Anth 750D : Microanalysis of Verbal Interaction
Fall 2007, Fridays, 2:45-5:15, Saunders 345
Jack Bilmes

This will be a workshop-type course, with classroom time devoted largely to on-the-spot analysis of transcribed data, repeatedly listening to/watching a piece of interaction, studying the transcript, and sharing our ideas. We will also have directed, largely student-led discussions of the readings and concepts. We will work with data primarily from four sources--the Linda Tripp tapes, political campaign debates, the US Federal Trade Commission, and televised talk shows. Students will also learn transcription skills.

One special, semester-long project will be to assemble and analyze a collection of to-be-determined conversational phenomena from the Tripp tapes.

We will consider various analytical techniques. However, the general methodological framework will be that of conversation analysis. This involves, in particular, the use of naturally-occurring, recorded talk (rather than invented examples), a focus on interaction (rather than isolated utterances), and a participant orientation. That is, we will be concerned with how the participants construct the interaction and what they make of the talk rather than what an analyst might make of it. Readings will consist of selected articles. Evaluation will be based on analytical exercises, classroom discussions of the readings, and a term paper.

Week 1   Introduction
  2   Foundations: Hutchby and Wooffitt, CONVERSATION ANALYSIS, Intro and Ch.1; Heritage, GARFINKEL AND ETHNOMETHODOLOGY, Ch. 8; Edwards, DISCOURSE AND COGNITION, Ch. 4
  3   Foundations: Schegloff and Sacks, "Opening Up Closings"; Schegloff, Questions and Ambiguities", Bilmes, "Category and Rule in Conversation Analysis"
  4   Exemplary Studies: Emanuel A. Schegloff, "Preliminaries to Preliminaries: 'Can I Ask You a Question?'"; Goodwin and Goodwin, "Interstitial Argument"; Raymond, "Prompting action"
  5   Conversational tactics: Sacks, "Rules of conversational sequence,"; Sacks, fragment on children's conversational openings; Bilmes, "The call-on-hold"; Bilmes, "Tactics and style in the 1992 Vice-Presidential debate"
  6   Preference: Schegloff, Chapter 5 of Sequence organization in interaction.
  7   Formulation 1: Hester and Eglin, "Membership categorization analysis: An introduction"; Edwards, "Categories are for talking"; Schegloff, "Notes on a Conversational Practice: Formulating Place"
  8   Formulation 2: Goodwin, "Practices of Color Classification"; Sacks, "Hotrodder"; Bilmes, "Generally speaking"
  9   CA and ethnography 1: Schegloff, "Reflections on talk and social structure"; Briggs, "Notes on a 'confession'"; Maynard, "Conversation analysis and ethnography"
10 CA and ethnography: Nelson, "Ethnomethodological Positions on the Use of Ethnographic Data in Conversation Analytic Research"; Bilmes, "Problems and Resources in Analyzing Northern Thai Conversation for English Language Readers"; Moerman, TALK IN CULTURE, Ch. 5
11 CA in institutional settings: Drew and Heritage, Introduction to TALK AT WORK, Hester and Francis, "Ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, and institutional talk"; Goodwin, "Professional Vision"
12 Narrative: Schegloff, "Narrative analysis"; Edwards, DISCOURSE AND COGNITION, Ch. 10; Bilmes, "Person reference in a Northern Thai narrative"
13 Gesture: Goodwin, "Notes on Story Structure and the Organization of Participation"; Goodwin, "Pointing as Situated Practice"
14 "Critical Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis: An Exchange between Michael Billig and Emanuel A. Schegloff"; Levinson, "Living with Manny's dangerous idea"