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Book review: EMANUEL A. SCHEGLOFF, *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis. Vol. 1.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. xvi + 300 pp

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The second section deals with issues of intercultural dialogue in the workplace. The first paper in this section by Dhal 'Communication in a Globalized World' depicts the consequences of global apartheid for excluded groups in society and shows how culture should no longer be seen as a homogenous entity but that culture is 'independently experienced and lived collectively' (p. 102). Other papers in this section describe through well-presented research methods, aspects of immigration, cultural trauma and cultural differences in social values particularly with the arrival of new dominant migrant groups in Europe.

Intercultural dialogue under the section 'Education' is written by teachers with personal experience of pedagogical applications and constraints in classes of different ethnic makeup. Trainers detail challenges for intercultural communication training, and different methods of teaching. The final section looks at identity and stereotypes and attitudes to national identity and social stereotypes and in particular that of group or individual identity.

Overall, *Aspects of Intercultural Dialogue* incorporates an interesting and varied collection of papers highlighting the need for greater attention to our ever-increasing multi-cultural societies. Current theories and recent research in this book are well-documented and bode well for students and researchers alike in the field of the social sciences and offer new perspectives and insight in the field of intercultural discourse, analysis and application.

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EMANUEL A. SCHEGLOFF, *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis*. Vol. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. xvi + 300 pp.

In reviewing Schegloff's *Sequence Organization* one is inevitably reviewing not only a particular book, but also a research programme that has been there, powerfully operative, for about 40 years. This is a book that shows how one of the founders of this programme sees some of the basics of Conversation Analysis. Reviewers such as myself who have invested much of their professional capacity in learning this programme face a difficulty: how can you assess your own intellectual origins? The task is not made easier by the fact that the template of this book, a mimeo with the same main title, originally made available by Schegloff for his students, has for more than a decade served as a key resource

for many conversation analysts, both those who have had the privilege of taking Schegloff's courses and those that have not. So, the book has already shaped the way that the CA community thinks and works.

Thus, the position of *Sequence Organization* in the field of study it belongs to is quite specific. It is a book that constitutes the field. It is a textbook, but it also lays out the fundamental theoretical concepts of conversation analysis. In its relation to its particular field of study, *Sequence Organization* is perhaps best compared to Bales's *Interaction Process Analysis* (1951) – a book which also explicated the key concepts of its own field. The fundamental difference is, however, that Bales' book constituted the *starting point* of the respective tradition while *Sequence Organization* represents a *mature tradition*, systematizing ideas and propositions that have been put forward in numerous individual studies during the decades that the research programme has been operative. As a mature tradition, conversation analysis incorporates various voices, and not all of them emphasize exactly the same issues as Schegloff does. The voice represented by this book, however, has a unique position, and the theory put forward in the book is unsurpassable if one wants to learn what conversation analysis is.

As the title of the book shows, the focus is on the organization of sequences (systematic patterns in relations between adjacent utterances); but in taking the reader into and through sequence organization, the author also exposes some of the key tenets regarding the other core organizations, such as turn taking organization and organization of repair. In his preface, Schegloff points out that *Sequence Organization* is meant to be one part of a future set of primers of conversation analysis, the other covering other core organizations of real time social interaction.

The key concept of this book – and of sequence organization as a subject matter – is *adjacency pair*. Drawing upon key texts by Schegloff and Sacks from the early 1970s (especially 1973), the book defines an adjacency pair as two adjacent turns, produced by different speakers and so ordered that a particular type of preceding utterance initiates a corresponding type of next utterance. However, the exposition of the adjacency pair as such does not extend over many pages of the book. The bulk of the text explicates structures that are built around adjacency pairs: sequences that precede the first pair part, that come between the first and the second pair parts, or come after the second pair parts. These *pre*, *insert*, and *post expansions* in most cases are themselves built of adjacency pairs. So, most of the book consists of analyses of adjacency pairs that in various ways expand what Schegloff calls *the base adjacency pair*. Along the discussion on expansions, a thorough account on *preference* (ways in which certain second pair parts are treated as more favourable or unproblematic than certain others) is offered, as well as a compact account on *sequences of sequences* (ways in which adjacency pairs can be linked, not as base and its expansions, but as a series of adjacency pairs all operating on the same order of organization, on equal footing as it were). Many, if not most, earlier key CA studies that Schegloff draws upon were originally published by himself and/or the two other members of the initial CA team, Harvey Sacks and Gail Jefferson. Recurrent references are also made to the work of the first generation students of them, such as Anita Pomeranz, and

