the sentence, the embedded sentence (here, "the office wanted, say, a piñata") has to be presupposed. Thus, (for me), in the sentence

(a) I wasn't told that the office wanted, say, a piñata by Mrs. Horrobin

the speaker _was_ told that the office wanted, say, a piñata; but he was told this by someone other than Mrs. Horrobin (that is, the _by_-phrase is what is being negated). However, in (b)

(b) I was told by Mrs. Horrobin that the office wanted, say, a piñata

the embedded sentence is not necessarily presupposed. Thus, in (c)

(c) I wasn't told by Mrs. Horrobin that the office wanted, say, a piñata

the speaker can be denying that he was told this. We might notice also that part of the reason why _say_ cannot refer to "a piñata by

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Mrs. Horrobin" in (12) is that if this were the case, part of the referent would be presupposed, part asserted--the same situation as was mentioned in footnote 1.

3. From here until the point when I specifically move on to the discussion of say when it refers to a following element, I will in every sentence intend say to be interpreted as referring to a preceding element.

4. A problem arises here. This is that when I speak of "noun phrases" and "embedded sentences" here, I am essentially talking about units which are obviously noun phrases or embedded sentences--such as "her homework" or "that Sarah wouldn't dance with Phil"; units which have always been regarded in transformational grammar as being noun phrases and embedded sentences. However, in the auxiliaries as main verbs analysis, various other units which have not been traditionally regarded as noun phrases are considered to be such. For example, in (87) "discover that Sarah wouldn't dance with Phil" would be a noun phrase. However, if one inserts say after "discover" in (87), it can refer to the preceding "Bill", as we have seen; it can refer to elements outside of this hypothesized noun phrase. The behavior of interjections, then, seems to indicate that there is a clear difference between units of the latter type and units traditionally viewed as noun phrases. In the text, I will ignore this problem, and simply use "noun phrase" to mean the traditional variety. I have no suggestions as to what the best solution would be to this problem.

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5. According to the more traditional view of sentence structure, there is, as stated in the text here, no internal sentence-boundary in (105)-(110). However, according to the auxiliaries as main verbs analysis, there is a sentence-boundary between "might" and "give . . . etc." Just as this analysis gives rise to the problems discussed in footnote 4, it gives rise to problems here. Take (110), for instance. As mentioned below in the text, say in (110) seems to be able to refer to "Sue". However, if there is really a sentence-boundary between "might" and "give", "might" being higher, then "Sue" does not command all the material intervening between itself and say, and say, therefore, according to the generalization made earlier, should not be able to refer to "Sue". I have no explanation whatsoever for this problem.

6. Although I have not discussed simple pauses in this chapter, in fact, they can be shown to obey the same grammatical rules as interjections. A pause usually indicates a memory lapse. So do ah and oh_1. If, in the examples which I have given using ah or oh_1, one replaces these with a pause, I think one will see that the hearer will interpret what the thing forgotten can be in the same way as he does with ah or oh_1--that is, the pause can only be "referring to" certain elements in the sentence and not others--the element forgotten can only be those certain elements. The restrictions are the same, I think, as those I have suggested for ah and oh_1.

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CHAPTER 5

Interjections and Other Grammatical Phenomena: Their Interrelationship

This chapter will deal with a variety of situations in which, given the particular construction of a sentence and in some cases the context in which it occurs, the presence of an interjection, for no clear syntactic reason, affects the appropriateness of the sentence or the possible meanings which it may have. In some cases, an interjection renders a sentence ungrammatical; in others, it makes a sentence which would otherwise be ambiguous unambiguous. In most or all of these cases, the reasons for this have to do with semantics. This type of situation arises in particular with certain types of phenomena; a few of these, for example, are pronouns, idioms, tags, preposed adverbials, and parentheticals. I will be looking, then, at a number of these cases, examining what semantic factors might be involved, and drawing, if possible, conclusions as to what this tells us about the semantics of the interjections and the semantics of the other phenomena involved.

It was mentioned on page 111 that it seems to be the case with each of the following words: $\underline{oh}_2$, $\underline{say}_2$, $\underline{uh}$, $\underline{well}$, $\underline{ah}$, and $\underline{oh}_1$--that they are only said when there are at least two possible alternatives as to what the speaker could say. This would imply that if one of these words is made to refer to an element to which there is no possible alternative, it will be inappropriate. I think that it is in fact this which lies behind the odd behavior of interjections in

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a number of cases. I will now give a series of examples of sentences in which an interjection seems unacceptable. The first is the following:

(1) Mother: You wrote on the wall, and I told you not to!

Child: I did, well, not! Johnny did!

Well seems completely inappropriate here, and so do other interjections; e.g., "I did--ah, not!", "I did, say, not!", "I did--uh, not!", "I did--oh, not!". The only explanation for this that I can suggest is that in this context, there is no other morpheme or phrase that could plausibly occur instead of "not". There is no possibility of choice--no possible alternative the child could choose--and thus, no reason to hesitate and use an interjection.

Let's look also at (2), (3), (4), and (5):

(2) Daya won't like the picture of him and Patil washing dishes, and Patil won't, say, either.

(Say is to be considered as referring to the following element here, and in all cases not otherwise specified.) If we regard say as referring to "either", it is unacceptable. I believe this is because there is no word other than either which could plausibly occur here; there is no reason for the speaker to hesitate and use an interjection. With other interjections the sentence is also odd--e.g., "and Patil won't, well, either", "and Patil won't,--ah, either!".

(3) The river is deeper than the lake, uh, is.

Here also, there is no word other than "is" which could occur here; and thus it is odd for the speaker to hesitate. And it would be equally as odd as (3) to say "than the lake, oh, is", or "than the lake--oh, is!".

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(4) I might go skating, and so--ah, might!--my roommate.

Clearly, given this context, there is no possible alternative to "might"--the verb here must be the same as the highest verb in the verb phrase in the first half of the coordinate structure; it must be "might".

(5) Daya wants you to stop taking pictures of him, and Patil, well, does, too.

I have underlined "does" here not so much to indicate stress as to make it clear that well is intended to refer to "does" rather than "does too". Well would be acceptable if it referred to "does too", since it is plausible that Patil might have other feelings besides wanting the addressee to stop taking pictures of him. However, if it refers only to "does"--with "too" outside the reference of well, meaning that the same thing is true of Patil as of Daya--then well is unacceptable; and I think this is because "does" is then the only possible thing which could occur here--only "does" can stand for the verb phrase in the first half of the coordinate structure.

Take also (6):

(6) What Doris and Seymour were, oh, doing is a mystery.

This sentence is also very odd, and in a somewhat more complicated way, since there could theoretically be other verbs here, such as "singing" or "playing". However, these verbs are not parallel to "doing"--"doing" is a general word describing all activities. There is no other semantic element parallel to "doing" which could occur here, and I believe this is the reason why oh is so odd. (Note also, of course, that this sentence indicates that "possible alternatives" to an element have to be elements which are semantically parallel in

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some sense to the element--they cannot be simply any other grammatical element which could occur in that position.)

Another example is (7):

(7) Not, oh, only did John go, but he took all his stuff with him.

The problem here seems to have to do with the morpheme "only". I would suggest that again, there is no plausible alternative, semantically, to "only" here, and that this is the reason for the unacceptability of the interjection.[1]

Another class of examples in which interjections are odd is expressions such as "I held my breath", where the possessive pronoun must be the same as the subject (e.g., *"I held his breath"). Note that interjections are inappropriate if they refer to the possessive pronoun; e.g.,

(8) I held, oh, my breath[2]

(9) Sue craned, well, her neck

(10) Mother will always keep, say, her temper

(11) John went on--ah, his!--way

For another example, take the expression "X will be damned if X'll . . ." As has been pointed out by Ross (1968), "X" must be identical to the subject of a higher verb of saying. (In sentences without an overt higher verb of saying, this will be the deleted performative.) For example: "I'll be damned if I'll do it", *"Bill will be damned if he'll do it" (except in reporting what Bill said), "Bill said he'd be damned if he'd do it", *"Bill said I'd be damned if I'd do it". Notice that it is odd to say

(12) Bill said that, oh, he would be damned if he'd listen to any more bullshit

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(13) I told them that, say, I would be damned if I'd do any more work for the Search Committee

Both of these sentences are, I think, quite odd, and again, I think this is because the speaker has no choice other than the pronouns used.

Another type of example has to do with speech acts. R. Lakoff (1972) has noted that with each type of speech act, there is associated an "appropriate" type of response, and that this association shows up linguistically in superficial structures like (14)-(16):

(14) John is a Communist, and if you don't (believe / *obey / *answer) me, ask Fred

(15) Get out of here, and if you don't (*believe / obey / *answer) me, I'll sock you

(16) I ask you whether John left, and if you don't (*believe / *obey / answer) me, I'll be furious

Since there is only one appropriate response to each speech act, we might expect an interjection to be odd before the description of that response, and I think this is the case:

(17) John is a communist, and if you don't, oh, believe me, ask Fred

(18) Get out of here, and if you don't, say, obey me, I'll sock you

(19) I ask you whether John left, and if you don't--ah, answer!--me, I'll be furious

In each of these cases, I think, the presence of the interjection implies that there are other appropriate types of responses to the

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speech act; and since this cannot be the case, an interjection is unacceptable.

It is also the case in sentences such as (14)-(16) that the object of the verb indicating the response can only be "me" (since the speaker is the person performing the speech act). Anything else, such as "yourself", "Bill", or "the people over there", would be unacceptable. If an interjection occurs in front of "me", the same type of unacceptability is produced as in (17)-(19)--e.g.,

(20) John is a Communist, and if you don't believe, say, me, ask Fred

(21) Get out of here, and if you don't obey, uh, me, I'll sock you

Interjections are also sometimes odd before pronouns. The contexts in which they are odd are those contexts in which there is no plausible alternative to the pronoun which occurs. They are quite acceptable where there are possible alternatives; for example, in contexts where the pronoun is deictic, e.g.,

(22) Professor Maffick might give an A to, oh, her (pointing)

or in contexts such as that in which (23) would be said:

(23) Professor Maffick doesn't give many A's, but Aida$_i$ thinks he might give one to, say, her$_i$

But an interjection is odd in sentences such as (24)-(26):

(24) It's Julie's birthday today. We're giving, oh, her, a surprise party

(25) I like to feed squirrels. I give, uh, them, nuts and cookies

(26) While serving the guests at her last table, the waitress dropped the soup. That--ah, she!--had done this annoyed her. (Or: That she had done this annoyed--ah, her! Or even worse: That--ah, she!--had done this annoyed, well, her.)

