Jocular mockery, (dis)affiliation, and face

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Abstract:

Teasing has often been linked with studies of face, with many analysts claiming that it can be interpreted as face-threatening and/or face-supportive depending on the context. Since teasing encompasses such a diverse and heterogeneous range of actions in interaction, however, the analysis of teasing in this paper is restricted to a particular type of teasing, namely, jocular mockery. After exploring how jocular mockery is interactionally achieved as an action, the ways in which participants align or disalign their responses to previous actions through jocular mockery, thereby indexing affiliative or disaffiliative stances with other participants is discussed. Building on this initial analysis, it is proposed that an approach to pragmatics informed by the results and methods of conversation analysis can usefully ground an exploration of the ways in which jocular mockery influences the participants' interpretations of their evolving relationships, here glossed as face consistent with its conceptualization in Arundale's (1999, 2006, this volume) Face Constituting Theory. It is argued that an approach to jocular mockery which explicates its impact on the evolving relationship between the interactants gives a richer account than that concerned only with the personal identity, public image or the wants of individuals, as face has traditionally been understood.

Key words:

teasing, mocking, affiliation, face, interactional achievement, Australian English

Bio-note:

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1. Introduction

Teasing has become the focus of a considerable amount of research in pragmatics since Radcliffe-Brown (1940) first drew attention to the ways in which mocking and insulting others can occur freely in so-called “joking relationships.” Yet as teasing has been investigated in an increasingly diverse range of contexts, ranging from children taunting each other, adults socialising children, between adults in casual interactions as well as in workplaces, and even flirting in (potentially) romantic relationships, it has become apparent that teasing in fact encompasses a markedly heterogeneous group of actions in interaction (Keltner et al., 2001: 235; Pawluk, 1989: 145-146). This diversity is reflected in the wide range of functions now ascribed to teasing in interaction. Teasing is said to be associated with fostering interpersonal and group solidarity (Boxer and Cortés-Conde, 1997; Dynel, 2007; Kotthoff, 1996; Lampert and Ervin-Tripp, 2006; Norrick, 1993, 1994, 2003; Partington, 2008; Straehle, 1993; Zadjman, 1995) or more broadly affiliation (Antaki, 1998: 79; Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987: 160), mitigating face threats (Dynel, 2007), defusing conflict (Keltner et al., 2001; Norrick and Spitz, 2008), asserting power and in socialising others (Boxer and Cortés-Conde, 1997; Keltner et al., 2001; Kotthoff, 2007; Norrick, 1994; Partington, 2008; Tholander, 2002; cf. Drew, 1987: 250), expressing outright aggression or impoliteness (Boxer and Cortés-Conde 1997; Dynel 2007; Kotthoff, 1996; cf. Bousfield, 2008: 136-137), as well as claiming and/or ascribing identities (Drew, 1987; Dynel 2007; Queen 2005; Schnurr, 2009). One common element across these different functions of teasing is the notion that it combines elements of provocation and playfulness directed at others or self (Boxer and Cortés-Conde, 1997; Everts, 2003 Keltner et al., 2001; Lampert and Ervin-Tripp, 2006; Norrick, 1993, 1994; cf. Dynel, 2008: 251-252).¹ The degree of provocation versus playfulness involved is claimed to run along a continuum, from bonding and nipping through to outright biting (Boxer and Cortés-Conde, 1997: 279).

From the perspective of face theory, teasing is said to involve particular combinations of face threat (provocation or aggression) and face support (rapport or solidarity) directed at a co-present party, including self (Bousfield, 2008: 136; Dynel, 2008: 252; Keltner et al. 2001: 240; Straehle, 1993: 226-227; Zadjman, 1995: 320). However, while previous work on teasing from the perspective of face has drawn from either Brown and Levinson’s (1987) or Goffman’s (1955[1967]) notions, the recent move towards a pragmatics informed by conversation analysis (Arundale, 2009, this volume; Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009; Haugh, 2009), raises the question of whether we can better understand the nature of teasing by paying closer attention to its intricate relationship with the interactional achievement of face (cf. Geyer, 2008, this volume). In this paper, instances of teasing amongst Anglo speakers of Australian English are analysed from the perspective of Arundale’s (1999, 2006, this volume) Face Constituting Theory in order to show how teasing can concurrently engender evaluations of both face threat and face support. However, since teasing covers such a diverse and heterogeneous range of actions in interaction, as previously noted, the following analysis is restricted to a particular subset of teasing where participants are orienting to fostering solidarity, rapport or affiliation. Such teasing is invariably carried out within a marked non-serious or joking frame (Goffman 1955[1967]: 218,

¹ While *teasing* in the vernacular sense cannot be directed at self (i.e., I can’t *tease* myself), in the literature teasing others is often investigated in conjunction with self-directed teasing/joking or mocking of self, and so the usage of teasing in this technical sense is respected here.

1956[1967]: 495), and so is here termed “jocular mockery” in order to distinguish it from the broader category under which it may be at least partially subsumed.

The paper begins by characterising the act of jocular mockery with a particular focus on how it arises in interaction, building on the rich literature on teasing to date. It is suggested that paying close attention to how the utterances in question are framed by the speaker and interpreted by the recipient(s), as well as the local sequential environment, is crucial to establishing that the mockery is interactionally achieved as jocular rather than aggressive. Drawing from recent work in conversation analysis on affiliation, a close examination of a candidate example of jocular mockery then indicates that the interactional achievement of particular stances on the relationships between the participants, namely dis/affiliation in this case, can be seen to emerge co-ordinate with the interactional achievement of jocular mockery as an action in interaction. In the following section, moving into an analytical frame of a pragmatics informed by conversation analysis, it is argued that such findings can be expanded upon by grounding the analysis of the complex connections between jocular mockery and relationships in Face Constituting Theory (Arundale, 1999, 2006, this volume). In particular, to explore the ways in which jocular mockery influences the participants’ interpretations of their continually evolving relationship(s), here glossed as face consistent with its conceptualisation as a relational phenomenon in Face Constituting Theory. It is argued that while jocular mockery may be evaluated as threatening to the relationship of those interactants, it can also be evaluated at the same time as supportive of their relationship. The complex intertwining of evaluations of face interpretations as threatening and supportive, which is found to be coordinate with the interactional achievement of jocular mockery in this analysis, suggests an approach to jocular mockery that explicates its impact on the evolving relationship between the interactants gives a richer account than that concerned only with the personal identity, public image or the wants of individuals, as face has traditionally been understood. The paper concludes by briefly considering the implications of this analysis for our approach to theorizing both face and teasing more broadly.

