11th AWIA SYMPOSIUM 2012

Applying Conversation Analysis

Thursday October 4: Lecture & workshop Elizabeth Stokoe (Loughbourough University)
Friday October 5: Papers AWIA members

University of Groningen,
Academy building, Broerstraat 5
Harmony building, Oude Kijk in’t Jatstraat 26

More information:
http://www.rug.nl/let/onderzoek/onderzoekinstituten/clcg/events/AWIA2012/index
awiasymposium2012@rug.nl

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Anéla (Association Néerlandaise de Linguistique Appliquée / Dutch Association for Applied Linguistics)
Introduction

The theme of the symposium “Applying CA” is meant to capture various approaches that apply CA research outcomes for the benefit of professional and organizational environments of various kinds. More specifically, the symposium focuses on CA’s potential application as a training tool.

For many years now organizations, professionals, and scholars have been interested in the application of research outcomes and in teaching professionals the workings of practices of interactions. CA research of the past four decades has resulted in an enormous body of knowledge about how particular institutional tasks are managed through talk, and is increasingly concerned with applying its findings to actually solve institutional problems for the benefit of professionals. Such an attempt is, for example, the use of CA as a reflective tool to make professionals aware of the moment-by-moment exchanges and their impact on and relationship with institutional and professional tasks and identities, and to let them gain insight in and reflect on their interactional practices.

All contributions are concerned with how the production and understanding of social actions are shaped by the circumstances and tasks of institutions, organizations, or other professional settings. Some contributions that additionally elaborate on (outcomes of) application initiatives of their empirical findings for ‘communication trainings’, are of special interest.

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Program THURSDAY  October 4 2012.
Lecture and workshop led by Elizabeth Stokoe (Loughborough University)

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9.30   Coffee, registration, and opening

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10.00  Elizabeth Stokoe, Lecture: “The (in)authenticity of simulated talk: Comparing role-played and actual interaction and the problems of communication training”

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12.00  Lunch (late registration at 13.15 room 1312.0024)

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13.30  Elizabeth Stokoe, Workshop: “Applying designedly large scale qualitative research: The Conversation Analytic Role-play Method (CARM) and communication training”.

15.30 – 16.30 Discussion

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17.30  Drinks & Diner
Program FRIDAY October 5, 2012.
Papers AWIA members (20 minutes presentation, 10 minutes discussion)

Room A902 (building on the left-hand side of the Academy building)

09.00 Tom Koole, Aliesje Schneijderberg, Claudia de Widt, Jos van Berkum (Utrecht University)
Managing caller emotions in emergency calls

09.30 Wytske Versteegen (Twente University)
“Doing not being alternative”: negotiating knowledgeability in a radio phone-in

10.00 Guusje Jol & Fleur van der Houwen (VU University Amsterdam)
Pursuing a response: question design in police interviews with children

10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 Annette Klarenbeek (Hogeschool Utrecht) & Cees van Woerkum (Wageningen University)
From whistle blowing to public involvement: A discursive analysis of latent crises

11.30 Karen Mogendorff (Wageningen University)
Scientists’ constructions of plant disease and their fight against it: Are personification, contextualization and gerrymandering as strategies effective in building public trust in plant disease science and technology?

12.00 Petra Sneijder (Wageningen University)
Application of the Discursive Action Method: Stakeholder dialogue on responsible food innovation

12.30-13.30 Lunch
13.30 Erica Huls (Tilburg University)  
Title: “The left is hurting terribly”: Neutrality in broadcast news

14.00 Tessa van Charldorp & Charlotte van Hooijdonk (VU University Amsterdam)  
Generating ‘likes’: an interactional study of Facebook messages between brand and customer

14.30 Wyke Stommel (Nijmegen University) & Fleur van der Houwen (VU University Amsterdam)  
Formulations in chat counseling

15.00 – 15.15 Coffee break

15.15 Tom Koole, Louise Nell, Marloes Herijgers, Henk Pander Maat, Leo Lentz (Utrecht University)  
Talk and text in financial communication

15.45 Nynke van der Schaaf (Groningen University/ Hanzehogeschool Groningen)  
Strong and weak strategies in conflict management in after school day care, a study of how caretakers intervene in conflicts of children of 4 to 7 years

16.15 – 16.45 Closing
LECTURE

Elizabeth Stokoe (Loughborough University)

“The (in)authenticity of simulated talk: Comparing role-played and actual interaction and the problems of communication training”

How authentic is simulated, role-played, interaction? The lecture will address this question by analysing actual and role-played interaction. Using conversation analysis, I will examine actual police investigative interviews with suspects and compare them to training interviews using actors. I will show that while, in gross terms, participants in real and simulated interviews formulate the same gross actions (e.g., identifying co-present parties, giving an account of the allegedly criminal events), key differences are observable. This may be because in the simulations, officers do ‘assessable’ things that do not get done in interviews with real suspects where there are different contingencies in play. I will discuss the implications for the efficacy of role-play methods for training.