to other long standing scholars in the field such as John Heritage and Charles Goodwin. But Schegloff has also included some rather recent ideas coming from the work of a younger generation of UCLA trained conversation analysts, ideas such as *type conformity* by Raymond and *immediate and delayed requests* by Lindström, as well as fresh concepts, such as *retro sequence*, developed by himself. What he does in this book is to offer an overall framework which encompasses these ideas originating in different sources, and shows systematic linkages between them.

It is part of a rather common reception of CA – both among CA scholars and among researchers that have their home base elsewhere – to consider CA as an ‘inductive’ or ‘data-driven’ approach. This understanding echoes the way in which Sacks described his way of working: ‘We sit down with a piece of data, make a bunch of observations and see where they will go’ (Sacks, 1984: 27). The point of departure of the research process is thought to be in the (video or audio) recorded data, which are first analysed in an ‘unmotivated’ fashion, until the analysis gradually yields descriptions of structures and processes of social interaction. The research process thus conceived comes close to how another social science approach, Grounded Theory, is often understood.

It may well be that Grounded Theory is not as inductive as we tend to think (see Dey, 2004). In any case, Schegloff’s *Sequence Organization* should convince the reader that this is not the case in CA either. Schegloff offers us a set of theoretical concepts that help us to organize the interactional data that we encounter. The key concepts presented in this volume include *adjacency pair* and its constituents, different types of *expansions*, and *preference*. There are other concepts that are not so central to this volume but are present anyway, and they include *turn constructional unit*, *transition relevance place*, and so on. And there is yet another set of concepts that Schegloff explicates and draws upon: concepts that point at underlying, generic properties of all utterances and their relations: *adjacency*, *relevancy*, *progressivity*, *contiguity*, *position* and *composition*.

It is through these concepts that *Sequence Organization* invites us to investigate interactional data. *Adjacency pairs*, *expansions* or the general principle of *progressivity* do not announce themselves in the unmotivated exploration of data – you have to learn to see them, just as for example junior archaeologists gradually learn to see the shapes and colours in their objects of observation (see Goodwin, 1994). Hence, the necessity of proper training and supervision in learning CA. You might say that in social science methodological terms, CA is after all closer to Foucault than grounded theory: rather than starting the research process with no expectations (as we tend to think that grounded theory proposes), Foucauldian researchers and CA researchers know what kind of things they are looking after: for Foucauldians, the intertwinement of specific forms of knowledge and power, and for conversation analysts, the specific realizations of adjacency pairs, expansions, preference and so on.

In comparison to the theoretical concepts of most social science, the ones that Schegloff offers to us are nevertheless different. They involve an effort to encapsulate the *participants’ orientations*. Schegloff’s claim is not only that interactional data are *analysable* in terms of the concepts that he offers, but

more importantly, that the participants themselves incessantly analyse their interaction in just those terms. Second, the propositions that Schegloff makes using these concepts are explicit and in principle falsifiable with reference to data. For example, the key proposition regarding adjacency – ‘next turns are understood by co-participants to display their speaker’s understanding of the just-prior turn and to embody an action responsive to the just-prior turn so understood (unless the turn has been marked as addressing something other than the just prior turn)’ (p.15) – is an explicit statement, and it is possible to imagine a world of interaction where it would not be true. However, the interactional data that we have about typically developed humans have confirmed this basic statement. As far as I can see, most social science has not reached this level of falsifiability of key propositions.