2. Jocular mockery

2.1. Jocular mockery in English

The vernacular sense of *mock* entered English in the mid 15th century from Old French *mo(c)quer* meaning to “deride”, “make fun of” or “tease” (Oxford English Dictionary), while the relevant sense of *tease* as “lightly irritating, annoying or goading the recipient” (Palwuk 1989: 148) that emerged in the 17th century evolved from Old English *tæsan* meaning to “tear or pull to pieces” (OED). In ordinary parlance, then, *mocking* overlaps to a large extent with *teasing* in that both involve a figurative cutting down or diminishment of the recipient. However, *mocking* does not have connotations of repeated provocation in the same way as *teasing*, nor does it encompass instances where an object of desire is purposefully withheld from someone. Instead, it is largely restricted in the vernacular sense to instances where a speaker imitates, impersonates or makes some kind of mocking remark, often in response to a mistake or slip up in the target’s performance (Everts, 2003 374; Norrick, 1993: 134, 1994: 244). Central to *mocking* in English, then, is the importance placed on not taking oneself too seriously, whether the mockery is self-directed (Fox, 2004: 68; Norrick, 1993: 80), or directed at both self and others (Goddard, 2006, 2009; Olivieri, 2003). However, just like teasing, it is not necessarily always

understood as playful or friendly, but may also be framed and/or interpreted as rude or aggressive.

Jocular mockery is a complex pragmatic act that builds on the injunction to “not take oneself too seriously”, being accomplished through various interactional practices, such as *taking the piss/mickey* (Goddard, 2009), deadpan jocular irony (Goddard, 2006), as well as through verbal or non-verbal imitation and impersonation (Everts, 2003 Norrick, 1993, 1994). It is closely related to, but not necessarily synonymous with practices such as *rubbing your mates* (Goddard, 2006) or more broadly jocular abuse (Hay, 2000), as well as self-deprecating humour (Ervin-Tripp and Lampert, 2009; Fox, 2004; Goddard, 2009; Norrick, 1993, 1994). It thus encompasses a complex array of (non-)verbal acts whereby the speaker somehow diminishes something of relevance to self, other, or a third party who is not co-present, but does so in a non-serious or jocular frame.

In characterising mockery as jocular or non-serious, rather than aggressive, examining participant responses together with the way in which the mocking utterance (or behaviour) is framed by the speaker in the local sequential context is crucial, as has been argued in relation to teasing more broadly (Drew, 1987; Pawluk, 1989; Straehle, 1993). The analysis of jocular mockery can therefore be separated into three inter-related dimensions: (1) occasioning of jocular mockery in the local sequential context, (2) projecting (or framing) of jocular mockery by the speaker, and (3) interpreting of jocular mockery by the recipient (the target and/or audience).²

Jocular mockery may be locally occasioned in response to the target “overdoing” or exaggerating a particular action (Drew 1987), slip-ups or exploitable ambiguity in what the speaker has previously said (or done) (Everts, 2003 Norrick, 1993, 1994), and face concerns (Haugh, forthcoming). Instances of “overdoing” include acts such as complaining, extolling and bragging, as previously noted by Drew (1987: 250), as well as overdoing polite routines and compliments, or being overly earnest or “serious” about the topic at hand. Slip-ups or ambiguity in what is said also occasion jocular mockery when they are exploited by the speaker in the form of imitation, or alternatively through hyper-understanding, where the speaker “exploit[s] potential weak spots (ambiguity) in a previous speaker’s utterance by echoing the latter’s words with a fundamentally different reading” (Brône, 2008: 2028). Finally, particular expectations about connection or separateness face can be invoked by interactants and thereby occasion jocular mockery in some instances.

Mockery can be framed or projected as non-serious, and thus jocular, in a number of ways by speakers, including various combinations of lexical exaggeration, formulaicity, topic shift markers, contrastiveness, prosodic cues, inviting laughter, and facial or gestural cues, as noted in relation to both teasing and non-serious talk more broadly (Attardo, Eisterheld, Hay and Poggi, 2003; Drew, 1987: 231-232; Edwards, 2000: 372, fn.14; Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987; Keltner et al., 2001: 234; Lampert and Ervin-Tripp, 2006: 56; Schegloff, 2001; Straehle, 1993: 214). Particular lexical selections can be exaggerated, either in the form of overstatement, where “a speaker makes a claim higher (or lower) on some scale than warranted” (Norrick, 2004: 1729), or through extreme case formulations (ECF), which involve semantically extreme expressions such as *all*, *always*, *every*, *never*, *none* and so on (Edwards, 2000: 349-350; Norrick, 2004: 1728-1729; Pomerantz, 1986). Formulaic or idiomatic expressions also appear to frame the mockery as non-serious by either alluding to

² The overview of jocular mockery in this section draws in part from a more extensive study of jocular mockery (see notes on data).

incongruous imagery (Antaki, 1998: 78; McHoul, Rapley and Antaki, 2008: 49), or by indicating a possible summarizing and closing of the sequence (Drew and Holt, 1998). Related to the use of idiomatic expressions to indicate a closing of a sequence, is the appearance of either lexical markers of discontinuity, or topic-initial ‘no’, which indicate a shift back to a serious frame, thus constituting evidence that the preceding sequence, often interpretable as a “side sequence” (Jefferson, 1972), was non-serious (Drew, 1997: 76; Schegloff, 2001: 1951-1952). Speakers may also frame the mockery as non-serious through contrasting what is said (or presupposed through what is said) with facts known to the participants (Drew, 1987: 232; Edwards, 2000: 372). Various prosodic cues are often crucial to projecting the mockery as jocular, including markedly louder or softer utterances, elongated vowels or syllables, emphatic stress through pronounced pitch accents, deadpan delivery through compressed pitch, and sing-song or other modulations in voice (Attardo et al., 2003; Keltner et al., 2001: 234). Closely related to these prosodic cues is the appearance of post-utterance completion laughter particles (such as *heheh*) that are used to orient the recipient to the possibility of joining in to laugh about the mocking remark (Glenn, 2003; Jefferson, 1979; Schenkein, 1972). Finally, various nonverbal cues, including raised or lowered eyebrows, nodding, smiling, a markedly blank facial expression, and iconic displays such as winking, can be observed to frame mockery as non-serious (Attardo et al., 2003; Keltner et al., 2001).

