THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Research Explorer

The reservations of the editor

OPEN ACCESS

The reservations of the editor: The routine work of showing and knowing the film in the edit suite

Authors: Eric Laurier and Barry Brown

Address for correspondence:

Institute of Geography and the Lived Environment,
School of Geosciences,
University of Edinburgh,
Edinburgh
Midlothian
UK
EH8 9XP

eric.laurier@ed.ac.uk

Department of Communication,
University of California San Diego
La Jolla, CA, USA

barry@ucsd.edu

The Reservations of the Editor: the routine work of showing and knowing the film in the edit suite

Eric Laurier, University of Edinburgh
Barry Brown, University of California San Diego

Abstract: The editing suite is one of the hidden spaces of film. A place where complex forms of embodied collaboration around screens take place. In this paper we present video-recorded data of an editor and director assembling a short documentary. From it we begin to describe editing work in terms of being aware of what media there are, assessing those materials and making them visible. We move on to consider the joint task of assessing clips once they are visible and making proposals about possible sequences. These actions are spatially arranged in a side-by-side format in front of multiple screens with asymmetric access to the controls. The editor's reservations are the areas of film-making for which they are accountable – their characteristic role of caution around the quality of media and intelligibility of a film for its audience. Much of the work on media and interaction assumes that the media are pre-formed and that these interactions are at a distance. Here we study the place where media are still in the process of being made and while the work of editing is intimately dependent on video it is nevertheless accomplished in the local orders of the editing suite.

Keywords: video editing, media, space, interaction, visual, assessments, conversation analysis

Making the movie visible

The academic sits at their computer editing their current journal submission. They have a first full draft, rather too quickly completed and twice the length of the word limit. If one of the empirical sections can be deleted without damaging the argument then that will be a thousand words taken out. They read and compare the two sections – yes that can probably go - with that section deleted they reread the introduction realising some re-writing will be needed and some extra deletions. Similarly, the conclusion will require a few extra words now to compensate for the removal. While editing of this kind will be familiar to the journal's readers quite what editing is as a practice remains relatively understudied apart from a few notable exceptions (e.g. Becker, 1982).

If we add a co-author to our initial scenario the situation is subtly changed. Sitting at the word processor they discuss what to do, they read aloud certain sections, one operates the keyboard while the other makes suggestions. At various crucial rewordings they both keep their eyes on the screen so they can see exactly how the new wording reads. The editing situation has become more complicated yet, in the requirement of both parties to remain aware of what they are doing, more accessible to an outsider. This is also the case with film-makers editing a documentary. There are more screens, yet the work of excision, addition, revision and trimming might be similar. We should be careful in our comparison that the object for film makers is a filmic object and not a textual one.

A generation ago the analogue media of celluloid and beta tape meant radically different machines were used in editing. Film editors worked on flatbeds with strips of negative, blade and specialist sticking tape and video editors with two video recorders and corresponding buttons and shuttles. In the succeeding thirty years digital video has brought windows, keyboards, mice and cursors to both cultures while also merging their workplaces. Software has converted a linear process into a 'non-linear' process that allows editors to cut and paste video and audio just as academics cut and paste text in word processing packages. Professional editing software like Avid, Premiere and Final Cut Pro have grown in increments out of the work of editors and the project structures of film-making (Caldwell, 2008).

Yet even with the greater ease provided by digital video, the professional editing of even short films takes place over several days, weeks, months or years (Crittenden, 2005; Thompson & Bowen, 2009)[1]. To assemble a feature-length film editors will draw upon hundreds, if not thousands of video and audio clips. Editors have numerous technical jobs to perform with this abundant collection of material: logging footage as it comes in, assembling dailies (the day's footage for directors to review in the evening), repairing

---

[1] There a number of professional editing situations where editing happens much faster. Most obviously live editing but also a number of other TV formats such as news packages, sports highlights etc.

problems from the shooting, picture-editing, sound-editing, responding to notes, and, in a general sense, assembling first cuts & numerous further versions of a film (Caldwell, 2008; Koppelman, 2005). Avid, and systems like it, collect together the bewildering array of labelling devices, specialised tools, shortcuts, viewers and playback possibilities that editors may call upon. Our aim here though is not to study the historical development of the software or the cultural practices of the production industry, important though they are, our focus is on providing is a rudimentary description of what is actually involved in the lived work of video editing.

While the director's tasks are certainly fascinating and we will attend to them in what follows, it is the hidden work of the editor collaborating with the director that we want to concentrate on. As a first gloss of what the editor's work with the director is, it is *making the movie visible and audible* – this can seem an odd idea for academics used to working with documents which, aside from scrolling them on screen or flicking the pages, only seem to require reading[2]. During the production process a film slowly emerges as an object, like the pot of the potter's wheel: from the three-minute pitch that begins to say what a movie might be like, to two page treatments, to story-boards if they are made, to scripts, to shooting schedules etc. What is being done is shaped by what has been done and will shape what will be done later. Documentaries, in some senses, happen backwards and, more than any other form, are shaped in the edit (Rabiger, 1998). The documentarist has shot a lot of material on a topic and the story then has to be found in the footage. Backwards is perhaps a slight exaggeration because there is always a rough story which the film-makers are pursuing yet it serves to mark the significant differences in the editing process between documentary and other film forms. As you might imagine the editor's task is all the greater in making a documentary visible because there is no script nor storyboard to follow or diverge from in the editing.

