

Orienting to the Phenomenon*

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You should allow yourself, for some bit of time, to listen for the recurrent simplicities in the organization of conversation. It doesn't matter who's talking...

-Sacks (1974)

The assumption that no order of detail in interaction can be dismissed a priori as insignificant has had two major consequences for conversation analytic researchers. The first has been a general retreat from premature theory construction in favour of a more strongly empirical approach to the study of social action ... an avoidance of the abstract theoretical constructs . . . every effort is made to render empirical analyses answerable to the specific details of research materials and to avoid their idealization ... the data of interaction will, in all their aspects and unless proven otherwise, exhibit systematic and orderly properties which are meaningful for the participants.

-Heritage (1984, pp. 242-243)

With the advent of the journal *Communication Theory*, representing what Craig (1991) foresees as the coming of age of an academic field (p. 1), "contributions such as this edited volume are not just timely but indispensable. Opportunities to systematically address elemental features of *communication* and *theory-their*

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relationships, problems, and promises—cannot be underestimated. For researchers, educators, and students alike the ongoing task involves *excavations* of basic roots and taken for granted assumptions emerging from attempts to describe and explain inherently *social*, human behavior. These are problematic exercises; no finalized solutions are proposed nor delivered. Rather, this chapter (and, I assume, others in this volume as well) are designed to "stimulate reflection and productive dialogue on fundamental questions of scope, purpose, and method that speaks to central problems and concerns of communication theory" (Craig, 1991, pp. 1-2).

The specific focus of this chapter rests with *language and social interaction*, and may be summarized as follows: Whenever language and social interaction comprise the locus of communication inquiry, certain basic questions emerge regarding interactants' and researchers' methods for displaying, detecting, and thus orienting to phenomena constituting social order. The following questions are central both to the present essay and to the future course of communication theory and research:

- Have we located a phenomenon yet?
- Would we recognize a phenomenon of interest if we *observed* one communicatively "at work"—as speakers and hearers orient to the occasions in which they are interactionally engaged?
- What evidence could be provided that is available for critical inspection to all researchers interested in the discovery and justification of that phenomenon?
- How would we know that a phenomenon is convincingly and uniquely of one type rather than another?
- **To** what extent is the object of study a phenomenon-in-the-world and an artifact of the research enterprise?

These are deceptively complex queries, applying equally well to all modes of inquiry focusing upon the organizing features of language and social interaction. With increasing regularity, however, such questions are being raised by researchers attempting to understand rudimentary features of everyday conversation. Throughout Zimmerman's (1988) overview of the "conversation analytic (CA) perspective" in *Communication Yearbook 11*, for example, attention is drawn to how speakers and hearers noticeably achieve interaction in the first instance, that is, by and for themselves (cf. Jefferson, 1973; Schegloff, 1986). Consideration is also given to how researchers go about the business of observing, analyzing, and providing evidence for the existence of an interactional "phenomenon."

Guided by the foregoing questions, issues and recurring problems associated with "orienting to the phenomenon" are examined from five interrelated perspec-

naturally occurring interaction. Consideration is given to the location and recognition of social phenomena, wherein phenomena consist of conversational activities existing (in the first instance) independently of the research enterprise. Second, a reflexive consideration of *coding*, as a set of activities enacted by all interactional researchers, is offered. When coding tasks are viewed as achieved orientations to social order, it becomes possible to render them as problematic. Doing so addresses how the routine nature of coding tasks leads to their typically being overlooked as methodical glosses of phenomena routinely oriented-to by speakers and hearers. Third, readers are invited to examine a transcribed segment of video recorded interaction. This segment is provided so as to demonstrate, empirically though in introductory fashion, how speakers and hearers orient to phenomena that make up a "social occasion." The turn-by-turn analysis of this segment begins to locate how particular phenomena are shaped and fashioned within the environment of a three-party speech exchange system. Such an exercise informs and thereby directs both the analyst and readers in the search for patterns and recurring orientations by participants. Fourth, it is argued that phenomena exist in and through interactional sequences. Invoking macro-concepts "external" to the talk itself (e.g., power, status, identity) serves only to gloss the detailed and achieved character of routine social occasions. Finally, this chapter concludes with an overview of specific methodological and thus theoretical issues implicit within the positions developed above. Particular attention is given to the degree and type of correspondence between researchers' and interactants' methods for displaying and detecting social phenomena.

LOCATING AND RECOGNIZING PHENOMENA

A basic tenet of CA is the recognition that social order, evident within the detailed and contingent activities of societal members, exists *independently* of social scientific inquiry. Irrespective of the possibility of being examined and in some way analytically dissected for purposes of research, everyday interactants simply go about their business performing routine and often mundane tasks. Whether these tasks are occasioned during family dinners, service encounters, corporate meetings, prayer support groups or any other type of interactional involvement, the indisputable fact is that they are ordinarily achieved in the course of daily life in the process of "doing being" (Sacks, 1984b) a friend, a parent, a customer, a boss, a prayer partner, a lawyer, a doctor, and so on. How these tasks get done is a direct function of ways in which persons' identities get worked out turn-by-turn, moment-by-moment, through the methods employed to accomplish the, routine character of everyday living. In the eventual course or evolution of a conversational involvement (cf. Goffman, 1981), the practical consequences of interactions (e.g., their outcomes) evidence little more or less than how participants display and detect one another's orientations to the occasion-at-hand.

fashion, shape, and make available to one another their understandings of the local environment of which they are an integral part.

For conversation analysts, the unparalleled goal is to seek understandings of the independent and natural existence of social order. The reliance upon carefully **produced transcripts of audio and video recordings**, allowing for repeated **hearings, viewings, and inspections of "actual and determinate"** (Schegloff, 1986) **sequences of interaction**, reflects a basic commitment to employing research methods fashioned after the phenomena being examined. Although neither recordings nor transcriptions are conversations in and of themselves (Zimmerman, 1988), they nevertheless preserve and embody the integrity and distinctiveness of many conversational activities. Such activities are drawn from natural settings, examined *on their own merits as* interesting phenomena—for example, openings and closings in telephone conversations (Schegloff, 1968; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), compliments (Pomerantz, 1978a), teases (Drew, 1987), laughter (Jefferson, 1979, 1985a, 1985b), audience responses to public speaking (Atkinson, 1984a, 1984b, 1985)—and made available to readers (in the form of transcribed instances of interaction) for their critical inspection. Evidence for claims regarding the routine ways in which interactions get done is, within the constraints of publication outlets, offered to the public rather than remaining within the relative privacy of a researcher's workplace. Shared analyses of actual conversational instances (with priority given to repeated listenings of recordings, aided by carefully produced transcriptions) are invited, simply because the detailed nature of ordinary talk is best *seen* by readers in unison with descriptions and explanations of some phenomenon. In short, working *with* recorded and **transcribed data (as heard and seen) is qualitatively** different than merely writing and/or talking *about* the intricate ways in which participants organize conversation. As Zimmerman (1988) notes,

as procedures *in use*, they [participants] reflexively fashion and engage the detailed opportunities and constraints of actual circumstances of talk and thus serve as a resource for permitting speakers-hearers to *achieve* that order for one another, and hence, for the analyst. (p. 409; emphasis added)

