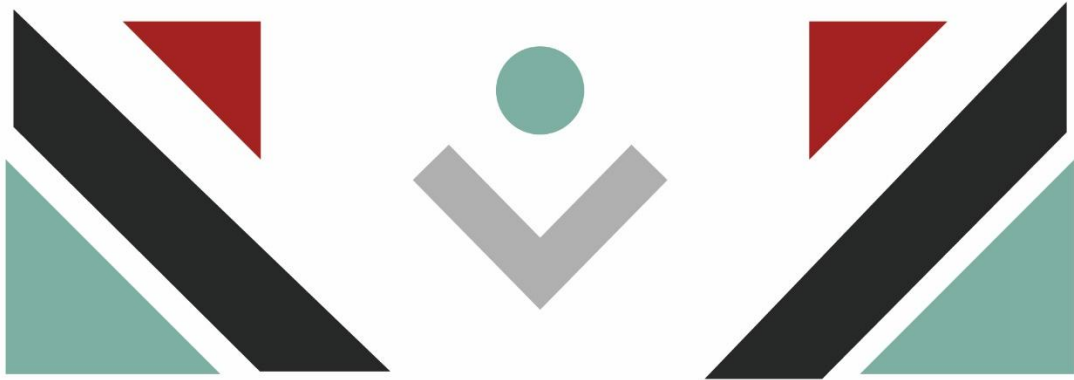


PANELS



IIEMCA27



Johannesburg

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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AI Stream

There are 4 panels on AI for IEMCA27. If you wish to submit a paper to **any of the 4 panels** then please select the **AI Stream** option when submitting. You can also indicate in your submission if you prefer one of the panels, or if you have been invited to submit to one. The organisers of all four panels will collectively review and coordinate the organization of accepted abstracts in the stream and decide on the allocation of papers. Have a look at the panel descriptions below for more information about the focus of each panel.

What are the Epistemics of 'AI'?

Authors: Shan Shan Li¹, Saul Albert², Christian Greiffenhagen¹

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Description:

Everyone is studying 'AI', but its research objects, methods, and topics remain unclear. For those curious about the ethno-methods available to members as a generative condition of socio-technical order (Rawls & Lynch, 2024), this confusion is fertile ground. Indeed, long-standing traditions of ethnomethodological (EM) studies of work in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and Human-Robot Interaction (HRI) are rich in theoretical and methodological antidotes to the "misplaced concreteness" of treating 'AI' as a self-evident topic and object of study (Suchman, 2023). However, until the recent enthusiasm for large language models (LLMs), studies of 'AI' in ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (EM/CA) tended to adopt CA's established topical and methodological apparatus: addressing turn-taking, repair, openings and closings, and embodied conduct in interactions with machines (Mlynář et al., 2024). Given this 'agentification' of 'AI' as a conversational participant (Reeves, 2022), many such studies have shown, time and again, 'what computers still can't do' (Dreyfus, 1992). Instead, this panel asks how could EM/CA studies approach 'AI' without reifying it as a unitary topic and object of study?

The title of our panel is inspired by Lynch's (1993) notion of 'epistemics': familiar themes from epistemology and methodology, such as observation, description, measurement, explanation and proof, that provide common headings across disciplines, but whose "nominal coherence guarantees nothing about localised praxis" (p. 281). The proposal inherent in the critique is that EM studies respecify these epistemics by demonstrating how each is practically situated in a characteristic set of activities, equipment, and indexical residues of action. Adopting this programme in the context of 'AI', we ask: [1] What are the epistemics of AI that should be investigated? For example, 'intelligence', 'artificial', 'agency', 'interaction', 'human', 'social': all familiar terms in EM/CA studies of 'AI', but whose practical sense is constituted differently across the settings and activities in which AI figures. [2] What are 'primitive examples' (Lynch, 1993: 300) through which we might explore these epistemics? [3] What challenges in terms of adopting a unique adequacy requirement (Garfinkel, 2002) do we face: will researchers need to develop technical competencies alongside their EM commitments?

We therefore invite participants from across the range of approaches in EM/CA research to present their work while addressing how their approach, whether theoretical, analytical, or methodological, grapples with these challenges. From conversation analytic studies of interaction with 'machines', to work on the practical categorization of interactants as 'human'

or ‘machine’, hands-on engagements with the domain of professional practice, self-instructive ethnography, or studies of data/computer scientists’ methods: the panel aims to find new praxeological respecifications of what ‘AI’ is and does. We welcome various kinds of contributions. For example, those who have completed empirical studies are encouraged to reflect openly on what they find ethnomethodologically satisfying about their findings, and equally, what remains unresolved or unsatisfying. Reports on ongoing work and accounts of struggles with the very problem of re-specifying AI as an ethnomethodological phenomenon are equally welcome. If you have previously published or presented your research, we invite you to give it a new twist, namely, tell us how it re-specifies AI in an ethnomethodological perspective. We encourage contributors to problematize the analytical and methodological trade-offs in their research: which phenomena were sidelined, “smoothed over,” or strategically omitted to facilitate publication? What substantive insights were sacrificed, and what compromises were dictated by the pressures of academic dissemination?

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Hybrid Engagements: Dialogues in and Across AI and Ethnomethodology

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Description:

Bringing together researchers and technologists, this panel probes new horizons in hybrid studies: going beyond more traditional models of collaboration to jointly explore and learn from the work of designing, deploying and using “Artificial Intelligence” (AI) in practice. Ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (EM/CA) have long connected around these shared concerns with computer science and the fields of human–computer interaction (HCI), computer-supported cooperative work (CSCW), and science and technology studies (STS). Some of those connections can be traced to the work EM/CA researchers were doing in and with companies like Xerox from the 1980s (e.g., Suchman 1987), and relationships that were expanding outwards from there (see Dourish & Button 1998). In these contexts, EM/CA approaches were used practically to improve the design and deployment of computer systems in the real world, outside of academe.

However, they have a longer history still: Garfinkel’s interests in this area were already forming in the 1940s, with work on information theory, discussed in a 1952 conference he organised with Shannon, Bateson and Morgenstern, a.o. (cf. Garfinkel 2008). These exchanges continued through the following decades, e.g., with Hubert Dreyfus on “Alchemy and AI” (1965), Beryl Bellman, Yves Lecerf, and Phil Agre, who considered ethnomethodology a “practice of resistance to the symbolic violence of formalization” in AI research (Agre 1998). Garfinkel’s engagement with Weizenbaum’s ELIZA in the 1960s and his subsequent attempts to study a similar ‘proto-chatbot’ - LYRIC - with computer scientists could also be seen an early hybrid study in this regard (Eisenmann, Mlynář, Turowetz & Rawls 2024).

Such hybrid engagements (Garfinkel 2002, Crabtree 2004) help foreground just what and how EM/CA and computer science can learn from each other by describing specific practices and members’ methods of building working, usable computational systems in situated detail. They also explore the promises and pitfalls of various visions of AI, oftentimes sources of deep critical disagreements (e.g., Coulter & Sharrock 2007). From that starting point, contemporary debates around AI, technology, and EM/CA are closely tied to topics emerging from these engagements and exchanges, including the anthropomorphisation of machinic agents, the integration of algorithmic systems in everyday life, or how encounters with cutting-edge technologies can be variously addressed through the complementary and alternate relationship of engineering and social scientific points of view.

In this context, the panel focuses on two of the most prominent areas of AI today - predictive and generative AI (Mitchell 2025). The aim is to continue a long-running cross-field dialogue in order to find new ways of understanding AI functionality and performance when in interaction with people (‘users’). We hope this will lead to new insights into the interrelationship between AI and human action and interaction, and in doing so meaningfully

contribute to debates about Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) and Artificial Superintelligence (ASI) gripping the technology industry today. The panel will bring together ethnomethodologists, conversation analysts, HCI and AI researchers to identify points where hybrid engagements built around shared projects and problems could yield useful new perspectives and understandings and, from there, new horizons in critique, research and development. We particularly welcome African perspectives, as Africa is a frontier for AI development. Its unique conditions (mobile-first, informal economy, relationship and community focus and infrastructural constraints) create fundamentally different AI requirements which demand new approaches to human and community centred AI innovation.

