

# Relationships and Identities in Interaction

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Spring 2009

Instructor:	Dr. Jenny Mandelbaum, Dept. of Communication
Office hours:	Mondays 10:45-12:45, before and after class in classroom (briefly); and other times by appointment
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Class website:	<a href="https://sakai.rutgers.edu">https://sakai.rutgers.edu</a>
Readings:	All readings are posted at our Sakai website under Resources

## Course objectives

In this course we examine how relationships and identities are constructed in communication. We focus on specific practices of interaction – the basic building blocks for communication – to discover those practices through which communicators build their actions and sometimes thereby, their relationships and identities. We use the discoveries that others (researchers who examine the organization of interaction) have made as a starting point for making our own discoveries. We will work extensively with tape-recorded naturally occurring interaction, with a particular (although not exclusive) emphasis on the organization of storytelling. We will begin by developing an understanding of the basic organization of interaction (how turns are taken, sequences built, actions formed, troubles repaired, words selected, etc.), and then proceed to a more detailed examination of how stories are told. Each of these aspects of the organization of interaction will give us insight into how, when, and if relationships and identities are built and managed in and through interaction.

You will learn:

- (1) How to engage in close observation of naturally occurring, taped interaction
- (2) How to transcribe and analyze tape-recorded naturally occurring interaction
- (3) How to recognize basic features of interaction (such as turn-taking, action sequence organization, action formation, repair organization, etc.)
- (4) How to describe the actions interactants are engaging in, and the specific practices they use to implement these actions
- (5) How storytelling is organized, and what interactants can accomplish in and through storytelling
- (6) When and how relationships and identities become salient for, and/or come to be managed and/or produced by interactants

## Tentative Schedule of Activities

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Readings</u>
W 1/21	Introduction to the course and each other	Download readings from Do transcription workshop at: <a href="http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/sczegloff/TranscriptionProject/index.html">http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/sczegloff/TranscriptionProject/index.html</a>
		<u>Readings are due on the day by which they are listed</u>
M 1/26	The wonderful world of transcribing <b>Transcription homework assigned</b> Get Quicktime, preferably Quicktime Pro - <a href="http://www.apple.com/quicktime/">http://www.apple.com/quicktime/</a>	1. Jefferson on transcribing laughter <a href="https://sakai.rutgers">https://sakai.rutgers</a>
W 1/28	Relationships as things we DO vs. Relationships as things we HAVE <i>Acquaintances (Marcia &amp; Donny)</i>	2. Mandelbaum - CA & interpersonal comm.
M 2/2	<u>Building-blocks of conversation</u> Turn-taking in conversation <i>Friends (CD II – potato)</i> <b>Turn-taking homework assigned</b>	3. Schegloff, Chap. 1 <b>Transcription homework due</b>
W 2/4	Building turns <i>Families and friends (Chinese Dinner)</i>	4. Goodwin - Interactive construction
M 2/9	The miraculous orderliness of overlap <i>Female friends (TG)</i>	5. Jefferson - Overlap onset
W 2/11	Building action sequences <i>Teenage friends (BB Gun)</i> <b>Sequence organization homework assigned</b>	6. Schegloff - Chapter 2
M 2/16	Beginning phone conversations <i>Male acquaintances (Edgerton)</i>	7. Schegloff - Routine as achievement
W 2/18	A matter of “preference” <i>Male-female “just” friends (Arthur &amp; Rebecca)</i>	8. Pomerantz - Compliment responses
M 2/23	Repairing troubles in talk <i>Family interaction – Grandma reminisces (Easter Soup)</i> <b>Repair organization homework assigned</b>	9. Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks - Self-correction
W 2/25	Other-correction <i>A family with a teenager (Virginia)</i>	10. Jefferson - Embedded correction