When a director and editor work collaborate in the editing suite there is a distribution of knowledge as much as there is a distribution of work (Crabtree, Nichols, O'Brien, Rouncefield, & Twidale, 2000; Harper, 1998; Sharrock, 1974). A second gloss is then around what the editor's knowledge is, it is *knowing what footage we have, where it is and what it is like* (similar work on textual editing can be found in Clayman & Reisner, 1998). In the academic scenario one could imagine a paper where one author might know the empirical material better, whilst the other knows their theory. The director for their part may have supervised or directly recorded much of that footage but they may not have yet seen how the shots or sound 'came out'. Or may not yet have scrutinised, ranked and judged the picture and sound in the manner that the editor has. When the director is collaborating with the editor they will be expected to know what the argument of the documentary is, what they were recording at the time, what they were trying to achieve in recording an event or person or scene etc. and other surrounding facts pertinent to the

---

[2] Though of course quite what reading a text is outside of the editing setting is one that gives birth to huge academic enterprises as well as other more practice-based studies (Gallacher, 2010; Livingston, 1995; McHoul, 1982).

documentary. It is the marrying together of these two sets of knowledge of the emerging film that is the ongoing challenge.

Working around, with and in screens

The approach we will use to describe the video-analytic work which as the heart of editing grows out of conversation analysis (CA). Early work in the field of CA was mono-modal, having the benefit of drawing upon tapes of telephone calls or other audio recordings, for its primary data (Sacks, 1972; Schegloff, 1972). Telephone calls became the prime site for investigation because callers, like the researchers, were reliant upon entirely on what they could hear and could effectively bracket out gestures, objects, movement within the environment and the varied array of resources which constitute multimodal communication elsewhere. As scholars involved in the development of CA began to analyse a wider variety of settings, (e.g. medical consultations Heath, 1986) and turn their attention toward the importance of gaze and body movement in speech exchange (Goodwin, 1986; Schegloff, 1998), a number of aspects of communication that had been bracketed out were gradually brought back in. While the first studies tended toward considering gesture and body movement, over the longer term, various objects (Goodwin, 2003; Hindmarsh & Heath, 2000b) and spaces (Haddington, 2010; Llewellyn & Burrow, 2008; Mondada, 2009a; Nevile, 2004) have, by necessity, been re-integrated into the study of talk-in-interaction.

What has been a particularly challenging area of study has been when the multimodal doubles-up; when we have people doing activities amongst, based upon and or indeed creating multimodal objects. For instance, surgeons teaching surgery while also using live video to display the surgery they are teaching (Mondada, 2003), underground railway staff using video to monitor crowds while also controlling those crowds (Heath & Luff, 2006) and school students visualising Shakespeare's Macbeth (Greiffenhagen & Watson, 2009). In each of these cases screens (and speakers) bring into play a further set of features that have to be made sense of in coming to understand what the activities in question are. This is not to say that the materiality of the screen or speaker itself is the phenomenon in question (Introna & Ilharco, 2006; Tutt & Hindmarsh, 2008) just as paper is not at the heart of most newspaper activities. What studying video editing requires of us is, from time to time, the double focus of following courses of actions of following courses of action, analysing the analysing and, as Macbeth (in press) puts it, understandings of understandings. In addition, because in our research we have utilised video to record activities, this results in scrutinising, on a screen and through speakers, other workplace analysts scrutinising other people, activities and events on a screen and through speakers. In trying to understand what is happening around computer, TV and other forms of audio-visual production technologies there is this double duty of following the actors (e.g. director and editor) recorded by the researcher while also attending to the course of action that they are not only following but also producing as the point of what they are doing (e.g. an interview in the documentary).

Of particular pertinence to understanding the multimodal complexities of screen work and editing are Broth's (2004, 2008, in press) and others (Engstrom, Perry, Juhlin, & Broth, forthcoming; Perry, Engstrom, & Juhlin, 2010) studies of TV live editing. Drawing upon video recordings of a debate show Broth (2004, 2008, forthcoming) documented the collaboration between the live edit suite and the camera operators. Yet, while the environment was exceedingly complex the camera operators only used a mono-modal channel to communicate their proposed shots to the editing suite: the camera feed itself. With this one mode of communication they were able to offer shots to the editors by using both zooms and sweeps of the camera to indicate they were about to select a fresh shot as a candidate camera angle for the production team to cut to.

Where we depart from Broth's work and other studies of editing (Engstrom, Perry, Juhlin, & Broth, 2009; Mondada, 2003, 2009b) is that, in following the work the documentary film-making, the editing team have several weeks, after shooting, to edit the short video they are making. Because the video they are making is not the coverage of an event while it is happening what is required to make the documentary visible and audible is of a different nature also. Not least because the camera crew have usually finished their shooting, though there may still be late requests for extra footage (which we will return to in a moment). There is time in hand to dwell upon shot selection, placement of audio, revising previous versions, overall structure of the short film and more. Unlike the rapid-fire cutting of the live event, what we will see in the empirical materials of this paper is cutting and re-cutting in a contemplative mode.

Working 'around' screens brings with it a common spatial arrangement whether it is two academics re-writing their article together or a director and editor recutting their film. By contrast with face-to-face interaction the actors are arranged side-by-side facing toward the screens. A format which ranges across a number of activities involving screens such as watching TV at home (Taylor & Harper, 2002), controls of distributed settings (Luff, Heath, & Jirotka, 2000), computer game-playing (Reeves, Brown, & Laurier, 2009), design work with CAD (Ivarsson, 2010), diagnosis using mammograms (Hartswood, Procter, Rouncefield, & Slack, 2001) etc. A format though that needs to be differentiated from working around screens where the screen as acting as the link between two spaces, such as we find in teleconferencing, mobile video telephony and other computer-mediated live visual communication (Heath & Luff, 2000; Tutt, Hindmarsh, Shaukat, & Fraser, 2007). Where parties are working together around a screen, central to that work is, at significant points, seeing what the other sees or that the other person has failed to see. In multi-screen and multi-window settings like video editing this requires parties to display the current focus of their attention and others to recognise and make available their search-for, recognitions or misrecognition of that reference point (Hindmarsh & Heath, 2000a). How this happens is through gestalts of actions such as leaning toward or away, pointing at, cursor movements and so on, and the central resource of audible speech in its deixis of 'this', 'that', 'those', 'here', 'there', 'on their left'. Although they sit side-by-side in front of their screens the access to those screens is in significant ways asymmetrical because only one person handles the controls of interface and editing software and normally this will be the editor. Whether it be the editor or the director that

is handling the controls it is only that person that can direct their attention through moving the cursor, playing an audio or video clip, playing through a sequence and so on.