It becomes obvious that when some phenomenon is purported to exist within interaction, it is much more difficult to show exactly what a given set of methods and/or techniques (or series of "action sequences," see Heritage, 1984, 1985; Pomerantz, 1978a, 1978b, 1984) are *occupied* with. For example, what an utterance is achieving in its placement and construction; how a series of utterances is overlapped or latched together to accomplish particular activity-types; the ways in which coparticipants display and thereby build understanding into interaction vocally and nonvocally; and/or the methods for both creating and repairing routine problems as conversation unfolds. Consequently, there appears to be a growing realization by researchers working with conversational materials of the time and detail required to describe and explain instances and sequences thoroughly. One

analytic priority of such research efforts is to produce insightful (and inherently defensible) accounts of the routine tasks of social life. More specifically (as noted previously), the attainment of such a priority entails orienting as best as possible to the same kinds of phenomena produced, in the first instance, by and for interactants as they routinely orient to, and therein organize, occasions comprised of their participative efforts.

Ironic as it may seem, however, most communication researchers are not trained to look *directly* at interaction itself. Only rarely is interaction examined *on its own merits* as an achievement as ordinary and collaboratively produced sequences of action, used and relied upon by speakers and hearers to get the work of social life done. Thus, many researchers are retooling to accommodate the detailed organization of naturally occurring talk, while at the same time training students not to dismiss prematurely some phenomenon as insignificant or disorderly (cf. Heritage, 1984, p. 241; Zimmerman, 1988). In this sense seemingly "small," and what may at first appear to be relatively unimportant phenomena (e.g., pauses, overlaps, turn-constructions, laughter, gaze, gesture) turn out to be dense achievements (e.g., Goodwin, 1981). Microinteractional achievements comprise both the organization of "larger" units of social order such as *power, identity, gender, or culture* (cf. Beach & Lindstrom, 1992; Boden & Zimmerman, 1991; Drew & Heritage, 1992; Schegloff, 1987) as well as less encompassing yet no less important social encounters such as telephone calls, family picnics, courtroom interrogation and testimony (cf. Atkinson & Drew, 1979), or medical diagnostic interviews (cf. Frankel, 1984, 1990; Heath, 1992; Maynard, 1989a, 1989b, 1991, 1992). Thus, providing convincing accounts of the detailed nature of conversational organization is, in the very least, a formidable task—one in which issues regarding the location and recognition of some "phenomenon" must constantly be examined rather than being discounted as trivial or untimely.

Such issues have been repeatedly and directly addressed within sociology (e.g., see Atkinson & Heritage, 1984; Button, Drew, & Heritage, 1986; Heritage, 1984; Psathas, 1979; Schenkein, 1978; Sudnow, 1972; Zimmerman & West, 1980); they have also been raised by speech communication researchers representing a diverse set of concerns with language, interaction, and features of everyday conversation (e.g., Beach, 1982, 1983, 1989, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c, 1992; Craig & Tracy, 1983; Ellis & Donahue, 1986; Hopper, 1991a, 1991b, 1992b; Nofsinger, 1991; Pomerantz, 1989). Yet it is important to recognize that nearly 2 decades ago Harvey Sacks (see 1984a, pp. 26-27) articulated the need for treating "interactions as products of a machinery," the goal being to "see how finely the details of actual, naturally occurring conversation can be subjected to analysis that will yield the technology of conversation." Similarly, Schegloff's (1986) concerns with the study of conversation have long been rooted in:

what appears to be the primordial site of sociality-direct interactions with others. Wherever else we might locate [the] society—the economy, the polity, the law,

the organized systems for the reproduction of the population and the membership of the society, etc.-the organization of persons dealing with one another in interaction is the vehicle through which those institutions get their work done. On these and other grounds, interaction and talk-in-interaction merit recognition as a strategic locus of the social. It is at the elucidation of this fundamental aspect of social life that inquiries such as this are aimed. (p. 112)

TOWARD A REFLEXIVITY OF CODING

All research on interaction is grounded in some form of coding. This claim holds true, minimally, in the following simplistic and somewhat generic sense: *Coding* is a set of activities necessarily transforming the first-order world of doing (and displaying the experience of being involved in) interaction, into various kinds of evidence and claims regarding interaction as a topic of inquiry. The nature and degree of these transformations varies considerably, depending upon questions raised, basic commitments to research methods employed, and what counts as "data" in the process of providing answers to certain questions.

Viewed in this manner, methods may be understood as arguments generating from sequences of events (see Jackson, 1986; Jacobs, 1986) commonly referred to by researchers as observations, measurements, transcriptions, procedures, steps, and the like. These sequences of events may or may not be linear in their evolution. Yet in each and every case, certain categories, labels, and/or classifications must be invoked in order to render some claimed phenomenon as existing, thus providing for the very possibility of the phenomenon to be describable and retrievable for purposes of analysis. Moreover, researchers must somehow compare and contrast instances of observed and/or measured phenomena with one another, so as to identify similarities and differences among the instances being examined. Finally, continued observations and/or measurements require ongoing categorizing-coding or placing of instances in various groups. As types of instances evolve into constructed sets of categories or "groupings," the routine work of coding involves discernment among (and the creation of new) categories for organizing and making sense of social order.

As briefly sketched before, *coding* is not a sequence of activities that one group of researchers does and another does not. Rather, coding is inevitable in the achievement of scientific inquiry; it is how sense is made in and through the discernment and imposition of order on the social world via the location, categorization, and identification of types of instances. Moreover, determining how a corpus of instances constitutes a given phenomenon is also a form or phase of coding, simply because attention is rendered to similarities and differences between instances with respect to criterion attributes of that being observed. The important issue when examining coding, therefore, is not who engages in coding and who does not. Rather, the focus should be upon how coding gets accomplished (e.g., the

methods enacted or "schemes" employed) and the ways in which coding-as an inevitable set of abstracting, transforming moves-accounts for the original (first-order) set of interactional achievements. Put simply, the focus should be on how coding re-presents underlying patterns of the social world. Because the enactment of coding routines determines, in an ultimate sense, those empirical findings we subsequently put forth as knowledge claims, there exists a need to reflexively examine our procedures for revealing how the social world gets organized and worked out-by and for the members themselves.

