

**REVISED 9/1/10**

**F 2010--English 710/Sociology 895: Discourse Analysis: Talk as Social Organization**

**Prof. Cecilia Ford** [ceford@wisc.edu](mailto:ceford@wisc.edu)

**Room: College Library Media Studio (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)**

**Day/Time:** F 1:30-4:00

**Office hour:** By appointment; email me anytime with questions and to make appointments.

Each student is required to meet with me at least once during the semester.

**Office:** 6187 H. C. White & 8105 Sewell Social Sciences

**Course Description:**

English 710/Sociology 895 provides a *practice-intensive* introduction to the analysis of a pervasive form of discourse: talk-in-interaction. E.A. Schegloff calls real-time interaction the “primordial site of sociality”. Our work will be on learning the craft of analyzing interaction as social organization. Each class meeting has required background readings, and we will spend at least half of each class meeting practicing in conversation analysis (CA) in a format known in the field as a “data session” (see attached description). Themes covered include turn construction, turn taking, collaborative courses of action (sequences), the interactional emergence of stories, practices for interactional repair. In the process of covering these themes, will also attend to the local construction of (and resistance to) roles, relationships, and institutional structures. We will pay attention to the functions of embodied action in interaction. Student written work includes in-class data analysis notes, a detailed transcript of 3 to 5 minutes of videotaped, naturally occurring interaction, two short analysis papers. As a final project, each student will prepare a formal written proposal for research incorporating CA methods.

**Requirements:**

1. Class participation: independent preparation of readings. Serious engagement in both collaborative and individual analytic exercises. Class presentation on data analysis or research proposal (final project).
2. Readings to be done *before* the class meeting for which they are listed.
3. Fieldwork & Data Preparation – Done in pairs or groups.
  - a) With written consent from people involved, videotape naturally occurring interaction (20-60 min).
  - b) Digitize and save video in .mov file format (must be playable in Quicktime – free download).
  - c) Turn in a copy of (DVD or CD ROM) of your .mov file along with Human Subject Consent Forms.

4. Written assignments:

Transcription assignment – Due Oct. 1st, by class meeting time.

Use Courier 11 font. Turn in transcript on Learn UW or as an email attachment in a .doc or .rtf file format, with notations as to where the transcription begins and ends within your digitized video file (minutes and seconds).

**Main Books Drawn from In Course Readings**

All readings will be available on the 875/710 LUW website. The main volumes should also be on reserve in the College Library.

Duranti, A. 1997. Linguistic Anthropology. Cambridge.

Goodwin, M.H. 1990. He-Said-She-Said: Talk as Social Organization among Black Children. Indiana.

Schegloff, E. A. 2007. Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis. Cambridge.

Heritage, J. 1984. Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology. Polity.

Heritage, J. and Clayman, S. 2010 Talk in Action: Interactions, Identities, and Institutions. Blackwell.

Sidnell, J. 2010. Conversation Analysis: An Introduction. Blackwell.

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**Calendar F 2010** (provisional & subject to revision; PLEASE CHECK EMAIL AND LUW)

**Sept. 3** Introduction, overview

Data collection and transcription assignment (form groups)

Data session handout & initial data session

Reading: Schegloff et al.: "CA and applied linguistics"

Recommended: "Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology" Heritage  
"Handbook chapter" Maynard

**10 Methodology and transcription**

Discussion of analysis papers and final paper. Transcription lecture.

Reading: Sidnell: "Talk" & "Methods"; Schegloff: "Analyzing single cases" (*go to Schegloff homepage to listen to the sound of each example*)

**17 Meet at Digital Media Center—Orientation to digitizing, editing equipment  
Back in Media Studio, transcription work in pairs, coaching from advanced  
conversation analysts**

Reading: Ochs: "Transcription as theory"

Bucholtz: "The politics of transcription"

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**24 Turn taking. Data session.**

Reading: Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson: "A simplest systematics for turn taking..."