By renewing the deep connections between ethnomethodology and computer science, we hope to reinvigorate earlier discussions and advance our understanding of contemporary AI. For example, given their ability to process and produce natural language, what is the relationship between machine performance and members competence, between machine reasoning and human reasoning? The panel will consider the possibilities, and the asymmetrical, complementary or perhaps incommensurable relationships between computer science (narratives) and critical EMCA-informed hybrid approaches.

In line with the historical sketch above, the aim is to broaden this panel out beyond EMCA researchers alone to a range of participants working on AI as an invitation to dialogue and consider new horizons (especially in the African context). While the panel leads have considerable experience as well as current involvements in this area, a call will be shared widely before a final balanced panel programme is finalised ensuring plenty of space for dialogue.

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Interacting With AI – Adequate Description of Human-Machine Communication

Authors: Ricardo Moutinho¹, Robin James Smith²

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Description:

Artificial intelligence is often presented as a mysterious, autonomous force reshaping society. Popular discourse anthropomorphises AI systems, describing them as “thinking,” “learning,” or “hallucinating.” Yet these metaphors obscure the everyday practices through which humans actually engage with machines. This panel, based on the forthcoming volume *Interacting with AI: The Practical Work of Human–Machine Communication* (edited by Ricardo Moutinho and Robin James Smith), brings together scholars working at the intersection of ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, and membership categorisation analysis to examine how social order is accomplished when AI technologies are put to use.

The panel challenges deterministic and speculative narratives of AI by foregrounding the situated practices of human–machine communication. Rather than asking what machines “think,” contributors ask: How do people orient to machine actions? How do they calibrate prompts, categorise competence, and embed technologies into everyday routines? By focusing on “instructive actions” and “perspicuous settings,” the panel demonstrates that AI systems are not autonomous actors but tools whose meaning emerges through human use and interpretation.

The objectives of the panel are fourfold:

- To study the production of coordinated actions in naturally occurring events involving AI.
- To explore methodological challenges in analysing data at the intersection of human–machine communication.
- To examine how organisation and sequentiality are brought into being through turn-taking and categorisation practices.
- To observe adaptations and improvisations that participants employ to accomplish coordinated activities with AI.

Contribution

This panel offers a distinctive methodological innovation. While much scholarship on AI focuses on technical design, ethics, or speculative futures, our contributors insist on the importance of adequately describing situated practical action. By treating AI as part of ordinary social practices, the panel avoids utopian and dystopian exaggerations, instead providing grounded accounts of how people actually use AI in situ. This approach contributes to ethnomethodology and conversation analysis by extending classic concerns with turn-taking and categorisation into the domain of human–machine communication. For digital sociology and technology studies, it provides empirical insights into how AI is embedded in social life, challenging deterministic narratives and highlighting the importance of local practices.

Panel Structure

The panel will feature papers drawn from the volume and also others whose authors might be interested to join, each illustrating a different dimension of human–machine interaction. Together, these papers illustrate the breadth of contexts in which AI is encountered—from

kitchens to games to staged demos—and the methodological richness of ethnomethodological approaches to describing them.

Significance

As AI becomes increasingly embedded in everyday life, scholars, practitioners, and policymakers require methodological approaches to understand not just what AI is but how it is used. Without such understanding, there is a risk of mystification and misplaced trust in machine autonomy. This panel contributes to a more realistic and nuanced view of AI, showing that success in using AI depends not only on technical design but on the competence and creativity of users, the contexts of interaction, and the social processes through which meaning is produced. By reframing AI as a practical tool embedded in social life, the panel invites audiences to rethink what it means to “do things with artificial intelligence.”

Technologies do not act alone; they act in concert with humans, within contexts, and through locally specific emergent practices. This panel demonstrates that the most important insights lie not “behind the screen” but in the observable details of interaction.

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The Work to Make Robots Work: EMCA Perspectives on Human-machine Interaction

Authors: Hannah Pelikan¹, Stuart Reeves²

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Description:

Robots in the form of humanoids and self-driving mobility platforms are increasingly deployed commercially due to growth in research and industry investments. Like any AI system, robots are maintained by larger infrastructures, where people perform different kinds of paid and unpaid labour to make the machine appear as autonomous (Crawford & Joler, 2018; Gray & Suri, 2019). A key signature of robot deployments is that they are no longer operating only around ‘primary users’ as envisioned by their designers. Instead, such robots are present alongside potentially large numbers of locally situated others – i.e., people going about their everyday activities there. Yet, from the perspective of the robot designer, such people tend to be treated as less relevant or consequential to robot operations (Dobrosovetsnova et al., 2025).

The success of robot initiatives rests upon socially organised practices that are deployed widely to oversee, maintain, manage, or accommodate the presence of robots and their infrastructures in place. It is this practical work – whether done by their imagined ‘primary users’ or merely people who happen to be co-present – that remains of fundamental interest to studies of social interaction. For example, robots can invite new categorisational work (Stommel et al. 2025), shifts in public conduct (Reeves et al. 2025), or support work behind the scenes (Pelikan et al., 2025). We cannot fully understand the impact of novel robotic technologies without necessarily also seeking members’ understandings in situ. As robots disrupt and reconfigure social and moral orders of interaction, they raise opportunities to examine the vast fabric of members’ work that is brought to bear in making robots work (Krummheuer & Eriksen, 2025).

Robots and their infrastructures surface broad conceptual questions for robot-oriented researchers and designers around notions like agency, embodiment, distributed action, legibility, accountability, etc. Such interests are ripe for ethnomethodological specification, deflation, or disassembly. This panel invites authors to present investigations into the social organisation of the social ‘infrastructures’ – or as we might call them, the ‘work to make the robots work’ – across domains and contexts as practically organised social phenomena. This may be located in/as the practical work of people on-scene, whether they are persons with some existing relation to such robots (e.g., institutional) or not. We are also interested in submissions which address methodological and conceptual issues related to social interaction ‘with’ and around robots as it pertains to the organised work involved in making robots work. This includes, for example, respecifications of concepts of ‘human-robot interaction’, ‘human-robot collaboration’, or the topics mentioned above that persist as going concerns within HRI and robotics communities. The panel is also equally interested in the dimensions of their reliance upon ‘invisible’ human work to sustain assumptions about robots and their design.

We encourage submissions from authors who submitted manuscripts for a forthcoming special issue in *Social Interaction: Video-Based Studies of Human Sociality* on "The Work to Make the Robots Work" and welcome additional presentations related to this topic.

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From Evidence to Interactional Competence: Applying CA to the Architecture of Health Education

Authors: Nancy Barber¹, Jennifer Watermeyer¹

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Description:

For decades, Conversation Analysis (CA) has provided a rigorous descriptive account of the “work of the clinic,” offering detailed insight into how healthcare interactions are organised moment by moment. However, in an era of rapid digital transformation, the challenge for the EMCA community has shifted from describing interaction to actively shaping the future of health education and clinical practice. As healthcare delivery undergoes a paradigm shift toward digital integration, simulation-based learning, and increasingly complex patient provider dynamics, the communication skills taught in medical and nursing curricula must be critically reimaged.

Traditional models of communication training, often grounded in intuition, generic professionalism frameworks, or prescriptive checklists, are not inline with the realities of contemporary healthcare practice. Clinicians are now required to navigate emotionally complex encounters across face to face, digital, and AI mediated contexts while maintaining patient centred, equitable, and contextually responsive care. The interactional demands placed on healthcare professionals extend far beyond the acquisition of “soft skills.” Instead, practitioners require interactional adaptability, critical reflexivity, and the ability to manage uncertainty, epistemic tension, and technologically mediated communication within rapidly evolving healthcare systems.

This panel moves beyond the descriptive to the design oriented, exploring the application of CA as a transformative pedagogical tool to rebuild the interactional architecture of health education. We position EMCA not only as an analytic methodology, but also as an evidence base for informing educational innovation, simulation design, and communication training grounded in authentic clinical interaction. By translating micro analytic findings into pedagogical frameworks, educators can move away from idealised communication models and instead develop learning experiences that reflect the realities of contemporary clinical practice.