Such reflexivity presupposes a shift from coding as a taken-for-granted resource to a problematic set of achievements in need of critical inspection. It is only through reflexive examinations of research achievements that relationships can be made evident between the social world and researchers' accounts of interaction.

Coding as Achievement

As an achievement, coding may be viewed synonymously with how researchers come to locate phenomena and make sense of interaction by imposing scientific order upon the social world (and its working features). Coding is the general process of translating *raw data* into *symbolic data* (cf. Ford, 1975, pp. 383-395), and coding is constituted by a set of moves through which gathered data are observed and made sense of, that is, *ordered* so as to be used and relied upon in the explanation of patterns constituting some phenomenon. These coding moves constitute the accounting practices of the researcher(s); they reflect the situated production of analysts' practical methods for shaping data into analyzable, reportable, and thus readable forms. Coding accomplishments are frequently unarticulated, and thus taken for granted, as useful resources for understanding how findings and results got produced by the "research machinery" (cf. Ford, 1975; Garfinkel, 1967; Sacks, 1984a).

The intermittent formulation of coding methods, as meaningful data, reflects a heuristic concern for constant refinements of observational techniques. Studying how coding gets done (and even reported as an activity) is not particularly useful as an end in and of itself. Rather, reflexive examination allows for the possibility of questioning underlying presuppositions of empirical outcomes as displayed connections between theory and method. A reflexivity of coding can also reveal gaps and overlaps between conceptual intrigue and empirically justified "reality."

While it is not news to suggest that an essential reflexivity exists between knowledge claims and modes of observation (e.g., Delia & Grossberg, 1977; Fisher, 1978; Kaplan, 1964; Phillipson, 1973; Polanyi, 1962), it is somewhat of a different claim to suggest (as discussed in a subsequent section), that coding methods inevitably function to gloss (and perhaps even misrepresent) the phenomena accounted for in the guise of empirical findings. The key issue,

however, is the nature and degree of glossing that occurs, and the implications such glossing holds for understanding how interaction gets organized.

A useful point of departure for understanding coding is Garfinkel's (1967, Chapter 1) classic examination of coding achievements. Throughout daily "commonsense situations of choice" (p. 19), Garfinkel and his associates were curious about how staff members accomplished their daily routines within the UCLA outpatient clinic. In asking the question "By what criteria are its applicants selected for treatment?", they decided to investigate clinic records "Because clinic folders contain records that clinic personnel provide of their own activities . . ." (p. 18). They employed two graduate students to examine 1,582 folders, transfer relevant information to coding sheets, and subsequently ran conventional reliability tests to assess coders' level of agreement. These tests were run because it is typically assumed that level of coder agreement at some point in the research process presumes "agreement on the end results" (p. 20). Their concerns with reliability coefficients, however, went beyond their routine employment as a resource for substantiating agreement of coders. The research focused on not only the actual practices through which "reliability" was obtained, but also how it became possible for coders to "follow coding instructions." Rather than considering coders to be "right or wrong" in their answers (i.e., codes), it was assumed that "whatever they did could be counted correct procedure in *some* coding 'game.'" "The question was, what were these 'games?'" (p. 20).

It was discovered that in the process of attempting to follow coding rules, coders relied more heavily on their practical knowledge of the organizational activities of the clinic to make decisions about clinic folders than they did the *a priori* instructions. Coders engaged in several *ad-hoc*ing procedures that better allowed them "to grasp the relevance of the instructions to the particular and actual situations they were intended to analyze" (p. 21). In attempting to "fit" and classify the contents of the folders, ad hoc considerations attained priority over the coding rules themselves. Only by "ad hocing" could the coders work with the "a priori" category scheme, suggesting that instructions are essentially incomplete and inherently "indexical" guidelines for research procedures. Garfinkel and his coworkers concluded that ad-hocing procedures were inevitable simply because *that's what happens* when coders rely upon their native competence as part of the research "arrangement."

Coding instructions ought to be read instead as consisting

of a grammar of rhetoric; they furnish a "social science" way of talking so as to persuade consensus and action within the practical circumstances of the clinic's daily organized activities. (p. 24)

Garfinkel's (1967) study of coding practices has much to say about research as a practical, orchestrated achievement. In particular, the relationships of reliability coefficients and validity claims are questioned. It raises as problematic the basic difficulties involved in training coders to follow instructions or rules,

and thus casts doubt on exactly what "interrater reliability coefficients" imply when employed as an argument for "getting at the phenomenon." Coders must agree on more complex issues such as: What counts as an instance of the phenomenon being observed?; How might instances be coded into categories that, in varying degrees, are glosses of the detailed work of speakers and hearers?; How should problematic decisions be resolved as ambiguity arises throughout the coding procedure?

Of equal if not greater importance, however, are basic questions regarding the creation of categories imposing artificial order onto interaction. To the extent categories do not emerge from or re-present underlying achievements of interactants, they remain macro-concepts invoked as an explanatory resource for "getting at the phenomenon." Similarly, coding instructions may themselves prove ambiguous in light of categories employed.

An extended example may be useful here. In an examination of coders trained to employ the RELICOM manual and category system as a means of studying "relational control" (see Beach, 1980, 1981), an analysis of training session recordings and coder diaries revealed specific problems in the routine accomplishment of coding. First, problems were frequent in following the "transactional coding rule" whereby each act should be coded as it relates to the previous act. Exactly what counted as an *act* became problematic, as did the coding of acts adjacent to a prior act yet not appearing to be designed as a receipt of a speaker's turn-at-talk. Second, coding "transactionally" was further complicated by the fact that coders were instructed to determine "the definition of the relationships among communicators, that is, how the communicator interprets her or his relationship with other." Here coders had difficulty understanding how they were to impute "interpretations" from transcripts or recordings. Third, exactly what counted as a "unit of analysis" (i.e. "an uninterrupted verbal utterance; an act; independent of length.") was difficult to operationalize: What counted as an "interruption" (compared, for example, to an "overlap")? How carefully were "interruptions" displayed in the transcripts and "hearable" in recordings? What kinds of conclusions should be drawn about "relational control" upon the occurrence of an "interruption"? Fourth, the "moves vs. turns" rule was particularly troublesome, since coders were instructed to assign one of five codes (i.e., dominance, structuring, equivalence, deference, submissiveness) to each and every act. As might be expected, however, coders frequently determined that certain acts contained multiple "control" functions. Thus: Which portion of an act had more impact on the control dimension of an utterance-in-sequence? One utterance studied during a training session included what coders believed to possess several different "functions": an insult, an expression of opinion, a humorous statement, a disagreement, a question, and an "I don't know." Coders were perplexed, yet gradually reached a consensus that, in this and other cases, they would individually attempt to "average" the contents of each utterance and in so doing, make a categorical judgment best reflecting the *tone* of the act. Though none of

the coders felt satisfied with the outcome, the training manual did not provide a sufficient alternative; they had to improvise.