Sequence Organization is written in a very clear and transparent style. The arguments that Schegloff puts forward are not simple, but he does everything that can be done to express his arguments in a clear and reader friendly language. The fact that almost all data extracts are made available at a website maintained by the publisher is a wonderful aid and resource of study for the reader – I hope many CA publications will be able to follow this pattern of presentation of data. In spite of the author’s maximal efforts to make the work accessible, I would not give this book to an average sociology student to serve as his or her first contact with CA. The book is very condensed and in a way it presupposes that the reader shares the view of social interaction as an autonomous order of social organization requiring its own theoretical concepts and research methods. This fundamental presupposition is only briefly touched upon in the preface of the book. I would rather give this book to all students and researchers who have recently, or already for a long time ago, felt the pull and fascination of the study of social interaction. The book will serve them in two ways: first, it gives a comprehensive systemic view of a large area of the organization of interaction, and second, it serves as a resource to be consulted when one is trying to understand specific kinds of sequences and their expansions.

All data extracts discussed in *Sequence Organization* come from ordinary conversation, but the book is highly applicable in research on institutional interaction as well. I would like to illustrate this with a short excursion to research on psychotherapy. Schegloff is not addressing issues of psychotherapy, no more than any other institutional interactions. Nevertheless, his ideas are useful in this field as well. Let’s repeat once more Schegloff’s basic proposition: ‘next turns are understood by co-participants to display their speaker’s understanding of the just-prior turn and to embody an action responsive to the just-prior turn so understood’ (p. 15). Taking this proposition as our point of departure, we (Peräkylä et al., 2008) recently argued that psychotherapy takes place in and through relations between adjacent utterances. We suggested that turns at talk in psychotherapy propose an understanding of the speaker’s and the hearer’s experience and of how one should relate to that. For example, by complaining, the patient can present herself as a helpless victim, the therapist’s question about the patient’s capacities can present the patient as an active agent, or an interpretation pointing at the patient’s painful feelings may foreground

the patient's hatred, grief, or the like. Psychotherapy aims at restructuring of experience. We argued that adjacency, understood in the way that Schegloff proposes, is the main vehicle of this restructuring. Due to the strict structural relation between adjacent turns, each participant inevitably *has to* orient to, and work with, the understandings that the other brought about in just prior turn. This work with understandings unfolds, literally, utterance by utterance, so that psychotherapy takes place *between utterances*. If things go well, the interplay of the participants' turns brings about a favourable change in the patients' ways of understanding and relating to her experience. Because sequence organization is thus the backbone of any psychotherapeutic work, understanding psychotherapy is greatly enhanced by ideas crystallized in this book.

Schegloff's *Sequence Organization* is about relations between utterances in spoken discourse. Clear focus is a strength of this book. At places, Schegloff is quite clear in stating what the book is *not* about. Foremost among those things are the body and the mind. Regarding the body, Schegloff points out that '[t]here is . . . no reliable empirical basis for treating physically realized actions as being in principle organized in adjacency pair terms, and this matter will, therefore, have no place in our agenda' (p. 11). In spite of this basic distinction between the vocal and physical, Schegloff does make observations about physical actions, such as delivery of objects, as well as gaze and gesture, as far as these are coordinated with, or part of, sequences of spoken utterances. So, body and physical objects have a place in Schegloff's map, even though it is apparent that some of the other voices of contemporary conversation analysis would give them a more central place. Regarding what we might call mind, Schegloff points out that 'to the degree that the design of the turn or the structure of the sequence appear to reflect what are vernacularly understood as "desires" or "attitudes", they figure in our understanding, but this is by virtue of their interactional expression, not their status as "private" motivational states' (p. 63). So, it appears that when the mind is concerned, there is a starker line between what the object of sequential analysis is and what it is not. In a way I wish that this line would in the future become analytically more permeable, the way the line between the physical world and the spoken utterances seems to be. Stance may be the key issue here. Schegloff points out that 'there is a range of places in conversation in which a next turn takes up some stance to, or relative to, a prior turn, and that stance is roughly characterizable as "plus" or "minus", aligned or misaligned, preferred or dispreferred' (p. 250). One is tempted to see enactment of emotions and emotional relations in such places. However, Schegloff is consistent in treating these junctures in terms of the relations *between turns at talk*, not relations *between the speakers*. The analytical clarity of the Schegloffian approach here is too precious to be compromised, but it is my hope that we will some day learn to express the psychological implications of his analysis. (For attempts to that direction, see Ruusuvauro, 2005; Wootton, 1997.)

