This is the first in an occasional series of articles on the use of Ethnomethodology / Conversation Analysis to study technology.

EMCA in Sociology of Science, Technology, and Engineering
By Don Winiecki, Ed.D., Ph.D.

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Department of Instructional & Performance Technology

Obviously enough, the work of a professional sociologist can happen anywhere and it is perhaps most common for such work to happen 'out there,' in society writ large. However, for the practitioner of EMCA and its derivatives the focus is – more often than not – in the small, mundane and oftentimes (for others) inconsequential bits of interaction that make up one's (or their) day to day world. One can (and many have) make the case that society writ large is an assemblage (ad hoc, planned, semi-planned and so on) made up in and of these small bits. And that's why we do what we do – to understand social action, and in turn society, from – as they say – the ground up.

As one can readily see, the members of ASA's EMCA section focus a wide range of topics; education, counseling, law, economics, medicine, police work – the list is endless. Regardless of the focus, however, our object is consistent – in the words of both Harold Garfinkel and Harvey Sacks (among others) we focus on the technology of social interaction. For myself – a sociologist in a college of engineering – it is not just this technology at its various levels and in its many forms to which I try to attend, there is also the popularized sense (that is, computers, machines, tools, and the like – what we may label as

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(continued on p.5, see Winiecki)
Praxiological Approaches to Law

July 1 – 3, 2009
Paris, France

This workshop aims at delineating the praxiological approach to law. This can be provisionally done around four major themes: the opposition between law in action and law on the books; the “missing what” of law-and-society and statistical legal studies; the problems created by “hyper-explanations”; the re-orientation of research on the legal work.

Provisional list of participants

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Language & Social Interaction Division of the International Communication Association (ICA) meeting

Chicago, Illinois, USA
May 21-25, 2009

Conference on Laughter and Humor in Interaction

Huddersfield University, UK
June 24-25, 2009

9th Biennial IAFL Conference on Forensic Linguistics/Language and Law

VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands
July 6-9, 2009

11th International Pragmatics Conference

Melbourne, Australia
July 12-17, 2009

* Panel: Talk-in-interaction in (Australian) Indigenous Communities
* Panel: Occasioned semantics: Systematic approaches to formulation in conversation
* Panel: The interactional practices of children and young people using helplines.

2nd International Meeting on Conversation Analysis and Clinical Encounters

Plymouth, Devon UK
July 21-23, 2009

EM & CA Sessions at the 104th American Sociological Association Annual meeting

San Francisco, CA USA
August 8-11, 2009

RGS-IBG Annual Conference, “Language and Space: Intersections and exchanges between socio-cultural linguistics and human geography”

Manchester, UK
August 26-28, 2009

Our special thanks to Paul ten Have (http://www2.fmg.uva.nl/emca/EMCA.htm) for providing some of this information
The International Conference on Communication in Healthcare (ICCH) October 4-7, 2009 Miami Beach Resort & Spa Miami Beach, Florida, USA

The International Conference on Communication in Healthcare series is the largest gathering of researchers, educators and administrators from around the globe to focus on improving communication in healthcare. The multi-disciplinary nature of conference delegates encourages the integration of perspectives, theory, practice and innovation.

Emphases of this year’s conference are Ethical issues in Healthcare Communication, Patient safety as a Communication Issue and Inter-cultural Issues in Communication. The International Conference will feature Jozien Bensing, PhD (5 October) and Michael Leonard, MD (6 October) and William Branch, MD (7 October) as the keynote speakers.

Registration is now available for the International Conference on Communication in Healthcare. Make sure to register before 10 August 2009 to get the early bird discount!


The International Conference on Conversation Analysis (www.ICCA10.org)

The ICCA will be held at Mannheim University, Germany (July 4-8, 2010). The conference theme is "Multimodal Interaction”.

Notification of panel acceptance is scheduled for June 2009, accepted panels will be announced on the conference webpage.

Submission of abstracts for individual papers, posters and workshops/data sessions will start on August 17, 2009, together with the conference registration.

Further information and advice can be obtained from the conference webpage at www.icca10.org


2nd Bi-Annual CLASP (Culture, Language, and Social Practice) Conference University of Colorado at Boulder October 2-4, 2009

Language and Social Interaction Division, Annual Meeting of the National Communication Association Chicago, Illinois November 12-15, 2009

International Conference on Conversation Analysis (ICCA-10) Manheim University, Germany July 4-8, 2010

Our special thanks to Paul ten Have (http://www2.fmg.uva.nl/emca/EMCA.htm) for providing some of this information.

This paper traces the history of the development of programs in ethnomethodology at Boston University and Manchester University by offering comparisons with the ideal type model of "school," the Chicago School of Sociology. It focuses primarily on institutional structures and arrangements rather than shared theoretical or methodological perspectives. It shows that a small core faculty, aided by extended collegial and research relationships in the local area and with visiting and part-time faculty, can develop and sustain a program over several decades. The history of these programs is elaborated and the titles of dissertations and the names of graduates in both programs are listed. It appears that institutional support is basic to the development, maintenance and expansion of any "school" particularly the ability to retain or hire replacement faculty together with other factors (such as supportive administrations, local collegial networks, research conferences and research groups, and access to publication) which are discussed.
A good example of this is my current project in which I am studying open source software projects. In this research I am functioning as a member of one such project (a role which has demanded more than a bit of disciplinary-specific learning and which stretches my capacity as a programmer, but one for which I also have quite a bit of support from local computer science faculty and students). The software this project is developing is an implementation of a programming language that is already in use by developers of other software systems that in turn are used in (primarily) academic research.