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In the contexts specified in (24)-(26), there is only one entity being talked about and therefore there is no possible alternative to the pronoun which occurs; thus, it is simply not plausible for the speaker to hesitate before saying the pronoun.

A related case is reflected in the following sentences:

(27) When Dan insulted her, Nancy hit, well, the bastard

(28) When Nixon shook her hand, Brenda was captivated by, oh, the President's, winning smile

There are two alternative ways of interpreting these sentences. In the first, and, I believe, more natural interpretation, "Dan" and "the bastard" must be construed as two different people, and likewise "Nixon" and "the President". In the second interpretation, one must assume the speaker to be hesitating in (27) and (28) in order to think of an appropriate way to describe "Dan" and "Nixon". However, well is not usually used for this purpose, thus rendering this a somewhat unlikely interpretation of (27), and it is not at all likely that one would have to think about using the term "the President" to describe Nixon, so this is likewise a rather implausible interpretation of (28). With either interpretation, it is the fact that an interjection implies the presence of alternatives which makes these sentences seem as odd as they do.

Sentences such as (29), which involve identity of sense rather than reference, are also odd with an interjection:

(29) Joanne ate a piece of pie and I ate, well, one, too

And the following kinds of sentences, involving verb phrase and sentence pronominalization, are unacceptable with an interjection:

(30) Jack flies planes carefully, but I do, oh, so, with reckless abandon

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(31) Shui Meng wants to go to Julie's birthday party, and--ah, so!--does Aida

(32) Aida doubts that Dorothea is really her rival, but Shui Meng doesn't doubt, say, it

(33) Sally claims that she wouldn't be cruel to animals, but I wouldn't put, oh, it, past her

In situations in which verb phrase or sentence pronominalization is involved, I think there can never be any alternative to the pronoun; that is, there cannot be other elements which could possibly occur in the same position in the sentence. Thus, it is never plausible to hesitate or use any interjection before such a pronoun.

Idioms are another type of case where interjections are odd.[3] Take, for example, (34):

(34) Fred kicked, say, the bucket

Although the expression "to kick the bucket" has an idiomatic reading "to die", (34) cannot have this idiomatic reading; it can only have the literal reading. Similarly, in

(35) I wonder who, oh, in the world, will accept Jim's invitation

one finds oneself forced to interpret the speaker as wondering who on Earth, as opposed to who from Mars, Venus, etc., will accept Jim's invitation--that is, one is forced to interpret the phrase literally rather than idiomatically. The parallel expression "who the hell" has no literal reading, and with an interjection is very odd:

(36) I wonder who, uh, the hell, will accept Jim's invitation

Compare also the following sentences:

(37) I'll throw the ball you just gave me, oh, up

(as opposed to down, over there, etc.)

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(38) I'll throw the dinner I just ate, oh, up

Whereas (37), in which there are possible alternatives to "up" e.g., ("down", "over there") is fine, (38), in which there is no possible alternative to "up", since the idiom "throw up" has no literal reading, is quite unacceptable.

The following are a few more examples:

(39) Who did Jane take up, well, with?

(40) Max took, oh, heed, of Gandalf's warning

(41) Max took, oh, some heed of Gandalf's warning.

(39) is unacceptable, since "take up with" has no literal reading and there is no possible alternative to "with". (40) is unacceptable for the same type of reason. However, (41) is fine, since the speaker is hesitating in order to choose the most convenient description he can give of the degree to which Max took heed of Gandalf's warning ("some"). Clearly there are possible alternatives as to how the speaker could describe this.

I would like now to look at a series of more complicated cases. These involve the interrelationship of interjections with various syntactic and semantic phenomena. In many cases, the behavior of interjections seems to be ultimately traceable to the same kinds of semantic inconsistencies discussed above, but in a less clear way than in the cases above. Moreover, the behavior of interjections can in some cases shed light on various aspects of the particular construction involved. We will also find that different interjections behave in different ways with some of these constructions, for reasons having to do with their own semantics.

The constructions to be discussed are: A. preposed adverbials, B. the rule of negative raising, C. negative polarity items, D. tags,

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E. the rule of sluicing, F. islands, G. presupposition-suspending *if*-clauses, H. parentheticals and sentential adverbs, and I. the rule of Yiddish-movement.

A. Preposed Adverbials.

When following certain kinds of preposed adverbials, interjections tend to be unacceptable. Take, for example, the following sentences (*Say* is to be considered as referring to a *following* element in each case). The interjections will be marked according to my intuitions and those of my informants as to their acceptability.

(42) In that house, (oh,)[4] (well,) (say) (--ah!) (--oh!) there used to live a mad scientist

(43) On Tuesday, (oh,) (well,) (say,) (--ah!) (--oh!) I get to skip class

(44) To make money, (oh,) (well,) (??say,) (--ah!) (--oh!) Sue is going to take up typing on the side

(45) Quietly, (*oh,) (*well,) (*say,) (*--ah!) (*--oh!) John left

(46) With a hammer, (*oh,) (*well) (*say) (*--ah!) (*--oh!) Bill hit Fred

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(47) With a hammer, (oh,) (well,) (say,) (--ah!) (--oh!) you can build a stepladder

(48) Stupidly, (?*oh,) (?*well,) (*say,) (*--ah!) (*--oh!) Carol let the cat out of the bag without thinking

(49) For some reason, (*oh,) (*well,) (*say,) (*--ah!) (*--oh!) Francesca didn't want the mushrooms

Following adverbial phrases of time, place, and purpose, then, interjections are in general quite acceptable (the only exception being say in (44)). Following manner, instrument, epithet, and reason adverbs, however, they are unacceptable--with the notable exception of (47). (Note also that say must have the "let's imagine" reading, and not the "for example" one, for some reason, in the sentences in which it is appropriate.) I have no explanation for these facts. It is possible, however, that the following observations are related to them: note that it is reasonable to imagine someone stopping to choose or to try to remember one of several events which happened "in that house", or "on Tuesday"--or to try to think of the best way of describing an event which happened "in that house", or "on Tuesday"; but it is rather strange to imagine someone stopping to choose or to remember one of several events which happened "quietly", or which happened "with a hammer", or which happened "for some reason", or which "stupidly happened". This parallelism does not, however, extend to (44), which is acceptable with most interjections, but in

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which the speaker is stopping to think about an event which is going to happen "to make money"--a somewhat anaomalous concept. In the case of (47), which contrasts with (46), one might note that one can quite plausibly speak of the speaker stopping to choose or remember one of several things which one can do" with a hammer"; and this is in fact what is being described in (47). In (46), on the other hand, the speaker is stopping to think about events which happened "with a hammer", which is anomalous.

Although (44) is a problem, perhaps these facts are clues as to why the interjections show the characteristics they do in (42)-(49). Clearly, I think, the semantic relationship of the adverbial phrase to the main clause in the case of at least time and place adverbials is somewhat different from the semantic relationship involved in the case of manner, instrument, epithet, and reason adverbials. I do not know how this should be characterized, but it clearly is the underlying reason why the interjections in (42) and (43) are acceptable, while those of (45), (46), (48), and (49) are not.

B. Negative-Raising.

The presence of an interjection can have an interesting effect in sentences involving negative raising.[5] (50) is such a sentence:

(50) Andrea doesn't think that Eunice will arrive until Saturday

In (50), the negative has been raised from the lower sentence into the higher; semantically, it is "will arrive" that is negated, rather than "think". Moreover, the phrase "until Saturday" (when it occurs with punctal verbs such as "arrive") is a negative polarity item;[6] that is, it can only occur if a negative or some other appropriate trigger is present in the sentence. (E.g., one cannot say (51):

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(51) *Eunice will arrive until Saturday)

This particular negative polarity item is one which demands an underlying negative within the same simple sentence. Thus, if the negative originates in the lower sentence and is raised, as in (50), the sentence is acceptable; but if the negative originates in the higher sentence, the sentence as a whole is not acceptable. An example of this is (52), in which the verb is "say", which does not govern negative raising:

(52) *Andrea doesn't say that Eunice will arrive until Saturday

Now let us insert an interjection into sentence (50); first, after the negative, and second, after the negative-raising verb:

(53) Andrea doesn't, (*say / *--ah! / ??--oh! / ?oh, / ??well,) think that Eunice will arrive until Saturday.

(54) Andrea doesn't think, (*say, / *--ah! / ?--oh! / oh, / well,) that Eunice will arrive until Saturday.

Say and ah seem quite unacceptable in these sentences. It seems that when these interjections are present, the negative must be construed as belonging underlyingly in the higher sentence; this renders the sentence as a whole ungrammatical. $\underline{\text{Oh}}_1$ seems more acceptable than say and ah in both sentences. $\underline{\text{Oh}}_2$ and well seem fine in (54), but somewhat worse, for most informants, in (53); for some informants, they are just as acceptable in (53) as in (54).

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(55)-(60) are similar examples. The negative polarity items here ("in weeks" and "have a red cent") must also, like "until . . .", have an underlying negative in the same simple sentence.

(55) I don't believe that Teresa's been here in weeks

(*"I don't say that Teresa's been here in weeks")

(*say,)
(*--ah!)
(56) I don't, (?*--oh!) believe that Teresa's been here in weeks
(??oh,)
(?*well,)

(*say,)
(*--ah!)
(57) I don't believe, (?--oh!) that Teresa's been here in weeks
(oh,)
(well,)

(58) Alice says she doesn't suppose that Chuck has a red cent

(*"Alice says she doesn't say that Chuck has a red cent")

(*say,)
(*--ah!)
(59) Alice says she doesn't, (??--oh!) suppose that Chuck has a
(?oh,)
(?-well,)

red cent

(*say,)
(*--ah!)
(60) Alice says she doesn't suppose, (--oh!) that Chuck has a
(oh,)
(well,)

red cent

As in (53) and (54), <u>say</u> and <u>ah</u> in (56), (57), (59), and (60) seem quite unacceptable; when they are present, one seems forced to interpret the negative as belonging underlyingly in the higher sentence. <u>Oh</u>$_1$ seems more acceptable, and <u>oh</u>$_2$ and <u>well</u> seem fine when they follow the verb, but less acceptable when they follow the negative (although for some informants they are also acceptable in the latter case).