The chapter where Schegloff deals with 'sequence as practice' is most thought-provoking. In it, Schegloff points outside the centre of his book: 'sequence-organizational designs can be worked out on a canvas that transcends particular,

well-structured sequences of the sort we have been describing' (p. 249). I find this illuminating in two ways. First, I frequently come across pieces of data where I cannot make up my mind whether the participants are treating a particular adjacency pair, say, as a base adjacency pair or as an expansion of some sort. Well trained conversation analysts do not always reach consensus on such matters. In the chapter on sequence as practice, Schegloff seems to express his understanding and appreciation of such ambiguities: the participants can improvise and be creative in constructing complex sequences, based on the principle of adjacency but not always exhibiting the distinct properties of the patterns discussed in this book. Second, what is particularly illuminating in this chapter, especially for research of professional practices such as psychotherapy and counselling, is Schegloff's account of what he calls 'interactional projects'. Such projects involve lines of action that transcend the boundaries of a sequence, but are nevertheless something that shapes the interaction and is oriented to as such by the participants. In psychotherapy, preparing the ground for an interpretation (Vehviläinen, 2003) or facilitating the patient's direct expression of emotion or her self-reflection might be examples of such projects. So, it seems as if Schegloff encourages to ask, along with the primary questions 'how is this utterance responding to the preceding one', and 'how is it controlling the next', also a third question: 'what kind of interactional project might this utterance be part of'?

The subtitle of this book is *A Primer in Conversation Analysis*. In his Preface, Schegloff cites the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* to explain what the somewhat intriguing term 'primer' refers to: 'a small introductory book of any subject' (p. xi). This is certainly an understatement, when it comes to *Sequence Organization*, which is not a small book but a comprehensive treatise of a central area of human conduct. This book will serve as an introduction for those who are up to its standard of engagement, but it is also thoroughly scholarly work, constitutive to the field. Well, 'primer' is a word with many meanings. A different kind of primer is used in wooden boat maintenance: before applying the final paint, a layer of primer is applied to the boat, to ensure the sticking of the paint, and to prevent the boat's coat of paint from being ruined by the end of the season. For me, Schegloff's *Sequence Organization* is this kind of primer for interaction research. You need to apply it first, you need to understand your data through the concepts of sequences and their expansions. Once this primer is applied, you can make observations of various aspects of interaction and of interactional projects, and your observations will stick, and your analysis will not be ruined at the end of the sailing season.

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CHRIS BRAECKE, GEERT JACOBS, KATJA PELSMAEKERS and TOM VAN HOUT, *Lodz Papers in Pragmatics. Special Issue on Discourse in Organizations*. Lodz: Lodz University Press, 2006. 219pp. € 25 (pbk).

This is the second volume of the relatively recently launched *Lodz Papers in Pragmatics*. The special issue focuses on Discourse in Organizations, and compiles eight contributions which look at three types of discourse: meetings, speeches and interviews.

The first contribution by Charlotte Lundgren uses video-recordings of multi-professional team meetings to explore the key aspects which considerably impact on the team's communication practices: having to make decisions that are i) in the best interest of their patients while at the same time ii) meeting the requirements of the Social Insurance Agency, and iii) the distribution of expert knowledge among participants. Lundgren argues that these aspects influence the team's decision-making process in which members appear to have equal rights to add or request further information.

In the second contribution, Jonathan Clifton provides an in-depth analysis of the ways in which a relatively junior member of a school in France uses the sequential resources of turns-in-progress to align with the emerging consensus and thereby avoids being held accountable for her lack of knowledge. A combination of CA and membership category analysis is employed in an analysis of a video-recorded pedagogical meeting. Results indicate that the most junior person in the meeting uses a range of linguistic strategies to 'go with the flow' by signalling agreement with her colleagues and co-constructing the talk in progress.

In 'Powerspeak Uncovered', Ellen van Praet attempts to investigate the political and ideological processes underlying weekly meetings at a British embassy. She conducts interviews with the ambassador and other meeting