WORKSHOP

Elizabeth Stokoe (Loughborough University)

“Applying designedly large scale qualitative research: The Conversation Analytic Role-play Method (CARM) and communication training”.

In this workshop, I will describe my work with mediation services and the development of the Conversation Analytic Role-play Method (CARM). CARM is an approach to communication skills training, which can be adapted to any sort of workplace or institutional encounter. It is based on evidence about what sorts of problems and ‘roadblocks’ can occur in conversation, as well as the techniques and strategies that best resolve these problems. In contrast to traditional role-playing techniques, which use a combination of hypothetical scenarios, actors, post-encounter observations of training videos, and so on, CARM uses audio- and video-recordings of real-time, actual encounters as the basis of its training technique. After research about a setting has been conducted, the next step is to transcribe and anonymize extracts from recordings that demonstrate the different ways that mediators formulate and organize particular actions (e.g., offering mediation). The audio/video files and transcript are presented synchronously, such that participants ‘live through’ encounters without knowing what will happen next. Next, workshop participants ‘role-play’ what they might do next to handle the situation. For example, if party A makes a particular sort of comment, how might party B respond most appropriately? Participants either discuss their likely response in small groups, or respond individually by taking the next turn without time for discussion (as would happen in a real interaction). Finally, party B’s actual response is revealed and discussed, and the workshop moves on. Participants glean ‘best practice’ on the basis of what mediators actually do and say. In this workshop, I will explain, demonstrate, and then present examples from CARM training as the basis of discussion.
Generating ‘likes’: an interactional study of Facebook messages between brand and customer
Tessa van Charldorp & Charlotte van Hooijdonk (VU University Amsterdam)

Nowadays companies increasingly use social media to advertise their products and promote their brands. Through sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter, companies aim to generate ‘likes’, create ‘followers’ or have people ‘talking about’ or ‘retweet’ the post, the video or the ad. In other words, companies aim to create online interaction with its customers and also allow customers to interact with each other. Little research demonstrates how such interaction takes place and what constitutes (un)succcessful interaction.

In a new research project in cooperation with a social media agency, we analyze how effective interaction takes place online. By effective interaction we mean posts that generate a high amount of interaction. Specifically, we analyze Facebook interaction of the top 10 social media brands (www.pagemonitor) in the Netherlands and their Facebook followers. We analyze the interactions based on the actions that are performed by the participants.

In this talk we will demonstrate how we can apply conversation analytic methods in this semi-institutional, computer mediated setting. Specific attention is paid to how actions are accomplished when multiple audiences are collapsed into a single context (Marwick & Boyd, 2011) and which actions generate high interaction traffic. Moreover, we will demonstrate that this analysis can result in guidelines for the social media agency to generate successful interaction on Facebook.

References
“The left is hurting terribly”: Neutrality in broadcast news
Erica Huls (Tilburg University)

The study that I will present investigates the ways in which the Dutch standard news programme NOS-journaal and the alternative PowNews practise neutrality and deal with political perspectives. Neutrality is a concept with core dimensions that are generally accepted. At the same time, it arouses heated debate. I treat two strands of research on neutrality, namely discourse studies and conversation analysis, and select aspects that are the focus of the study.

The study is a two-fold case study: two issues taken from news programmes on the national channel were analysed – an issue from NOS-journaal and an issue from PowNews. The analysis focuses on facticity of news kernels, evaluation in headings and interviews, non-neutral question design in interviews, and support from the interviewer for the interviewee. Evaluation is analysed in relation to structure, and political perspectives, if found, are related to the notion of bias.

The results show that neither edition of news programmes on the national channel is neutral. However, they differ in their non-neutrality. First, there is a difference in the degree of non-neutrality, with PowNews showing it more often than NOS-journaal. Second, and more importantly, NOS-journaal almost always embeds its non-neutrality deep in the structure of the programme or item and does not discuss it. PowNews, on the other hand, shows non-neutral perspectives right from the start, preceding ‘the facts’ and formulated by a range of voices. Third, NOS-journaal shows a left-wing and PowNews a right-wing bias. To conclude, NOS-journaal is basically structured according to the hierarchical model that there is one truth, represented by the anchor; PowNews adheres to a model of different perspectives on reality, with the anchor offering one of these perspectives.