We will invite submissions that demonstrate how CA evidence is being used to inform the design and facilitation of Simulated Learning Encounters (SLEs), Digital Health Literacy training, and AI mediated clinical practice.

The panel also seeks to foreground emerging challenges associated with the AI augmented clinic. As ambient AI systems, large language models, automated documentation tools, and digital scribes become increasingly integrated into healthcare delivery, clinician patient interaction is being fundamentally reshaped. These technologies introduce new forms of interactional complexity, including triadic communication between clinician, patient, and AI

systems, shifting epistemic authority, and the potential depersonalisation of care. Preparing students for these emerging realities requires educational approaches grounded in empirical evidence of interaction rather than abstract communication competencies alone.

At the same time, healthcare communication now occurs within an increasingly polarised digital landscape characterised by misinformation, competing epistemologies, and inequitable access to healthcare knowledge. Clinicians must therefore be equipped to manage interactional misalignment sensitively and effectively while supporting patient understanding, trust, and collaborative decision making. EMCA offers a unique methodological lens for understanding how empathy, authority, alignment, resistance, and understanding are negotiated in real time, and how these insights can be translated into meaningful educational interventions.

The panel is particularly interested in contributions that explore the pedagogical translation of interactional research into teaching and learning practices across healthcare disciplines. This includes work examining simulation based education, communication training, reflective debriefing, telehealth education, digital health communication, and the use of video based methodologies to support clinical learning. We also encourage submissions that consider issues of equity, cultural responsiveness, and contextual relevance within healthcare communication training, particularly in under resourced or multilingual healthcare settings.

Ultimately, this panel seeks to explore how interactional research can contribute to the development of future healthcare professionals who are not only clinically competent, but also interactionally resilient, critically reflective, and responsive to the complexities of hybrid healthcare environments.

Key Areas of Interest:

- Data driven simulation: Using CA to script, facilitate, and debrief SLEs that move beyond idealised role play.
- The AI augmented clinic: Training for triadic interactions involving clinicians, patients, ambient AI systems, LLMs, and digital scribes.
- Pedagogical translation: Methods for teaching interactional awareness, professional vision, and reflective communication practices to students.

Studies of Living Objectivity and Tendentious Orderliness: A Celebration of the Work of Kenneth Liberman

Authors: Chiarra Basetti¹, Dirk vom Lehn², Jakub Mlynár³, Robin James Smith⁴, Erik Boström⁵

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Description:

This panel is devoted to a celebratory reflection of the work of Professor Kenneth Liberman. At all points, Ken's studies exemplify a deep and careful reading of classic sociology and phenomenology: most prominently, Husserl's critique of pure reason, Merleau-Ponty's writings on the body, perception, and reflexivity, and Simmel's sociology of forms. This philosophical grounding has found its expression in a range of rigorous studies which have taken seriously the situated practices upon which a living objectivity stands. Together these studies provide a mapping of just how an attention to the lived work of doing society together might be explored, whilst pointing the way to new directions of travel. Ken's research traverses multiple 'topics' of contemporary relevance for ethnomethodological and conversation analytic research. His inquiries are connected by a bare attention to the ways in which local order lives beyond the intentions and plans of the strategic individual found at the centre of Enlightenment-oriented sociologies. He has pointed to how the tendentiousness of social occasions can find their staff working, and sometimes failing, to keep up with the ongoing flow of lived reality, and the autochthony of ethno-methods. Ken's descriptions of settings as seemingly diverse as coffee tasting sessions, Aboriginal community meetings, and the fluid organization of surf lines or traffic intersections recurrently remind us of the liveliness of doing social order. Such settings are viewed as primarily self-organising; a radical notion of the intertwining of action and context which remains under appreciated even within EM/CA. Indeed, such a view stands in sharp contrast to the 'taxidermic' renditions of society, rules, and communication, that yet confound attempts to catch at just what and just how emergent social order remains in the making (Basetti et al., 2026). A core theme in Ken's work is found in the notion of "necessary indeterminacy", developed from Husserl (Liberman, 2007), in which practices, such as those that provide for the objectivity of the taste in the cup of coffee (Liberman, 2022), become tools and resources rather than hindrances to their craft. Additionally, his studies orient to this indeterminacy in terms of the relationship between ambiguity and the often-unknown sources of the 'production' of order and the moments of objectivation in which the 'germ of universality' lies ahead of us. Whether in the playing of board games, or in the work of drivers finding the methods for making their way through an intersection where the lights have gone down (Liberman, 2019), Ken's attention to the ongoing, in-its-course, navigation of the lived contingencies of social settings raises significant questions for standing notions of the 'production' of social order. Above all, Ken's work displays a deep ethic of respect for the ways that lives are actually lived on the terms of those busy living them, a humility in the use and limitations of theorising, and an 'openness to transformation' (Liberman, 1999) through a vital engagement with the settings and practices we seek to describe. This proposed panel comprises two connected sessions. The first will feature four papers reflecting on various topics occasioned

by Ken's studies, the second will feature a 'roundtable discussion' with Ken and four other speakers reflecting on the themes and topics of interest outlined above.

Mind, Brain and Conduct in EMCA

Authors: Patrick Watson¹, Phil Hutchinson²

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Description:

Jeff Coulter's work posed one of the most sustained challenges within ethnomethodology to the treatment of mind and cognition as hidden processes, internal mechanisms or theoretically postulated entities. Drawing upon ethnomethodology, ordinary-language philosophy and Wittgensteinian grammatical investigation, Coulter argued that before "mind," "intention," "emotion," "memory," "understanding" or "agency" are treated as objects of scientific explanation, researchers must examine how such expressions acquire their sense within ordinary practices of description, avowal, attribution and accountability. His work respecified mental life not as an inaccessible interior domain but as intelligible within the publicly available organisation of conduct.

This panel takes Coulter's work as an important point of departure while reopening the wider question of how mind, brain and conduct should be approached within ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and related fields. Coulter was an influential and sometimes polarising interlocutor. His criticisms were directed outward, towards cognitivism, neuroreductionism and computational theories of mind, but also inward, towards interactional and discursive approaches that, in his view, reproduced the conceptual assumptions they purported to overcome. His interventions therefore concern not simply what EMCA might say about "the mind," but how inquiry should proceed when its topics are already constituted through ordinary conceptual distinctions.

These questions have acquired renewed significance. Developments associated with embodied, embedded, enactive and extended cognition, radical enactivism and ecological psychology have challenged the image of cognition as an exclusively intracranial, representational and computational process. They emphasise embodied activity, organism–environment relations, affordances, practical engagement and, in some cases, forms of cognition without representational content. Renewed engagement with existential and phenomenological traditions, including work influenced by Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger and related approaches, has likewise returned attention to embodiment, perception, practical involvement, situated agency and being-in-the-world.

Such approaches appear to move closer to concerns long present in ethnomethodology: the situated character of action, the inseparability of conduct from its environments, and the practical organisation of intelligibility. Yet apparent proximity should not be mistaken for conceptual agreement. Do post-cognitivist approaches genuinely dissolve the problems identified by Coulter, or do they relocate mental processes from the brain to larger organism–environment systems while retaining "cognition" as an explanatory theoretical object? Does replacing representation with embodiment, enactment, affordance or distributed process overcome the grammatical confusions Coulter diagnosed? Conversely, might Coulter's insistence upon conceptual clarification prematurely restrict empirical inquiry into embodiment, perception, affect, neurological impairment or practical involvement? And how should ethnomethodological respecification relate to phenomenological description: as complementary inquiry, corrective, rival account or differently directed enterprise? These questions also bear upon divisions internal to EMCA. Analyses of interaction routinely

employ such notions as knowledge, recognition, intention, expectation, orientation, understanding and agency. The issue is not whether analysts can purge mental concepts from their vocabulary, but how those concepts enter an analysis and what work they are made to do. Are they grounded in participants' displayed orientations and the sequential, categorical and embodied organisation of conduct, or introduced as analyst-supplied explanatory machinery?

