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The Conference Theme: Multimodal Interaction

The development of the technology of video-recording has paved the way for a comprehensive naturalistic study of social interaction as multimodal interaction. Conversation analysis has started to extend its methodology of close sequential analysis of talk-in-interaction to the organization of bodily interaction in its full audio-visual detail. In addition to the sequential structures of (verbal) interaction, the simultaneity of different modalities of interaction (speech, gaze, gesture, facial expression, manipulation of objects, etc.), their fine-grained, interactive co-ordination, and their context-sensitive deployment have become a new focus of studies. A growing body of research has produced insights into practices of multimodal interaction in conversational, institutional, and media contexts, discovering new phenomena and shedding new light on classic topics of conversation analysis, such as the organization of turn-taking and conversational openings.

Notability: how media influence talk-in-interaction

In my presentation, I will discuss the influence of media texts (talk and pictures) on the talk-in-interaction of the recipients. My data consist of videotaped recordings of English football fans watching the World Cup on television.

I will start with a general account of the talk in this setting with its shifting ‘contextual configurations’ (Goodwin 2000) ranging from full orientation to the TV set to e.g. ‘story telling frames’ during which only ‘view signs’ (Scollon 1998) e.g. posture differentiate this talk from regular conversations.

I will propose the term ‘notability’ to account for sudden shifts in the data. When the viewers decide that the media text offers a ‘notable’ scene, they may shift frame without any prior interactional work. In other words, no pre-sequences, discourse markers or other means of signalling new agendas will be used. Often interjections (cf. Wilkins 1992 for their deictic potential) suffice to instantiate these reorientations to the media text. Their indicative nature shows that a viewer is at that moment orienting to the media text and no longer to his/her co-viewers’ interactions. These interjections do not represent ‘pre-s’ marking an upcoming action, but their employment signals that such a shift has happened. If the co-viewers ratify the ‘notability’ of a given scene in the match, no signs of dispreference or repair work can be found in the ensuing interaction. Even the highly marked case of other-interruption goes unnoticed. ‘Notability’ is principally negotiable. The notion is not based on the relative noteworthiness of the actual scene in relation to some real-world average; rather it is a concept which accounts for the verbal behaviour of the participants.

Goodwin, C. 2000. Action and embodiment within situated human interaction. *Journal of Pragmatics* 32. 1489–1522.

Scollon, R. 1998. *Mediated Discourse as Social Interaction*. London: Longman.

Wilkins, D. 1992. Interjections as deictics. *Journal of Pragmatics* 18. 119-158.