In the discussion, I evaluate the research instrument for the investigation of neutrality in broadcast news that I applied. Other topics in the discussion are the allegations that NOS-journaal is a politically partial and left-leaning programme, as well as the discrepancy between NOS-journaal’s mission statement and practice concerning neutrality. I also reflect on the feasibility and practicality of the aim – put forward by policy makers – of the Dutch public broadcasting system of multiforntity, which encompasses a balance in political perspectives on news facts. I close the presentation by focusing on the most worrying aspect of the study: presenting balanced news by means of hearing various sides is an infrequently used practice in both news programmes that were studied.
Managing caller emotions in emergency calls
Tom Koole, Aliesje Schneijderberg, Claudia de Widt, Jos van Berkum
Universiteit Utrecht

We will report on applied research that we are presently doing for the national and the local Utrecht emergency call centres. One of the interactional problems that call-takers have to deal with is to get the required information from emotional callers. In an analysis of a corpus of 60 emotional emergency calls, we established that callers’ emotion acts are not inherently problematic for the purpose of emergency calls. A quivering voice, for example, does not stop the caller from providing the required information. However, two emotion acts in particular present problems since they concur with dispreferred answers or non-answers. These two are crying and screaming. Next, we looked in our corpus how call-takers deal with these two emotion acts and whether their responses were successful in getting the caller to answer their questions. This analysis produced a rather diffuse image of potentially more and less successful emotion-responses, the diffusion being partly due to small numbers such as single occurrences. Therefore we conducted a second study that had the form of a quasi-experiment in which call-takers were instructed to use four different emotion-responses during set periods of several days. This resulted in a corpus of 173 calls. The four different types of response were used in respectively 16, 19, 62 or all calls. Presently this corpus is analysed for the effectiveness of the four responses and the results of this analysis will be subjected to a statistical analysis in order to establish the significance of the outcomes. In October we will present the results of this analysis and discuss the way the emergency call-centres are taking up these results to instruct their call-takers.
In this paper we will present a research programme that is going to be carried out over the next 3 to 4 years with a focus on the construction of client understanding in communication on pensions and mortgages. These communications consist of a multimodal package of texts, internet tools, and talks, that will all be object of investigation. The methodology will be a mix of document design methods for the analysis of text and conversation analysis for the analysis of talk. The assumption underlying these choices is that reading a text needs to be investigated as an individual cognitive process, while talk needs to be investigated as an interactional process in which participants need to make understanding and not-understanding observable for each other. The research is carried out both with a fundamental aim to gain insight in processes of constructing understanding, and with the applied aim to adapt texts or interactional strategies. In the design of the project, researchers will report twice a year to the financial organisations that supply part of the research funding, and will eventually test the suggested modifications for their effects.
This paper examines police interviews with children. Recent research has emphasized the importance of how child-witnesses are interviewed. Studies have shown that children can give reliable testimonies, if the interviewer complies with certain instructions. Most instructions aim at avoiding suggestion because children are sensitive to suggestion.

In the Netherlands, instructions for interviewing child witnesses are described in a manual. This manual includes instructions about avoiding suggestive questions and not to give feedback on the child’s answers, positive or negative. Positive feedback could suggest that there are right (and wrong) answers; negative feedback could urge the child to change its answer. However, questions in Dutch police interviews with child-witnesses are regularly prefaced by ‘but’. And, more generally, but-prefaced utterances are associated with disagreement and objection, and thus could form negative feedback.

Based on the analysis of seven police interviews with child-witnesses, we found that questions that are prefaced by ‘but’ can function to pursue an answer. We show how these questions 1) treat a preceding answer as insufficient, and 2) how, in their design, they can show more or less explicitly why the answer is insufficient and direct the child how it could alter the answer, without filling in the answer. Both can be achieved without going on record for doing so and thus being apparently compliant with the manual’s instructions.
From whistle blowing to public involvement: A discursive analysis of latent crises
Annette Klarenbeek (Hogeschool Utrecht)
prof. C.M.J. van Woerkum (Communication Science Wageningen)

We examine the ways in which a latent crisis can be exposed from a communication point of view. In which way can we create general awareness of a latent crisis and try to understand the dynamic nature of interactions? Until now, this issue has been partially or insufficiently addressed and, consequently, leads to the following definition of a problem:

What are the interactional problems experienced by a crisis entrepreneur who intends to put forward a crisis and how does he solve these problems?