The panel invites empirical, conceptual and historical contributions examining mind, brain and conduct as topics and resources of members' practices. Possible areas include remembering, intending, understanding, deciding, imagining and feeling; avowals and attributions of mental states; agency and responsibility; neurological and psychiatric categories in institutional settings; brain-based explanations in clinical, educational, legal or everyday encounters; action formation and ascription; and relations between embodied conduct and linguistic description. Contributions may engage sympathetically or critically with Coulter and may draw on Wittgenstein, Ryle, Garfinkel, Sacks, discursive psychology, interactional linguistics, ecological psychology, enactivism, Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger or other phenomenological and existential traditions compatible with the panel's agenda.

The panel is both retrospective and prospective. It recognises Coulter's major role in establishing mind as a domain for ethnomethodological respecification while refusing to treat his arguments as settled doctrine. By bringing conceptual reflection into contact with empirical analyses of situated practice, it asks how mind, brain and conduct might be investigated without reinstalling the interiority, mechanism or theoretical abstraction that EMCA inquiry has repeatedly called into question

Perception in High-Stake Environments: Sensing Contextual Relevancies at Play

Authors: Robin James Smith¹, Lorenza Mondada²

¹*Cardiff University, United Kingdom,* ²*University of Basel, Switzerland*

Description:

This panel revisits issues of perception and multisensoriality in interaction, by focusing on social activities in high-stake situations where participants' actions and projects crucially rely on careful perceptive explorations of the surrounding physical environment. In other words, the approach to such activities supposes an analytical attention for what people perceive and sense around them as a condition of/while engaging in their action for which the contextual relevancies of that environment are fundamental significances for ongoing courses of activity. At the same time, the panel approaches the environment itself as reflexively tied to the activities in course, thus renewing understandings of the accomplished dynamicity and unity of the phenomenal field. Indeed, the panel aims to demonstrate just how the perception and accomplishment of these relevancies are displayed in activity specific ways, examining notions of unique adequacy in action (Mondada et al. 2025, Smith 2024) and thus further demonstrating the praxeological grounds of perception, emergent consequences for action and activity, and the accomplishment of environmental relevancies as contextured details.

This focus enables the panel to tackle multiple issues currently discussed in EMCA and their intertwined articulations. First, we address the way EMCA revisits phenomenological conceptions of perception and sensoriality and casts new light on the sociality, intersubjectivity, and interobjectivity (Latour 1993, Liberman forthcoming) of perceptive and sensing practices, as well as on their embeddedness in the sequential and categorial details of social interaction, the organisation of interaction and of participation (Goodwin 1994, 2000a, Liberman 2013, Mondada, Bouaouina, Gauthier, In press; Mondada 2021; Smith 2021, Smith forthcoming). Second, while issues of sensoriality have been mostly raised either in relation to sensing other persons, or to sensing objects, they have been less often tackled in relation to sensing and accomplishing the environment in activity and task specific ways. This latter focus casts new light on the accomplishment of materiality and physicality of the local ecology of action, the way relevant features of the environment are oriented to, mobilised and reflexively established by the participants in what has been called 'ocassioned environments' (Smith et al, 2025), for example in terms of Gestalt contextures and phenomenal fields as revisited by Garfinkel (Fele 2008, Eisenmann & Lynch, 2021, Lynch & Eisenmann 2021, Hutchinson et al. 2022) or in terms granularity (Nishizaka 2022). Third, this focus on complex environments attracts attention to the ways in which bodies arrange, cooperate, coordinate, and adjust in space in relation to complex tasks, often in situations of mobility (Haddington et al. 2013, McIlvenny et al. 2014; Smith, Forthcoming), as well as in relation to the perceptive explorations and sensorial engagements necessary for achieving them (Goodwin 2017, 2000b, Mondada 2009). Fourth, in most of these cases related issues of temporality emerge, be it in relation to urgency and time constraints, the sequential placing of displayed noticings in the course of complex activities, or in relation to multiactivity or multiple participation frameworks, operating on the basis of multiple temporalities (Haddington et al. 2014; Mondada 2018).

The panel addresses these issues as they are intertwined in situated activities in which participants engage in action, mobility and perception in high stake environments. Across the papers in the panel, we explore these core EMCA issues with a renewed attention to the intertwined Gestalt relationship between action and environment, including how features of the environment are actively attended to in instructed viewings, how environmental features are overlooked or are absent are made relevant by participants, and how environmental features are accomplished as procedurally and operationally relevant within profession and lay 'ways of seeing' (conceived of as embodied, spatially positioned, and mobile practices). Conceptual discussions based on detailed empirical analyses showcase various activities and settings, ranging from professional interventions out and in the workplace, to sport and outdoor activities. We will recruit 8 presenters (two sessions) from our collaborators and an open call.

EMCA in and as Psychology: Respecification, Inquiry and Application.

Authors: Bo A. Christensen¹, Phil Hutchinson², Daniella Rafaely³

¹Aalborg University, ²Manchester Metropolitan University, ³University of the Witwatersrand

Description:

Conversation analysis and Discursive Psychology have, over several decades, established substantial programmes of psychological research grounded in the close analysis of discourse and interaction. Discursive Psychology, in particular, has demonstrated the productivity of respecifying psychological phenomena rather than treating psychological categories as transparent descriptions of inner states or cognitive processes. Studies of memory, emotion, attitudes, identity, attribution, prejudice and other conventionally psychological topics have shown what becomes available when analysts attend to how such matters are invoked, managed and made consequential in situated discourse. Conversation analysis has likewise transformed psychological inquiry into action, understanding, knowledge, affiliation and institutional practice. This panel takes those achievements as its starting point and asks a further question: *what specifically might ethnomethodology contribute to psychological inquiry?*

The question matters because ethnomethodological respecification is not simply another technique for analysing interaction. Ethnomethodology directs attention towards members' methods for producing, recognising and making accountable the phenomena that psychology subsequently names, categorises and investigates. Its concerns with reflexivity, indexicality, accountability and the endogenous production of social order therefore raise questions not only about how psychological phenomena are talked about, but about how the situations in which such phenomena have their identity are practically constituted.

This opens a productive conversation with the respecification programme already developed within Discursive Psychology. What does it mean to “respecify” a psychological phenomenon in DP and in ethnomethodology? Where do those projects converge, and where might their analytic commitments diverge? Does an ethnomethodological orientation shift attention from psychological phenomena as topics of discourse towards the wider praxeological organisation through which actions, identities, experiences and situations become recognisable in the first place? Conversely, what can ethnomethodology learn from the substantial body of DP and CA research that has already demonstrated how psychological matters are occasioned and managed in interaction?

The panel invites empirical, conceptual and methodological contributions concerned with phenomena conventionally treated as psychological, including emotion, memory, cognition, identity, agency, prejudice, distress, development, learning and interpersonal relations. Contributions might examine how such phenomena are practically accomplished, displayed, attributed, contested or rendered accountable in interaction, documents and institutional practices. They may also explore the relations among ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and Discursive Psychology, including different understandings of respecification and different approaches to the status of psychological concepts within analysis.

The panel also welcomes studies of psychology itself as a practical and institutional accomplishment. Psychological assessment, diagnosis, counselling, therapeutic interaction, professional reasoning, research interviewing, experimental practice, coding and categorisation, training and the production of psychological expertise can themselves become topics for ethnomethodological investigation. Such studies raise a second sense of EMCA “in and as psychology”: not only the use of EMCA within psychological research, but the possibility of investigating psychology’s own methods for producing its objects, evidence and forms of professional knowledge.

The central question is therefore not whether EMCA should replace existing psychological methods, nor whether ethnomethodology offers a superior alternative to the established achievements of CA and DP. It is what becomes visible when ethnomethodology is brought more fully into an already productive conversation about psychological inquiry. What becomes of psychological phenomena when their identity is traced to the situated practices through which they are produced and made intelligible? And what becomes of psychology itself when its methods of description, categorisation, evidence-production and professional reasoning are treated as members’ practices open to investigation?

The panel seeks to bring together ethnomethodologists, conversation analysts, discursive psychologists and psychologists interested in these questions, with the aim of developing a more explicit dialogue about the different senses and consequences of respecification within contemporary psychological inquiry.