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It is really not clear quite why $\underline{oh}_2$ and well ($\underline{oh}_1$ will be discussed later) are more acceptable than say and ah. There is one difference between $\underline{oh}_2$ and well on the one hand, and say and ah on the other, however, which appears to be relevant. That is that say and ah seem to imply the possibility of completely different alternatives to what they refer to, while $\underline{oh}_2$ and well need only imply that there are other possible ways of describing what they refer to. For example, in (60), say implies that the speaker is giving "that Chuck has a red cent" as an example of something that Alice says she doesn't suppose, or, that he is hypothesizing this as something Alice says she doesn't suppose. In either case, something which was a different example or a different hypothesis would be substantially different from "that Chuck has a red cent". Similarly, ah would be used when the speaker has just managed to remember that what Alice says she doesn't suppose is "that Chuck has a red cent"; this implies, again, that there might be substantially different alternatives to this proposition. $\underline{Oh}_2$, however, need only imply that the speaker is thinking of the most effective way to describe the amount of, or lack of, money that Chuck has; and similarly, well need imply no more than that there might be other ways of describing this. Thus, if the speaker were stopping to try to think of the most effective way to describe Chuck's lack of money, he might use $\underline{oh}_2$ or well. He could not, however, use say and ah in this case; and it appears that for some reason it is not possible to use them in the ways in which they can be used. Thus, this semantic difference between say and ah on the one hand, and $\underline{oh}_2$ and well on the other, seems to be significant in determining the acceptability of these interjections.

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When $\underline{oh}_2$ and well precede the verb, they are less acceptable than when they follow it. I believe that this is because when they precede the verb, this tends to imply that they are referring to the phrase consisting of the verb plus the complement, rather than the complement alone; however, the only very natural interpretation is that $\underline{oh}_2$ and well indicate that there are other ways of describing the complement (in (59), for example, how else could one describe the verb "suppose"?). However, it seems to be to a certain extent possible, and for some speakers it is entirely possible, to in some sense "skip over" or ignore the verb and regard the interjection as referring only to the complement; where $\underline{oh}_2$ and well seem acceptable, it seems to be because this is possible.

I would also like to discuss the behavior of $\underline{oh}_1$ in these sentences. There are two possible usages of $\underline{oh}_1$ when it is sentence-internal. In one, $\underline{oh}_1$ indicates that the speaker has forgotten something, paused, and managed to remember it. He may feel some emotion about this--pleasure, perhaps. He then says "Oh!", etc. $\underline{Oh}_1$ is very similar to ah in this usage, and is acceptable or unacceptable to the same extent that ah is, as one can easily ascertain by replacing ah by oh (and giving it this reading) in any sentence. $\underline{Oh}_1$ can also, however, be used in the following way: the speaker pauses to try to think of what to say or the best way to say it--suddenly, something particularly good or appropriate enters his mind--and, perhaps with some emotion, such as pleasure, he says "Oh!", etc. For example, in (60), $\underline{oh}_1$ can be used in this way and is quite acceptable in this reading; it would indicate that the speaker has thought of a good way of expressing himself ("that Chuck has a red cent") and

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feels pleased or enthusiastic over finding this to say. $\underline{Oh}_1$ can, I believe, only be used in this way in those contexts in which $\underline{oh}_2$ can be used to indicate that the speaker is trying to think of the best way of describing something. (For example, "Bill hit . . oh . . Fred", with $\underline{oh}_2$, indicates that Fred is one person out of several whom Bill hit; the "trying to think of the best way of describing something" reading of $\underline{oh}_2$ is not possible here. Similarly, "Bill hit---oh, Fred!", with $\underline{oh}_1$, could only indicate that the speaker had forgotten who Bill hit.) Clearly, $\underline{oh}_1$ and $\underline{oh}_2$ are not too far away in meaning in contexts in which $\underline{oh}_1$ can have this second usage, although I believe they can still be kept distinct, since $\underline{oh}_1$ here still retains those typical characteristics which $\underline{oh}_2$ does not share--that is, the characteristic of indicating that the speaker has just become aware of something, and the characteristic of being able to indicate some sort of emotion, such as pleasure.

In the sentences above, I have marked the acceptability of $\underline{oh}_1$ in terms of this second reading.

Throughout the rest of this chapter, I will not use $\underline{oh}_1$ in examples. This is primarily because the data tends to be complicated enough as it is, and because it would be necessary in each case to discuss in the text which usage of $\underline{oh}_1$ is possible and what their different degrees of acceptability are. In fact, as mentioned above, when $\underline{oh}_1$ has the trying-to-remember reading, it has, I believe, exactly the same degree of acceptability as does ah; and when it has the second reading discussed above, its degree of acceptability is in general similar to that of $\underline{oh}_2$. Consequently, to simplify the text, I will exclude $\underline{oh}_1$, in general, from consideration, expecting the

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reader to keep the above remarks about it in mind.

C. Negative Polarity Items.

I would like also to look at the acceptability of interjections when they occur directly in front of negative polarity items. Let's start by taking the negative polarity item "lift a finger". Like all negative polarity items, it cannot occur in the following context (or rather, it can only have a literal reading, and not the idiomatic reading normally associated with "lift a finger:).

(61) (I asked him to give me some help, so) Jack lifted a finger

It can only occur when a negative, or some other appropriate trigger, such as a question, a preceding too, an if-clause, a higher predicate like surprised, etc., is present. Now let's look at (62), with interjections inserted.

(62) Would Jack help with the housework, you ask? He wouldn't,

(oh,) lift a finger.
((?) well,)
(?*say,)
(*--ah!)

Oh_2 seems quite acceptable here, and well is fairly acceptable also. When the speaker uses oh_2 here, he is stopping to think of the best way to describe his feelings; and with well, he is doing something similar. However, if he uses say, this implies that "lift a finger" is an example of something which Jack wouldn't do--which is not what the speaker would be wanting to convey here, and which moreover, would tend to force one to interpret "lift a finger" literally. And in the case of ah, ah would imply that the speaker had forgotten or had only just managed to think of what Jack wouldn't do; in the first place, this would not be plausible in this context, in which the

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speaker is expressing his feelings about Jack; and in the second place, it would imply that there are other possible things which Jack might not do, which, as in the case of say, would tend to force one to interpret "lift a finger" literally. Thus, the distinction mentioned in the previous section between say and ah on the one hand, and oh_2 and well on the other, that is, that say and ah imply the possibility of substantially different alternatives to what they refer to, while oh_2 and well merely imply that there might be other ways of describing what they refer to, is clearly relevant here, and explains why say and ah are unacceptable while oh_2 and well are acceptable.

The following sentences, which contain the negative polarity items "at all", "worth shit" (in a question), "do a damn thing" (with too), and "bat an eye" (in an if-clause), show similar characteristics to (62):

(63) They haven't eaten, (oh, / well, / *say, / *--ah!) at all.

(64) I ask you, is this book, (oh, / ?well, / *say, / *--ah!) worth shit?[7]

(65) Frank was too cowardly to, (oh, / well, / *say, / *--ah!) do a damn thing

(66) I'd be surprised if Susie, (oh, / ((?)well, / ?*say, / *--ah!) batted an eye[8]

Again, oh_2 and well seem fine, or more or less so, in these sentences, while say and ah are odd. I suggest that the reasons for this are the

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same as those I suggested to account for (62).

With a number of negative polarity items, however, say and ah are quite acceptable. For example:

(67) My aunt said she might not get here, (say, / (--ah!) until Tuesday

(68) Before Suzanna offers me, say, any coffee, I'd better let her know I don't like hot drinks.

(69) Sam hasn't given a bag lunch--ah, in years.

(70) Did John, say, do as much as take out the garbage?

I think the reason for this is that in all of these negative polarity items--"until Tuesday", "any coffee", "in years", and "do as much as take out the garbage"--there are real, substantial possible alternatives within the item as to what the speaker could say. For example, instead of "Tuesday", it could be "Wednesday"; instead of "coffee", "tea"; instead of "years", "months"; and instead of "take out the garbage", "water the plants". However, in expressions such as "worth shit" and "bat an eye", there is no alternative to any of the elements within the expression; they are essentially idioms.

Thus, say and ah are unacceptable before certain kinds of negative polarity items, it seems because they imply the possibility of substantially different alternatives to what they refer to.

D. Tags.

Another context in which interjections tend to be inappropriate is immediately preceding, and referring to, a tag. Take, for example, the following sentence, with different interjections:

(71) Shirley's not going away for the weekend, (is she? / uh, is she? / oh, is she? / --ah, is she?) / (well, is she?) / (say, is she?)

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(I have here not marked these interjections according to acceptability.) In a sentence such as (71), the speaker is making a statement which he is not quite certain is true, and is asking the addressee for corroboration. The tag "is she?" can be said with either falling or rising intonation; falling intonation indicates that the speaker is realtively certain that what he has said is correct, and rising intonation indicates that he is relatively uncertain. I find uh quite acceptable in (71) with rising intonation on the tag; it indicates, however, that the speaker is even more uncertain than would be normal. I find uh quite odd with falling intonation; we might expect this, however, if falling intonation indicates relative certainty and uh greater uncertainty than usual. $\underline{\text{Oh}}_2$ I find quite odd in (71). The only context in which I would find oh natural would be the following: the speaker says "Shirley's not going away for the weekend"--then, the addressee does something to indicate that he disagrees--and the speaker goes on: "Oh, is she?", meaning "Oh, you mean she is?". This is $\underline{\text{oh}}_1$, not $\underline{\text{oh}}_2$, and "is she" is no longer a tag here; it is a separate question in itself. Similarly, I find ah, well, and say (but in this case it would be $\underline{\text{say}}_1$, not $\underline{\text{say}}_2$) acceptable in the context just described; ah and well I do not find acceptable in any other context, however. Say can of course also be referring to the preceding "the weekend" in (71); apart from this reading, however, I think say is still possible, but only with rising intonation on the tag, and only in a reading which is more or less synonymous with "Say, Shirley's not going away for the weekend, is she?". This is, of course, $\underline{\text{say}}_1$, not $\underline{\text{say}}_2$. $\underline{\text{Say}}_2$, like $\underline{\text{oh}}_2$, then, does not seem to be able to occur here at all.