With the help of discourse analysis, we have examined the interactional achievements of the founders of a social movement and a whistleblower in exposing a latent crisis in the domain of education in the Netherlands. We wanted to learn to understand the discursive practices that are playing an active role when certain players signal a crisis in the public debate on education innovation in the Netherlands. The analytical principles adopted in discursive psychology leave room for the fact that any crisis is not something that is 'out-there' but brought to relevance in an interactional way.

In this research we found that crisis entrepreneurs have three interactional problems:
1. showing the validity and urgency of the problem
2. presenting the credibility of the messenger
3. creating the belief in a solution.

References
Help! Education is a sinking ship!, NRC Handelsblad, 3 june 2006.
Appetite 52 . - p. 621 - 630.
Scientists’ constructions of plant disease and their fight against it
Are personification, contextualization and gerrymandering as strategies effective in building public trust in plant disease science and technology?
Karen Mogendorff

This paper analyzes what effects plant scientists generate in public meetings with their representations of the plant disease phytophthora and reconstructions of the fight against phytophthora. Phytophthora is a plant disease known for its persistence and virulence: it has been able to destroy entire potato harvests since the 19th century up until now. Plant scientists face the challenge to explain to non-scientists how the disease management strategies they recently adopted – such as creating a durable phytophthora-resistant potato with genetic modification – may succeed where classical plant breeding techniques have failed to do so.

Analysis shows that scientists use different discursive strategies: (1) they shift from talk about phytophthora as a disease-object to constructions of phytophthora as a human actor with a history; and/or (2) scientists simplify information about disease management strategies. The technical talk seems to be designed to display scientists’ expertise; humanization of phytophthora is produced to explain why science is now likely to come up with a long lasting solution to phytophthora problem. However, in talk-in-interaction scientists’ representations are challenged. This raises the question whether scientists’ contextualization and simplifying strategies are a good way to build trust in the efficacy of plant disease science.

Note
Fragments of talk-in-interaction will be used in workshops based on the discursive action method (DAM) in the fall of 2012 in order to make scientists and different non-scientists aware of what they and their interaction partners discursively do and accomplish in face-to-face encounters with each other.
Strong and weak strategies in conflict management in after school day care, a study of how caretakers intervene in conflicts of children of 4 to 7 years
Nynke van der Schaaf (Groningen University/ Hanzehoogeschool Groningen)

After school day care is relatively new in the Netherlands and the amount of children attending after school day care (bso) has enormously increased over the last decade (Schreuder et al., 2011). At first the main focus of the bso’s was taking care of the children while their parents were at work. Nowadays it is a service that is focused on stimulating the social development of the children within a safe environment (Boogaard & Fukkink, 2009). In respect of this it is important that caretakers know how to handle conflicts of children. These conflicts are of great importance for the development of children in many ways (Corsaro, 1997, 2003; Berenst & Mazeland, 2000; Singer & De Haan, 2006; Church, 2009).

In this paper I will study how caretakers intervene in conflicts between children from 4 till 7 years of age in the bso-setting. The data I use are collected in an ongoing PhD-study investigating children’s en caretaker’s natural interactions in two day care centres. The conflict fragments are transcribed following Jefferson-conventions (Mazeland, 2003) and are analyzed according to the method of conversation analysis (Ten Have, 2009). I will show the influence of the intervention of two different caretakers and the process of conflict management and why one caretaker succeeds in conflict solving strategies, while the other one fails. Finally, I discuss the consequences of this analyses of conflict management by caretakers in the after school day care.

References
Application of the Discursive Action Method: Stakeholder dialogue on responsible food innovation

Petra Sneijder (Wageningen University)

In this presentation I discuss how I applied Discursive Psychology in a workshop about responsible food innovation, organised for stakeholders in the food domain. Problems in the dialogue between science and society on food technology supports the call for an interactional perspective on this dialogue in several ways. First of all, making knowledge claims is a condition for gaining entitlement to speak in a debate and is important for maintaining a certain identity. An interactional perspective on innovation may shed light on the interactional goals participants in talk on technology achieve by claiming specific knowledge territories, such as constructing of maintaining the identity of, for instance, an autonomous consumer.