Having reminded ourselves of existing studies of workplaces which are organised in, around and through screens let us now turn toward an instance of an editor and director working together.

The lived work of editing

figure 1. l,r Oscar & Jo

Oscar and Jo are working on a short documentary to open a conference on young children's involvement in the arts through the activities of a number of local arts organisations (e.g. several galleries, a storytelling centre, a mobile art studio). The documentary has been made, in large part, by a group of older young people as part of the operations of community video resource centre. Planning for the few minutes of editing we are about to examine in more detail has come about from months of previous meetings and, more recently, through a number of discussions in the editing suite between Jo, the director-producer, and Oscar, the editor. Moreover Oscar, as is common editing practice, has been working by himself over a number of days re-editing some of the sequences from the first cut of the short film.

The editing suite they are working in is in a long-running community video centre, so long-running that it now provides a video archive for local historians of the city. From its outset the centre has offered up the opportunity for film-making to those who otherwise would find it difficult or impossible to do so. Jo and Oscar themselves have been involved for several years in the centre's youth work. Oscar growing up, and out, of their young

film-makers group and, in making this documentary, graduating into the role of paid-up editor. Jo, as a youth worker, recruiting the people that shot the film they are editing while also working as producer-director.

figure 2. Three monitor arrangement & documents in front

The editing suite, which Oscar and Jo are using, is laid out in a common spatial arrangement of off-line and on-line editing suites (see figure 2) (Button, 2002; Dancyger, 2002). Its flickering CRT (cathode ray tube) screens are perhaps a little dated and a little small compared to contemporary flat screens. The studio-quality speakers (confusingly also called monitors) are placed to the left and the right (not visible in figure 2). Indeed as current flat screens have grown in size they have the space to include the windows previously spread over two CRT monitors.

To provide a brief explanation of the geography of the three screens: the two in the middle and right are for the editing tools and the one on the right is a monitor for displaying and examining the final output. The latter serves an important purpose for displaying the final product of the editing work because it is colour and aspect accurate while the other two screens are not. The former pair display both tools and the object being worked on with the editing software: the timeline, the clip viewer, the canvas, audio monitor and bins. The timeline provides an overview of the video and audio clip arrangement (we might compare it to the table of contents of an academic book). Clip that are currently being trimmed or manipulated in one way or another are displayed on the clip viewer. The canvas displays the images of wherever the play-head is on the timeline (and is the mirror of the monitor on the right hand side if much smaller). The

'bins' are comparable to the folders where we, academics, organise and store all our documents. An Avid station is an elaborate geography of windows, tools and levels that takes most beginners several weeks to find their way around, thus we do not expect readers to take it all in, just to take away a basic sense of its layout.

A large part of what Jo and Oscar do when they are together in the edit suite (as against when Oscar works by himself) is to plan, review what they have just done and, on the basis of what they have achieved so far, further plan what they will try and do next. For the time being we want to set aside these planning conversations because they are 'tools down' (the editor takes their hands off the controls and the work on-screen halts). While such tools-down discussions are a key part of the job of editing any film and shape up much of the work that follows, it is the *hands-on* work that we want concentrate on in this article. We want to examine a hands-on moment in more detail because these are the times when we have the inter-twining of multi-modalities of talk, gesture, objects and environment with the ongoing selection, addition, removal, adjustment and re-arrangement of the sound and vision of talk, gesture, objects and environments in the medium.

The editing we will examine closely is in the midst of producing a second assembly of the documentary. Completed in the previous week, the first assembly of the documentary was and was around twenty minutes long (the final cut should be less than four minutes). Given that the director and editor have a version that is five times too long for its final purpose, making the second assembly is, thus, going to be a dramatic abbreviation process. We might imagine this will then simply be a case of a massive trimming and removal of audio and video. Except that a curious and endemic property of editing down a movie, noted by a number of editors[3], is that it requires the introduction of *new* clips.

For those unfamiliar with film editing, this routine requirement for additional footage late in the production process appears odd, if perhaps more so in fictional films than documentary. One explanation for this requirement for additional materials lies in the medium of film's inherently sequential properties. To pull out one clip, just like pulling out one turn of talk in a conversation, will likely cause problems of, at least, intelligibility and possibly begin to endanger the overall narration or argument of the final filmic object. Further, in looking at an assembly, editor and directors almost always see ways of improving the film they are making. In fact they can *only* see it at the point where they have the majority of the film's elements in place. For instance now that they look at an assembled sequence, they will need one more close-up of this building but from a different angle which shows its recognisable roof outline. To get from the story from one location to another, they need a shot of someone leaving the building. A number of these editorial problems are anticipated by experienced professional camera crews who share professional knowledge of the editing process. Consequently, camera crews shoot exit and

[3] See for instance Stephen Mirrione's commentaries on the special editions of the Go DVD (dir. Doug Liman, UCA, 2004) and Traffic DVD (dir. Steven Soderbergh, Criterion Edition, 2002). Also the late stages of editing of Cold Mountain in (Koppelman, 2005)

entrance shots of characters even when they appear to serve no purpose in the script as it stands and seem wasteful of film and actors' time (amusingly explained in Mamet, 2007). They also do multiple takes in interviews, they shoot numerous cutaways (e.g scenes or images from the location that can be used for wallpapering over edits or audio). For documentary, above all, they record a lot of picture and audio (e.g. 100 hours material for 1 hour documentary is a common ratio). In the editing suite, a further common solution, which will see in a moment, is to trawl through the 'bins' to see if some unused clips might serve a new purpose within the assembly[4]. We are going to join Oscar (editor) and Jo (director) as they run into just such a moment in their second assembly. It begins with the director noticing a clip in the bin that might be able to be used in the section they are working on. We are providing a transcript of the entire sequence to give a sense of longer course of action before then concentrating on shorter sections in detail.