In order to characterise instances of mockery as jocular, however, close examination of the response of recipients, either the target of the mockery him/herself or other participants in the interaction, also proves crucial (Dynel, 2008: 248; Edwards, 2000: 348; Pawluk, 1989; Straehle, 1993). Responses to mockery generally fall into three broad categories: (1) rejecting the mockery as untrue or exaggerated, (2) going along with or making the pretence of accepting the mockery, or (3) ignoring the mockery (Drew, 1987; Keltner et al., 2001: 243; Pawluk, 1989: 160). Within these broad categories, mockery can be receipted as jocular in a number of ways. One of the key means is through laughter by one or more the recipients (Drew, 1987; Everts, 2003; Glenn, 2003; Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987). However, it is important to note that receipting the mockery as jocular through laughter does not necessarily mean recipients are accepting or going along with it. As Drew (1987) and Glenn (2003) both point out, laughter may be associated with serious rejection or resistance to mockery. Another key means by which recipients may display interpretations of mockery as jocular is by displaying explicit accord with, or appreciation of, the mockery, as well as through (partial) repetition of the mocking remark (Drew, 1987; Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987). Continuation of the jocular frame is also achieved through the recipient going along with the mockery by either elaborating upon the mockery or countering it (Drew, 1987; Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987), with the latter giving rise to what is commonly termed “banter” (Dynel, 2008: 243; Leech, 1983: 144-145; Norrick, 1993: 29).

2.2. Analysing jocular mockery in interaction

While the preceding discussion has separated the analysis of jocular mockery into these three broad dimensions, in examining actual instances of jocular mockery in interaction it becomes apparent that these analytical dimensions are in fact closely inter-related. The complexity of this pragmatic act thus arises from the way in which it involves multiple layers of meanings and cues directed at other, self, or a third-party not co-present that can be interpreted in various converging and diverging ways in

local sequential contexts by participants.³ For instance, in the following excerpt, we can see how these three dimensions are intricately involved in the interactional achievement of jocular mockery, in this case directed at a co-present recipient. Three students who are friends have been talking about using computers to do assignments up to this point in the conversation. Instances of jocular mockery directed at another person in this excerpt are observable in lines 150-151 and 164.⁴

(1) ICE-AUS: S1A-029: 4:43 “Your whole life is lost”

(Three friends talking at a university dormitory. Sally is a 19 year old female, while Tony and Greg are 18 year old males)

142 S: actually I've gotta book it for tomorrow,
 143 °the computer°
 144 (1.0)
 145 T: °so have I°=
 146 S: =I've got so:: much to do tomorrow;
 147 T: °mm° o:::h;
 148 G: =o:::h;
 149 (0.2)
 150 S: I have to ring channel [seven-
 151 G: [your who:le life
 152 is lost.
 153 (0.2)
 154 T: ha ha=
 155 S: =It is.
 156 (0.6)
 157 T: I gotta get up early in the morning
 158 [and I'm not looking] forward to that.
 159 S: [do you=what for?]
 160 what for?
 161 T: I've got a °bloody° nine o'clock lecture
 162 °this term.°
 163 (0.2)
 164 S: shock. (0.2) [horror]
 165 T: [It is.] It's awf-
 166 G: do you mean you're gonna have to be up by
 167 eight(hh)t o'clock.
 168 T: ↑YE:ah.
 169 S: if ↑I've got nine o'clock lectures I'm not
 170 up by eight o'clock?
 171 S: pardon me .hhhuh I hop up- like I set my
 172 alarm for eight.

The excerpt begins with Sally saying she needs to book a computer to use tomorrow, followed by Tony saying he has to do the same, before Sally going on to say in line 146 that she has a lot of things to do the following day. The latter is hearable as complaining in light of her emphatic stress and elongation of “so:: much” (line 146). Tony and Greg initially respond by receipting this as being informed of new information with an “oh” (lines 147-148) (Heritage, 1984; Schegloff, 2007: 118). However, in being elongated and ending with weak falling and then rising intonation,

³ In characterising jocular mockery as interactionally achieved, therefore, it is not being suggested that mockery projected as jocular is necessarily always interpreted in the same manner by all participants (cf. Xie, 2008: 167, fn.11). An interactional achievement model of communication allows for both converging and diverging interpretations of meanings and actions by participants (Arundale, 2006: 196; Haugh, 2008a).

⁴ A list of transcription symbols can be found at the end of this paper. Pseudonyms are used for all interactants.

both their responses are also hearable as overdone or mock sympathy. When Sally proceeds to start listing what she has to do (line 150), Greg's next comment in lines 151-152, which overlaps with Sally's listing of these activities, includes an extreme case formulation (that is, "your *whole* life") (Edwards, 2000: 349-350; Norrick, 2004: 1728-1729) uttered with a deadpan or compressed intonation contour (Attardo et al., 2003: 249). In redoing Sally's description of what she has to do the next day, Greg not only orients to it as overdoing complaining (or even whinging) through his reformulation of the complaint using an extreme case formulation (cf. Edwards, 2005: 18), but indicates by his flat intonation and lowered pitch that his sympathy is framed ironically, or what Goddard (2006) terms deadpan jocular irony. Greg's remark is then receipted as non-serious or jocular by Tony through laughter in line 154 (Glenn, 2003: 122-123; Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987: 161-162; Drew, 1987: 225). The target of the mockery (Sally), on the other hand, responds seriously in agreeing her whole life is indeed lost (line 155), thereby orienting (at least on the surface) to Greg's literal expression of sympathy rather than its ironic framing. In doing so, she implicitly rejects Greg's framing of her previous talk as overdoing complaining, and so her response can be characterised as po-faced (Drew 1987).

Yet although Sally responds seriously to Greg's mockery of her complaining about what she has to do, she later orients to the jocular frame of the sequence in her response to Tony's remark that he has to get up "early" for a nine o'clock lecture the next day (lines 157-158, 161-162). In using "bloody" to refer to the nine o'clock lecture (line 161), Tony expresses his "bad feeling" about having such an "early" lecture (Wierzbicka 2002: 1181), and thus his talk is also hearable as complaining. Echoing Greg's mocking of her previous talk as overdoing complaining, Sally responds in line 164 with an exaggerated assessment or overstatement about how bad it is to have a nine o'clock lecture (Norrick, 2004: 1728-1729), delivered with emphatic stress. Tony, in turn, begins to respond seriously by agreeing with Sally's assessment (line 165), and so his response is also characterizable as po-faced. Tony's response to Sally's mocking, however, is cut-off by Greg who offers a possible account for Tony's complaint, namely having to get up at eight o'clock (lines 166-167). On close examination of Greg's question, however, it is also apparent that the jocular frame has indeed continued up to this point in the sequence, as his uttering of "eight (o'clock)" is infused with laughter particles. As Jefferson (1985) argues, not only the presence of laughter particles but also their particular occurrence in an utterance may be meaningful. In this case, the short burst of "bubbling laughter" in Greg's repetition of "eight" is interpretable as displaying mild amusement at the thought of it really being an early time to get up. It is apparent, then, that both instances of exaggerated responses to complaints by others in this excerpt can be characterised as jocular mockery.