When the Unexpected Becomes the Plan: How Practices of Improvisation Build on Interactional Organisation

Authors: An Kosurko¹, Lorenza Mondada²

¹*University Of Guelph*, ²*University of Basel, Switzerland*

Description:

The EMCA approach is unique in revealing the lively, contingently unfolding nature of social interaction and how it is produced reflexively in situ. EMCA work over the past five decades has assembled a conspicuous body of studies that demonstrate how interactional order is accomplished and the fine-grained sequential organisation that supports it. This agility of social interaction has prompted some scholars to invoke "improvisation" as a characterization of participants' ongoing mutual adjustments (e.g., Erickson, 1982; Whalen et al., 2002). The term improvisation is invoked widely across the humanities and social sciences to refer variously to processes of making things up as one goes along; to moments that are unscripted, unexpected or unplanned; or to spontaneity and creativity more generally. In its institutionalised artistic forms, however, improvisation refers to practices in which spontaneity itself becomes the object of disciplined accomplishment - where the unexpected becomes the plan. This paradox makes improvisation a compelling topic for EMCA: how do participants interactionally organise, recognise, and sustain actions as improvised in the moment?

Rather than treating "improvisation" as a metaphor for the situated unfolding of social interaction, in this panel we will focus on improvisation as a type of activity in which professionals or amateurs engage in specific settings (rehearsal studios, performance venues, etc.) We are interested in how improvisation as an institutional activity relies on social interaction for the very organisation of its practices: how does the organisation of social interaction support and make possible improvisational practices? How is improvisation interactionally organised?

While improvisation is an established topic of inquiry in performance, pedagogy, and sociological studies (Faulkner & Becker, 2019; Johnstone, 1998; Sawyer, 1992; Spolin, 1999), interactional investigations of improvisation remain comparatively scarce. Sudnow's (1993) study of improvised conduct, grounded in phenomenology and ethnomethodology, stands as an important precursor to many of the questions now emerging in interactional studies of improvisation. Recent studies have examined jazz improvisation (Ashley, 2009; Duranti & Black, 2011; Duranti et al., 2021), singing and musical performance (Stevanovic & Frick, 2014), dance (Albert, 2015; Keevallik, 2015), and theatre (Hazel, 2025; Schmidt & Deppermann, 2023). Yet interactional research that takes improvisation itself as its primary object of inquiry remains comparatively scarce. In *Viewing Spontaneity* Ethnomethodologically, Zaunbrecher (2018) called for studies of theatre improvisation that respecify how spontaneity is produced, recognised, and oriented to by participants moment by moment in unfolding sequences of interaction. Responding to and extending this call, the proposed panel will bring together studies of theatre as well as dance, music, performance, and related artistic domains to position improvisation not simply as a metaphor for the contingent character of interaction, but as an empirical phenomenon and institutional practice

worthy of study in its own right. In doing so, it aims to explore a new horizon for EMCA in an emerging area of inquiry into the interactional accomplishment of improvisation.

We will invite empirical EMCA studies that investigate practices of improvisation across artistic and performance settings, including theatre and improvisational comedy, dance and movement practices, jazz and musical improvisation, rehearsal and devising processes, audience participation, performer-audience coordination, multimodal resources for improvisation, the interactional organisation of spontaneity, creativity, timing, rhythm, and comparative studies across artistic or institutional settings. Papers based on detailed analyses of naturally occurring interaction will be particularly encouraged. The panel aims to develop a deeper understanding of how interactional architecture provides for the methods participants use to support and develop in situ their improvisational practices.

The Production of Evidence in Forensic Investigations: Bodies, Discourses, Materialities and Tools in Building Accounts of What Happened

Authors: Lorenza Mondada¹, Patrick Watson²

¹*University Of Basel*, ²*Univ. Of Toronto*

Description:

Forensics refers to the use of scientific methods in service of legal issues. Sometimes construed as a unified field of inquiry ("forensic science"), it includes various disciplines (biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, actuarial studies, anthropology, linguistics, etc...) to criminal investigations. Depictions of forensic practice have pervaded popular media from Sherlock Holmes to Dexter Morgan, fictions from *Nuestras Madres* (Díaz, 2019) to *Madres Paralelas* (Almodóvar 2022), and novels (Reichs, Cornwell, Elkins...) - these depictions reaching their cultural zenith with the TV CSI series in the early 2000s and 2010s. On the one hand, forensics in criminology has rarely been subjected to ethnographic scrutiny (but see Becky 2020), although it has been discussed in critical appraisals from both the academic and legal communities, both for its scientific bona fides (e.g. Cole, 2001; 2004; 2011; Morrison, 2014; Saks & Faigman, 2008; Saks et al. 2016) and its alleged overbearing impact on layperson triers-of-fact-jurors (Alldredge 2015; Holmgren & Fordham 2011).

Ethnomethodological inquiries have studied how forensic investigations impacted legal adjudication, and how law circumscribes the terrain on which "scientific" information informs legal decisions (e.g. Burns, 2008; Lynch 2004; 2015; Lynch et al. 2010). Moreover, EMCA studies have focused on courtrooms (Aktinson & Drew 1979), sometimes considering how results of forensic inquiries have been debated and mobilized as evidence for court cases. On the other hand, forensics have massively developed since the aftermath of South-American dictatorships (since the grounding of the *Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense* in 1985, Fondebrider 2015) in the field of mass violence, state violence, violations of human rights – culminating in what has been called the “forensic turn” (Anstett & Dreyfuss 2015, Rosenblatt, 2015, Dziuban 2017, Weizman, 2014). Forensic anthropology has played an increasing and crucial role in legal procedures and truth commissions, e.g. in the aftermath of South-American dictatorships (Quevedo 2015, Teles J. 2017, Teles E. 2020) and in the context of post-colonial truth and reconciliation in the wake of massive colonial violence (e.g. Wilson, 2003; see Aragüele-Toribio 2022). In this field too, discussions debated what constitutes evidence and for whom (Crossland 2003). EMCA inquiries have documented in fieldwork and with video the practices of forensic investigators engaged both in post-mortem and ante-mortem inquiries (Mondada & Cruz 2024, 2025, Mondada et al. 2025), showing how they assemble and produce evidence in the course of collaborative work sessions.

This panel further explores EMCA inquiries into forensics settings, both in studies of forensic scientific practice and applications of forensic observations in legal inquiries. We discuss and expand our understanding of how forensic scientists work, how they engage with the materiality of environments, objects and human remains; how findings are produced, evidenced and preserved for historical and legal records and litigation practice with forensic

science evidence, how evidence is locally respecified — further Burns' "... interest in the [knowledge] contest, [locating] places where deciding who is right, "really," actually gets done." (2008:129).

We invite contributions from any scholars working on activities where forensic investigations is mobilized, building contesting negotiating preparing evidence – be for court uses, other legal procedures, or practices and events concerning historical and political memory, and forms of reparatory justice.

At Home with EMCA: Exploring Interactional Routines in Home-visit Practices

Authors: Xinjing Tan¹

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Description:

Home is the fundamental setting in which social members organize their everyday life. It is not only a private sphere but also a domain in which various social forces converge, serving as a productive and perspicuous site for ethnomethodological and conversation-analytical inquiry. Most existing studies on interactions within the home have demonstrated strong interest in the topic of organization and maintenance of family and intimate relationships, investigating how moral orders and socialization are achieved within the home (Kim & Tse, 2021) and how technology and materiality become embedded in family interaction (Amery et. al, 2026). However, these studies have predominantly focused on interactions among family members. Interactions between home visitors and family members, especially those who enter the home with institutional purposes (such as healthcare, education, and social welfare, etc.), remain relatively underexplored with EMCA.

The encounters between family members and institutional visitors represent a distinctive intersection of formal institutional framework and vernacular domestic order. On the one hand, institutional purposes are pivotal to the sequential organization of talk. For example, in the UK, the compulsory nature of practitioner-initiated visits created a “ticket-of-entry” dilemma, where advice-giving serves as the legitimate warrant for being in the home despite the advice being unsolicited (Heritage and Sefi, 1992). Even in patient-initiated home visits to people with dementia, an explicit visiting-reason statement was crucial for establishing trust and collaboration (Dooley and Barnes, 2022). On the other hand, visitors are required to navigate the gap between their own take-for-granted schemes of reference and the situated patterns of the family they enter. For social workers, for instance, home visits are not merely an extension of institutional purposes and policies into domestic spaces, but also are practices that are contingently produced and managed by participants through their embodied practices and situated creativity (Ferguson, 2018). As such, home visits are the ongoing and practical achievement and accomplishment (Garfinkel, 1967) on the part of both practitioners and family members. As home visit manifests as a unique practical domain, this panel aims to explore the organization and situated character of home-visit practices, unpacking the ongoing, practical navigation between formal institutional schemes and indigenous knowledge within home settings.

