

A case of precision timing in ordinary conversation: Overlapped tag-positioned address terms in closing sequences.

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# A Case of Precision Timing in Ordinary Conversation: Overlapped Tag-Positioned Address Terms in Closing Sequences

**GAIL JEFFERSON**

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GAIL JEFFERSON

### A Case of Precision Timing in Ordinary Conversation: Overlapped Tag-Positioned Address Terms in Closing Sequences

i. A widely used transcription procedure is that of marking the precise point at which some ongoing utterance is overlapped by the talk of another speaker. The version utilized here is to place a double oblique [/ /] in the talk of an ongoing speaker to indicate the moment at which another speaker has started to talk. This procedure has provided encounters with a variety of systematic phenomena, among which is the following. An 'address term' occurring in 'tag' position (as a last particle of an otherwise possibly complete utterance)<sup>1</sup> is overlapped by the talk of the recipient of that utterance. So, for example:

[FD :IV :40]

Desk: Is it a stretcher patient / / Ma'am,  
Caller<sup>o</sup>: It's- Uh yes he is,

[NB :9-10-68 :6 :3]

Penny: O:kay. I'll see yuh.  
Agnes: A::?righ / / Dear,  
Penny: Bye bye,  
Agnes: Bye bye,

That is, Desk's "Ma'am" is overlapped by Caller's "It's-" and Agnes' "Dear" is overlapped by Penny's "Bye bye".

<sup>1</sup> The structural-sequential features of a 'possibly complete utterance' have been described at great length by Harvey Sacks in a series of unpublished lectures. For the purposes of this paper the crucial features involve that while a complete utterance may be identical with a sentence it need not be, but may indeed consist of a single word; and that the occurrence of a possible complete utterance can provide for a next speaker's starting to talk at the moment of its completion.

## ⌵ About the article

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