3. Jocular mockery and dis/affiliation

As previously noted, the occurrence of teasing in interactions has been said to give rise in some instances to affiliation (Antaki, 1998: 79; Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987: 160), or rapport and solidarity (Boxer and Cortés-Conde, 1997: 279; Dynel, 2007: 250; Kotthoff, 1996: 300; Lampert and Ervin-Tripp, 2006: 53; Norrick, 1993: 80, 1994: 423, 2003: 1341-1342; Strachle, 1993: 211; Zadjman, 1995: 327), among other things. In the case of jocular mockery, it appears that both affiliative and disaffiliative stances may be interactionally achieved. Building upon the analysis of jocular mockery in the previous section, it is suggested here that through the

alignment or non/dis-alignment of their various responses to the initial complaints and subsequent jocular mockery, the participants concurrently index affiliative and disaffiliative stances with other participants in this local sequential context.

In the preceding analysis, the two instances of jocular mockery in the excerpt (lines 150-151 and line 164) can be seen to mirror each other, as both are occasioned by a complainable (Schegloff, 2005). In the first instance, this involves “express[ing] feelings of discontent” (Heinemann and Traverso, in press: 1) about having too much to do, and in the second case, about having to get up too early. As Heinemann and Traverso (in press) go on to argue, “by exposing their inner state in this manner, complainants make themselves vulnerable to how others react” (p.1), and for this reason, complaint sequences have been increasingly approached in conversation analysis in terms of the broader study of affiliation and disaffiliation (Barraja-Rohan, 2003; Drew and Holt, 1988; Drew and Walker, in press; Edwards, 2005; Jefferson, 1988; Laforest, 2002). It has been found that the response of those hearing the (emerging) complaint can be characterised as either aligning or non/dis-aligning, thereby influencing the trajectory of the complaint sequence (Drew and Walker, in press; Schegloff, 2005). In this way, participants may index affiliative and/or disaffiliative stances.

In this instance, holding a complaint up as a target for mockery rather than taking it seriously through the generally expected display of sympathy (Drew and Holt, 1988: 416; Edwards, 2005: 28), as well as blocking a more extended complaining sequence (Drew and Walker, in press), displays a lack of alignment with the complaint, and so arguably indexes a disaffiliative stance. An interpreting of the stance indexed by these instances of jocular mockery as disaffiliative is warranted, in this case, by the subsequent po-faced responses from both of the targets to the tease (Drew, 1987).

However, on closer examination, when one compares Tony and Greg’s response to Sally’s complaining, on the one hand, and Sally and Greg’s response to Tony’s complaining, on the other, it becomes apparent that these two instances of jocular mockery also occasion further (dis)affiliative work. In the first instance, where Sally is the target of jocular mockery, Greg appears to be aligning his response with that of Tony in latching his mocking “oh” to Tony’s “oh” (lines 147-148). Tony’s laughter in line 154 following Greg’s ironic expression of sympathy (“Your whole life is lost”, lines 151-152) is also arguably interpretable as laughing *at* Sally as the butt of Tony’s mockery (Glenn, 2003: 112-113; Jefferson, 1972: 301). In other words, Tony and Greg are displaying affiliation with each other through aligning their respective disaligning responses to Sally’s complaint. In the second instance where Tony is the target, however, Greg is more equivocal in aligning his response with Sally’s mockery of Tony. In particular, while Greg displays mild amusement at the thought of getting up at eight o’clock as being early, his question nevertheless also provides an account as to why having a nine o’clock lecture is a legitimate complainable (Pomerantz, 1986). In the second case, then, while Sally indexes a disaffiliative stance with Tony, Greg’s response is much more equivocal, if not outright affiliative.

In the analysis so far, then, it has been argued that mockery may be interactionally achieved as jocular in particular local, sequential contexts, and, moreover, that it may also concurrently index (dis)affiliative stances. Little has been said, however, about the implications of jocular mockery and the coordinate indexing of (dis)affiliative stances for the evolving relationship between participants (cf. Drew, 1987: 220). While in this instance Tony and Greg align their mocking responses to Sally’s complaining, and thereby simultaneously index affiliative stances with each other, as

well as a disaffiliative stance with Sally, an examination of their responses to other instances of complaints by Sally that precede and follow this particular excerpt paints a somewhat different picture of their relationships. When Sally complains on a number of other occasions in the conversation, Tony or Greg respond by collaborating in co-constructing the complaint sequence, or by expressing agreement (Schegloff, 2007: 61), thereby arguably indexing an affiliative stance with Sally (data not shown here). In other words, the way in which Tony and Greg index disaffiliation with Sally in this excerpt is only a passing phenomenon. A question thus arises as to the exact impact of these particular instances of jocular mockery and coordinate indexing of (dis)affiliative stances as they arise in this excerpt on their evolving relationships.

Such a question arguably currently lies outside the central purview of conversation analysis where the main focus is on understanding actions in talk-in-interaction (Arundale, in press: 16). Studying the impact of language use on face, however, is core business for pragmatics. One consequence of grounding the analysis of jocular mockery in a largely conversation analytic framework though, as has been attempted in this paper so far, is that employing a theory of face where the underlying epistemological and ontological assumptions are inconsistent with those underpinning conversation analysis is likely to yield a theoretically incoherent account of the complex relationship between face and the action in question (Arundale, 2009, this volume), in this case, jocular mockery. The analytical framework employed in the remainder of this paper is thus grounded in an approach to pragmatics informed by methods and research in conversation analysis (Arundale, 2005, in press; Schegloff, 2005: 474-474), namely Face Constituting Theory (Arundale, 1999, 2006, this volume). In this analysis it is suggested that while jocular mockery may be interpreted as a non-aligning response, thereby allowing participants to index a disaffiliative stance with the target of the mockery and hence to conjointly co-constitute relational separation, when considered relative to their evolving relationship(s) situated in the broader sociocultural milieu of Anglo-Australian speech practices, it may also, in many instances, be coordinate with the conjoint co-constitution of relational connection.