In the workshop the Discursive Action Method was applied for exploring interaction between experts and consumers together with stakeholders in the food domain (technologists, consumers, marketeers and policy makers). In the first part, they explored how experts and consumers make certain knowledge claims regarding naturalness, and the interactional effects of these knowledge claims. An important effect is privatizing the domain of naturalness, which prevents stakeholders from taking the responsibility to place this theme on the public agenda. In the second part, the insights gained from the analysis were used to stimulate a stakeholder dialogue on naturalness and analyse and rewrite scenarios that were presented as consequences of the present way of interacting.
Formulations in chat counseling
Wyke Stommel (RU Nijmegen)
Fleur van der Houwen (VU Amsterdam)

In this presentation, we examine chat counseling for people with problems of depression and anxiety. The analysis focuses on “formulations”, because they have been found to play an important interactional role in face-to-face counseling. The data consist of 53 individual chat sessions of approximately 25 minutes each between a coach and a client with moderate symptoms of depression and/or anxiety. We use conversation analysis (CA) as a method, mainly focusing on sequence organization. In applying CA for online data, we also analyze how the medium plays a part in the interaction. The analysis finds three uses of formulation: 1) formulations that organize the chat sessions as a whole as well as at the level of topics, 2) formulations that aim to clarify ambiguity, and 3) formulations that articulate a particular view on the client’s account by either formulating a positive aspect of the client’s account or formulating the problem in terms of feelings. The first and third type are used in comparable ways as in face-to-face therapy. The second type seems specific to the medium of chat as it is a strategy to deal with trouble in the interaction aiming at re-establishing intersubjectivity. Another medium characteristic is that formulations are often followed by question marks that disambiguate whether a next action by the co-participant is expected. A last finding is that chat seems more permissive of not responding to formulations due to disrupted adjacency of pair parts. This study contributes to the understanding of institutional interaction online and the interconnection between medium structure and social interaction.
“Doing not being alternative”:

**negotiating knowledgeability in a radio phone-in**

Wytske Versteegen (Twente University)

Within the context of a radio phone-in, both invited experts and lay callers have to establish a right to speak. Such an entitlement to speak in turn depends upon whether interactants are able to present themselves as knowledgeable agents.

In this paper I will show how interactants negotiated knowledgeability in a radio phone-in about the usefulness of the flu shot. I argue that both lay callers and experts oriented towards the imperative of ‘not being alternative’ as a matter of stake inoculation. The interactants employed various strategies to enhance their credibility; witnessing, scientific knowledge and, surprisingly, a lack of knowledge about particular topics.

Witnessing might seem a knowledge claim that is difficult to contest, but I will show how the host did not merely question the observations of callers who claimed to have witnessed the usefulness of the flu shot, but actively used these claims to turn them into examples of gullibility (cf. Hutchby 2001). Both lay callers and experts invoked scientific knowledge, but the latter were also able to employ a seemingly contradictory device to enhance their epistemic authority; a partitive evidential, that is, a claim of limited epistemic access to particular knowledge domains (Matoesian 1999). Paradoxically, the expert can thus enhance his status as a knowledgeable agent by emphasizing what he does not know.

**Keywords**: knowledgeability, epistemic access, formulations, partitive evidentials

**References**


Past AWIA Symposia

- 1993 University of Groningen (Topic: Negotiation)
  Invited speaker: Alan Firth (Aalborg)

- 1995 Free University, Amsterdam (Topic: Applying c.a. for learning)
  Invited speaker: Anita Pomerantz (Philadelphia)

- 1996 University Utrecht (Topic: Methodology)
  Invited speaker: Doug Maynard (Indiana University)

- 1997 UFSiA Antwerp (Topic: Controversies about and in c.a.)
  Invited speaker: Rodney Watson (University of Manchester)

- 1999 University of Groningen (Topic: Culture, morality and interaction)
  Invited speaker: Jörg Bergmann (Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen)

- 2001 Free University Amsterdam (Topic: Identity in talk)
  Invited speaker: Charles Antaki (Loughborough University)

- 2003 Wageningen University (Topic: Psychological categories as participants' resources)
  Invited speaker: Derek Edwards (Loughborough University)

- 2005 University Utrecht (no special topic)
  Invited speaker: Paul Drew (York University) and Gail Jefferson

- 2007 University of Groningen (Topic: Managing Differential Knowledge in Social Interaction)
  Invited speaker: Tanya Stivers (MPI Nijmegen)

- 2010 Free University Amsterdam (Topic: Interaction in institutional settings)
  Invited speaker: Geoffrey Raymond (University of California, Santa Barbara)