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It seems then that except for uh and say$_1$, none of the interjections can occur before a tag such as that in (71). This is, I would suggest, because there is no possible alternative to such a tag, and moreover, one could not hesitate to think about the best way of saying a tag, since there is only one possible way to say it; so oh$_2$ and well cannot be interpreted as indicating this, and are thus not acceptable at all.

In a sentence such as (72)

(72) Leslie's taking one of your hamsters, (is she? / uh, is she? / oh, is she? / --ah, is she?) (well, is she?) (say, is she?)

the speaker is not asking for corroboration of a statement, but is rather expressing interest, surprise, dismay, or some other emotion at something which he accepts as true. I find all of the interjections unacceptable in (72) (ignoring that reading of say in which it refers to a preceding element). Since there cannot be any uncertainty involved, uh is odd, since it would tend to indicate uncertainty. I feel that say$_1$ also cannot occur here, in the sense that it could in (71). Also, the context described for (71) in which oh$_1$, ah, well, and say$_1$ could occur, in which "is she" in (71) was a separate question rather than a tag, is impossible in the case of (72) for semantic reasons (one does not accept something as true and then ask if it is true).

Let's now look at tags in imperatives. Take (73), for example:

(73) Open the window, (will you? / uh, will you? / oh, will you? / well, will you?) (say, will you?) (--ah, will you?)

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I find uh quite acceptable here, but as in (71), it would indicate that the speaker was uncertain; here, uncertain that the addressee will do as he is requested. I also find say acceptable, but only in the say_1 sense, and only in a reading in which it is synonymous with "Say, open the window, will you?". This is parallel to the possible reading of say noted above in the discussion of (71). All the other interjections I find unacceptable, although John Lawler informs me that he likes "oh, will you" in a reading in which it indicates that the speaker is choosing between "will you" and "won't you" as tags. (I do not find this reading plausible, however.) Of course, oh, (oh_1), well, ah, and say would be acceptable in a context in which "will you" is not a tag but a separate question (meaning "will you do it?"). This type of context is parallel to that described in the case of (71), in which the interjections were also acceptable if the tag was seen as a separate sentence rather than a tag.

(74), with the tag "won't you", is a polite imperative:

(74) Come in, (won't you? / uh, won't you? / oh, won't you? / say, won't you? / well, won't you?) / (--ah, won't you?)

Uh, as in the other cases described, indicates uncertainty here, and consequently makes the invitation rude (it gives the impression "I am not sure if I want you to come in"). Say, again, can have the say_1 reading, and (74) with say can mean the same thing as "Say, come in, won't you?" (although say_1, as we saw in Chapter 2, has overtones of casualness which are not quite appropriate with such a polite form as this). I do not find any of the other interjections acceptable except,

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again, in a context in which "won't you" is not a tag but a separate question (e.g., "Oh, won't you?" = "Oh, you mean you won't?")

Thus, it would appear, in summary, that interjections cannot occur in front of and referring to tags, except for uh, which indicates uncertainty, and say_1, which, however, does not really refer to the tag, but rather seems to be misplaced from the beginning of the sentence (in fact, of course, say_1 normally can never occur inside a sentence, but only initially). Why say_1 should behave in this way I have no idea. It is interesting also that uh should indicate uncertainty of the kind that it does here; normally, it does indicate that the speaker is uncertain, for various possible reasons, as to what he should say next, but in these cases, the uncertainty is not over what the speaker should say next, but rather over another aspect of the conversational situation--in (71), whether the statement is true (or, in other words, whether the addressee will agree with the speaker); in (73), whether the addressee will obey; and in (74), whether the speaker really wants the addressee to obey. The aspects of the speech act involved in (71) and (73) seem parallel, since they deal with the addressee's reaction, but the aspect of the speech act involved in (74) does not seem parallel to that of (71) and (73). I think this has to do with the fact that in a context in which one would use "won't you", it is being assumed that the addressee wants to do the action; whereas in a context in which (73) would be said, it is not assumed that he wants to do it; and in the context in which (71) is said, it is not assumed that the addressee will necessarily agree with (believe) the speaker. If uh is used, to indicate uncertainty, it seems to make the speaker more uncertain about the area which he is already uncertain

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about--and in (74), since there is no doubt that the addressee wants to do the action and will do it if allowed to, the uncertainty must concern whether the speaker wants him to do it. These are, at least, my speculations on this subject.

In general, however, interjections cannot precede and refer to tags, presumably because there is no other alternative which could occur instead of a tag in the same context, and therefore there is no reason to use an interjection.

E. Sluicing.

Another class of examples in which interjections seem odd, for reasons which are not at all clear, is sentences like the following, in particular those which involve Ross's rule of Sluicing (Ross, 1969).

(75) Ed's writing something, but you'll never be able to imagine, oh, why he's writing it

(76) Ed's writing something, but you'll never be able to imagine, oh, why

(77) Larry bought something--guess, well, what color it is

(78) Larry bought something--guess, well, what color

(79) Judy's marking exams--you'll never guess, say, how fast she's marking them

(80) Judy's marking exams--you'll never guess, say, how fast

I find (75) and (79) rather odd, but (76) and (80) considerably worse. (77) is quite acceptable, I think; (78), however, I find quite odd. (My informants in general agree with these judgments.) Interestingly, however, (81), which is very similar to (76), is fine:

(81) Ed's writing something--you'll never even guess, oh, why

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In (76), (78), (80), and (81), Sluicing has applied. John Lawler has pointed out that in (76), (78), and (80), the possible alternatives which the interjection can refer to form a set which is in some sense unbounded and unpredictable, whereas in a sentence such as (81), in which the word "even" is present, the set of possible alternatives is narrowed down and bounded--only things on one end of a scale, that is things which are normally easy to guess, from the speaker's point of view, are possible alternatives. Perhaps this is the clue to why (81) is so much better than (76), (78) and (80). However, from this one would predict that all of (76) to (80), unsluiced sentences as well as sluiced ones, would be somewhat unacceptable; however, in fact the sluiced sentences are worse. I have no explanation for why this should be the case.

If the problem with (76)-(80) is really that the set of alternatives which the interjections could refer to is too unbounded and unpredictable, this is interesting, in that this is the opposite sort of problem from the one usually encountered, in which an interjection is unacceptable because there are not enough possible alternatives. It would indicate that not only must there be a set of alternatives, but this set must be bounded in some way.

F. Islands.

It is also interesting to look at the behavior of interjections inside islands. In general, interjections are perfectly acceptable within islands; in some cases, however, they can either be not very acceptable or have readings other than what one might otherwise expect. Let us first look at complex noun phrases of the Det+N+S type. Take,

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for example, (82) (and interjections here will not be marked for acceptability):

(82) The report that Bill might leave, (oh,) (say,) (well,) (--ah!) by Wednesday won't please Susan

All the interjections seem fine here, with the exception of ah. This is clearly because ah usually indicates that the speaker has suddenly forgotten something and then managed to remember it; in a construction such as that in (82), however, it is presupposed to be true that there is a report that Bill might leave by Wednesday; therefore, it is not too plausible that the speaker would suddenly forget exactly what the report was in mid-sentence.

The following pair of sentences illustrate the same point:

(83) They agreed that Sylvia should buy, (oh,) (say,) (well,) (--ah!) a Porsche

(84) They agreed with Jane's suggestion that Sylvia should buy,

(oh,)
(say,) a Porsche
(well,)
(--ah!)

In (83), it is fairly plausible that the speaker should forget what kind of car they agreed that Sylvia should buy. But in (84), ah seems considerably odder. In (84), it is presupposed that Jane suggested that Sylvia should buy a Porsche; thus, it is odd for the speaker to forget what kind of car it was in mid-sentence.

I also find oh_2 somewhat odd in (84). I think this is because if the oh_2 is inside a sentence describing Jane's suggestion, the choice involved in making the oh cannot be the speaker's, but can only be Jane's--that is, Jane has to have explicitly said "Sylvia should

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buy, oh, a Porsche"--and, as described in Chapter 2, $\underline{oh}_2$ seems to be odd if it reflects anyone's choice other than the speaker's. Looking back at (82), $\underline{oh}_2$ also seems a little odd there, but not as much so as in (84). One might wonder why this is the case. Does the difference have to do with the fact that the determiner is the (the definite article) in (82), Jane's (a possessive noun) in (84)? I don't think that this is the case, since if one replaces "Jane's" by "the" in (84), and "the" by "Jane's" in (82), I still have the same intuitions as before in (82) and (84), that is that $\underline{oh}_2$ in (82) is not as bad as in (84). Rather, I think that the difference lies in the fact that the speaker can plausibly be rephrasing or encapsulating what the report said in saying "by Wednesday", without changing its basic purport (e.g., the report might have said "by April 19th"); however, "a Porsche" cannot as plausibly be a rephrasing or encapsulation of anything by the speaker; it is not something which lends itself to this. Thus, the oh in (84) can only be Jane's, and is thus a little odd, since, to be appropriate, it should only be the speaker's; but it is quite possible for the oh in (82) to be the speaker's, and thus oh is perfectly appropriate in (82).

In relative clauses, all the interjections are fine; it is interesting to note, however, that ah, while certainly possible, is less plausible in some contexts than in others. Imagine, for example, someone saying the following:

(85) The man who lived--ah, on Church Street!--died yesterday

One would only say this if one suddenly forgot the name of the street in mid-sentence. Now, if one is identifying the man in a random sort of way--for example, saying "who lived on Church Street" instead of

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"who always wore sunglasses" or "who loved cats" or some other clause which would identify the man--it is odd to suddenly forget the name of the street in mid-sentence. This seems to be primarily because it is not particularly important or crucial which street the man lived on; and also because it is presupposed here that it is Church Street that the man lived on. Ah is odd here in the same way as it is in complex noun phrases of the Det+N+S type.

However, it would be quite natural to use ah in the following sorts of situations. First, suppose there are three men who have been dying, one living on Church Street, one on Forrest Street, and one on Hill Street. The speaker is trying to remember which of the three has died. He might then say (85). Here, the main thing that is being asserted is that it is the man who lived on Church Street who has died; it is the name of the street which is the main information being put forward, and the name of the street is the crucial thing which the speaker has to remember. Thus, it is quite reasonable to use ah in this sort of context.