With this, the network of associations from (a) within the project itself, to (b) the users of this programming language, to (c) the research conducted by the users of this programming language and beyond, is long both physically (it has members on all seven continents) and disciplinarily (including dedicated computer programmers, mathematicians, experimental physicists, macroeconomists and more) loosely connected through their interest, ability and need.

There are many places where one can research the imbrication of hard technologies and social technologies and their products, though in my location there are opportunities for such research that rival an ontological standpoint. That is, in some cases I can be there when hard technologies are formed and – in some cases – where the developers of those technologies make or are conscripted into mediating the introduction or incorporation of their creations into other parts of the social sphere.

While members tend to limit their action to only that which satisfies their personal needs (which is one of the superficial aspects of the open source phenomenon), some have interests that stretch from one end of this very circuitous (in more ways than one!) network and it is with and through those individuals that I can study its entire length. Functioning as a programmer myself provides me with authentic reason and need to interact with other programmers at a functional level, and also opens the door to the sort of conversations which serve to collect data for my social research. My status in these projects also affords authentically-grounded participant-inductions which influence my fieldwork and data analyses in ways that would not otherwise be possible. Methodologically, this follows the long tradition of close contact with our informants, by researchers in our tradition. Similarly, it makes available to us the deep archive of experience and advice arising from similarly ethnographic research in anthropology, sociology and related fields.

Within all of the positives this form of research has for our practice, it also puts us at the `pointed end' (so to say) of research ethics, status differentials between researcher and researched, responsibility for our findings and what we do with them, and our own commitment to radically empirical social research.

For example, I have found in my current project and in other projects in which I have aimed to study the social technologies involved in the development and implementation of Technologies, that individuals are very wary of outsiders. This orientation to outsiders follows from worries that (cont’d on p. 10, WORRIES)
EMCA Section Council Elections
CANDIDATES
SECTION 43: Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis
American Sociological Association

Ballots will be emailed to everyone who joined/renewed by March 31st. Paper ballots will be available to people who indicated they wanted a paper ballot. If you joined/renewed after March 31st you will not be able to participate in the election in this year’s election. **ASA voting closes on June 1 at 5:00 p.m. (eastern).**

Please remember to cast your vote for EMCA Section council members online voting is going on now – please see the ASA website.

Name: Christopher Henke

Present Position:
Assistant Professor of Sociology, Colgate University (2001-present).

Prior Position:
Visiting Assistant Professor of Science and Technology Studies, Cornell University (2000-2001)

Education:
PhD, Sociology/Science Studies, University of California, San Diego (2000)
MA, Sociology/Science Studies, University of California, San Diego (1995)
BA, Sociology, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee (1992)

Publications and Professional Accomplishments:

National Science Foundation, Scholars Award, “Contested Fields: Place-Bound Conflicts over Transgenic Crops” (2008-2009).


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Name: Nozomi Ikeya

Present Professional Position:
Research Scientist, Palo Alto Research Center (PARC), 2005-present

Previous Professional Positions:
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Toyo University, Tokyo. April 2000 to March 2005.
Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Toyo University, Tokyo. April 1997 to March 2000

Education:
PhD, University of Manchester, U.K. 1997
MA, Keio University, Tokyo, Japan, 1990
BA, Gakushuin University, 1988

Publications and Professional Accomplishments:


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Name: Geoffrey Raymond

Present Professional Position:
Associate Professor of Sociology, University of California-Santa Barbara 2003 - present

Previous Professional Positions:
Research Scientist, Palo Alto Research Center (PARC), 1999 - 2003
Lecturer (tenure track) University of York, 1999 - 2002

Education:
PhD, Sociology, University of California-Los Angeles 2000
MA, Sociology, University of California-Los Angeles, 1993
BA, Sociology, University of Colorado-Boulder, 1991

Publications and Professional Accomplishments:


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Name: Tanya Stivers

Present Professional Position:
Staff Scientist, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics

Previous Professional Positions:
Post-doctoral fellow, Dept. of Pediatrics, UCLA

Education:
Ph.D. UCLA 2000
MA UCLA 1996
BA California State Polytechnic University, Pomona 1993

Publications:


Stivers, T. Non-antibiotic treatment recommendations: Delivery formats and implications for parent resistance. *Social Science & Medicine, 60(5).* 949-964. 2005
(WORRIES, cont’d from page 5)
others will make the developers responsible for all primary, secondary and tertiary effects and affects of their work – a worry that is perhaps inflamed by popularized accounts of tort lawsuits, patent battles and so on, but which is also made relevant by what is known as ‘the dirty windows thesis’. The dirty windows thesis is what happens when professional (and not so professional) journalists try to report the work of science but in an effort to communicate to non-specialists, oversimplify it and invoke analogies and metaphors which undercut the very foundation of their work. In other words, with a worry that researchers and reporters will get it wrong and in turn damage their own stakes and the credibility of their work, many people and projects we would want to involve in our projects may instead push us away.

The most popular current example of is the description of the product of evolution as a ‘design’ an allusion which implies forethought and which very problematically invokes the idea of ‘intelligent design’!

Of course, all of this argues for an ethnographic approach in which the researcher demonstrates and maintains a commitment to the group and their work through authentic participation. Due to my practice in this regard, I have found that fellow faculty in my college are less wary of my work and give it more credibility (all the while remaining willing to critique it!). I have also been invited into some of their laboratories for my research. (Something which I aim to use in aiding my own students to become competent practitioners of this form of research.)

Incorporating EMCA into the study of science, technology and engineering is both a pursuit aimed at some of the most dramatically advanced thinking and development in the world today and a use of tools and methods that can be found to stretch back to the beginning of social science itself. As Garfinkel and Sacks envisioned them, both EM and CA seem to be the closest to a ‘natural science’ pursuit of social phenomenon and it is fitting that we use them as principal orientations when we study the social technologies involved in science itself.

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