---

[4] There are yet more solutions for documentary editing such as library footage, stock footage as well as sending the camera crew out to record the missing sections. These can leave a documentaries temporal factuality open to defeat under conditions of opposition when this asynchronous collection is discovered. The controversy over the editing of 'Chavez - The Revolution Will Not Be Televised' providing a perspicuous case (Stoneman, 2008).

```
1.  Jo:     OH!
2.
3.  Oscar: What
4.
5.  J:      School interior. There should be some [quite really ni'
6.                                                                +
7.  O:                                             [They're very shake:y
8.
9.  J:      Are  [they
10.              +
11. O:           [As I recall I think it was all handheld, the school
    interiors and exteriors
12.
13. J:      Shouldn't be
14.
15. O:      Wait. Is it. It's all right actually
16.
17. I:      I think some of it is handheld
18.
19. O:      It's pretty-
20.
21. J:      I- is this bit handheld well I mean that's classrooms so we
    don't need that anyway
22.
23. J:      This- is this bit all handheld
24.
25. O:      Looks like it. Wait maybe that bit isn't actually no: No
    you're °right actually, it's not°
26.
27. J:      >It's coz I jist< I just remembered this interior being
    absolutely ama:zing
28.
29. ((some lines removed where J & O are examining a shot of a model
    bus))
30.
31. J:      I think the shot of Van Gogh by P6 is perfect [obviously
32.                                                                 +
33. O:                                                     [Yes b'
    it's good really good but I don't- Where can we put it
34.
35. J:      When she's saying I'm at the scho:ol
36.
37. O:      Mhm
38.
39. J:      Exterior shot, school sign, interior shot, into the
    classroom
40.
41. O:      Hhhm
42.
43. J:      Which means that you can cut some of the front of this out
    as well
44.
45. O:      Pfwoo yeah mhm
```

Oscar, the editor, is in the midst of another task when the director notices (line 1) a bin of interior shots on the screen on the far right. The editor switches from his task and

brings up the interiors as requested (line 15). They watch them together and eventually the director finds a shot of Van Gogh posters on the wall (line 47) that she likes. In the face of some apparent reservations from the editor (line 49) she formulates a sequence of shots into which the Van Gogh posters will fit (line 55).

fig. 3 Asymmetry of editor–director pair

A first thing to note here there is an almost unavoidable asymmetry in the mutual monitoring (see fig 3). Gaze plays a significant role in the confirming or querying of understanding, in emphasizing, in attending or dis-attending, in turn-offering and requesting and more (Goodwin, 1980). As we noted in the introduction in workplaces and everyday situations where participants are not orientated face-to-face, how we pursue a response or indeed respond by a subtle move such as a raising of the eyebrows (Peräklyä, 2004; Streeck, 2009) have to be adjusted and adapted. When working hands-on, the editor operating the keyboard and with their gaze upon the Avid interface cannot look extendedly at the director without stopping their work on Avid. The director who has no software tools in their hands nor direct tasks to perform can look at the editor whenever it is sequentially appropriate in terms of her conversationally and gesturally communicated tasks. From lines 51-61 we have this situation and it is a common one throughout editor-director collaboration. Having noted this common asymmetry, what we have at the outset of fragment above is both the editor and the director looking at screens, though at different screens. Let us look at this in a little more detail now:

```
1.   Oscar: ((speaking quietly to himself))
2.
3.   Jo:    OH! ((taps A's arm and points toward the bins on the right
      hand screen ))
4.
```

```
5.
6.
7.   O:      What ((still rushing through sequence))
8.
9.   J:      School interior (1.0)
10.
11.  J:      [There should be some quite really ni'
12.              +                        +
13.  O       [.h::::::::        They're very shake:y
14.                                      +
15.                            [((stops scrubbing finally))
```

While the director is waiting on the editor to complete his current task (displayed to him on the central screen) the director can of course do other things such as examining the bins which are displayed on the right hand screen. In common with a number of collaborative situations around an interface such as searching for solutions together at an interface (e.g. Heath & Luff, 2000; Ivarsson, 2010) the person without their hands on the keyboard and mouse has to find appropriate points in the ongoing flow of the other's task to intervene. In the excerpt above, we have the initiation with the free standing 'oh' (line 3) of a noticing (Heritage, 1998) by the director. Meantime the editor is already busy with a task both had agreed upon and his somewhat blunt 'what' and absence of immediate cessation of his task marks what the director has done as interruptive (Sacks, 1992). However the director's awareness of interrupting and the need to secure the director's attention is handled by her breaking apart the 'oh' noticing token, from the thing noticed 'school interior' (line 9). Space is thus given for the director to find the place where he can pause and then re-orient to what she has spotted. 'School interior', is the label for a collection of clips of 'cutaways' mentioned earlier, identifiable as such by 'interior(s)' which is a member of the family of cutaway terms (along with 'exteriors').

What we should not forget, in the director Jo's reading aloud of the label 'school interior' is that it is the editor who has created the clips that fall within that label, so there is no news for him in its discovery. In a simple sense it is part of the visualisation of the movie

through text and also part of the organisation of the movie as work project. It is available not only for himself as a resource to draw upon but also open for (over-the-shoulder) reading by the director. It thus is part of the work of making the movie visible for both, but connected to different awareness of what further footage of what quality is indexed by such labels. Although the labels are generally available 'School interior' has not been brought to the director's attention by the editor for working on at this juncture. The director has picked it out because it happens to be lying open on the right hand screen rather than because it is relevant to what they are currently working on. Accordingly, of course, the director goes on to provide an account of her noticing's potential relevance for their current task. For the editor, not only is the 'school interiors' collection not a noticing, it triggers a long audible in-breath from him in overlap with the director's account of its relevance (lines 11 & 13). This does several things, perhaps most significantly pre-figuring a negative assessment (that will undermine the director's discovery even as it accounts for the school interiors' absence). Moreover it the editor displays hearing the director's noticing as consequential for the task at hand and competing before the turn closes to provide his assessment of those clips. Indeed the director cuts off her turn before it reaches completion on the very assessment term 'nice' which only makes it to 'ni-', thus marking it as abandoned. Quite why the director might abandon on the word 'nice' turns upon 'what the editor knows' since as we have noted already, the editor collected these clips and thus has the epistemic upper hand (Raymond & Heritage, 2006).