4. Jocular mockery and face in Anglo-Australian interactions

In this section, after briefly outlining the reasons for favouring Face Constituting Theory over previous models of face in the current analysis, examples from a set of instances of jocular mockery where the participants were newly acquainted are examined in order to further explore the complex relationship between face and jocular mockery (see notes on data). The advantage of drawing from these particular examples is that the entire “history” of the participant’s evolving relationship is on-record for inspection by the analyst, since the participants have only just met for the first time. An analysis of these examples indicates that not only may the interactional achievement of jocular mockery occasion evaluations of face interpretations as supportive and threatening, but may itself be occasioned by participant expectations underlying recipient design about potential future evaluations of face interpretations as supportive or threatening. In both instances, the interactional achievement of jocular mockery can also be observed to be coordinate with the conjoint co-constitution of relational connection.

4.1. Jocular mockery and Face Constituting Theory

The ways in which belittling self and others in a non-serious or joking manner can be characterised as a form of facework was first noted by Goffman (1955[1967]: 218) in his seminal introduction to the notion of face. However, it was only in Brown and Levinson's (1987) later work on politeness that the link between non-serious or joking teasing and face was investigated more carefully. Brown and Levinson (1987: 124), building on Goffman's work, claimed that joking and teasing are oriented to saving the hearer's positive face, the desire that one's wants be desirable to at least some others (ibid.: 62), in particular, the want to have mutually shared background knowledge and values (ibid.: 124), while at the same time are also potentially threatening to the hearer's negative face, the desire that one's actions be unimpeded by others (ibid.: 62). There are, however, two issues that arise when attempting to analyse the facework associated with mocking others or self in this way.

First, Brown and Levinson's (1987) dualistic approach to face does not readily allow the analyst to reconcile these two seemingly conflicting aspects of jocular mockery. This is because such teasing appears to give rise to what Tannen (1986) terms the "paradox of power and solidarity", whereby "a verbal attack can signal solidarity, because it implies a relationship where distance, respect, and power count for little" (cited in Norrick, 1993: 75). A dualistic model of face does not accommodate situations where a particular action, such as jocular mockery, is simultaneously face-threatening and face-supportive (cf. O'Driscoll, 1996).

Moreover, in both Goffman's (1955[1967]) and Brown and Levinson's (1987) approaches, face is defined in terms of person-centred attributes, a public self-image in the case of the former, and social wants in the latter. This person-centred conceptualisation of face, however, is also paradoxical in another sense in that it focuses on how jocular mockery occasions evaluations of individual persons, thereby underestimating the import of what is argued here to be primarily at stake when mocking others (or self) in a non-serious or jocular manner, namely co-constituting evaluations of the *relationship* between the participants. This is not to say that jocular mockery does not give rise to perceptions on the part of the target(s) that their person is being threatened, but rather to suggest that what has been largely missing in studies grounded in explanations of face thus far is an acknowledgment that jocular mockery involves primarily threats and support to the relationship between participants, and only secondarily (that is, derivative of the former) threatening or supportive of perceptions of their persons or public self-image. In other words, in tying face to the personal wants of individuals (a la Brown and Levinson), or claim(s) for recognition of one's self-image from others (a la Goffman), the impact of jocular mockery on the relationships of participants is unduly backgrounded.

Arundale's (1999, 2006, this volume) Face Constituting Theory (FCT), however, offers an alternative to treating teasing more broadly, and jocular mockery specifically, as paradoxical in terms of its relationship to face.⁵ This is because face is re-conceptualised in FCT as the interpreting(s) of participants of their relationship(s) with each other, not their perceptions of person-centred attributes. More specifically, face is defined as "participants' understandings of relational connectedness and separateness conjointly co-constituted in talk/conduct-in-interaction" (Arundale, this volume: 1), where connectedness is understood as "meanings and actions that may be

⁵ What follows is a very brief introduction to some of the most salient aspects of FCT in regards to the analysis of jocular mockery. For a much more comprehensive introduction see Arundale (this volume).

apparent as unity, interdependence, solidarity, association, congruence, and more” (Arundale, 2006: 204), and separateness is understood as “meanings and actions that may be voiced as differentiation, independence, autonomy, dissociation, divergence, and so on” (ibid.: 204). Crucially, then, in FCT the focus is on “our connection or separation” or “our face,” rather than “self face” or “other face”. One consequence of this move towards a relational approach to face is that the primary analytical focus is shifted to the relationship between the participants.

Arundale’s (this volume) reconceptualisation of face as dialectical in FCT also means that while jocular mockery can be interpreted as disaffiliative (see previous section), the fact that it can also be understood as indexing solidarity or building rapport is no longer to be viewed as paradoxical. Instead, it arises as a natural consequence of the ways in which evaluations of face as supported, threatened, or in stasis may be conjointly co-constituted in interaction. As Arundale (this volume) argues, “evaluations of face interpretations as threatening may arise apart from evaluations as supportive, but they may also arise in conjunction” (p.30). While Arundale cites compliment responses as examples of the latter, such an argument is also consistent with the *simultaneously* face-threatening and face-supportive nature of jocular mockery. In other words, coordinate with the interactional achievement of jocular mockery and relational connection, then, is the co-constitution of evaluations of this action as *simultaneously* threatening to and supportive of the participants’ face.

The definition of face threat and support here draws from that proposed by Arundale (1999, 2006, this volume), namely, as “the process of evaluating their provisional or operative interpretations of connectedness and separateness [i.e. face] as threatening, in stasis, or supportive of the relationship they are (re)creating” (Arundale, this volume: 26), where an interpreting is defined as the participant’s “dynamic process of forming both meanings and conversational actions” (Arundale, this volume: 5).⁶ More specifically, evaluations of face as threatened or supported involve three levels of face interpreting: (1) a provisional face interpreting, namely, a participant’s interpreting of the utterance or action currently in question “with regard to the extent of both connectedness with and separateness from the other person”, (2) an evolving face interpreting, involving a participant’s interpreting of “the extent of both connectedness and separateness that characterize the relationship with this particular person, up to the current point in the interaction”, and (3) a contextual face interpreting, encompassing the participant’s “expectation for the interpreting of connectedness with and separateness from the other person that applies in the current context, as that context has been invoked or brought into play at the present moment by the participants in the conversation” (Arundale, this volume: 27). Evaluations of face interpretations as supportive arise when the proffered shift in face interpretations (namely, the perceived difference between the provisional and evolving face interpretations) is consistent with the situated shift in face interpretations (that is, the perceived difference between the evolving and contextual face interpretations). Evaluations of face interpretations as threatening, on the other hand, arise when the situated and proffered shifts in face interpretations are not consistent (Arundale, this volume: 27-28). Within the context of FCT, then, jocular mockery is an action that is evaluated as face threatening because it involves interpretations of a particular utterance/act as mockery, but it is also evaluated as face supportive, since it involves interpretations of the utterance/act as non-serious in that particular local context. It is

⁶ A provisional interpreting is one that is “not yet assessed in view of uptake”, while an operative interpreting is one that has been “assessed in view of uptake” (Arundale, this volume: 5).

thus argued that relational connection may be occasioned in interaction through jocular mockery (see section 4.2).