Also, if the relative clause is extraposed, ah is more acceptable than it otherwise would be:

(86) The man died yesterday who lived--ah, on Church Street!

In any context in which (86) would be said, the extraposition seems to convey the idea that the man's living on Church Street is a relatively significant fact--one which one would make a point of mentioning.[9] Since one would make a point of mentioning it--it is an important point--it is more plausible that one might forget it, and be pleased to remember it; thus, more plausible to use ah.

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And also, if the head of the relative clause is plural, ah is more acceptable.

(87) The men who lived--ah, on Church Street!--died yesterday

A member of the Gestapo, systematically killing off all the men on particular streets, would be likely to say (87). It is implied that there is some sort of causal relationship between the men's living on Church Street and their dying. Again, ah is more plausible here because remembering the name of the street is important and signifi- in it.

Thus, ah is fine in relative clauses if particular importance is being attached to the thing it refers to, but odd otherwise.

Ah is also somewhat odd in sentential subjects. For example:

(88) That Gretchen will buy--ah, a Pontiac!--is unlikely. (but cf.

(89) That Gretchen will buy, (oh,) a Pontiac is unlikely.)
(well,)
(say,)

(90) That the movie will get here--ah, by Saturday!--is believed by everybody.

Sentential subjects, as was described in Chapter 2, involve material which is in some sense already known to be a possibility--that is, for example, under normal stress, one would not say (89) to someone unless one felt he was already aware that it was possible that Gretchen would buy a Pontiac. Thus, the material in a sentential subject is not presupposed to be true, but is presupposed, in some sense, to be a possibility. I think it is for this reason that ah_1 in (88) and (90) is odd--it is not likely that the speaker would forget the propositions involved, since they are "presupposed" in a certain sense.

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Take also the case of the complements of factive and negated verbs, as in, e.g.,

(91) It's surprising that the movie will get here by, (oh,) Saturday (well,) (say,) (--ah!)

(92) It's surprising that Sam might bring, (oh,) Nancy with him (well,) (say,) (--ah!)

(93) Jack realizes that I haven't read, (oh,) the article on negation (well,) (say,) (--ah!)

(94) Jack didn't say (that I might read, say,) the article on negation (that I had read, (oh,) ((well,) ((--ah!)

(92), (93) and (94) can be used in two different kinds of contexts. (93), for example, could be used in a context in which the speaker is simply presupposing that he hasn't read the article on negation, and asserting that Jack realizes it. It could also be used in a context in which there are several articles which the speaker hasn't read, but Jack only realizes the truth about <u>one</u> of them--e.g., "Jack realizes that I haven't read the article on <u>negation</u> (although he doesn't realize that I haven't read the articles on conjunction and modals)". Similarly, (92) could mean "It's surprising that Sam might bring <u>Nancy</u> with him (although not surprising that he might bring Karen and Laura)". This type of context is not possible in (91), however, as it would be semantically anomalous to say "It's surprising that the movie will get here by <u>Saturday</u> (although not surprising that it will get here by Monday)". These two types of readings would differ in stress and intonation--in particular, in the reading of the second type I

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have been describing, the elements which I have underlined in the paraphrases will tend to be stressed.

I bring up this difference in the possible contexts in which these sentences could be said because the context makes a difference as regards the acceptability and meaning of the interjections. Take ah for instance. In (91), ah is odd in the same way as it is in (82) and (84). It is presupposed that the movie will get here by Saturday, and thus it is somehow quite odd for the speaker to suddenly forget which date it will get here by (since this is presupposed). In (92) and (93), the complements are also presupposed, and in the readings in which "Nancy" and "the article on negation" are not being contrasted with anything else, ah is odd in the same way as it is in (91). In (94), the complement is not presupposed. However, in the reading in which "the article on negation" is not being contrasted with anything else, ah is odd in the same way as it is in (91), (92), and (93). There doesn't appear to be any clear explanation for this; however, as has been noted by several linguists, e.g., Lakoff, Perlmutter, and Ross, 1969) the complements of negated verbs behave like the complements of factive verbs in a number of ways; this matter would, then, appear to be another way in which the complements of negated and factive verbs are alike.

In (92), (93), and (94), in the readings in which "Nancy" and "the article on negation" are being contrasted with other things, ah is, I think, quite acceptable. (92) in this reading would be paraphraseable by "It's--ah, Nancy!--that it's surprising that Sam might bring with him (as opposed to Karen, Laura, etc.)"; (93) would be paraphraseable by "It's--oh, the article on negation!--that Jack

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realizes I haven't read (as opposed to all the other articles I haven't read, which Jack doesn't realize I haven't read)"; and (94) would be paraphraseable by "It was--ah, the article on negation!--that Jack didn't say I had read (as opposed to all the other articles I've read, which he did say I'd read)". Notice that in this type of reading, while it is still, in (92) and (93), presupposed that Sam might bring Nancy with him, and that I haven't read the article on negation, it is not presupposed who it is surprising that Sam might bring, or which article Jack realizes I haven't read, assuming that Sam might bring more than one person and that there is more than one article which I haven't read. It is, then, being asserted who it is surprising that Sam might bring and which article Jack realizes I haven't read (and, in (94), which article Jack didn't say I had read). This, I believe, is why ah is quite acceptable in these readings. In the readings of these sentences in which no contrast is involved, however, there is no such assertion concerning Nancy and the article on negation; rather, there is only a presupposition (at least in (92) and (93)) and it is because of this that ah is odd.

In the cases of oh_2 and say there are also differences in interpretation of the interjection depending on the reading the sentence has. Take oh_2 in (93), for example. If "the article" is not being contrasted with anything else in (93), the most natural interpretation of the oh is that in using it the speaker is picking out one particular article to mention out of several which he has not read. If "the article" is being contrasted with other things, one must interpret the oh as indicating that there are a number of articles which the speaker hasn't read, and that Jack knows about some of them--more than one, but not

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all. To rephrase this, the oh indicates that the article on negation is one of the articles which Jack realizes the speaker hasn't read. Similarly, in (92), in the reading in which there is no contrast, the oh_2 indicates that Nancy is one of the people Sam might bring with him. In the reading in which there is contrast, the oh_2 indicates that Nancy is one of the people that it's surprising that Sam might bring with him; there are, thus, several people that it would be surprising to find Sam bringing, and in addition, other people who it would not be surprising to find Sam bringing; these are being contrasted, and Nancy is an example of the former group.

Similarly, there are differences in the interpretation of say depending on which reading the sentence has. In (92), for example, in the reading in which "Nancy" is not being contrasted with anyone else, say simply indicates that Nancy is an example of someone Sam might bring with him. In the other reading, "Nancy" is being contrasted with other people whom it would not be surprising for Sam to bring with him, and say indicates that Nancy is an example of someone that it would be surprising for Sam to bring. In (94), in the reading in which there is no contrast involved, say means "for example", and it would be accurate to say that what Jack did not say was "Bill might read, say, the article on negation" (supposing that the speaker's name is Bill). In the reading in which contrast is involved, however--that is, in which it is being emphasized that Jack didn't say that I might read the article on negation, but did say of several other things that I might read them--say cannot very easily have the "for example" reading; and this seems to be because the higher verb ("didn't say") is in the past tense--an environment in which the "for example" reading is usually

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not possible. Thus, I can only interpret (94) as "Let's imagine it's the article on negation which Jack didn't say that I might read".

Similarly, if one puts "realizes" in (93) into the past tense--e.g.,

(95) Jack realized that I might not read, say, the article on negation

and gives the sentence the interpretation in which "the article" is being contrasted with other things which Jack didn't realize that I might not read, (95) can only mean "Let's imagine it's the article on negation that Jack realized that I might not read". However, with the more ordinary interpretation in which there is no contrast, say means "for example".

Thus, in these cases say of necessity has different meanings in the two different possible interpretations of the sentence. We noticed earlier that the "for example" sense occurs only when associated with an activity or state which is not definite and factual. In the non-contrast reading of a sentence such as (95), then, say seems to be associated with the lower predicate "might not read" (which obviously does not describe a definite action). But in the contrast reading, it seems to be primarily associated with the higher predicate "realized", which is a definite action; and it would appear to be for this reason that only the "let's imagine" reading is possible.

There is one other island type of environment I would like to look at, and that has to do with the well-known phenomenon of picture nouns.[10] Let's take the following sentences:

(96) Bill is going to show me photographs of, (oh,) Anne
(well,)
(uh,)
(say,)
(--ah!)

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(97) Bill is going to show me Sylvia's photographs of, (oh) Anne
(well,)
(uh,)
(say,)
(--ah!)

(98) Sam is buying pictures of, (oh,) (well,) (uh) boats (say,) (--ah!)

(99) Sam is buying Clifford's pictures of, (oh,) (well,) (uh,) boats (say,) (--ah!)

The interjections in (96) and (98) are not within islands, but those in (97) and (99) are, since there is a possessive noun before the picture noun. First, let's look at (96) and (97). All of the interjections in (97), even uh, seem somewhat worse than those in (96). This is particularly true of say, which, in fact, seems quite unacceptable in (97). I do not know why this should be the case. In the case of (98) and (99), I have the same feeling that the interjections in (99) are worse than those in (98), and that say is quite unacceptable in (99) (while fine in (98)). We might also note one thing in connection with oh_2; that is, that in (98), one possible interpretation is that oh_2 indicates that boats are one of the things Sam is buying pictures of; but in (99), the only possible interpretation seems to be that in oh_2 the speaker is trying to think of the best way to describe what Clifford's pictures (at least those which Sam is buying) portray. Thus, the interpretation that boats are one of the things Sam is buying Clifford's pictures of is not possible in (99). The reason for this is probably related to the fact that the paraphrase just given is ungrammatical; and it is ungrammatical because of the "island-ness" of the construction, the word "boats" having been

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moved out of the picture-noun clause, which is an island. In (97), since we are talking about photographs of Anne, the reading in which $\underline{oh}_2$ indicates that the speaker is trying to think of the best way to describe what the photographs portray is implausible (obviously one must describe them by saying "Anne"). Since this reading, which would otherwise be acceptable, is not plausible, $\underline{oh}_2$ seems generally rather unacceptable in (97).