In a disagreement marked in a parallel construction on overlap: we have 'really nice' and 'very shaky' Not having the space to do more than draw on the larger ethnographic work on editing this comes from (Laurier, Brown, & Strebel, 2010), we can add that 'shaky' is a negative assessment that brings into play editors' professionally consequential criteria (Ivarsson, 2010; Lymer, 2009; Phillabaum, 2005). Editors in video and film take responsibility for, and in various ways enforce, certain qualities – stable shots rather than shaky hand-held ones, fixed shots rather than zooms. Through the term 'shaky' the editor is thus providing editorial reasoning for the absence in the current assembly of a shot selected from the interiors that the director has just noticed. The array of routine terms used by editors to formulate and assess problematic clips are not only 'shaky' but 'jerky', 'jumpy' and 'whippy' (to name a number that we have come upon during time spent in a number of editing suites[5]).

What we will move on to now is a more detailed look at the end of the fragment where the editor does provide a positive assessment of one of the interior shots [play 'interiors perfect b']

```
31. J:    I think the shot of Van Gogh by P6 is perfect,
    obviously
```

---

[5] It is hard to resist seeing a certain sound shape in these adjectives that can provide a resource in hearing an editor's negative assessment with economy.

```
32.
33.  ((Oscar leaves timeline to return to clip viewer))
34.                                                    +
35.  O:                                        [Yes b'
     it's good
36.
37.  O:     really good but I don't- ((leaves the Van Gogh visible
     in clip viewer))
38.
39.  O:       Where can we put it ((begins to move through
     timeline))
40.
41.  J:     When she's saying I'm at the [scho:ol ((chopping
     toward screen))
42.                                      +
43.  O:                                  [((Oscar takes playhead to
     school shot))
44.
45.  O:     Mhm
```

Jo provides a first assessment of the Van Gogh posters by P6 as 'perfect'. Moreover she provides this assessment in what Pomerantz (1984) calls a final position assessment (i.e. the assessment term comes at the end rather than the beginning). Final position assessments as Pomerantz shows prefer agreement and are thus harder to disagree with. That her assessment expects no disagreement is underlined by her qualifying her assessment with 'obviously'. This makes Oscar's expression of his doubts 'yes but' (lines 35 & 37) all the more interesting. He provides a second assessment which "does the work of claiming to agree with the prior while marking, and accompanying, a shift in assessed parameters which partially contrasts with the prior" (Pomerantz, 1984: 63). In other words, through making a second assessment rather than simply agreeing with her, his downgrading 'good' maintains his affiliation with the director while also edging in a disagreement through the downgrading. This affiliation appears to be further developed in his delayed, upgrade on his initial 'good' with 'really good', with its 'but' problem upcoming. As Pomerantz (1984) argued, assessments are usually not done for their own sake but are lodged within other action sequences such as praising, complimenting, complaining and so on. We should thus also then examine Jo's first assessment in terms of its place within another course of action.

The editor's overall extended response of his two assessments and question helps us see what the course of action might be. He provides an agreement through his assessment on one part of her assessment: the aesthetics of the clip. The absence of a matching upgrade to 'perfect' indicating his reservations over something else: the action that will be done with the 'Van Gogh'. 'Where can we put it' he asks at line 39 and thereby we see that overall course of action here is inserting the shot into the sequence they are currently working on. Let us move on to examine what happens next:

```
41.  J:     When she's saying I'm at the scho:ol
42.
```

```
43. O:      Mhm
44.
45. J:      Exterior shot, school sign, interior shot, into the
            classroom
46.
47. O:      Hhhm
48.
49. J:      Which means that you can cut some of the front of this
            out as well
50.
51. O:      Pfwoo yeah mhm
```

With the insertion problem now raised by the editor, the director formulates the insertion point using the voice-over or audio-track 'when she's saying I am at the scho:ol' (line 41) to locate it. After which we have a gesturally-supported sequence of shots to which 'Van Gogh' is reconnected with its initial labelling by the editor as part of his stock of interiors. Moreover we have an interior located within a sequence of professionally meaningful membership categories (Hester & Eglin, 1997) belonging to establishing shots: 'exterior, school sign, interior, into classroom'. The sense of why and how the shot is 'perfect' becomes more apparent in what it is perfect *for*. It is not shaky, looks good and fits into their establishing shots sequence. With no revised assessment or agreement from the editor, the director adds a final flourish which is that the sequence could be cut down slightly and thus achieve their over-riding goal here to trim the first assembly down in length.

Throughout the editor appears to be continuing to have his reservations about the three part list (e.g. 1. where to insert, 2. what video sequence is produced and 3. what additional benefit this carries). Each of these assessments which form part of the director's overall proposal are all receipted with the minimum continuer of 'mhm's by the editor. At this point we might expect the editor, if he is agreeing with the director to show a positive acceptance of the proposal (e.g. 'good idea', 'so it will', 'yes will do' etc.)? In fact as the final recommendation for the insertion of the clip comes to an end, the editor offers a distinctly tentative 'yeah', prefaced with a puff, concluded with an 'mhm and marked gesturally with a furrowing of the brow.

What we have done up until now though is to overly concentrate on the talk and ignore what is happening on, and with, Avid. What is visually available to participants changes something of how we understand the import and uptake of the editor's responses from the first assessment of the clip in question as 'perfect' (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992). Let us turn to the actions taking place on the Avid interface.