Ford: "Turn taking and sequentiality" (in press)

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**Oct. 1 Courses of action: Sequence analysis. Data session: adjacency pairs and expansions**

**Transcripts Due.** Reading: Schegloff: Sequence organization in interaction Chs 1-4 (pp. 1-53)

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**8 Affiliating and disaffiliating actions. Topic proffering. Data session.**

Reading: Schegloff: "Topic proffering"

Ford: "Contingency and the construction of turns"

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**15 Repairs, hitches, and interactional construction of turns**

**Makoto Hayashi Visit: Cross-linguistic perspectives on repair.**

Reading: Fox/Mazeland: "Repair"

C. Goodwin: "Interactional construction of sentence"

Recommended: Lerner: "Sentence-in-progress"

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**Oct. 22 Data session**

**Analysis 1 Due**

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**29 Methodological challenges**

Reading: Kitzinger: "Feminist CA"; Schegloff: "On quantification"

Recommended: Billig & Schegloff dialogue

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**Nov. 5 Participation structures**

Reading: "Units of participation" Duranti

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**12 Organizing participation through stories**

Reading: M. Goodwin "Stories as participation structures"

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**19 Institutional interaction**

Reading: Heritage/Clayman Talk in action chs. 2-3

**Analysis 2 Due**

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**25-28 Thanksgiving recess**

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**Dec. 3 Research projects incorporating CA**

Readings to be determined.

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**10 Term papers due (except for students who present today)**

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**Confidentiality**

Because the audio and videotapes we view involve people leading their real lives, it is essential that you remember to protect the anonymity and privacy of these participants. This is the agreement we make with participants when we ask them to be taped. It is also legally required by the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

If you meet someone who you think appears in one of the videotapes (they may be in Wisconsin or elsewhere!), do not bring up the subject. Even if *\*they\** mention that they may have been in a videotape in your class, it is *your* responsibility to tell them you cannot talk about it because of issues of confidentiality. This is a commitment we make to the people who allow us to study in detail interactive moments of their lives. What is at stake is the integrity of our work and our relationships with persons who generously participate.

There has never been a problem with this, but I must be very clear about how you should handle this. Coincidental meetings will occur. Please be respectful. If you have any questions, do bring them up at any time, in class, over email, or in my office. Confidentiality is extremely important for this kind of research.

**Data Collection and Transcription Project**

Exchange phone numbers and email addresses and get to work on this assignment right away. Setting up the taping, making copies of the tape, and then transcribing it are all *very time consuming*. For example, I take about one hour to transcribe one minute of conversation! Your transcripts are due on Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> → not far off when you consider the work involved. Get going now!!!

**(1) Getting started.** Form a working group. Locate a videocamera (LSS, Digital Media Center, College Library

Media Center, Doit).

**(2) What to tape.** Interact in that is normal, habitual, usual, one that might happen whether you wanted to tape it or not. This could be a family or roommate dinner, a get together after a movie, TA office time, so some such gathering. Any of these settings is fine, but **you will need to get written permission to videotape and use the material for research.**

As students working under my supervision, you may use my Consent Form (remind me to post it on the Learn UW Site. **However, if you plan to use these data for further research in your degree program here at UW or for publication, you should contact the "human subjects committee" directly and do a complete application for approval. There are different committees in L & S and Education.**

**(3) Taping.** Get explicit and signed consent from the participants ***before*** you record the conversation (use the attached form, unless you have your own human subjects committee approved form on file). It is usually best if you can leave the camera going without anyone at it. This makes the process a little less intrusive; the participants will not be orienting to an “animate” observer behind the camera.

Make things as easy and simple as possible for this assignment. The goal is to get 20 to 60 minutes of clear, understandable videotaped conversation, with optimal visual access to the participants. Place the camera in a position that gets as much in the view as possible. Some faces may not be visible (unless you use 2 cameras); this is not ideal, but we can live with that for our purposes here. ***Do not zoom in on speakers*** during the interaction or you will lose the simultaneous actions of other participants – this is essential to understanding interaction.