I also find that there tends to be a slight difference in meaning in the cases of well and uh depending on whether the possessive noun is present or not; however, I find it difficult to pinpoint just what this is.

In the case of ah, (96) and (98) are much more acceptable than (97) and (99). In (96), for example, it seems quite possible that the speaker might forget who Bill was going to show him photographs of, hesitate, remember, and say "Ah! Anne!". However, there seems to be something wrong, for some reason, with his forgetting who Bill was going to show him Sylvia's photographs of (and note again that this paraphrase is in itself ungrammatical). Ah here and in (99) seems to be odd in the same way that it is in environments involving presuppositions.

In conclusion, being in an island can affect the acceptability or the possible range of meaning of an interjection. Ah is rather unacceptable in Det+N+S constructions, in sentential subjects, in relative clauses given certain contexts, and in the complements of factive and negated verbs, given one of their two possible types of interpretations. $\underline{Oh}_2$ is rather unacceptable in certain kinds of Det+N+S constructions, and $\underline{oh}_2$ and say can be interpreted in different ways in the complements of factive and negated verbs depending on the interpretation being

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given these. All interjections seem to be odd through unacceptable in picture noun constructions, and $\underline{oh}_2$ is, moreover, restricted in its possible readings in these.

G. Presupposition-Suspending If-Clauses

Interjections can disambiguate sentences like the following:

(100) Nancy is pretty, if not beautiful

(101) His behavior was unusual, if not unprecedented

(102) It's possible, if not probable, that Pete will forget to water the plants

These sentences are ambiguous, in that the if-clauses have two possible readings. In (100), for example, one can interpret "if not beautiful" either as meaning "even though not beautiful" or as meaning "maybe one could describe Nancy not only as pretty, but as beautiful". In the latter sense, the if-clause is performing the function of suspending the presupposition of the preceding clause; that is, "Nancy is pretty" implies that she is not more than pretty; "if not beautiful" cancels this implication. This notion of suspending presuppositions is discussed in Horn (1972).

Compare (103)-(108):

(103) Nancy is pretty, if, oh, not beautiful

(104) Nancy is pretty, if not, oh, beautiful

(105) His behavior was unusual, if, well, not unprecedented

(106) His behavior was unusual, if not, well, unprecedented

(107) It's possible, if, uh, not probable, that Pete will forget to water the plants

(108) It's possible, if not, uh, probable, that Pete will forget to water the plants

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My intuitions and those of my informants are that the only natural interpretations of (103), (105), and (107) are those in which the *if*-clauses are paraphraseable by "even though not . . . " In (104), (106), and (108), on the other hand, the more natural interpretations are those in which the *if*-clauses are suspending presuppositions. My intuitions are that when the *if*-clause is suspending a presupposition, the phrase "if not" is somehow taken to be a unit; my feeling, for example, in (106), is that in this reading, "if not" is one constituent, and "beautiful" another. The fact that (103), (105), and (107) don't seem to be able to have this reading would support this view; they treat "not+Adj." as one constituent; and if these in fact do not form one constituent in the suspension of a presupposition reading, then it would follow naturally that (103), (105), and (107) would not be able to have this reading. In (104), (106), and (108), on the other hand, the suspension of a presupposition reading would be quite natural, given this type of constitutent structure. The "even though" reading would, I believe, have the structure "if" plus "not+Adj.". Since "Adj." is of course in itself a constituent, we might expect (104), (106), and (108) to be able to have both readings, and I believe they can, although the suspension of a presupposition reading does seem more natural, since the position of the interjection reflects the appropriate structure for it.

It is interesting to note that if the adverb "downright" is inserted into a sentence such as (100), the resulting sentence is unambiguous:

(109) Nancy is pretty, if not downright beautiful

The *if*-clause in (109) can only have the suspension of a presupposition reading. What it is about the semantics of "downright" that causes this is not clear. Now compare (110) and (111):

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(110) Nancy is pretty, if, oh, not downright beautiful

(111) Nancy is pretty, if not, oh, downright beautiful

(111) seems fine, but (110) is somehow odd; odd, I suggest, because oh in this position tends to force the "even though" reading, which is unacceptable with "downright".

Oh_2, well, and uh are quite acceptable in contexts such as those in (103)-(108); but say is less so, and ah is quite unacceptable. Take (112)-(115), for example:

(112) That sort of behavior would be unusual, if, say, not unprecedented

(113) That sort of behavior would be unusual, if not, say, unprecedented

(114) That Pete will forget to water the plants is possible, if --ah!--not probable

(115) That Pete will forget to water the plants is possible, if not--ah!--probable

Say in (113) seems acceptable, but it seems strangely odd in (112); I do not know why. In (114) and (115), ah is quite odd; this is clearly because it is hardly plausible that the speaker would forget "probable" or "not probable". It would likewise be odd to use ah in any other similar sentence--e.g., it is strange to say "Joan is a poor typist, if not--ah!--an awful one".

I'd like to look also at other types of if-clauses which involve suspending a presupposition. Take, for example, (116) and (117) (the interjections here will not be marked for acceptability):

(116) John doesn't beat his wife, (oh,) (well,) (say,) (--ah!) if she makes an excellent dinner

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(117) John doesn't beat his wife anymore, (oh, / (well,) / (say, / (--ah!)) if he ever did

All of the interjections seem fine in (116); in (117), however, only $\underline{oh}_2$ seems reasonably acceptable; well seems a little worse, and say and ah seem quite unacceptable. It is clear why this is the case with ah, since it is not plausible that the speaker would forget how to suspend, or that he should suspend, the presupposition. In the case of say, in (116) the if-clause gives an example of a circumstance under which John doesn't beat his wife. However, the if-clause in (117) obviously could not be an example of anything; I would judge that it is for this reason that say is inappropriate in it.

It is not clear why well is worse in (117) than in (116).

Interjections are more acceptable in certain kinds of presupposition-suspending if-clauses than in others. For example, compare (117) with (118) and (119):

(118) When she grows up, I think Nancy will be pretty, (oh, / (well,) / (say, / (--ah!)) if not beautiful

(119) Your point would be glossed over, (oh, / (well,) / (say, / (--ah!)) if not ignored

In both (118) and (119), ah is, again, very odd, since it would be implausible for the speaker to forget to suspend the presupposition. $\underline{Oh}_2$, well, and say all seem quite acceptable in (118); in (119), $\underline{oh}_2$ and well seem fine, and say somewhat worse than in (118), but not as bad as in (117). I suspect the difference between these sentences and (117) is that there is a certain amount of choice of description

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involved in the if-clauses in (118) and (119); one could use some term other than "beautiful", or other than "ignored"; or some term not as far advanced, or farther advanced, on the scale involved. This would make an interjection such as oh_2, well, or say more plausible, since they indicate that the speaker is making a choice or picking out an example. In (117), however, there is no real choice involved inside the if-clause.

Let's also look at some other sentences containing presupposition -suspending if-clauses. I will here put question marks and asterisks to indicate my opinion of the acceptability of an interjection. (Other informants consulted have given similar judgments to those given here). Since ah, as we have seen, is unacceptable before any if-clause which suspends a presupposition, I will not include it in these sentences.

(120) They won't arrive until Tuesday, (oh,) (??well,) (*say,) if at all

(121) They won't arrive until Tuesday, if, (oh,) (*well,) (*say,) at all

(122) I have only three friends, (oh,) (??well,) (*say,) if that

(123) I have only three friends, if, (*oh,) (*well,) (*say,) that

(124) I have only three friends, if, (oh,) (well,) (?*say,) I even have that many

(125) Who, (oh,) (?well,) (*say,) if anyone, came?

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(126) Who came, (?oh,) if anyone?
(*well,)
(*say,)

(127) Who, if, (?oh,) anyone, came?
(*well,)
(*say,)

(128) Who came, if, (??oh,) anyone?
(*well,)
(*say,)

(129) When, (oh,) if ever, is Julie coming?
(*well,)
(*say,)

(130) When, if, (*oh,) ever, is Julie coming?
(*well,)
(*say,)

(131) When is Julie coming, (?oh,) if ever?
(*well,)
(*say,)

There are certain general conclusions we can draw from these sentences. First, obviously, say is unacceptable in all of them. This is probably because both of its readings would be anomalous here. The "for example" reading would imply that the following element (I am assuming here that say would refer to the following element) is one example out of several which the speaker could have chosen; clearly this interpretation would be anomalous in these sentences (e.g., a phrase such as "if ever" is not an example of anything). The "let's imagine" reading, similarly, would be anomalous (e.g., it would be anomalous to paraphrase (131) as "When is Julie coming; let's imagine, if ever?").

We can also conclude that oh_2 and well are more acceptable when preceding the word if than when following it, at least when the part of the clause following if is short. I think this is because when oh or well precede if, the speaker can be stopping to think

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about whether to suspend the presupposition, or the best way of doing it; however, if the interjection follows *if*, it indicates that there must be some choice as to how the speaker could phrase the clause itself. If the rest of the clause consists only of something like "anyone", "ever", or "that", there is not sufficient choice; if it is longer, however, as in (124), it leaves open the possibility of a different phrasing and thus an interjection is more acceptable.

Also, it seems that if the *if*-clause is at the end of the sentence, it is less acceptable to have a preceding (or internal) interjection than if the *if*-clause occurs parenthetically inside the sentence; this can be seen by comparing (125) and (126), (127) and (128), and (129) and (131). I do not know why this should be the case.

H. Parentheticals and Sentential Adverbs.

Another area which I would like to discuss deals with parenthetical expressions, as in the following sentences:

(132) Sue won't ever finish her novel, Bill thinks.

(133) Sue won't, Bill thinks, ever finish her novel.

Let's look first at what happens to (132) when an interjection occurs in front of the parenthetical (and the interjections will not be marked for acceptability):

(134) Sue won't ever finish her novel, (oh,) Bill thinks
(uh,)
(well,)
(say,)
(--ah!)