Returning to the 'good' which is upgraded to 'really good' the editor is also getting the actual shot they are talking about on-screen. In fact his work begins even earlier when the director says 'I think the shot of Van Gogh by P6' at which point he finishes deleting a clip [1] and the cursor begins to move away from the timeline to the clip viewer [2]. Once in the clip viewer he scrubs through the clips from the stairwell with its globes [3]

until he has the Van Gogh shot on screen, in time for his second 'really good' [4]. Until the shot is on-screen their assessment of it is in an important sense limited. Or rather, the editor's re-assessment is limited. He is able to, and can, display as a *re-assessment* what he is doing by bringing the image back up on the monitor and clip-viewer. So while we still have a downgrade in response to 'perfect' we begin through examining what is happening on Avid to understand that the assessment is being re-shaped by the work of making the documentary visible for the director and editor's current purposes.
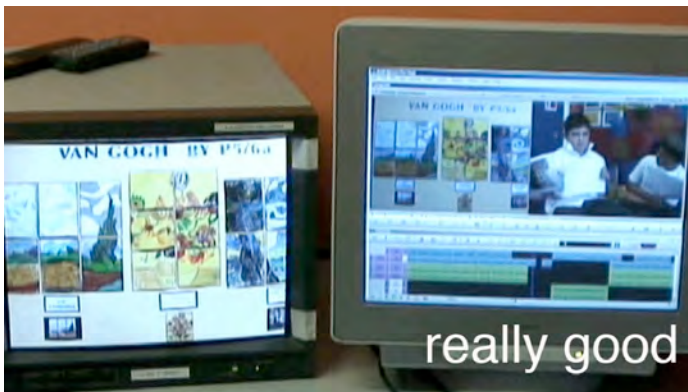
1.
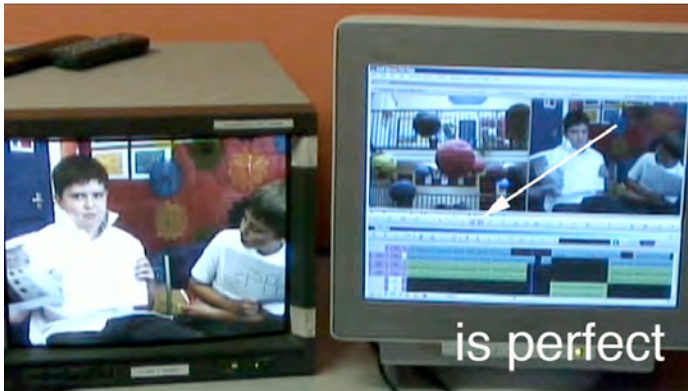
2.
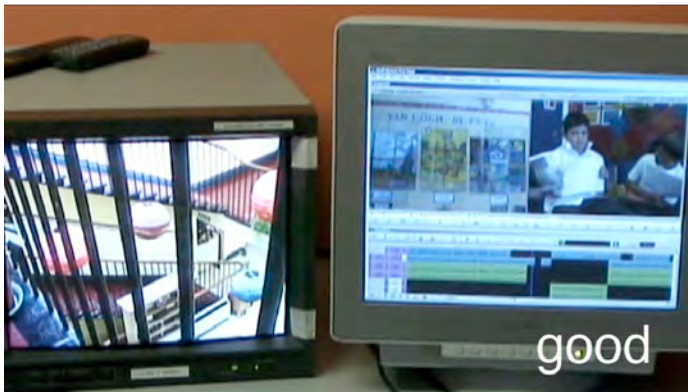
3.

4.

Having re-examined the sequence assessments in the light of the visual materials on Avid we can now turn to the sequence of minimal 'mhm's from the editor during the director's suggested insertion. These minimal receipts also take on a different character as we watch what Sam is doing as Jo is speaking. By the close of 'scho:ol' the editor has brought the playhead to the point on the timeline where the interview is saying 'school'. In itself, jumping to the relevant point so quickly so as to furnish the director with the actual materials she is talking about is a remarkable if commonplace accomplishment of an editor. As the director finishes her description of the establishing shot (line 45) the editor has moved on to running the playhead back and forth over timeline re-examining the existing establishing-shot briefly before deselecting the tracks in order to begin inserting the Van Gogh clip. In other words, when we follow his actions with Avid - a following that the director is also doing - then we see that his actions are the concrete responses to her proposals. When the director's third and final recommendation of the insertion actually comes it is actually *after* the editor has followed through on her suggestions.

It thus takes on a post hoc character rather than being part of a continuing attempt to convince the editor to insert the Van Gogh clip. In turn, the editor's 'mhm's then come to be seen, when dealt with as a whole, as expressing that he is busy already getting on with the suggested insertion. When the director says: 'Which means that you can cut some of the front of this out as well' the puff the editor makes comes to be understandable as one that displays the quantity of tasks piling up as he hears her recommendation as a further direction for the editing. One might puff in this way to help the person giving us more work to do appreciate that we need a little time. So rather than being doubtful about the director's suggestion he is dealing with the work pace.

Finishing our analysis of selecting a clip in the editing suite by concentrating on what is happening in Avid (and this is where our editor and director as focused) returns us to the slightly cryptic remark at the outset that the editor's work when working with the director is making the film, as it is now, visible. The editor is busy in manipulating footage in order to make just the right section of a clip or sequence of clips and more available for their visual analyses of these clips as director and editor. Moreover you may still be thinking that the edit was not made in the midst of this re-examination of the qualities of this clips perfectness. Having unlocked the appropriate tracks on the timeline (at line 43) set the in and out points (line 49-51), within a few more second the clip is inserted and they move on.