This panel invites empirical studies addressing questions such as: What interactional resources are used to maintain these encounters? How do participants achieve mutual understanding and establish trust? How are institutional goals managed interactively within domestic contingencies? This panel welcomes contributions on home visits conducted by a range of practitioners, including healthcare practitioners, teachers, social workers, and others.

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Philosophy and EMCA: Reciprocal Investigations

Authors: Phil Hutchinson¹, Giuseppe Flavio Artese²

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Description:

Ethnomethodology and conversation analysis have maintained complex and generative relations with philosophy from their beginnings. Yet these relations are not adequately described as the straightforward application of philosophical doctrines or as the inheritance of secure philosophical foundations. Garfinkel drew extensively upon Schütz, Gurwitsch and, later, Merleau-Ponty, but did so through what he called deliberate “misreadings”: inventive appropriations that respecified phenomenological topics for ethnomethodological inquiry. In place of invariant structures of consciousness or analyst-supplied accounts of constitutive organisation, ethnomethodology examines the endogenous and accountable practices through which members produce the sense and unity of local social worlds. Garfinkel’s transformation of phenomenological resources was therefore neither a simple rejection nor an unchanged continuation of phenomenology, but a praxeological reworking of its problems.

This history raises an open question about how ethnomethodology should now be situated in relation to phenomenology. It is possible to understand EM as a distinctive form of praxeological phenomenology, continuing phenomenological attention to the life-world, embodiment, temporality, intersubjectivity, perception and the organisation of experience. It is also possible to describe EM as post-phenomenological: retaining many of phenomenology’s central concerns while replacing transcendental, constitutive or existential explanations with studies of members’ situated accomplishments. These descriptions need not be settled in advance. The panel welcomes phenomenologists, ethnomethodologists and conversation analysts who wish to explore, defend, complicate or contest them.

The relation between EMCA and Wittgensteinian or ordinary-language philosophy is similarly more substantial than the occasional borrowing of conceptual cautions. Later Wittgenstein and ethnomethodology share a resistance to treating rules as tracks laid down in advance of practice, and both return questions of meaning to the circumstances in which expressions and actions have their lives. On this view, sense is not merely dependent upon an independently given context. It is contexture-dependent: produced or woven through the activities of participants. Wittgensteinian grammatical investigation and ethnomethodological inquiry consequently meet in their attention to the practical relations through which an utterance, action, object or event becomes intelligible as the particular phenomenon it is.

The traffic between philosophy and EMCA should, however, move in both directions. Wittgensteinian philosophy, ordinary-language philosophy and phenomenology can alert EMCA researchers to conceptual confusions, unnoticed presuppositions, reified analytic categories and the forms of theorising through which phenomena are detached from their practical homes. Philosophical investigations of embodiment, perception, expression, criteria, rule-following, acknowledgement and being-in-the-world may transform how empirical materials are approached. Conversely, EMCA offers philosophy more than illustrative examples. Through detailed investigations of naturally occurring practices, it can show how intelligibility, normativity, knowledge, recognition, agency and social order are produced,

displayed and contested in the details of situated conduct. Empirical inquiry may thereby redirect philosophical questions, expose limitations in philosophical descriptions, or respecify what had appeared to be a general conceptual problem.

This panel invites conceptual, historical and empirically grounded contributions exploring these reciprocal relations. Papers may engage with Wittgenstein, Austin, Ryle, Cavell, Ebersole or other ordinary-language philosophical traditions; with Husserl, Schütz, Gurwitsch, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty or other phenomenological and existential approaches; or with philosophical work on action, mind, language, embodiment, normativity and sociality. Contributions might examine how philosophical clarification changes the analysis of particular materials; how EMCA studies complicate or correct philosophical formulations; how phenomenological descriptions can be praxeologically respecified; or where phenomenology and EMCA remain productively distinct.

The panel does not require contributors to accept that EM is post-phenomenological, Wittgensteinian or itself a form of philosophy. Nor does it propose that philosophy should legislate the proper methods of EMCA. Its aim is to create a hospitable space for disagreement about the connections, discontinuities and mutual lessons among these traditions. Rather than arranging philosophy as theory and EMCA as application, the panel approaches them as neighbouring, sometimes convergent and sometimes conflicting investigations of how phenomena acquire their sense within human life. It asks what each can learn from the other when neither is reduced to an intellectual resource for purposes already determined by the other.

Praxeological and Critical Praxeological Analysis: Empirical Studies, Methods and New Directions

Authors: Phil Hutchinson¹, Loreen Chikwira²

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Description:

Praxeological Analysis (PA) and Critical Praxeological Analysis (CPA) are developing approaches to qualitative inquiry grounded in ethnomethodology, Gestalt psychology and Wittgensteinian ordinary-language philosophy. Both begin from the proposition that words, actions and social phenomena acquire their sense within the organised situations of which they are constitutive parts. Rather than treating meaning as a property carried by isolated expressions, behaviours or categories, PA and CPA examine the reciprocal relation between constituent actions and the praxeological or linguistic Gestalts through which those actions become intelligible. Participants produce the situation through their conduct, while the identity of the situation gives that conduct its locally specific sense. PA develops these commitments into a structured form of grammatical investigation. It examines the situated use of psychological, social and moral concepts through descriptions of actual, fictionalised and imagined cases. Its purpose is not to identify hidden mechanisms, infer inner states or construct explanatory models, but to clarify the practice-embedded relations through which a phenomenon is recognisable as the phenomenon it is. PA is therefore situated rather than abstracted, descriptive rather than explanatory, and grammatical rather than hypothesis-testing. By returning expressions and actions to the activities into which they are woven, PA seeks to generate realisations that release inquiry from misleading pictures, false analogies and prematurely fixed theoretical categories.

CPA respecifies critical research through the same praxeological orientation. Critical scholarship frequently identifies consequential phenomena—racialisation, stigma, marginalisation, coercion, inequality, exclusion or degradation—but can leave the local production of those phenomena analytically underspecified. CPA moves from analysts' formal accounts to the sites in which social orders are produced, maintained, challenged, repaired and overcome. It investigates how norms, identities, structures and relations of power become operative and witnessable in situated action. This is not a rejection of critical phenomenology or critical theory, but a participant-up complement to them: critical scholarship can direct attention towards consequential sites and phenomena, while CPA recovers the methods through which participants encounter, reproduce, negotiate, resist or transform them.

A central resource for CPA is the analysis of discordant Gestalts. Participants may orient to the same encounter through different organisations of relevance, salience, accountability and obligation. A professional may encounter a situation as one of risk management, procedural compliance or organisational protection, while another participant experiences the same unfolding events as a request for care, an attempt to preserve dignity or a struggle to remain intelligible. CPA examines how such discordances are produced and sustained, how one Gestalt may acquire institutional authority over another, and how alternative courses of action become latent, unavailable or practically recoverable.

The panel complements the IEMCA preconference workshop on PA and CPA. Whereas the workshop introduces participants to their conceptual foundations and analytic resources, this panel provides a forum for substantive studies, methodological development and critical discussion. It invites contributions applying PA or CPA across varied domains and materials, including recorded interaction, interviews, institutional documents, policy texts, clinical records, complaints, educational settings, organisational practices, fictional materials and public controversies. Contributions may address psychological phenomena, health and care, stigma, inequality, professional reasoning, identity, morality, institutional decision-making or other topics amenable to praxeological investigation.