First of all, I want to exclude the reading in which the interjection refers to "Bill" alone; I want, rather, to discuss the possibility of its referring to "Bill thinks" as a whole. Given this, I find *say*

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and ah unacceptable in (134), but oh_2, well, and uh are possible, I think; and all three carry the same type of meaning; that is, they indicate that the speaker tends to disagree with Bill; he thinks Sue will finish her novel. Or, more accurately, it seems that in saying oh, uh, or well before "Bill thinks", the speaker is indicating that ther are other things he could say in addition to, or instead of, merely saying "Bill thinks". Now, let us take oh_2 alone, and look at its meaning and acceptability with a wider range of parentheticals:

(135) Sue won't ever finish her novel, oh, (Bill thinks)
(Bill believes)
(I think)
(I suppose)
(Bill hopes)
(I hope)
(it has been asserted)
(I suppose?)
(we've decided)
(it's certain)
(I know)
(I assert)
(I admit)
(it's clear)
(Bill asserts)
(Rory insists)
(I agree)
(Clara has announced)
(it seems)

According to my intuitions, oh before "Bill believes" indicates, as in the case of "Bill thinks", that the speaker is uncertain that Bill's belief is correct. Similarly, before "I think" and "I suppose", the speaker is quite uncertain that he is right. Before "Bill hopes", I find oh worse, but meaning that the speaker is uncertain that Bill's hopes are founded on any solid basc. Before "I hope", I find oh quite odd; I am not sure why. Before "it has been asserted", again, oh indicates that the speaker feels that the people who did the asserting may have been wrong. When "I suppose" is a question--asked,

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perhaps, of Sue's thesis advisor--I find oh out of the question. With all of the other possible parentheticals listed, I find oh unacceptable, except, in some cases, in the oh_1 sense. As an example of this, note that it would be possible to say, e.g., "Sue won't ever finish her novel, oh, I know"; but this, I think, would be more or less paraphraseable as "Oh, Sue won't ever finish her novel, I know"; oh in the former sentence then is semantically oh_1 (whereas "Sue won't ever finish her novel, oh, Bill thinks" would not be paraphraseable as "Oh, Sue won't ever finish her novel, Bill thinks"; while the latter is of course a possible sentence it does not mean at all the same thing as the former sentence--that is, the uncertainty element is not present in it, and also, it indicates that the speaker has only just thought of or found out something, which the former sentence does not. Thus, oh before "Bill thinks" is oh_2). This oh_1 reading strikes me as only possible with "it's certain", "it's clear", "I know", "I agree", and "I admit". I think it would be odd to say "Sue won't ever finish her novel, oh, I assert", "Sue won't ever finish her novel, oh, we've decided", "Sue won't ever finish her novel, oh, it seems". In general, the difference between the parentheticals in which oh_2 (in the uncertainty sense) is fine and those in which only oh_1 (if anything) is possible seems to have to do with how much certainty is being expressed in the parenthetical. "We've decided", "it's certain", "I know", "I assert", etc., indicate a strong feeling that the statement is correct, as opposed to "I think", "Bill believes", etc., which do not indicate this. In addition, "admit" is factive, and "announce" tends to be factive (which would explain why "Clara has announced" is odd with oh_2).

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However, it is still unclear, for example, why "Bill asserts" is worse (for me) with oh than "it has been asserted"; and why "I hope" is odd with oh. Also, why is "it seems" odd with oh, when "I think" is not? Perhaps it is because one would say "it seems" when one's judgment was based on objective criteria, whereas one might say "I think" when one's judgment was based partly or entirely on subjective criteria; and perhaps it is reasonable to express uncertainty about a judgment based on subjective criteria, but less reasonable to express uncertainty about one based on objective criteria. This is, of course, merely a vague suggestion.

The oddness of oh with "I suppose?" also does not, of course, fit into the generalization made here. In general, oh cannot be used to indicate uncertainty in questions; if one converts any of the parentheticals in (135) into questions (they would, incidentally, have to be echo-questions), oh is odd; e.g., *"Sue won't ever finish her novel, oh, Bill thinks?" *"Sue won't ever finish her novel, oh, it has been asserted?"

In general, however, the cases in which oh_2 cannot be used are those in which the speaker is expressing or implying certainty that the statement is correct. Clearly, this would render the addition of an interjection of which the purpose was to indicate that the speaker was not certain of the statement's being correct semantically anomalous.

If one replaces oh by uh in (135), my intuitions indicate the following: that with "Bill believes" through "I suppose" (statement), uh indicates that the speaker is uncertain that the statement (or the hope) is correct. With "I suppose?", uh simply is

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unacceptable, and with all the rest of the parentheticals, the only really plausible reading is the reluctance-to-speak one (e.g., "Sue won't ever finish her novel, uh, we've decided--I hate to tell you we've decided this"--"Sue won't ever finish her novel, uh, I know--I hate to admit that I know it"). Like oh, uh cannot indicate uncertainty as to the statement's being correct in the last eleven cases listed.

If one replaces oh by well in (135), I get the following readings: with "Bill believes" through "I suppose" (statement), the speaker is expressing scepticism as to whether Bill's or his own beliefs or hopes are well-founded. With "I suppose" (question) well is quite unacceptable. With the rest, well is odd through quite unacceptable (e.g., ??"Sue won't ever finish her novel, well, it's certain", ??"Sue won't ever finish her novel, well, Clara has announced", *"Sue won't ever finish her novel, well, I assert".) In the last case, "I assert" is being used performatively, and the unacceptability of well follows, I believe, from the fact that it is odd under any conditions to modify the performative "assert" with well (or, for that matter, oh or any other such interjection)--e.g., *"I, well, assert, that Bill left".[11] Thus, it seems that well is inappropriate before any of the parentheticals that indicate relative certainty, just as are oh_2 and uh, in all but its reluctance-to-speak reading.

Say and ah I find unacceptable in all cases. I assume this is because they can never be used to indicate uncertainty. Certainly a parenthetical like these could not be an example of something; nor could the speaker plausibly have forgotten what the parenthetical

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should be. $\underline{Oh}_1$, as mentioned above, is acceptable with some of the parentheticals which indicate relative certainty. It does not seem to be acceptable with those which do not.

In sentences in which the parenthetical is inserted into the middle of the sentence, rather than being at the end, the same facts in general hold:

(136) Sue won't, oh, (Bill thinks / Bill believes / Bill hopes / I think / I suppose / I hope / it has been asserted / we've decided / it's certain / I know / I assert / I admit / it's clear / Bill asserts / Rory insists / I agree / Clara has announced / it seems) ever finish her novel

Here, my intuitions are that with "Bill thinks", "Bill believes", "Bill hopes", "I think", "I suppose", "it has been asserted", and "Bill asserts", oh indicates that the speaker is uncertain that the belief, hope, supposition, or assertion is correct. With all the others (including, oddly enough, "I hope"), it either cannot mean this as easily or cannot mean this at all; if oh can occur, it can only be $\underline{oh}_1$. For example, the sentence "Sue won't, oh, I admit, ever finish her novel", is the same in meaning as the sentence "Oh, I admit Sue won't ever finish her novel" (while "Sue won't, oh, I think, ever finish her novel" could not be paraphrased as "Oh, I think Sue won't ever finish her novel"). Uh and well likewise behave in general in the same way in a sentence such as (136) as in a sentence such as (135).

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The usage of $\underline{oh}_2$ which appears in these sentences is somewhat unusual, since the speaker is not exactly choosing between different alternatives as to what he could say. However, perhaps a partial explanation of this usage is that in putting an oh before an expression such as "Bill believes" or "I think", the speaker is indicating that he does not quite think that just saying "Bill believes" or "I think" is adequate--for example, in the case of "Bill believes", that he could say other things in addition to this (indicating, perhaps, that he thinks Bill is wrong); and, in the case of "I think", that he is not quite sure that he really should think what he is saying he thinks. This appears to be the only interpretation in which $\underline{oh}_2$, or any other interjection, is possible, with the parentheticals which indicate relative uncertainty; evidently this is the only sense in which they can be conceived of as having possible alternatives.

It is interesting also to note that if a sentence is followed by a sentential adverb, interjections are often inappropriate before this adverb. Some such adverbs are semantically similar to some of the parentheticals we have been discussing; for example, "hopefully" is similar to "I hope"; "certainly" to "it's certain"; "admittedly" to "I admit"; "supposedly" not to "I suppose" but at least to the similar "people suppose"; and "evidently" to "it is evident", or to "it seems". Let us look at the following sentences, and compare them to the similar sentences with parentheticals. I have marked the interjections according to my intuitions as to their appropriateness.

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(137) The election was rigged, (??uh,) supposedly
(?oh,)
(?well,)
(*say,)
(*--ah!)
(*--oh!)

(138) They'll get us some new curtains soon, (?uh,) hopefully
(??oh,)
(??well)
(*say,)
(*--ah!)
(*--oh!)

(139) I lied to him about the money, (??uh,) certainly
(??oh,)
(??well,)
(*say,)
(*--ah!)
(??--oh!)

(140) It's a faithful likeness, (?uh,) admittedly
(?oh,)
(?well,)
(*say,)
(*--ah!)
(--oh!)

(141) He pretended to be an old friend, (??uh,) evidently
(*oh,)
(*well,)
(*say,)
(*--ah!)
(*--oh!)

(I wish say to be considered as referring to the following element in all cases.)

The most obvious conclusion we can draw from these sentences is that interjections are in general odd before sentential adverbs. Say and ah are everywhere unacceptable, just as they are before parentheticals. Also, almost anything is unacceptable before "evidently", just as almost anything is unacceptable before "it seems". $\underline{\text{Oh}}_1$ is fine before "admittedly", just as it is before "I admit", and odd before "supposedly" and "hopefully", just as it is before "I suppose"

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and "I hope"; however, it is also odd before "certainly", which it is not before "it's certain". Uh, oh_2, and well do not here behave in the same way as they do before parentheticals, since they seem generally odd before any of these adverbs (and, in fact, seem better before "admittedly" than before the others, although they are not good before "I admit"). I cannot offer any explanation for these facts.

It is interesting to note that adverbs with incorporated negatives behave unlike the adverbs listed above, in that they allow all of the interjections except for say to precede them; e.g.:

(142) The election was rigged, (uh,) unquestionably
(oh,) undeniably
(well,)
(*say,)
(--ah!)
(--oh!)

Why the presence of a negative should have this effect is unclear.