**Enacting identity**

- M 3/2 Repair and identity 11. Land & Kitzinger - Speaking as a lesbian  
*Gay and lesbian friends*
- W 3/4 How to refer to people, places and things – invoking identity  
*Professionals (Cephalic presentation)* 12. Schegloff - Conveying who you are
- M 3/9 Review and catch-up
- W 3/11 **In-class midterm covering all materials up to and including M 3/9**
- M 3/16 & W 3/18 – Spring Break
- M 3/23 Enacting identity 13. Raymond & Heritage - Owning grandchildren  
*Middle-aged female friends (Rahman)*
- W 3/25 Enacting gender 14. Jefferson - "Male-female" laughter  
*A flirting couple (Kip & Cara part I)*
- M 3/30 Face and identity 15. Lerner - Finding face  
*Male-female acquaintances (Trip to Syracuse)*
- Storytelling and relationships
- W 4/1 How to start a storytelling; things we do with storytellings 16. Sacks - Dirty joke  
*Girl friends (HG)*
- M 4/6 Responding to storytellings 17. Goodwin - Story structure and the  
*Couple friends (CDII – Lobster)* organization of participation
- W 4/8 **No class**
- M 4/13 Using stories as part of exploring relationship possibilities  
*Flirting couple (Kip & Cara part II)* 18. Goodwin - Audience diversity,  
participation and interpretation
- W 4/15 **No class**
- M 4/20 Enacting "being a couple" through storytelling 19. Lerner - Collectivities  
*Involved couples (CDII – Crazy on the road)*
- W 4/22 Storytelling in professional settings 20. Heritage & Robinson- Accounting for  
*Doctors and patients (In terms of fingers)* the visit
- M 4/27 Storytelling and the family  
*The family dinner table* 21. Kitzinger - Heteronormativity in action

W 4/29      Project presentations - **MANDATORY ATTENDANCE DAY!**  
M 5/4      Project presentations - **MANDATORY ATTENDANCE DAY!**

**Final paper:** Due via email ([jennym@scils.rutgers.edu](mailto:jennym@scils.rutgers.edu)) by 9 pm, Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup>.

### Course Requirements and Grading

Attendance and participation	<b>20%</b>
A transcription exercise	<b>10%</b>
3 short exercises, 10% each	<b>30%</b>
Midterm exam	<b>20%</b>
Final paper	<b>20%</b>

#### Attendance and participation (20%)

Responsible attendance, timely completion of assigned readings, **active participation** in class discussions and exercises. (10%)

**Attendance is mandatory on project presentation days, 4/29 & 5/4.**

It is impossible to do well in this class if you do not attend class regularly. If you know that class attendance is difficult for you this is not the class for you! It is **essential** that everyone attend class regularly and do the readings.

**Reading summaries. (10%)** In order to encourage you to conquer the readings in time for class, at the BEGINNING of each class period you must submit a **typed** summary of each reading due that class day. Please submit a separate summary for each reading, but staple the summaries together.

The summary should have the following format:

In **OUTLINE** form, summarize **IN YOUR OWN WORDS** the main points and/or findings of the article. Your instructor must be able to tell from this summary that you have read and understood the article.

This will enable the instructor to evaluate and assist with any problems in understanding the readings. You may miss two summaries in the course of the semester without penalty. If you miss a class, you may submit the summary within a week of its due date.

Summaries must be brief -- no longer than one page in length.

#### Transcription exercise (10%)

Use the guidelines distributed in class, and the resources on the Sakai website under Resources to produce a thorough, careful transcript of a short piece of recorded interaction. You may work together with other students on this assignment as long as you submit your own version.

#### Three short exercises (10% each = 30%)

In these exercises, you will apply what you have learned in class about features of conversation to actual conversations, and bring your results to class to be discussed and handed in.

#### Midterm (20%)

This test will assess your grasp of transcript notation, and basic organizational features of interaction. It will take place in class on **Wednesday, 3/11/09**.

### A presentation (5%) and a paper (15%)

This assignment involves some original research, and consolidation of the major themes and ideas developed during the semester. Students will choose one of the relationships or identities examined in the course of the semester, or one not covered that you are interested in, and use data from class, or other data supplied by the instructor, to describe a conversational practice by which that relationship or identity is enacted or “done”. Class readings and discussions will also provide resources for this assignment. Students will present preliminary findings to the class on 4/29 or 5/4. Students will most likely work in groups for the presentation. **Attendance is mandatory on both presentation days, and absence will have a serious negative effect on students’ attendance grade.** Students will use student and instructor feedback from the presentations to further develop their research, and submit it as a paper. Final papers are due by **5 pm on Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>** via email to [jennym@scils.rutgers.edu](mailto:jennym@scils.rutgers.edu).

Final papers may be submitted as group work, but you will have the option to submit your own paper if you prefer. A more detailed explanation of this assignment will be provided. There will be ample time in class for groups to work on the project.

**Note: The particulars of this assignment may be altered somewhat depending on class size and interests. More detailed instructions will be distributed in class.**

### Grading policy

Assignments cannot be accepted late **unless prior arrangements are made.**

Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the class.

Never miss class in order to finish an assignment!

### Grading Criteria

An A grade will be awarded to an assignment that both fulfills the terms of the assignment and shows evidence of out-of-the-ordinary original, creative, analytical, and interesting thought. A B grade will be awarded if the terms of the assignment have been fulfilled thoroughly and thoughtfully, with some evidence of originality and creativity. Assignments that merely fulfill the terms of the assignment will receive a C grade. Assignments that fail to fulfill the terms of the assignment will receive a D. An assignment that does not approximate the terms of the assignment will receive an F.