The panel also welcomes papers examining the methods themselves. Possible topics include grammatical investigation; praxeological, linguistic and discordant Gestalts; the relation between members' and analysts' methods; the warrant of single cases; the use of imagined and fictional examples; relations with ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and membership categorisation analysis; the distinction between description and explanation; and the possibility of critical inquiry without imposing an external theoretical framework upon participants' conduct. Contributions may also consider the teaching, adaptation and practical use of PA and CPA, including their development as resources for audit, supervision, service improvement and professional reflection.

The panel approaches PA and CPA neither as fixed templates nor as techniques detachable from their ethnomethodological and philosophical commitments. It asks what these approaches make available as an emerging programme of qualitative inquiry, how they can be tested and developed through empirical studies, and what problems their application raises for the future of praxeological and critical research.

Futures-in-the-Making: Extending EMCA's Temporal Horizons

Authors: Iuliia Avgustis¹, Samira Ibnelkaid²

¹*Tampere University*, ²*Radboud University*

Description:

EMCA studies have produced remarkably rich accounts of the temporal organization of social life. From their earliest developments, they have demonstrated that social action is fundamentally organized through participants' orientations to what has happened, what is currently unfolding, and what may come next. The field has developed sophisticated analyses of the present through the moment-by-moment examination of naturally occurring audio- and video-recorded interaction, while increasingly extending its temporal scope towards the past through interactional histories (Golopentia 1988) and the growing tradition of longitudinal CA (Deppermann & Pekarek Doehler 2021). EMCA has likewise long recognized a prospective dimension of interaction insofar as sequential organization is inherently future-oriented: every action not only responds to a prior action but also projects relevant possibilities for subsequent action (Sacks et al. 1974; Schegloff 2007). Plans, invitations, arrangements, requests, and instructions organize activities whose completion lies in the future while rendering that future accountable in the present. Practical reasoning (Garfinkel 1967) therefore also involves what participants are in the process of making possible.

What remains underdeveloped, however, is a coherent body of research treating futures-in-the-making as an explicit program of inquiry in EMCA. This panel opens this conversation by asking how members, across diverse profiles, communities, and interactional settings, orient to, anticipate, negotiate, and interactionally enact futures, and how we, as researchers, can address futures here and now. The panel connects directly to the conference theme by asking how EMCA can expand its horizons and contribute to questions that have long animated critical studies. Futures-in-the-making have become central to Afrofuturism (Nelson 2002), queer futurity (Muñoz 2009), Indigenous futurisms (Dillon 2012), crip futurity (Kafer 2013), and Eco-futurism (Whyte 2017), all of which remind us that futures are never singular nor are they neutral. By comparison, EMCA has primarily examined social and technological practices once they have become part of ordinary life. Even the growing body of research on generative 'AI' mostly investigates its consequences after it has become ubiquitous. This panel asks whether EMCA can instead examine the situated practices surrounding mundane futures before they are decided by technological corporations, institutional actors, or policy makers, and before they solidify into the present. Rather than treating futures as outside EMCA's remit, the panel positions the field as a distinctive vantage point for understanding how they are intersubjectively produced, negotiated, resisted, and reclaimed.

When coupled with neighbouring disciplines, EMCA has already demonstrated its capacity to contribute to the study of futures-in-the-making. Within human-computer interaction, EM has informed the design of existing and emerging technologies through analyses of situated action (Suchman 1987). More recently, design fiction has been proposed as one way of investigating the practices of the "future mundane" through breaching experiments (Crabtree et al. 2026). Drawing on critical studies, EMCA has also mapped future directions for "race talk research and inclusive community building" (Shrikant & Williamson 2026). Through a

critical phenomenological lens, EMCA serves as both scholarly inquiry and praxis to advance social change by uncovering and dismantling oppressive power structures in everyday interactions (Ibnelkaïd 2026). Building on these emerging works, this panel aims to foster conversations on how futures-in-the-making can become an explicit object of EMCA inquiry while remaining firmly grounded in emic perspectives.

We invite three main areas of inquiry: -First, papers analysing naturally occurring interactions while drawing implications for future practices, technologies, designs, or policies, and including critical reflections on how EMCA can engage with, and give back to, the participants and settings it studies. -Second, papers employing speculative or prospective methods (e.g., design fiction, fictional prototypes, role-play, scenario-based interaction) to investigate mundane futures. -Third, theoretical and methodological contributions exploring how EMCA might ethically and sustainably adapt its concepts and methods to investigate futures-in-the-making, including dialogues with science and technology studies, decolonial theory, Indigenous scholarship, etc.

Together, these strands aim to establish futures-in-the-making as a legitimate object of EMCA inquiry and to ask what it would mean for the field to study mundane futures before they are imposed upon us. More broadly, the panel seeks to foster a social interaction research agenda that contributes to collectively enacting more ethical, sustainable, just, and desirable futures.

Category, Sequence and Contexture: Reintegrating EM, CA And MCA

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Description:

Ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, and membership categorisation analysis have differently contributed to the cumulative programme of describing members' methods for accomplishing social order. These contributions, developed from and developing different aspects of the work of Sacks and Garfinkel and their collaborators, have in common the pursuit of studies of social action and interaction. They have, in different ways, attended to the detail of the accomplishment of the 'Things of this world' and of 'order at all points', whether that be sequential order and generic organisations of practice (Schegloff, 2007), the array of categorisation practices and their order, or the praxeological accomplishment of the commonplace and professional scene. Such distinctions, however, can obscure the extent to which the analytic intersection of categorisation, sequential organisation, and the situated intelligibility of action precedes their consolidation as ostensibly separable analytic domains. In Sacks's early work, for example, categorial organisation is already implicated in members' practical production and recognition of intelligible courses of action (Sacks, 1972). Subsequent studies have differently elaborated these relations, examining how categorial relevancies are occasioned within sequential environments and particular activities, demonstrating ways in which to integrate the concerns of CA and MCA (Watson, 1997; Zimmerman, 1998; Schegloff, 1972; Stokoe, 2012; Whitehead et al, 2024). Ethnomethodological studies have demonstrated the inseparability of action's intelligibility from the temporal, spatial, and practically organised circumstances of its production (Sudnow, 1972, Liberman, 2020) and have continued to demonstrate the interdependence of sequential, categorial, and situated features of practical action (e.g. Mondada, 2020, 2022; Smith, 2026). In this panel, then, we foreground these relations in developing a renewed praxeological rapprochement among EM, CA, and MCA.

A point of departure is Rod Watson's (2015) argument that membership categorisation can be 'de-reified' not as decontextualised semantic objects "studied with" MCA as an autonomous research domain, but as an integral part of a praxeological contexture. Indeed, categorisation may shape sequences, rights, obligations, participation, and the intelligibility of turns, while their relevance and sense are themselves produced through sequential, embodied, and materially situated practices (e.g. Sudnow, 1972; Hester and Eglin, 1997; Watson, 2005). The consequence is that neither categorisation nor sequence should therefore be accorded analytic primacy in advance, and both sequence and categorisation should be understood as facets of a holistic sense of practices constituted by an orientation of "who-we-are-and-what-we-are-doing" (Butler & Fitzgerald, 2010). Such practices can, and perhaps should, be described contexturally (Watson, 2008). Which is to say, described in terms of their 'functional significance' - along with relevancies of setting, materiality, space, and time - which is accomplished within the wider Gestalt contexture of a given setting (e.g. Au-Yeung and Fitzgerald, 2022; Carlin, Marques, and Moutinho, 2026; Diskin and Hutchinson, 2024; Hutchinson, 2022; Jimenez and Smith, 2021).

To discuss this unitary understanding of membership practices, in all their forms, the panel invites empirical, historical, and methodological papers that resist the separation of EM, CA, and MCA into self-contained domains, highlight new directions for the development of hybridised descriptions of situated action, or, indeed, debate and contest the propositions of the panel. Possible topics include, but are not limited to, category-bound rights and obligations, person description, participation frameworks, turn-produced and embodied categorisation, the mutual elaboration of category and sequence, multimodal and material organisation, and cases in which the phenomenon itself requires movement across conventional methodological boundaries of analysis and presentation. The objective is not to construct a synthetic super-method or to weaken the analytic rigour of CA or MCA. It is, instead, to recover an ethnomethodological orientation in which sequence, categorisation, embodiment, materiality, and context are treated as potential features of members' methods whose relevance must be established through the analysis of the setting. The panel would ask what a fully 'hybrid' EMCA inquiry might become if its internal divisions were treated as analytic resources rather than disciplinary borders.