However, as Arundale briefly notes, participants may also co-constitute an interpreting of another participant's interpreting of their face (a displaced face interpreting), or an interpreting of another participant's interpreting of the first participant's interpreting of their face (a reflexive face interpreting) (Arundale, this volume: 24; cf. Haugh and Hinze, 2003). In the subsequent analysis, then, it is also proposed that participants orient to possible future interpretations of relational connectedness and separateness in recipient design, as outlined in the Recipient Design Principle (Arundale, 1999, this volume), and thus displaced/reflexive face interpretations may themselves occasion jocular mockery (see section 4.3).

4.2. Jocular mockery and the conjoint co-constitution of relational connection

Before analysing a representative example of jocular mockery taken from interactions between Anglo-Australians who are getting acquainted, it is worth briefly noting that in Face Constituting Theory connection and separateness face constitute an abstract relational dialectic that encompasses a range of culture-specific manifestations (Arundale, 2006: 205, this volume: 21-22). Ethnographic studies of Anglo-Australian speakers of English indicate that connectedness can be broadly understood from an emic perspective as involving a sense of "shared ordinariness" and "toughness", where one is expected to "downplay anything special about oneself, including one's abilities, achievements and experiences" (Goddard 2006: 71), purposefully reject "any overt show of respect, with implications of familiarity, friendliness and equality" (Wierzbicka 2002: 1194-1195), and to "not take yourself too seriously" (Goddard 2006: 68, 2009; Peters 2007: 243). Separateness, on the other hand, primarily involves a sense of one's own "space", a territory that should not be entered into without the (tacit) consent of the individual (or group) concerned, as well as a sense of self-respect in regards to one's own competence (cf. Haugh 2004: 90, Haugh 2006: 21-24).⁷

In the following example of jocular mockery that occurred around 14 minutes into a conversation between two university students who have met for the first time, the occasioning of this mockery appears to be consistent with the importance that is claimed to be placed on "not taking yourself too seriously" in such ethnographic studies.

(2) AGA: ERCH: 14:54 "Does he do *bonsai* as well?"

(Emma is female in her early 30s and Chris is a male in his mid-20s who are getting acquainted)

- 311 E: yeah I think- I think I did like the guy that
 312 I ended up studying with [he] I think he's=
 313 C: [yeah]
 314 E: =the best there is I haven't met him in person=
 315 C: =English guy?
 316 (1.1)
 317 E: WELL NO he's- he's in NEITHER THE (.) sensei
 318 that I ended [up]=

⁷ Such descriptions do not amount to the claim that such understandings of connectedness or separateness are in any way unique to Anglo-Australian speakers of English. Indeed, previous work indicates there may be significant overlap (Fox, 2004; Norrick, 1993). Such comparisons across speakers of different varieties of English, however, remain beyond the scope of this paper.

319 C: [oh]
 320 E: =(0.4) studying with (0.2) the older one
 321 C: yeah=
 322 E: =has been practicing for thirty five years
 323 he's a Japanese man
 324 C: wow
 325 (0.4)
 326 E: mmm >at least< I think he's the *best*
 327 (0.5)
 328 C: does he do bonsai as well?
 329 (0.6)
 330 E: NO::: NOT LIKE THA(H)T
 331 (1.2)
 332 E: A ha ha ha ha ha .hhh nup.

The two students have been discussing Emma's experiences studying acupuncture in Japan just prior to this excerpt. Emma at this point starts praising her teacher as "the best" (line 312, 314), as very experienced (line 322), and uses the reference term *sensei*, which Chris is aware (from his limited knowledge of Japanese) is a sign of respect. Chris at first indicates he is impressed with a strong-positive evaluative token in line 324 (Pomerantz, 1978: 94). However, in response to Emma repeating her teacher is "the best" (lines 326), Chris goes on to ask whether the teacher can do *bonsai* (that is, grow miniature trees) (line 328), thereby implying that it seems from Emma's account her teacher can do anything. By associating expertise in acupuncture with expertise in something totally unrelated, Chris frames her extolling as overdone (Drew, 1987), and so mocks her for taking her admiration for the teacher too far or seriously (what is colloquially known as *taking the piss*) (Goddard, 2009). As McCarthy and Carter (2004: 174) argue, speakers of English are often aware of the potential challenges to assessments that may be occasioned by hyperbolic utterances, but in this case, it is notable that Emma does not display any prior indication that she is aware of this possible reception, thereby opening herself up to the charge that she is taking her enthusiasm a little too seriously. This mocking question about *bonsai*, however, is conjointly co-constituted as jocular through its contrast with known facts (that is, acupuncture and growing *bonsai* are completely unrelated fields) (Drew, 1987: 232; Edwards, 2000: 372), its delivery with a flat, deadpan intonation (Attardo et al, 2003: 249; Goddard, 2006), as well as Emma's receipting of it as non-serious through an exaggerated rejection infused with laughter (line 330) and subsequent laughter (line 332) (Glenn, 2003; Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987).⁸

In work on assessments, it has been found that participants can make agreement or disagreement relevant in the subsequent turn (Schegloff, 1987: 106), with the preferred response depending upon the nature of both the assessment itself (Pomerantz, 1984), and the action, such as self-deprecations or compliments, that is concurrently made relevant through the assessment (Schegloff, 2007: 73; Pomerantz, 1978, 1984). In the present instance, where Emma is praising (or perhaps even extolling) a third-party who is not co-present, since Chris does not have any prior claim to expertise (or "epistemic rights") in relation to acupuncture teachers (Raymond and Heritage, 2005: 36), an aligning response, and thus an arguably

⁸ Notably, while the reference to *bonsai* in the question can also be understood as an inter-textual allusion to the popular film "The Karate Kid" (thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out), neither Emma nor Chris appear to be explicitly orienting to this possible interpreting, and thus its role in the interactional achievement of the mockery as jocular in this instance remains equivocal. But see the recent debate in McHoul, Rapley and Antaki (2008) in regards to place of inter-textual allusions in analysing talk-in-interaction more generally.

affiliative stance, can be realized by expressing agreement with Emma's assessment of her teacher. However, while Chris's initial response (line 324) aligns with Emma's assessment, as previously noted, his subsequent response (line 328) to Emma's repetition of her positive assessment is disaligning in that he holds her assessment up as a target for mockery, and thus the latter is arguably disaffiliative. An interpreting of Chris's jocular mockery as disaffiliative is warranted in this case by the subsequent po-faced response from Emma to the tease (Drew, 1987). Yet while this jocular mockery can be characterised as disaffiliative, Emma's laughter as well as the prior trajectory of their conversation indicates that it may also be consequential for their evolving interpretations of their relationship.