### Scholastic Dishonesty – Plagiarism

Avoid plagiarism by being very careful that it is clear to the instructor that your work is your own and not anyone else's. Among other things, this means writing up your own assignments (including reading summaries), not looking over at the exams of others, and showing in detail where the materials you use in your papers come from. Be sure always to show source and page number (e.g., Sacks, 1984, p. 43, and then a list of references at the back of the paper). If you find yourself paraphrasing an author, include a footnote or some other reference to show the source of the material you are using, also citing source and page number. If you are doubtful about issues regarding plagiarism or scholastic dishonesty, please feel free to discuss them with the instructor. The consequences of scholastic dishonesty are very serious.

## Readings

(available for download on the course website at <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>)

1. Jefferson, G. (1985). An exercise in the transcription and analysis of laughter. In T. Van Dijk (ed.), Handbook of Discourse Analysis (Vol. 3: Discourse and Dialogue). London: Academic Press, pp. 25-34.
2. Mandelbaum, J. (2008). "Conversation analysis theory: A descriptive approach to interpersonal communication." In Leslie A. Baxter & Dawn O. Braithwaite, (Eds.), Engaging Theories in Interpersonal Communication. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
3. Schegloff, E. A. (2007) Chapter 1 in *Sequence organization in interaction: A primer in conversation analysis: Volume 1* (pp. 1-12). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4. Goodwin, C. (1979). The interactive construction of a sentence in natural conversation. In George Psathas (Ed.), *Everyday Language: Studies in Ethnomethodology* (pp. 97-12). New York: Irvington.
5. Jefferson, G. (1984). Notes on some orderlinesses of overlap onset. In V. D'Urso and P. Leonardi (Eds.) *Discourse analysis and natural rhetoric* (pp. 11-38). Padua, Italy: Cleup Editore.
6. Schegloff, E. A. (2007). Chapter 2 in *Sequence organization in interaction: A primer in conversation analysis: Volume 1* (pp. 13-21). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7. Schegloff, E. A. (1986). The routine as achievement. Human Studies, 9, 111-151.
8. Pomerantz, A. M. (1978). Compliment responses: notes on the co-operation of multiple constraints. In J. N. Schenkein (ed.), Studies in the Organisation of Conversational Interaction. New York: Academic Press. pp. 79-112.
9. Schegloff, E.A., Jefferson, G., & Sacks, H. (1977). The preference for self-correction in the organization of repair in conversation. *Language*, 53, 361-82.
10. Jefferson, G. (1987). On exposed and embedded correction in conversation. In G. Button and J.R.E. Lee (Eds.) *Talk and social organization* (pp. 86-100). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
11. Land, Victoria and Kitzinger, Celia (2005) Speaking as a lesbian: Correcting the heterosexist presumption, *Research on Language and Social Interaction*. 38, 371-416.
12. Schegloff, E. A. (2007). Conveying who you are: The presentation of self, strictly speaking. In N. J. Enfield and T. Stivers (Eds.), Person Reference in Interaction: Linguistic, cultural and social perspectives (pp. 123-148). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
13. Raymond, G. and Heritage, J. (2006). The epistemics of social relationships: Owning grandchildren, *Language in Society*, 35, 677-705.
14. Jefferson, G. (2004) A note on laughter in 'male-female' interaction. Discourse Studies, 6, 117-133.
15. Lerner, G. H. (1996). Finding "face" in the preference structures of talk-in-interaction. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 59, 303-321.
16. Sacks, H. (1978) Some technical considerations of a dirty joke. In J. Schenkein (Ed.) *Studies in the Organization of Conversational Interaction* (pp. 249-270). N.Y.: Academic Press.
17. Goodwin, C. (1984). Notes on story structure and the organization of participation. In J. M Atkinson. & J. Heritage, (Eds.). *Structures of social action* (pp. 225-46). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
18. Goodwin, C. (1986). Audience diversity, participation and interpretation. *Text*, 6, 283-316.
19. Lerner, G. H. (1993). Collectivities in action: Establishing the relevance of conjoined participation in conversation. *Text*, 13, 213-245.
20. Heritage, J. & Robinson, J. (2006). Accounting for the visit: giving reasons for seeking medical care. In J. Heritage and D. Maynard (Eds.), *Communication in Medical Care: Interactions between Primary Care Physicians and Patients* (pp.48-85). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
21. Kitzinger, Celia (2005). Heteronormativity in action: Reproducing the heterosexual nuclear family in 'after hours' medical calls. *Social Problems*, 52, 477-498.