Although other problems did emerge throughout coding (e.g., questions were raised about working alone and in pairs, determining how often to assess reliability among coders, and the extent to which working with transcripts and recordings was an "equivalent" task), perhaps the most revealing and recurring finding was coders' unanimous agreement that the five categories of relational control did not reflect nor capture the subtleties of conversational control in everyday interaction. This task was described as "fitting a square peg into an undersized round hole," and "taking an axe to a spider web."

In summary, all coding tasks involve routine problems in need of resolution. *How* coding is achieved has much to say about the degree of correspondence between theories and findings. And in a sense, the reflexive stance of not taking coding for granted refines understandings of how research methods abstract and transform the detailed workings of interactants as they orient to phenomena.

Coding and Transcribing

In the prior discussion of how conversation analysts attempt to locate and recognize phenomena, it was noted how the use of transcriptions of naturally occurring interactions, drawn from and employed in unison with audio and video recordings throughout analysis, are carefully produced so as to mirror the unfolding details of conversational activities. Fashioned after the interactions being examined, care is taken to produce an adequate record of events that actually (rather than "presumably," "hypothetically," or "could have") occurred. Arguing for the theoretical relevance of transcriptions, Ochs (1979) notes:

A pervasive sentiment among those who draw from [speech] performance data is that the data they utilize are more accurate than intuition data: Their data constitute the real world-what is as opposed to what *ought* to be. (p. 43)

Although transcriptions are themselves subject to constant refinement and adjudication, so as to more precisely capture and reflect recorded talk-in-text, the key issue is what they are designed to "attend to." Jefferson (1985a) summarizes this point in her examination of laughter by observing:

transcription is one way we try to "get our hands on" actual occurrences in order to study social order in fine detail. The crucial point is that we are, in whatever ways we go about it, trying to proceed by detailed observation of actual events . . . that the detailed study of small phenomena can be useful and informative, that the results may be orderly, that without "close looking at the world" one might not know such phenomena exist, and that the absence of a range of phenomena from the data base upon which theories about the social world are built can be consequential. (pp. 26-27)

As detailed attention is given to the production of transcripts of naturally occurring interactions, the more readily available phenomena become to the analyst. Whether the analyst is conducting an unmotivated search through a transcript, or seeking multiple instances of particular types of phenomena (e.g., overlaps, pauses, laughter tokens, repairs, presequences, question-answer pairs), analysis is constrained by (a) the quality of the recordings and transcripts available, (b) how phenomena are described as achieved in character, and (c) relationships among descriptions offered and the organization of actual recorded events.

WORKING THROUGH A TRANSCRIBED SEGMENT

It may be useful at this point to examine, in some detail yet quite informally, the following segment of interaction. This examination provides readers with the opportunity to inspect (and thereby gain a sense of) how this extended instance unfolds-the nature of the occasion being organized, participants' orientations to and creation of the task at hand, how phenomena such as identities, power, and status get worked out and are embodied in the talk itself-and thus to ground prior discussions of CA and coding in an actual instance of interaction.

The following segment is drawn from a growing corpus of video recorded courtroom interactions. In a rather unmotivated fashion, my attention was drawn to this segment as it appeared both interesting and deserving of further inquiry. An analysis of this extended segment begins to locate what interactants are "up to" in achieving a courtroom hearing, and is not exhaustive in its location and recognition of a "phenomenon"- at least not in the sense that a large corpus of instances of some phenomenon are displayed and examined for recurring features (see, for example, Beach, 1991c). Rather, as will become apparent, working through this segment evidences the kinds of data and issues routinely addressed in CA research in the process of searching for patterns of social interaction. It also reveals the necessity of constantly cycling back to the transcriptions (and recordings, when available) to check and refine observations made, and ultimately of substantiating any conclusions put forth as empirical claims. (Transcription symbols are described in the appendix of this chapter. Speaker designations are: J^a Judge; D - Defendant; PL - Plaintiff Lawyer.)

(1) ELAC:T5:CU v. ADAMS-121-180

121 J: So the claim of exemption: u::h

122 further proceedings can go *off*calendar

123 subj ect to the receipt (0.8) by: thee:

[]

124 D: Sir ((raises hand, leans forward in chair))

125 J: - uh (1.4) > you're still gonna be invo:lved <

126 so it's (.) gonna go to yo u
 [I
 127 PL: > Ya (.) your honor urn <
 128 (0.4) my question: u:h since we have no
 129 answer from the marshall i:s uh whether the
 130 (1.4) thousand dollars was uh (0.3) *plus* was
 131 being held in the bank account
 132 (0.8)
 133 J: I dunnTo
 [I
 134 D: It's be- It's being *he:ld* (I dun no-)
 [I
 135 PL: Well wh y don't we
 136 release all monies all over (0.8) for a thou sand
 [I
 ((D shakes head))
 137 dollars your honor
 138 (2.6)
 139 J: Response?
 140 (0.8)
 141 D: I- I feel that it shudn't.
 142 (1.6)
 143 D: (eh) be- b- > for the *simple* reason that they
 144 din't- < (1.8) i- it's very confusing an (0.3)
 145 what T I want to know your honor is (0.8)
 146 why wasn't I s:erved with a supeenee to (.)
 147 appear ih *court* that's wha- confuses me
 [I
 148 J: Not- not into
 149 that.
 [I
 150 D: Okay aright sir-
 151 J: - You'(ve) - -
 152 D: -aright -
 153 J: -*won* the claim of exemption
 [I

155 J: - you've *got* the claim of reduced by::: ()
 [I
 156 D: And
 157 I'm will ing to live by-
 [I
 158 J: (*wey*)
 159 D: I'm willing to go by my agreement
 [I
 160 J: Please don't interr u(pt)-
 161 D: = Okay (.) well I'm sor ry
 [I
 162 J: By: uh > several
 163 hundred < dollars.
 164 (1.2)
 165 J: U(m) (1.2) and u:h (1.0) I need to know *why*:
 166 (0.2) you still need the two installments as
 167 long as there's a thou:sand are you -
 168 D: - Because th at(s)
 [I
 169 J: Are you s t a r : ving because-
 [I
 170 D: the only rea-
 171 J: -of the second (.) five hundred that's
 172 (0.8)
 173 D: Ye:s (.) your honor I (am)
 174 (1.2)
 175 J: (Then the) moneys uh *held* by the mar:shall are
 176 to be: released to thee uh (0.6) *defenda:nt*?
 177 except the five hundred (0.8) to be (.)
 178 released (2.6) to the (uh) plaintiff Creditors
 179 Underwriters
 180 ((Judge continues))

Even a preliminary inspection of the foregoing segment reveals evidence that the occasion being organized is some kind of court proceeding. For example, J appears to be addressed as "sir" by D (lines 124, 150), as "your honor" by both PL and D (lines 127, 137, 145, 173), and there are references to "marshall" (line 1101 "rinfonrlont" (l:na 17(.)) and "nlaiftiff" (line 178) *The mere use of these*

address-terms in unison with certain invoked identities, however, does not substantiate how J, D, or PL orient to phenomena emerging within this segment of an informal hearing.