Up to this point in the conversation, which contains the entire history of their relationship since this is the first time they have met, Chris has been showing "polite" interest in Emma through numerous questions, and by displaying appreciation and interest in her responses (data not shown). In terms of their evolving relationship so far, then, they have collaboratively co-constructed a telling about Emma's life, and Chris has been repeatedly aligning his responses to these tellings, through go-aheads, agreements, appreciations and the like. In this way, Chris has interactionally achieved an affiliative stance towards Emma on numerous occasions in the interaction. Their understanding of the extent of their relational connectedness and separateness that has been conjointly co-constituted thus far (or their evolving face interpreting) is one of "getting acquainted," where displaying a certain degree of respect and distance is expected on the one hand (separation), but nevertheless showing interest in the other person is expected (connection), on the other (Maynard and Zimmerman, 1984; Svennevig, 1999).⁹

However, in mocking Emma for taking her praise of her acupuncture teacher too far, Chris occasions an interpreting of their relational connection and separateness (i.e., their provisional face interpreting) that is not consistent with their interpretations of their relationship as just "getting acquainted" (i.e., their evolving face interpreting). As Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff (1987) argue in relation to "improper" talk more generally "it is a convention about interaction that frankness, rudeness, crudeness, profanity, obscenity, etc., are indices of relaxed, unguarded, spontaneous, i.e. intimate interaction. That convention may be *utilised* by participants. That is, the introduction of such talk can be seen as a display that speaker takes it that the current interaction is one in which he may produce such talk; i.e. is informal/intimate" (Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987: 160, original emphasis).

In this instance, the mockery indexes intimacy (i.e., their provisional face interpreting) in a context where the participants have been doing "getting acquainted" (i.e., their evolving face interpreting). In other words, we have a proffered shift in face interpretations towards greater relational connection as a consequence of Chris's mockery, which in the context of getting acquainted, can be evaluated as face threatening.

On the other hand, in invoking a jocular or non-serious contextual frame, Chris occasions an expectation that the interpretations of their relational connectedness and separateness (i.e., their contextual face interpreting) are not of the same order as previous interpretations (i.e., their evolving face interpreting). In other words, we also

⁹ This is not to say that all of Chris's responses in the conversation are necessarily evaluated as face supportive. See Haugh (2008b: 59-60, 62-64) for a discussion of two incidents where evaluations of potential face threats become salient. However, in both cases Emma's response to Chris downplays these actions as face threatening, and thus they do not affect the overall trajectory of the conversation, namely, as Emma and Chris interactionally achieving "getting acquainted."

witness a situated shift in their doing of “getting acquainted” from a serious into a non-serious frame. Within a non-serious frame it is expected, at least in an Anglo-Australian context, that participants will not take themselves too seriously (Goddard 2006: 68, 2009; Peters 2007: 243), thereby indexing greater intimacy. Thus, we also witness in this instance a situated shift in their face interpretations towards greater relational connection as a consequence of Chris and Emma conjointly invoking a non-serious or jocular frame. In contrast to the proffered shift towards relational connection being evaluated as face threatening, however, the situated shift towards relational connection can be evaluated as face supportive.

Ultimately, then, jocular mockery occasions relational connection despite being simultaneously both threatening and supporting to their face, because there is consistency between the proffered and situated shifts in face interpretations towards greater relational connection. This move thus becomes part of the evolving relationship between Chris and Emma, and so enters into subsequent recipient design considerations.

4.3. Face as co-constitutive of interaction

While jocular mockery can be seen to occasion the conjoint co-constitution of relational connection as discussed in the previous section, it is also proposed in this analysis that since participants project face interpretations when engaged in recipient design, these displaced and/or reflexive face interpretations may themselves occasion jocular mockery. In this sense, then, face can be said to be co-constitutive of interaction (cf. Haugh, 2009: 11-16).

In the next excerpt, for instance, which occurred less than two minutes into a conversation between two female university students who have met for the first time, Emma indicates she is impressed by Kathy's PhD topic. The way in which this can be seen to subsequently occasion jocular mockery is also consistent with the importance that has been claimed in previous ethnographic studies to be placed on “not taking yourself too seriously” in Anglo-Australian interactions.

(3) AGA: ERKR: 1:43 “Excuse just to stare”

(Emma is female in her early 30s and Kathy is a female in his mid 20s who are getting acquainted)

57 E: What are you doing your PhD on?
 58 (0.3)
 59 K: Umm Cyber communities.
 60 E: Wh[aa::]
 61 K: [Actu]ally Yea:↑h
 62 E: Whaa::
 63 K: Which is an excuse just to stare at a computer
 64 screen all day but you know
 65 E: Ummm that's bad for your health
 66 K: Yeah hah hah hah (.)
 67 no I'm just looking at umm actually it started
 68 off somewhat different but it turned out to be
 69 Indian Newsgroups on the net...

After establishing the topic of Kathy's PhD research (lines 57-59), Emma responds in lines 61 and 63 by signalling that she is impressed with this topic through repetition of an elongated variant of the token “wow”. Kathy initially responds with an agreement token (line 61), which is interpretable as acceptance (or at least non-rejection) of the

implied compliment. However, this is then followed by a self-deprecatory utterance (lines 63-64), where Kathy downplays Emma's admiration in claiming her research is not really serious and just an excuse to surf the Internet and the like. This self-deprecation is interactionally achieved within a jocular frame, as Emma next teases Kathy through an understated assessment (a litote) that such behaviour is unhealthy (line 65), in response to which Kathy laughs (line 66). Kathy then subsequently indicates a shift back to serious frame in line 67 through a topic-initial *no* (Schegloff, 2001: 1951-1952), further warranting an analysis of Kathy's self-deprecation as an instance of jocular mockery.