Conclusions

Existing studies of assessments and screen work have been based in educational settings (Lymer, 2009; Phillabaum, 2005), in this article we have presented the peer pairing of director-editor rather than student-teacher or tutor-tutee. Working together and on equal, if distinct footings, the editor's reservations push in creative ways against the director's vision. From the unexceptional materials presented we have hopefully given a

flavour of the distribution of labour in the editing suite and how these jobs interweave with one another. To successfully edit a documentary, and many other film genres, what the editor and director need to know is what they have available to assemble the movie with but this is not at all a straightforward collection of material to do so. In the instance we have examined, the director is recalling a scene they liked during the shooting and querying as to whether there were corresponding clips. The editor is expected to be the one that knows whether certain shots exist or not. As we have already mentioned, the editor's knowledge is one that they have acquired through logging clips, categorising clips into bins, building select shots of such things as 'school interior', 'children holding up pictures', 'interviews on music' etc. All of this preparatory work over the preceding weeks leading up to being ready and prepared to edit in collaboration with the director. In the edit room, collaboration is about bringing the editor's knowledge into dialogue with the director's vision for the documentary. This dialogue routinely takes the mundane form of interruptions, indeed we might say that interrupting and being interrupted are at the heart of editing. The ongoing achievement of such collaborations is to maintain affiliation when it is common knowledge in the industry that the editing suite is a notorious site for disagreements.

The central section of the article provided a typical example of what decision-making looks like in film making. And there are thousands of these sorts of episodes during the editing of any film. The sheer profusion of intense thoughtfulness around these thousand cuts is not recovered by film studies. Nor should these decisions be, since an overarching ambition of film studies is in the work of instructed viewings of cinema (Livingston, 1995). However the point of the study we have reported on here is not to limit the interpretative work done by film theorists with finished filmic objects. Our ambition is instead to recover the lived work of making those objects, work that precedes and is irretrievably lost in the final product.

Working on screens and with speakers is at the heart of film and video editing in a double sense because the final object is one that is to be consumed on screens with speaker systems. This isomorphism contrasts with otherwise comparable studies of how work is assessed on screens by architects (Heath & Luff, 2000; Lymer, 2009). Rather than working with sketches or plans of the final object displayed on screen, videos and films are entities that are made with *and* for screens and speakers. Nevertheless the essential quality of film and video is that it needs to be 'rolled' (as it used to be called) or played on screen and with speakers. The work of playing just the clips that we need now, to talk over, before or with those clips, is central to the work of editing. Without being able to see and hear what they are working on, the process of editing begins to unravel. In this article we have begun to see how the editor makes the film available visually and audibly for both themselves and the director as their routine work.

Bibliography

Becker, H. S. (1982). *Art Worlds*. London: University of California Press.

Broth, M. (2004). The production of a live TV-interview through mediated interaction. In C. van Dijkum, J. Blasius, H. Kleijer & B. van Hilten (Eds.), *Recent Developments and Applications in Social Research Methodology. (Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference on Logic and Methodology, August 17–20, 2004, Amsterdam)*. Amsterdam: SISWO.

Broth, M. (2008). The studio interaction as a contextual resource for TV-production. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40*, 904-926.

Broth, M. (in press). Seeing through screens, hearing through speakers: Managing distant studio space in television control room interaction. *Journal of Pragmatics*, xxx-xxx.

Button, B. (2002). *Nonlinear Editing: Storytelling, Aesthetics, and Craft*. Berkeley, CA: CMP, Elsevier.

Caldwell, J. T. (2008). *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and the Critical Practices in Film and Television*. Durham NC: Duke University Press.

Clayman, S. E., & Reisner, A. (1998). Gatekeeping in Action: Editorial Conferences and Assessments of Newsworthiness. *American Sociological Review, 62*(2), 178-199.

Crabtree, A., Nichols, D. M., O'Brien, J., Rouncefield, M., & Twidale, M. B. (2000). Ethnomethodologically Informed Ethnography and Information System Design. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science, 51*(7), 666-682.

Crittenden, R. (2005). *Film and Video Editing: Second Edition*. London: Routledge.

Dancyger, K. (2002). *The technique of film and video editing: history, theory and practice* (Third Edition ed.). London: focal press.

Engstrom, A., Perry, M., Juhlin, O., & Broth, M. (2009). "EVS… now!" socially segueing instant replay into live video. *copies available from the authors*.

Engstrom, A., Perry, M., Juhlin, O., & Broth, M. (forthcoming). Visual narrative and temporal relevance: segueing instant replay into live video. *Visual Studies*.

Gallacher, L. (2010). *The Practices and Consequences of Reading Manga.* Unpublished PhD, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh.

Goodwin, C. (1980). Restarts, pauses and the achievement of a state of mutual gaze at turn beginning. *Sociological Inquiry, 50*, 272-302.

Goodwin, C. (1986). Gesture as a Resource for the Organization of Mutual Orientation. *Semiotica, 62*(1-2), 29-49.

Goodwin, C. (2003). Pointing as Situated Practice. In S. Kita (Ed.), *Pointing: Where Language, Culture and Cognition Meet* (pp. 217-241). Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Goodwin, C., & Goodwin, M. H. (1992). Assessments and the construction of context. In A. Duranti & C. Goodwin (Eds.), *Rethinking context: language as an interactive phenomenon* (pp. 147-189). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Greiffenhagen, C., & Watson, R. (2009). Visual repairables: analysing the work of repair in human--computer interaction. *visual communication, 8*(1), 65-90.

Haddington, P. (2010). Turn-taking for turntaking: Mobility, time and action in the sequential organization of junction-negotiations in cars. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, NYP.

Harper, R. (1998). *Inside the IMF, An Ethnography of Documents, Technology and Organisational Action*. London: Academic Press.

Hartswood, M., Procter, R., Rouncefield, M., & Slack, R. (2001). Performance Management in Breast Screening: A Case Study of Professional Vision and Ecologies of Practice. *Journal of Cognition, Technology and Work, 4*(2), 91-100.