Before turning to an analysis of the interactional environment of this hearing, however, it might be useful to inform readers that this proceeding began the civil 10:00 AM call involving the collection of a debt by Creditor's Unlimited from Mark Adams (names have been changed so as to protect court participants). It was the second of two hearings concerning a proposed settlement (e.g., balance due, installment payment and dates) convened by J to discuss a motion filed by D. This segment is approximately ninety seconds in length, occurring 2 minutes and 30 seconds into a proceeding lasting 6 minutes and 50 seconds.

Closing and Opening

We begin by noticing that J, as turn-occupant, appears to initiate a closing of the "official" business of the motion (i.e., "the claim of exemption:") in lines 121-123. That this turn-at-talk is in fact an attempt to close down the hearing and thus take it "off calendar" (line 122) also seems to be recognized by D and PL.

First, D's "Sir" in line 124 is an unsolicited (i.e., self-selected) utterance, inserted in close proximity to a possible turn completion by J (projected by "calendar", line 122), yet overlapping with "subject"-a "syntactically coherent next utterance component" (Jefferson & Schegloff, 1975, p. 3). D's "Sir" was positioned in such a way as to indicate sufficient and carefully attended recognition that J had reached a "transition place"-the closing down of a motion being only one transition-relevant example. And by not elaborating, D orients to J's continuation in a manner preserving the "one party talks at a time" assumption of conversational turn-taking (cf. Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974).

Second, following J's (lines 125-126) "> you're still gonna be involved < so it's (.) gonna go to you," PL achieves overlap onset ("Ya", line 127) in a minimal and transitory fashion by starting up within the final sound and thus word produced by J (cf. Jefferson, 1983). PL's overlapped utterance does exhibit an immediate response to J's query, yet it also displays his recognition that J is, for all practical purposes, nearing completion of closing down the motion. In this sense there is more at work here in PL's 127-131. PL's response to J's query appears rushed, as evidenced by the quickened delivery "Ya (.) your honor um <" (line 127), as though he is orienting less to J's query than to the opportunity for asking J a question about the "thousand dollars" owed to his client. While more could be said about the manner in which PL constructs his question to J in 128-131, the point remains that as J attempted to take the proceeding "off calendar," PL raised a question meriting possible further consideration by J.

In summary, D's "Sir" is slotted in close proximity to the business being

possible opportunity for raising a new and/or related topic or issue by D, or possibly clarifying and/or questioning previously transacted business. There is additional evidence indicating the usage of such a slot, namely, PL's response to J's prior turn and extension with his own question (lines 127-131). In short, it may be at just this point in the hearing that J becomes informed of additional business yet to be taken care of, at least part of which is directly related to the motion at hand (e.g., payments).

Having briefly worked through this initial sequence, certain questions should now appear particularly relevant: What phenomena were J, D, and PL orienting-to in lines 121-131? How were they achieving this orientation, and what consequences might these achievements hold for analysts attempting to understand courtroom interaction? If one reinspects lines 121-131, as follows, it should become increasingly clear that the routine work of courts has something to do with taking care of business (e.g., getting cases in and moving them along).

- 121 J: So the claim of exemption: u::h
 122 further proceedings can go *off* calendar
 123 subject to the receipt (0.8) by: thee:-
- 124 D: Sir ((raises hand, leans forward in chair))
 125 J: = uh (1.4) > you're still gonna be involved <
 126 so it's (.) gonna go to yo u
 []
 127 PL: > Ya (.) your honor um <
 128 (0.4) my question: 'u:h since we have no answer
 129 from the marshal(i:s uh whether the (1.4)
 130 thousand dollars was uh (0.3) *plus* was being held
 131 in the *bank* account

Yet at the same time, both defendants and lawyers may have agendas they would like to have considered that are (at least for them) also important "business." One problem is: When and how might these agendas be raised and subsequently treated in some fashion by the court (i.e., J)? For example, J did not yield the floor by acknowledging D's "Sir" in line 121, D did not continue without receiving J's deferral, and it was only after J asked PL a question that PL gained access to the floor and subsequently asked his own question.

Though any conclusions to be drawn thus far must emerge from a short segment of interaction, the following observations might be made: (a) As current speaker, J takes extended turns-at-talk and does not yield the floor until his current turn is completed. Constructing and completing extended turns is thus one integral part of "doing being a fudge"; (b) Access to the floor is heavily

influenced by J's willingness to provide the opportunity for others to speak. Perhaps it is the case that in the ways and to the extent provided by J, the floor may be (and typically is) taken up by co-participants of the hearing. If this is the case, defendants and lawyers must attend closely to the opportunities provided by judges. Whether such opportunities are self-selected recognitions of possible utterance completions (as in D's "Sir"), and/or elaborations/extensions of a response requested by the judge and thus granting floor-access (as with PL's question to J), it is clear that phenomena such as "overlaps" are not random, loosely occasioned utterances within courtroom or other interactional settings. Rather, they are artful techniques displaying precise orientations to the occasion-at-hand.

Initiating the "Complaint"

Exactly what D's "Sir" in line 121 projected, however, cannot be determined until and unless one moves forward to the portion of the segment beginning with line 135:

135 PL: Well why don't we
 136 release all monies all over (0.8) for a thou sand-
 ()
 ((D shakes head))
 137 -dollars your honor
 138 . (2.6)
 139 J: Response?
 140 (0.8)
 141 D: I- I feel that it shudn't.
 142 (1.6)
 143 D: (eh) be- b- > for the *simple* reason that they
 144 din't- < (1.8) i- it's very confusing an (0.3)
 145 what T1 want to know your honor is (0.8)
 146 why wasn't I s:erved with a supeenee to (.
 147 appear in *court* that's wha- confuses me
 []
 148 J: Not- not into
 149 that.

Here PL's question to J is subsequently marked by a noticeable pause in line 138, after which J elects not to answer PL's question by opting instead to request D's response (line 139). Following a short pause (line 140), D constructs a

multifaceted turn (lines 141-147) in which several different yet related activities are achieved. He begins by disagreeing with PL's prior suggestion and quickly moves onto what may appear to be a partial justification (see Atkinson & Drew, 1979, Chapter 5) for disagreeing-the providing of an account of the position he is constructing. This justification remains incomplete, or so D states in line 144, because "i- it's very confusing."