The equivocality in Kathy's response to Emma's compliment - in that it involves both acceptance and evasion - is consistent with previous findings that certain utterances may occasion more than one preference structure (Pomerantz, 1978; Schegloff, 2007: 73-76). On the one hand, interpreting a turn-construction unit as an assessment can make agreement a preferred next action, while interpreting it as a compliment can make disagreement or rejection a preferred next action. This natural tension between supporting the prior speaker's action and self-praise avoidance, results in an evaluation shift in this instance, as has been found in the case of compliment responses amongst Australian English speakers more generally (Davis, 2008; Tang and Zhang, 2009). In this way, Kathy's response aligns with Emma's assessment, yet avoids the implication that she thinks too highly of herself (Haugh and Hinze, 2003: 1606). However, in contrast to previous findings that the preferred response to self-deprecatory assessments is disagreement (Pomerantz, 1984: 77-78), Emma follows Kathy's self-deprecatory assessment with a tease. In other words, Kathy does not align her response with Emma's compliment (lines 63-64), while Emma's subsequent response in line 65 does not align with Kathy's assessment either, and so they are both potentially disaffiliative. Yet while Kathy's jocular mockery in response to Emma's implied compliment, and Emma's subsequent teasing response are not aligned with the preceding actions, following the argument outlined in the previous section, these actions are coordinate with the conjoint co-constitution of interpretations of greater relational intimacy.

However, there is arguably an additional role that face interpretations play in recipient design in this case. By responding with jocular self-mockery (lines 63-64), Kathy displays an evaluation of Emma's positive evaluative tokens (lines 60, 62) as "overdoing" admiration (cf. Drew, 1987). That Emma does not take this as a signal to stop expressing admiration for Kathy is apparent from the conversation that follows (data not shown), where Emma continues to express admiration for Kathy's PhD work through positive evaluative tokens on a number of occasions. In this sense, then, the co-constitution of an evaluation of Emma's response as overdoing admiration does not alter the trajectory of the interaction as "getting acquainted," in the context of which expressing compliments or admiration for others is not unexpected. Instead, it appears to index an orienting to particular displaced and reflexive face interpretations that underlie the design of Kathy's self-mocking response, specifically Kathy's interpreting of Emma's interpreting of their face (i.e., a displaced face interpreting), and Kathy's interpreting of Emma's interpreting of Kathy's interpreting of their face (i.e., a reflexive face interpreting). Since not taking oneself too seriously is suggested here to be consonant with interpretations of greater relational connection in the context of Anglo-Australians getting acquainted, it follows that perceptions that one is taking oneself too seriously, which could be displayed in this instance by Kathy readily accepting the admiration of Emma, would *not* be consonant with interpretations of relational connection, and thus could potentially occasion face interpretations that are

evaluated as threatening to their relationship. In framing her response to the admiration as jocular self-mockery, Kathy displays the claim that she does not take herself too seriously, thereby avoiding the latter face interpreting. In this way, then, displaced and reflexive face interpretations can be argued to underlie recipient design, and thus the co-constitution of face interpretations can be said to be co-constitutive of interaction.

5. Concluding remarks

The primary focus in this analysis has been on the manner in which the interactional achievement of jocular mockery as an action in interaction is coordinate with the conjoint co-constitution of interpretations of the participants' evolving relationship, in particular their understandings of their relational connectedness and separateness. It has thus been proposed that we may further our understanding of teasing more broadly, and jocular mockery as a particular instantiation of teasing, by reconceptualising face as a fundamentally relational phenomenon. It is suggested that the simultaneously face supportive and face threatening nature of jocular mockery can be better understood within a framework that foregrounds the participants evolving relationship, rather than evaluations of person-centred attributes as advocated in previous accounts of face. This is based on the claim that what is primarily at stake when mockery arises in interpersonal interaction is the participants' relationship, with their perceptions of what others think of them relative to particular personal attributes being a secondary, derivative concern (cf. Haugh and Hinze, 2003). In other words, we are concerned about what others think of us first and foremost because it is consequential for our relationships with others.

It has also been argued in the course of this analysis that not only does jocular mockery occasion the conjoint co-constitution of greater relational connection, but that expectations about potential future evaluations of the interactants' evolving relationship may themselves occasion jocular mockery. In this way, face interpretations not only emerge through interaction (face as co-constituted in interaction), but are oriented to by interactants during interaction (face as co-constitutive of interaction) (Haugh, 2009).

These two broad findings suggest that analysing face and its inter-relationship with various pragmatic acts involves attention not only to local interactional detail as practised in Conversation Analysis, but also making recourse to the broader historicity of face, in that face does not simply emerge in single interactions in isolation, but rather evolves over the course of a relationship within a broader societal context (Chang and Haugh, forthcoming; Haugh, 2009; Haugh and Watanabe, 2009; Ruhi, this volume). Considerable analytical traction has been gained through the examples examined in this paper being taken from interactions where participants have met for the first time, where the entire "history" of their relationship to that point is on-record. However, clearly not all interactions are between people who are getting acquainted. In order to examine face as a relational phenomenon in other interactions, then, where examining the entire history of their interactions is not feasible, the analyst faces considerable challenges in ensuring the broader contextual detail from which they draw is empirically motivated, in order to avoid the (unwitting) imposition of their understandings (and biases). The importance of what might be termed the inevitable "historicity" of face continues to pose challenges for the development of a comprehensive theory of face and facework. It suggested here that Face Constituting

Theory, and a pragmatics informed by conversation analysis, may provide fruitful grounds in which to explore such issues.

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Notes on data

The analysis in this paper draws from a collection of 108 conversational sequences containing more than 145 identifiable instances of jocular mockery in Anglo-Australian interactions. The collection draws from a number of corpora of spoken Australian English, including 35 informal conversations between family and friends taken from the Australian component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-Aus) and the Griffith Corpus of Spoken Australian English (GCSAusE) (approximately 450 minutes), 5 recordings of radio talkback programmes in the AUSTGRAM corpus (approximately 200 minutes), 18 conversations between unacquainted Australians, the Australians Getting Acquainted corpus (AGA) collected by the author (approximately 200 minutes), and 7 conversations between married couples (approximately 300 minutes). I would like to thank Pam Peters for access to sound recordings from the ICE-AUS and AUSTGRAM corpora, and Rod Gardner for access to his collection of transcribed recordings between couples.

Transcription conventions

[]	overlapping speech
(0.5)	numbers in brackets indicate pause length
(.)	micropause
:	elongation of vowel or consonant sound
-	word cut-off
.	falling or final intonation
?	rising intonation
ˊ	falling then rising intonation
,	‘continuing’ intonation
=	latched utterances
<u>underlining</u>	contrastive stress or emphasis
CAPS	markedly louder
◦ ◦	markedly soft
Hhh	in-breathing
↓ ↑	sharp falling/rising intonation
* *	hearably smiling voice
> <	talk is compressed or rushed
< >	talk is markedly slowed or drawn out
()	blank space in parentheses indicates uncertainty about the transcription

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