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Doing and Being Musical: The Role of Musicality in Embodied Interaction

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Description:

Musicality is not exclusive to artistic practice, but a fundamental dimension of social life. From infancy, humans engage the world through rhythmic and melodic attunement: infants take rhythmic turns with their caregivers and match the melodic contours of parental speech (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009). This primordial capacity for attunement extends beyond human infancy to the synchronized flocking of birds (Sheets-Johnstone, 2011) and to collective human labor, such as women rhythmically pounding rice millet together (Meyer, 2017). Across these contexts, musicality emerges as a central organizing principle in being and doing together.

Garfinkel (1967) argued that the generic features of social action are often "seen, but unnoticed" (p. 36). This panel proposes that musicality constitutes one such unnoticed resource within the endogenous structure of social activity. The ethnomethodological program developed by Garfinkel (1967) and Sacks (1974) holds that social order is accomplished through members' common-sense methods for producing mutually recognisable and accountable action. Viewed from this perspective, Gratier's (2008) musical common ground and Berliner's (2009) depiction of jazz as a 'common language' suggest that musicality is not simply a matter of self expression. Rather, musicality constitutes both a practical and aesthetic resource through which people establish and sustain social order. Rhythmicity and tonality have been widely discussed in the field of Conversation Analysis (Auer et al., 1999; Reed, 2012; Couper-Kuhlen, 2001; etc). Musicality is often defined by its elements of pitch, intensity, timbre, tone color and rhythm. However, much like talk and interaction, musicality is more than the sum of its parts (Pflederer, 1963). Musical structure/phrasing and elements of musicality share a symbiotic relationship, creating a complex structure when it emerges. Hence, in musical ecologies of interaction, we propose that musicality as a social achievement goes beyond these individual elements and can be wholly embodied through interaction. The musicality of living bodies are therefore experienced visually, auditorily, and kinesthetically (Sudnow, 1979; Rahaim, 2013).

This panel invites the inclusion of musicality as a lens through which to critically reconsider the study of embodied interaction. By taking a closer look at the relationship between musicality and the sociality of the interaction, this panel 1) examines musicality as a felt experience by considering the "gestalt of musicality", 2) inspects musicality as an emerging and member-governed dimension of interaction, and 3) positions musicality as a central focal point of these ecologies. We argue that these considerations of musicality can fundamentally organise social interaction, and are made observable and accountable through the interactional framework. By furthering our understanding of musicality and its role in social interaction, we aim to open new analytical pathways for understanding how interactional phenomena are structured, experienced, and performed.

This panel joins ethnomethodological scholarship around how musicality is rendered observable in collective music-making (e.g., Sudnow, 1978; Weeks, 1990; Duranti & Burrell,

2004), and how musicality exists as an embodied resource in lived ecologies (e.g., Albert, 2015; Keevallik, 2021; Keevallik & Ekström, 2019; Gratier, 2008; Reed, 2020; Yagi, 2021; Herman, 2024). We aim to further explore ecologies of interaction where musicality is socially observable, organisable and governable, within and beyond the context of musically cultural activities.

We invite potential panelists to navigate the following topics:

1. What is musicality? (the cultural practice of music, the temporal structure it provides, the considerations when music plays a crucial role in the interaction, features that are musical in nature, etc)
2. If musicality organizes interaction, what are members' methods by which this organization is achieved? What 'musical material' are members attending to, producing, and using to govern the interaction?
3. How can the lens of musicality shape our understanding of time as an immanent dimension of social experience (Au-Yeung & Fitzgerald, 2022)?

Cultures of Death and Dying as Actions in Social Interactions

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Description:

Cultural, social and political aspects of death and dying are significant and rapidly changing. For example, in the United Kingdom assisted suicide is currently illegal but there is a Bill currently being considered that would allow a terminally ill adult to be assisted to end their own life. In New Zealand an End-of-Life Choice Bill took effect November 2021 and since then the Ministry of Health has recorded nearly 2000 assisted deaths (Ministry of Health, 2025). How human remains are handled is also undergoing rapid change with the number of eco, environmental or woodland funerals substantively increasing in recent years, at least in the UK (Power, 2019). Therefore, cultures of death and dying are evolving phenomena occurring in diverse contexts. Ethnomethodological conversation analytic study enable study of how these cultures are variously shaped, invoked, reproduced, challenged, and transformed in interaction.

A world-wide body of cutting-edge conversation analytic work has been rapidly developing what is known about interactions where death and dying are relevant matters, much of which is in palliative care settings (Parry, 2024; Wu & Zhang, 2024). Consistently identified practices have been established showing, for example, how the topic of death and dying can be implicitly or explicitly approached in ways that are attentive to relations between the relevant parties to the talk (Ekberg, et al., 2021, Pino et al, 2016). However, there is still much to be learnt as previously unexamined kinds of social interactions are being researched such as ‘advanced care planning discussions’ defined as those where patients with life-limiting illnesses are given “an opportunity to consider, discuss and, if they wish, document, their goals and preferences for future care and treatment” (Pollock et al., 2022, p. 69).

This panel proposes soliciting papers addressing death and dying in a broad range of settings from around the world. We expect contributions that examine interactions in hospitals, hospices and other clinical settings which will further refine and nuance current knowledge, clearly establishing the transformative impact of ethnomethodological conversation analytic research. However, we will also seek papers beyond health-care, for example in forensic or mundane settings that showcase how talk about death and dying are done and for what ends. In sum we aspire to showcase an international body of ethnomethodological conversation analytic work that can better inform and further develop current understandings of cultures of death and dying.

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Visions of Policing: Ethno/CA approaches to understanding policing's new visibility

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Description:

Policing entered its new visibility era in the mid-2000s, when official accounts of two fatalities involving police in Canada and the United Kingdom were captured and contradicted in bystander videos (cf. Goldsmith, 2007). At that time, it seemed to many policing scholars that this new era of recording the police would drastically impact police capabilities to control post-incident accounts of violent interactions and summarily dismiss allegations of excessive force. In 2026, two incidents in Minneapolis, Minnesota, involving Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials shooting and killing American citizens on video painted a very different picture of oversight and accountability. The shootings were in extremely questionable circumstances and invoked a significant and disapproving public reaction, but the killers of Rene Goode and Alex Pretti are not known to have faced any professional or criminal sanction for their violent conduct. These incidents, and their response, are arguably more representative of the general condition of police-involved violence in North America and Europe today; while there was much optimism among both academics and policy makers that video evidence would resolve conflicts between police and their critics, these conflicts seem more pronounced than ever. Criminal and professional sanctions remain rare for police officers who are alleged to have used excessive force despite sections of the public growing increasingly sceptical of police claims that violence is minimal, necessary, and proportionate in each new controversial video that emerges on social or legacy news media.

Why has video not delivered the anticipated new consensus on police violence and resolved tensions between the police and the policed? This panel explores this question in four countries (Canada, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) as well as some comparative cases occurring elsewhere in the world. It reports on a multi-year study undertaken by a team of scholars working on issues of police and police accountability in these four countries, with an interest in how video has impacted police training of, investigations into, and adjudications about police violence. Borrowing from observations in socio-legal studies (Watson et al. 2027), the research team has examined how video has been used to prepare and assess the reasonable officer both within (training, internal assessments) and without (activist efforts to make police violence legible with video, judicial and quasi-judicial evaluations of police violent conduct) – reasonable officer in/reasonable officer out.

Building on the broad history of EM/CA studies of both policing (Bittner 1967a&b; 1970; 1990; Meehan 1986; 1992; 2000; Sacks 1972; Stokoe & Edwards 2006; 2008; Watson 1983) and adjudication (Atkinson & Drew 1990; Burns 2003; 2008; Drew 1978; Dupret 2011; 2015; Pollner 1967; 1972), the panelists share their research from the Visions of Policing project. A broad discussion of how video has impacted policing and police oversight will be presented, with the intention of encouraging discussions of where future opportunities in EM/CA studies of policing (and studies of policing more generally) may exist.

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