However, a closer inspection of the organization of lines 141-144 might yield a competing explanation regarding whether a justification was, in fact, being provided by D-and if not an explanation, it might offer an alternative course of action rationally tied to D's subsequent utterance in lines 145-147. The alternative is to treat lines 141-144 as leading up to what appears to be one type of "complaint" in lines 146-147, "why wasn't I s: *erved* with a supeenee to appear in *court*." D produces several false starts and self-repairs ("I- 1"; "(eh) be- b-"; "i- it's") (cf. Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977), fails to complete "for the *simple* reason that they didn't" (lines 143-144) by immediately stating his own confusion, and finally explicitly informs J that all he really wants to know is information regarding why he was not served with a subpoena. Viewed in this light, D used his first direct and granted access to the floor in a manner leading up to the formulation of an apparent "complaint" that did not emerge following his "Sir" in line 124. In so stating his concerns and constructing the turn in this manner, D gives priority to responding directly to PL's suggestion (to "release all the monies over:", line 136) by stating "I- I feel that it shudn't. (1.6) (eh) be- b-" (line 143).

Such priority given to floor access by D is only one indicator of the importance of using turns as valued opportunities for expressing feelings, setting agendas, and thereby interjecting more "personal" concerns within the handling of "official" business in a routine court hearing. In this instance, the significance of D's 141-147 is rooted in the timing and placement of his turn-at-talk, as well as the artful construction of a turn including (in part) an answer to PL's question, a preface to an account, and a possible complaint.

The phrase *possible complaint* is employed here to call attention to the fact that little has been said about an issue central to the analysis of D's turn: Exactly what makes D's "why wasn't I s: *erved* with a supeenee to appear in *court*" (lines 146-147) *bearable* as a "complaint"? To begin answering such a question one might focus upon features of D's constructed turn. At least (but not exclusively) three features of lines 146-147 appear to indicate such a hearing. First, D's "why wasn't" might be heard as one form of accusation attributing possible blame to the failure of the court to act appropriately and on his behalf (as a defendant with legal rights). The "why wasn't" (as one type of negative formulation) can be usefully contrasted with a construction such as "Was I served . . .", for example, in which the latter could have functioned as a simple request for information. Yet another possibility could have been an instance such as "Would you please tell me if there was a problem in serving me with a complaint?", a

more polite request leaving open the possibility that the court was not necessarily at fault in serving the defendant. Second, the mode of delivery apparent in lines 146-147 of D's turn begins to suggest that D was troubled by the possibility of not having been served a subpoena. The words "*s:erved*," "*supeenee*," "appear," and "court?" were delivered with vocal emphasis by D. Note especially his prolongation of the first portion of "*s:erved*." Finally, attention might be drawn to D's "what T I want to know . . .", most importantly the stress on "r" as an indicator of D's concern in gaining knowledge about the subpoena process.

Dismissing the Initial "Complaint"

While the constituent features of D's turn construction may well be crucial to understanding the delivery and hearability of a portion of D's lines 141-147 as "offering up a complaint," the work produced by D in 141-147 does not necessarily predetermine and thus guarantee J's receipt and treatment of D's expressed concerns. Of equal if not greater importance in assessing how D's 146-147 might be hearable as a complaint, however, is to examine how J oriented as next speaker to D's prior turn. Though D would likely have preferred that his turn be responded to with positive appraisal by J, such is not the case in lines 148-149. Here J overlaps his turn onto D's prior with the dismissal "Not- not into that." Two brief observations merit attention here. First, that the overlap occurred in this instance should not be surprising, since it is quite possible that J had ample time to notice how and what D was up to in his 141-147 construction. Whatever else D's turn might have been an instance of, as noted previously, it was more than a direct and detailed response to PL's suggestion in lines 135-137. Second, built into J's rather abrupt response is an assessment that what D was doing was somehow untimely and/or inappropriate (cf. Pomerantz, 1984).

Orienting-to the "Complaint's" Dismissal

Yet something more may be at work here, namely, J informing/reminding D that he has gotten what might be roughly formulated as a "good deal" up to this point in the hearing. To substantiate this observation, once again it is useful to move to subsequent actions taken by J and D in order to achieve an even better grasp of each participant's orientation to the local environment of the sequence. Notice what J added onto his dismissal in the form of an explanation of his position:

148 J: Not- not into
 149 that.
 [I
 150 D: Okay aright sir-
 151 J: -You'(ve) --
 152 Sy rll - ariought -

153 J: -won the claim of exemption
 [I
 154 D: o k a y okay-
 155 J: -you've got the claim reduced by::: ()
 [I
 156 D: And
 157 I'm will ing to live by-
 [I
 158 J: (wey)
 159 D: I'm willing to go by my agreement
 [I
 160 J: Please don't interr u(pt)=
 161 D: - Okay (.) well I'm sor ry
 [I
 162 J: By: uh > several
 163 hundred < dollars.

In lines 151, 153, 155, and 162-163 J informs/reminds D that he has won die claim of exemption *and* got the claim reduced by several hundred dollars. Of course J is not required nor judicially mandated to provide such an explanation, but did so nonetheless. Perhaps J oriented to his own dismissal of D's 141-147 as overly abrupt, thus quickly moved to soften its potential impact on D. (Early on in the hearing, prior to segment [I], J acknowledged how D had been ignored and uninformed in this case, and thus had every right to be confused as to the details of the proceedings. In addition, D was without legal counsel, and at times J attempts to "fill in" details as the hearing unfolded.) Both the tonal qualities of J's voice and his request "Please don't interr u(pt)" in line 160 would further indicate an orientation whereby J was attempting to assist D's understandings of court proceedings.

Overlapped with J's dismissal of D's 141-147 and subsequent explanation are several compliant utterances from D (lines 150, 152, 154, 156-157, 159, and 161). D's first "Okay aright sir - aright" (lines 150, 152) displays immediate deference to the force of J's dismissal. Yet shortly after the overlapped compliance continues in line 154, D not only overlaps once again but appears a bit overly eager in lines 151-157 and 159 to comply with the unfolding situation (see also his softened compliance and possible apology in line 161). In and through these few turns-at-talk, D displays his recognition of J's attempts to inform/remind him of his already having won the "claim of exemption." Yet there is somewhat of an irony in this recognition, given that this short flurry of activity was itself initiated with D's 141-147-not with an effort to offer any kind of appreciation to J for his understanding and favorable ruling on the motion.