Heath, C. (1986). *Body Movement and Speech in Medical Interaction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heath, C., & Luff, P. (2000). *Technology in action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heath, C., & Luff, P. (2006). Video Analysis and Organisational Practice. In H. Knoblauch, S. Bernt, J. Raab & Soeffner (Eds.), *Video-Analysis. Methodology and Methods*. London: Peter Lang.

Heritage, J. (1998). Oh-prefaced responses to inquiry. *Language in Society*.

Hester, S., & Eglin, P. (Eds.). (1997). *Culture in action: studies in membership catehorization analysis*. Washington D C International Institute for Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis & University Press of America.

Hindmarsh, J., & Heath, C. (2000a). Embodied reference: A study of deixis in workplace interaction. *Journal of Pragmatics, 32*, 1855-1878.

Hindmarsh, J., & Heath, C. (2000b). Sharing the tools of the trade; the interactional constitution of workplace objects. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 29*(5), 523-562.

Introna, L. D., & Ilharco, F. M. (2006). On the Meaning of Screens: Towards a Phenomenological Account of Screenness. *Human Studies*.

Ivarsson, J. (2010). Developing the construction site: architectural education and technological change. *Visual Communication*, 1-25.

Koppelman, C. (2005). *Behind the Seen. How Walter Murch edited Cold Mountain using Apple's Final Cut Pro and what this means for cinema*. Berkely CA: New Riders.

Laurier, E., Brown, B. A. T., & Strebel, I. (2010). *Assembling the line: amateur & professional work, skill and practice in digital video editing*. Swindon & Edinburgh: Final report to the ESRC, ESRC & University of Edinburgh.

Livingston, E. (1995). *An Anthropology of Reading*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Llewellyn, N., & Burrow, R. (2008). Streetwise sales and the social order of city streets. *British Journal of Sociology, 59*(3), 561-583.

Luff, P., Heath, C., & Jirotka, M. (2000). Surveying the Scene: Technologies for Everyday Awareness and Monitoring in Control Rooms. *Interacting with Computers, 13*(2), 193-228.

Lymer, G. (2009). Demonstrating Professional Vision: The Work of Critique in Architectural Education. *Mind, Culture & Activity, 16*(2), 145-171.

MacBeth, D. (in press). Understanding understanding as an instructional matter. *Journal of Pragmatics, doi:10.1016/j.pragma.2008.12.006*.

Mamet, D. (2007). *Bambi" Vs. "Godzilla": On the Nature, Purpose, and Practice of the Movie Business*. New York: Scribner.

McHoul, A. (1982). *Telling how texts talk, Essays on reading and ethnomethodology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Mondada, L. (2003). Working with video: how surgeons produce video records of their actions. *Visual Studies, 18*(1), 58-73.

Mondada, L. (2009a). Emergent focused interactions in public places: A systematic analysis of the multimodal achievement of a common interactional space. *Journal of Pragmatics, 41*, 1977-1997.

Mondada, L. (2009b). Video Recording Practices and the Reflexive Constitution of the Interactional Order: Some Systematic Uses of the Split-Screen Technique. *Human Studies, 32*, 67-99.

Nevile, M. (2004). *Beyond the Black Box: Talk-in Interaction in the Airline Cockpit*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Peräklyä, A. (2004). Analysing facial expression in evaluations. *Video-Analysis: Methodology and Methods, Conference Paper*(copies avaliable from the author, Universität Helsinki).

Perry, M., Engstrom, A., & Juhlin, O. (2010). Mediated multi-stream media production: making sense of sense-making in distributed and multi-participant professional video production. *copies available from the authors*.

Phillabaum, S. (2005). Calibrating photographic vision through multiple semiotic resources. *Semiotica*, 147-175.

Pomerantz, A. (1984). Agreeing and Disagreeing with Assessments: Some Features of Preferred/Dispreferred Turn Shapes. In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis* (pp. 57-101): Cambridge University Press.

Rabiger, M. (1998). *Directing the documentary* (3rd ed.). Oxford: focal press.

Raymond, G., & Heritage, J. (2006). The epistemics of social relations: Owning grandchildren. *Language in Society, 35*, 677–705.

Reeves, S., Brown, B., & Laurier, E. (2009). Experts at play: understanding skilled expertise. *Games and Culture, 4*, 205-227.

Sacks, H. (1972). An initial investigation of the usability of conversational data for doing sociology. In D. Sudnow (Ed.), *Studies on social interaction* (pp. 31-74). New York: Free Press.

Sacks, H. (1992). *Lectures on Conversation*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Schegloff, E. A. (1972). Sequencing in Conversational Openings. In J. J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication* (pp. 346-380). New York: Holt, Rhinehart & Winston.

Schegloff, E. A. (1998). Body torque. *Social Research, 65*, 535-586.

Sharrock, W. W. (1974). On Owning Knowledge. In R. Turner (Ed.), *Ethnomethodology: Selected Readings* (pp. 43-53). Harmondsworth: Penguin Education.

Stoneman, R. (2008). *Chavez - The Revolution Will Not be Televised: A Case Study of Politics and the Media* London: Wallflower Press.

Streeck, J. r. (2009). *Gesturecraft : the manu-facture of meaning*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Taylor, A., & Harper, R. (2002). Switching on to switch off: An analysis of routine TV watching habits and their implications for electronic programme guide design. *usable iTV, 1*(3), 7-13.

Thompson, R., & Bowen, C. J. (2009). *Grammar of the Edit, Second Edition*. London: Focal Press.

Tutt, D., & Hindmarsh, J. (2008). The Screen Deconstructed: Video-based studies of the Malleable Screen. 14.

Tutt, D., Hindmarsh, J., Shaukat, M., & Fraser, M. (2007). The distributed work of local action: Interaction amongst virtually collocated research teams. In L. J. Bannon, I. Wagner, C. Gutwin, R. Harper & K. Schmidt (Eds.), *ECSCW 2007 Proceedings of the 10th European Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work, Limerick, Ireland, 24-28 September 2007* (pp. 199-218). Limerick.