I. Yiddish-Movement.

The presence of an interjection can be inappropriate in certain kinds of sentences in which Yiddish-Movement (also known as Topicalization)[12] has occurred. An example of such a sentence is (143):

(143) Jane Bill doesn't like

In (143), "Jane" is the direct object of "doesn't like", and has been moved to the beginning of the sentence by Y-movement. A sentence which is not dissimilar in meaning is (144):

(144) Jane, Bill doesn't like her

(144) is similar or identical in meaning to "As for Jane, Bill doesn't like her", and may possibly result from the deletion of "as for". Y-Movement has not applied here, obviously, since the pronoun "her"

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is present in the sentence as the direct object. Now let us examine what happens if we put an interjection after "Jane" in these sentences:

(145) Jane, oh, Bill doesn't like

(146) Jane, oh, Bill doesn't like her

Oh can refer to "Bill" in either of these sentences; I wish to exclude this reading, and concentrate on that reading in which oh refers to "Bill doesn't like (her)". In this reading, while (145) is not glaringly unacceptable, it is not nearly as good as (146), to my feeling and that of other informants. Similarly, take (147)-(150), again, ignoring the reading in which the interjection refers to "Bill":

(147) Jane, well, Bill doesn't like

(148) Jane, well, Bill doesn't like her

(149) Jane--ah, Bill doesn't like!

(150) Jane--ah, Bill doesn't like her!

Again, (148) and (150) seem much better than (147) and (149). Now, take (151) and (152):

(151) Jane, say, Bill doesn't like

(152) Jane, say, Bill doesn't like her

Say can refer to either Jane or Bill in (151) and (152), and both sentences are then acceptable; however, again, I wish to consider say as referring to "Bill doesn't like(her)". In this case, I can, with some difficulty, get the "let's imagine" reading of say for (152); I have a great deal more difficulty getting this reading for (151), however. I cannot get the "for example" reading for either sentence; since this may be because "Bill doesn't like(her)" is too definite and factual for the use of say in the reading to be appropriate, let's look at these sentences:

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(153) Jane, say, Bill might not like

(154) Jane, say, Bill might not like her

Here, as in the case of the "let's imagine" reading, I find the "for example" reading possible in (154) (although (154) is not nearly as good as "As for Jane, say, Bill might not like her" would be), but more difficult to get in (153).

Thus, in the case of these sentences, when an interjection refers to the entire phrase following it, it tends to be odd following a Y-moved element such as in (143), which has been chopped, but acceptable following an element which is in some sense also topicalized but for which there is a coreferential pronoun still in the sentence, such as in (144).

Another pair of sentences which can be examined for the same phenomena are (155) and (156):

(155) Madrid Roger's visiting

(156) Madrid, Roger's visiting there

Take the following sentences, which contain interjections:

(157) Madrid, oh, Roger's visiting

(158) Madrid, oh, Roger's visiting there

(159) Madrid, well, Roger's visiting

(160) Madrid, well, Roger's visiting there

(161) Madrid--ah, Roger's visiting!

(162) Madrid--ah, Roger's visiting there!

(163) Madrid, say, Roger's visiting

(164) Madrid, say, Roger's visiting there

According to my intuitions, and those of others with whom I have checked, in each case the interjection seems more acceptable in the

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cases where there is a pronoun coreferential to the topicalized element present in the sentence, than in the cases where there is no such pronoun.

In other kinds of sentences intuitions are less clear, however, Take, for example, these sentences:

(165) That sweater, oh, I got for Christmas in 1969

(166) That sweater, oh, I got it for Christmas in 1969

(167) That sweater, well, I got for Christmas in 1969

(168) That sweater, well, I got it for Christmas in 1969

(169) That sweater--ah, I got for Christmas in 1969

(170) That sweater--ah, I got it for Christmas in 1969

(171) That sweater, say, I got for Christmas in 1969

(172) That sweater, say, I got it for Christmas in 1969

(173) That sweater, say, I might give away

(174) That sweater, say, I might give it away

(Again, I would like say here to be interpreted as referring to the whole phrase which follows, rather than to "that sweater".) My feelings and those of my informants as regards these sentences is that in general, the sentences in which there has been Y-Movement in (165)-(174) seem much better than the sentences in which there has been Y-Movement in (145)-(164). Specifically, (165) seems fine for all informants, and in the cases of (167), (169), (171) (in which say would have the "let's imagine" reading), and (173) (in which say would have the "for example" reading), people are divided as to whether they find the sentences acceptable or not. (166), (168), (170), (172) and (174), however, in which the sentence contains a coreferential pronoun, are found acceptable by everyone.

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One might ask why the sentences in which there has been Y-Movement here seem better than the equivalent sentences which we looked at before. I have no explanation, and only one comment--that is, that sentences in which the phrase following the interjection is relatively long and in which the moved word has been moved from the middle rather than the end of the sentence (which is the case in (165)-(174)) seem more acceptable than sentences in which the situation is otherwise. As an example of this, take the sentence:

(175) Madrid Roger's visiting in September

This is similar to (155), but longer, and "Madrid" is moved from the middle rather than the end of the sentence. Now take the following sentences:

(176) Madrid, oh, Roger's visiting in September

(177) Madrid, oh, Roger's visiting there in September

(178) Madrid, well, Roger's visiting in September

(179) Madrid, well, Roger's visiting there in September

(180) Madrid--ah, Roger's visiting in September!

(181) Madrid--ah, Roger's visiting there in September!

(182) Madrid, say, Roger's visiting in September

(183) Madrid, say, Roger's visiting there in September

I find the sentences in which Y-Movement has taken place here more acceptable than the equivalent ones in (157)-(164); although the sentences in which there has not been Y-Movement are still in any case the most acceptable.

I have no explanation for why there should be a problem of acceptability in sentences involving Y-Movement.

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One of the primary things we can conclude from this data concerning these various different phenomena is that interjections are only acceptable when there are possible alternatives to the thing that the interjection refers to--that is, when the speaker could have said something other than what he does say; when there is, thus, a reason for him to stop to think. In the cases of uh, oh_2, and well, the speaker can be stopping to think of the best way of saying what he has to say; but in the cases of say and ah, the speaker must be stopping to choose an alternative which is substantially different in content from other possible ones. It seems to be for this reason that say and ah are acceptable in considerably fewer contexts than are uh, oh_2, and well. Examples of contexts in which uh, oh_2, and well are acceptable but say and ah are not, are: contexts involving negative raising, negative polarity items, islands, presupposition-suspending if-clauses, parentheticals and sentential adverbs.

With certain kinds of constructions, it is less clear why the presence of an interjection renders a sentence odd or unacceptable, and the cause seems to lie at least in part in some factor in the nature of the construction involved. However, in virtually all of these cases, what precisely this factor is is not clear. For example, it needs to be explained why interjections are only acceptable after certain kinds of preposed adverbials and not others; why interjections are odd in sentences in which the rule of Sluicing has taken place; why they tend to be unacceptable in picture noun environments, although they are generally acceptable in other types of islands; why they behave in the way they do before parentheticals and before sentential adverbs; and why they tend to be odd in sentences in which

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Yiddish-Movement has applied. In all of these cases, the unacceptability of the sentence cannot obviously be ascribed to the fact that there are not sufficient possible alternatives to the thing which the interjection refers to. We must, then, conclude that the behavior of interjections reveals some interesting characteristics of the phenomena listed above, although no clear explanation of them is forthcoming.

The interjections discussed here, then, do interrelate with other syntactic and semantic phenomena, and do so in interesting ways.

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Footnotes

1. It is also interesting to note that the interjection only seems to be able to refer to "only" here; it does not seem to be able to refer, for example, to "only did John go". My intuition is that the constituents here are "not only" and "did John go", and that thus "only did John go" is not a constituent and that it is for this reason that oh cannot refer to it. This is, of course, however, only an intuition on my part.

2. However, John Lawler has pointed out that one can say such things as "I lost, oh, my temper", meaning, "for example, I did this". It is not clear to me quite how the interjection is functioning here.

3. These facts were first pointed out to me by George Lakoff.

4. I have not included the word uh in this list of interjections. This is because uh is in general acceptable in far more contexts than any other interjection; it is, for example, acceptable in all of (42)-(49), although in (45), (46), (48) and (49) no other interjection is acceptable. There are, however, contexts in which it is not too acceptable or in which it conveys only a certain type of meaning (some examples are those given above in the text). I have decided for the sake of simplifying the text to include uh in the discussion only in such contexts; and in contexts in which uh is quite acceptable and has no other special characteristics I shall not

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include it. It is not entirely clear to me why uh is appropriate in so many more contexts than other interjections; it does appear, however, that it has a less specialized and differentiated meaning than do other interjections, and can sometimes be used, for example, to indicate no more than nervousness; given this, one might suppose that it would be able to occur in many contexts which other interjections could not occur in.

5. Negative-raising is discussed in Horn (1971), R. Lakoff (1969), and Lindholm (1969), among other works.

6. Negative polarity items are discussed in Horn (1972), Borkin (1971), and Baker (1970), among other works.

7. John Lawler has pointed out that while well is questionable with "worth shit", interestingly, it seems quite acceptable with "worth a damn".

8. I have treated say here as if it had only the "for example" reading; in this reading, it is unacceptable. However, the "let's imagine" reading would, I believe, be acceptable here--although it would not be in (62), (63), (64), and (65). I do not know why this is the case.

9. It is also pointed out in Morgan (1972), as mentioned in Chapter 2, that extraposed relative clauses have properties that their non-extraposed counterparts do not.

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10. Picture nouns are discussed in Postal (1971) and G. Lakoff (1971).

11. $\underline{\text{Oh}}_2$ and <u>well</u> are odd modifying some performatives, but not others. For example:

(a) I, (*well,) state, that Bill left
(*oh,)
(

(b) I, (*well,) ask, you to tell me what you're doing here
(*oh,)

(c) I, (??well,) promise, that I'll come and help
(??oh,)

(d) I, (well,) request, you to open the window
(oh,)

(e) I, (well,) order, you to go
(oh,)

(f) I, (well,) insist, that you come
(oh,)

I think the difference between (a)-(c) and (d)-(f) is that while there could hardly be any alternative performative to "state", "ask", or "promise", and thus there is no reason to use an interjection, in (d)-(f), the performatives "request", "order", and "insist" could be viewed as representing different ways of performing a similar act. Thus, for example, in (d), in saying <u>oh</u> or <u>well</u>, the speaker might be stopping to think about whether to say "insist" or to be more polite and say "request". There are, therefore, possible alternatives to the performatives in (d), (e), and (f).

12. This rule is discussed in Warshawsky (1966).

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