Packed into lines 141-163 there is a rather intricate balance struck between the possibility of complaining and dismissing on one hand, and explaining/requesting and compliance on the other. It is as though the adjacency of D's complaint and J's dismissal hinge, for the moment at least, on a quick flurry of mutual challenge and even rejection. Yet immediately thereafter, J and D appear to collaborate in supporting one another—even to the point where J accommodates D with a request rather than a command in line 160, followed by D's compliance and possible apology in line 161. In each of these action-types, both J and D orient symmetrically and instantaneously to the other's displayed orientations.

The negotiated character of this interactional segment evidences how it is that such different orientations eventuate in a collaboratively produced structure. It is also an instance of a legally constrained encounter, evident in and through a set of methods allowing each participant the opportunity to achieve preferred outcomes. However, in D's case, opportunity was shown not to be synonymous with the satisfaction of having his concerns addressed—at least up to this point in the hearing.

Back to the Motion

A final comment on this instance drawn from communication in a courtroom. Should the reader have lost track of the original business-at-hand addressed prior to D's multifaceted turn (lines 141-147), namely PL's question suggesting that the entire thousand dollars be released to the creditor, it should become clear in lines 165-180 that the lack of resolution of this issue has not gone unnoticed by J. Here it is apparent that the unspecified reason underlying D's disagreement in line 141 had to do with his needing \$500 for living expenses, a realization displayed in J's question (lines 169, 171) and finally confirmed by D in line 173. This possibility might imply that D's priorities rested less with receiving living expenses, than with attaining some kind of restitution regarding his not having been served with a subpoena.

The analysis offered herein is only partial in the sense that the hearing continues with D once again raising concerns about not having been served with a subpoena to appear in court. He does so in a location following an attempted closing down of "business" by J, yet in such a manner and slot that J receipts D's prior turn by taking the time and effort to provide a set of legal responses. Additionally, interesting contrasts emerge within the second handling of D's concerns, and there is much to say about J's eventual dismissal of D from court. Exactly how D takes certain liberties not tolerated by J, however, requires another discussion of achievements—one intended to illustrate how it is that forms of legal interaction exist, in the first instance to participants themselves, as they display and thus orient to the moment-by-moment problems routinely addressed in courts.

OCCASIONING IDENTITIES IN THE TALK

To say that defendants have rights in a hearing is to identify the possibility that a claim may be made or an exception taken about due legal process. How this work gets done offers insight into the interdependence of "official" and "personal" agendas, not to mention the displayed competencies involved in opening, closing, and adapting to numerous courses of action. But to describe the ways in which phenomena such as "complaints" emerge and are oriented-to as court business is achieved, is to explain the local environment within which power and status are occasioned in the talk as speakers and hearers employ diverse methods for accomplishing an informal hearing. The articulation and unpacking of these methods allows for the possibility of understanding the turn-by-turn organization of an occasion, and thus the interactional machinery produced by and for the participants themselves. By turning directly to actual instances of interaction as displays of social order, rather than attempting to account for the detailed work of participants by invoking macro-concepts such as power, status, identity, or related forces "external" to the talk itself (e.g., institution, age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic position), priority is given to the talk itself.

In short, attention is given to the sequentially relevant features comprising and constituting these more encompassing concepts and theories, and in so doing research inquiries begin from the "bottom up" rather than the "top down." The preceding section of this chapter displays the work of speakers and hearers routinely engaged in interaction as they attend to the moment-by-moment evolution of a conversational involvement, and accordingly such is the research priority of those examining the sequential character of social occasions.

Contrasting Theoretical Alternatives

One alternative is to impose, a priori, a series of macro-concepts and theories "onto" the interaction as a template (comprised of selected categories, terms, and so on) intended to carve out understandings of the detailed workings of speakers and hearers. One result of such an orientation is the recurring difficulty of describing some phenomenon, and attributing to that phenomenon specific features and components, without providing actual instances as evidence of the claims made for other's inspection and consideration. In light of these concerns, it is not uncommon to finish reading an article in which a phenomenon is proposed suggesting interesting and possibly even compelling implications regarding social interaction. Yet questions remain about the extent to which the phenomenon being queried exists within social order "in the first instance" (cf. Schegloff, 1986), as compared to having been given birth as a useful tool (or possibly even an artifact) of the research enterprise. Specifically, readers may query: What would an instance of such a phenomenon look like? From where and under what circumstances did this phenomenon emerge? What is the detailed nature of the

phenomenon as it is oriented-to and noticeably worked out by speakers and hearers in normal, everyday settings? These questions are most certainly applicable to an issue such as agenda-setting in courts and/or more casual conversations. The brief data analysis offered in the preceding section only begins to raise issues surrounding the sequential character of phenomena such as complaining and responding to complaints (dismissals being only one possible response-type).

An examination of van Dijk's (1987, 1989) sociocognitive perspective on power and discourse, for example, provides an expansive overview of how people may exercise power over others in interaction across a variety of settings. Attention is also given to specific features and definitions of power. One example is: "If A limits B's cognitive or social action control, A may be said to have power over B" (p. 5). How might we orient to "limits" and "over" as interactional achievements?

Turning to a review of research on courtroom interaction, van Dijk offers summaries of such findings as restrictions on turn-allocation and speech acts, obligations to answer questions when requested (and in specific manners), questions functioning as informative and accusatory, lack of topic control by defendants and witnesses, and how *style* may influence ongoing talk (e.g., powerless styles are noticeable by such features as "the frequent use of intensifiers, hedges, hesitation forms, and questioning intonation" [p. 45]). While these summarized findings may begin to articulate a framework for understanding the constraints on talk in courts, they should not be mistaken for empirical generalizations replacing (or, in many cases, adequately formulating) the detailed orientations displayed by court participants (e.g., see Atkinson & Drew, 1979; Maynard, 1984). A close examination of segment (1), for example, reveals that informal hearings-though equally binding and "official" as an occasion-are comprised of interactions exhibiting less restricted turn-allocations than "formal" examination formats (i.e., direct, cross, redirect, and rebuttal), fewer and different restrictions on answering questions, a more diverse use of questions than either *informative* or *accusatory*, and more active contributions by the judge and defendant in controlling *topic*.

In fact, the latter instance of *topic* provides a pointed example of distinct differences between the "macro" approach taken by van Dijk and the microanalytic examination of talk sequences evidenced in CA research. When examined as an interactional achievement, *topic* remains as an extremely difficult *concept* to get a handle on-to articulate (and provide evidence for) in its organized manifestations and conversational variations (e.g., see Beach, 1991c; Button & Casey, 1984; Maynard, 1980; Maynard & Zimmerman, 1984). As treated by van Dijk, however, topic control (and related components of courtroom interactions, such as *sequencing* and *speech acts*, cf. Beach, 1990) is assumed to be working in particular ways and thereby influencing particular court outcomes, even though such components are in each and every case glossed as interactional achievements.