**(4) Transcription:** This is ***very, very*** time consuming and it is also very fascinating. Start right away. We will divide our joint data into 3-5 minute segments for you each to transcribe. Ideally, you will transcribe in groups and share a larger transcript for your analysis papers.

**(5)** Here are some tips for doing your videotaping (from Goodwin 1993 "Recording human interaction in natural settings" *Pragmatics* v. 3, n. 2 181-210). Also look at the appendix in the Duranti text:

Practice with your equipment before you actually tape

- get the camera instruction manual and go over it and the camera thoroughly before you film
- try out your whole setup first. Tape something at home. By actually working with the equipment you will discover problems that you hadn't imagined and will be able to fix them.

Extension cords - Take an extension cord to the field with you. If your equipment needs batteries, take more than you think you need.

Always alter the record tab on a tape that has been shot. Do this right as you remove the tape from the camera. That way you can't accidentally record over it. This also provides a quick way to tell if the tape has been used yet.

Shoot continuously. Breaks in the taping may leave out important and consequential continuity in the activity being recorded.

What to include in the frame. This can't be answered in a simple way. Any decision you make will have problems. The more participants you need to get into the frame, the more difficult it will be to see facial expressions. If you shoot close ups, you'll miss the interaction - something you ***never*** want to do. For this beginning exercise, include all the participants in the frame, and try not to have anyone situated with her/his back to the camera (if this is possible).

**Consent Form for Videotaping: Get a signed copy from each participant. Each participant must also be allowed to keep a copy of the form. Turn in consent form with your transcript & digitized video**

## The Data Session

A data session may be general or it may be focused on a particular phenomenon. It may also be “pedagogical,” in which case a more experienced analyst gives feedback and guidance during the session.

## Purpose

To enrich our ability to make specific observations based on naturally occurring talk, and to support those observations with detail. To understand how interaction works; how people accomplish joint activities. Doing sessions sharpens observational and analytic skills.

The fundamental question is “Why that now?” We assume that participants in a conversation are always accountable to this question as they interpret the talk of others and produce their own talk in collaboration with others. What are these people doing to/with/for one another?

## **Why this now?**

“**that**” - Specifically characterize what the object is you are attending to (a pronoun, a pattern of intonation, a question, response). When you give a name to something, ask yourself what you mean by the name, how you know the label fits. E.g., Speaker X is “teasing” - what specific features of X’s talk lead to this interpretation?

“**now**” - Any point in a conversation is a “now” - meaning, it is a spot, a slot, in the sequential development of the interaction. Its place is as much a part of its meaning/function as is the utterance itself. How would you characterize the place of this utterance in the developing talk? The developing turn?

“**why**” - A big question regarding how a piece of talk is functioning. For CA, this involves a meeting of a particular “this” at a particular “now”. Rather than getting into speculation about the intentions of a speaker, we try to say something about the work that an utterance might be doing. This can then be supported by looking at how the other participants treat the utterance, how such utterances have been found to function in other studies, or by collecting our own set of similarly patterned exchanges and describing their recurrent structures and alternations.

## Guidelines

These fundamental steps allow the group to focus, work up observations, share ideas orally, and discuss ideas only after everyone had had a chance to share her/his separate observations.

- 1. Orientation to the data - whatever the supplier(s) of the data wants us to know. Often a particular focus is suggested based on prior observations made by the supplier(s).**
  - 2. Repeated listening to a segment of talk.**
  - 3. 10 minutes of individual writing, working up of observations regarding the data at hand. Be sure to tie all your noticings to specific displays by the participants. In order to understand how we collaboratively participate in interaction, we must attend to what is displayed rather than speculate as to what the underlying motives are (though these are interesting too!).**
  - 4. Sharing of observations. Each person has a chance to share observations without interruption or response from the others (except in the case of pedagogical guidance). Discussion is to be postponed until everyone has shared their observations.**
  - 5. Discussion - ONLY AFTER ALL PARTICIPANTS HAVE SHARED THEIR OBSERVATIONS! Discussion should concentrate on looking for evidence for particular analyses.**
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