To describe and explain the complex orientations of court participants, it is at times useful to summarize research findings as a means of formulating the empirical nature of participants' solutions to routine matters and problems. Yet when the argument is offered that power is the key issue in accounting for the precise nature of institutional discourse, questions must be raised about what *counts as* power in particular interactional environments. This is especially the case when, as apparent in van Dijk's overview, researchers' methods for gaining access to interactional phenomena remain unarticulated. Without careful consideration of the manner in which empirical results are generated-or even raising the more basic question of what counts as *data*, and the ways and extent to which such data are made available to readers for their critical inspection-the tendency is to disregard social order in its naturalistic state by invoking macro explanatory concepts offering minimal information about how interaction gets done.

A final example may prove beneficial here. After critiquing the work in Atkinson and Drew's (1979) *Order in Court* for paying little attention "to the social and legal power structures that become manifest in such interactions," van Dijk (1987) provides the following argument:

It may certainly be granted that we may first need insight into the properties of courtroom talk, before we are able to pinpoint conversational specifics as expressions of power or social structure. On the other hand, it may be argued that many properties of conversational organization in court, such as strategies of face-keeping and impression management, or persuasive defense and directive accusation, as well as of turn allocation and speech act control in the first place, can of course not be understood without a presupposed knowledge of their functions and goals in the courtroom and the legal process. In other words, instead of methodical ignorance of the properties of the social context, we argue for an interplay between conversation analysis and social analysis, in ways that continue and refine the analysis of strategic verbal interaction proposed by scholars such as Goffman. (cited in Goffman, 1967, p. 44)

Several questions might be raised in response to this position: Exactly how might such concepts as "face-work and impression management" or "strategy" influence courtroom contexts if they are not, in the first instance, displayed and oriented-to by speakers and hearers as methodical achievements? Of what practical benefit is locating "properties of the social context" *outside* of the interaction itself? How is it possible to identify "social and legal power structures that become manifest in the interactions," if not by turning initially and directly to sequencing of the talk by and for participants? These and related questions rest on the assumption that even though analysts inevitably trade on their "presupposed knowledge" while examining interactional data (cf. Turner, 1970), so doing does not satisfy the requirements for providing evidence of the claims and positions taken. A simple example may suffice here: If speaker designations were removed from a carefully produced transcript of courtroom interaction, analysts should be

able to provide evidence of the *context* in and through the methods employed to achieve orientations to the problems at hand. And if *power* eventually emerged as a relevant category for describing ways in which sequences get organized, it would most certainly be invoked only as a global reference accounting for the constituent features/methods comprising speakers' and hearers' achievements.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND THEORETICAL CONSEQUENCES

One methodological issue of interest stems from an earlier discussion of the inherent independence of social order: By definition naturally occurring interactions exist apart from being isolated as a topic of research, and irrespective of the possibility of being discovered and dissected for purposes of social science. When research commitments rest with the recovery and reconstruction of the social world, as best as possible "on its own merits," attempts are made to seek evidence for claims regarding *how* interaction is the vehicle for accomplishing the world of everyday life. By gathering and examining in detail transcribed versions of audio and video recordings of everyday talk and providing available evidence of transcribed instances for readers' critical inspection, conversation analysts attempt to minimize the diverse ways in which research orchestrations, as methodical achievements, produce data and findings *only as* a result of the methods employed in the investigation process. This claim is not to say that CA results can be separated from the research practices relied upon to capture interaction. Rather, the point here is that priority is given to speakers' and hearers' displayed methods for organizing everyday settings, as phenomena routinely existing *even if* they were not gathered for subsequent scientific analysis.

Any consideration of the correspondence between a researcher's and an interactant's methods necessarily leads to the question: To what extent do all research orientations inevitably transform, reflect analogies of, and in varying degrees distort the sense and structure of interaction that is produced by and for speakers and hearers? Though this question is considerably easier to raise than to answer, it does draw attention to further issues: If researchers are not looking directly at interactional achievements in natural settings, what counts as data? From what resources is evidence drawn for purposes of substantiating claims? And in what ways might the circumstances and methodical solutions to everyday interactions vary from natural to contrived concepts, settings, and simulations?

There is a responsibility shared by speakers, hearers, and communication researchers alike: To enact methods for displaying and detecting social order. Ingrained within interaction and the researching of interaction are certain basic constraints inherent to the achievement of the task-at-hand, namely, showing how talk unfolds in and through the identification and use of key practices for accomplishing such tasks. The patterns comprising these tasks ultimately reflect

As noted, both routine social encounters and research investigations are methodical achievements, understandable as managed attempts to enact certain procedures in the process of structuring and making sense of ordinary talk (and demonstrating the working machinery through which sense gets made). Understanding the complex relationships between collaborative productions of interaction and social scientific formulations of how interaction gets done (an inherently reflexive enterprise) is of central importance to ethnomethodological work in general (e.g., see Garfinkel, 1967; Sacks, 1984a).

Alternative Approaches to Social Phenomena

Having provided a brief glimpse of selected commitments and research practices of CA, it may be useful at this juncture to examine how such commitments differ from alternative empirical and theoretical approaches. Given the focus on stable and locally occasioned (i.e., detailed, contingent, turn-organized, moment-by-moment) features of naturally occurring interactions, Zimmerman (1988) has noted how the general approach of CA seems to reflect:

a methodological posture seemingly at odds with the procedures generally favored in social science at large ... [and an] apparent disregard of mainstream topics and methodologies not only in its initiating discipline of sociology, but also of communication. (pp. 2-3)

The priorities and commitments unique to CA reflect an obvious dispreference for certain empirical orientations to social order, especially those whose methods reflect an insensitivity to the natural contingencies of interaction. Concerns rest with research methods that unreasonably alter, and thus distort, the detailed work "*produced and oriented to* by participants as orderly and informative, and relied upon as a basis for action" (Zimmerman, 1988, p. 4). Questions are raised regarding the extent to which research methods fail to capture, display, and allow for the possibility of accounting for how speakers and hearers actually create phenomena they collaboratively produce, that is, in and through the "rules, techniques, procedures, methods, maxims . . . that can be used to generate the orderly features we find in the conversations we examine" (Sacks, 1984b, p. 413). Put simply: To what extent (and in what precise ways) are social phenomena artificially constructed and/or lost as a function of researchers' methods for observing interaction?

Though Jefferson's (1985a) concerns rest exclusively with how glossing procedures in conversations get done-as "a formulation which, on its occurrence, is quite adequate, but which turns out to be incomplete, ambiguous, even misleading" (p. 462) -we might herein borrow a few of her observations to formulate the problem of research methods, and theoretical consequences, in yet another way: "Most roughly, a gloss can be a generalization and/or somewhat inaccurate and/or incomplete and/or a masking or covering-up of what really