Chapter 7

'What's going on here?'

The pedagogy of a data analysis session

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Data analysis sessions are a common feature of discourse analytic communities, often involving participants with varying levels of expertise to those with significant expertise. Learning how to do data analysis and working with transcripts, however, are often new experiences for doctoral candidates within the social sciences. While many guides to doctoral education focus on procedures associated with data analysis (Heath *et al.*, 2010; McHoul and Rapley, 2001; Silverman, 2011; Wetherall *et al.*, 2001), the *in situ* practices of doing data analysis are relatively undocumented.

This chapter has been collaboratively written by members of a special interest research group, the Transcript Analysis Group (TAG), who meet regularly to examine transcripts representing audio- and video-recorded interactional data. Here, we investigate our own actual interactional practices and participation in this group where each member is both analyst and participant. We particularly focus on the pedagogic practices enacted in the group through investigating how members engage in the scholarly practice of data analysis. A key feature of talk within the data sessions is that members work collaboratively to identify and discuss 'noticings' from the audio-recorded and transcribed talk being examined, produce candidate analytic observations based on these discussions, and evaluate these observations. Our investigation of how talk constructs social practices in these sessions shows that participants move fluidly between actions that demonstrate pedagogic practices and expertise. Within any one session, members can display their expertise as analysts and, at the same time, display that they have gained an understanding that they did not have before.

We take an ethnomethodological position that asks, '*what's going on here*?' in the data analysis session. By observing the *in situ* practices in fine-grained detail,

we show how members participate in the data analysis sessions and make sense of a transcript. Ethnomethodology focuses on methods and resources that people use to make sense of what is happening around them and the actions of others (Garfinkel, 1967). Used in conjunction with ethnomethodology, conversation analysis (CA) pays close attention to the sequence of interactions, to see what members make of what each other says and does. The context, then, is one of co-construction where members work together to make sense of data, which may include audio or video recordings of interaction. Interactional moments involving members sharing different views are important for understanding how members make visible their stances.

Ethnomethodological and conversation analysis approaches have gained increasing recognition in the *in situ* study of educational practices from the perspective of the members engaged in the interactions. These approaches have been used, for example, in the examination of language and literacy practices in classroom settings, to study interactions between teachers and children (see, for example, Baker, 1997; Hester and Francis, 2000), and parent-teacher interactions (Baker and Keogh, 1995). There is little research exploring pedagogic practices within university settings, although Benwell and Stokoe (2002) investigated discussion groups in university tutorials, Gibson (2009) investigated postgraduate reading groups, Bills (2003) investigated focus group data of the supervisory relationship, and Danby (2005) examined email communication between a supervisor and her doctoral student. The strength of the ethnomethodological approach lies in showing how members achieve educational practice through the interactional work of its members. In so doing, the approach allows us to examine how pedagogy happens within data analysis sessions.

The Transcript Analysis Group (TAG), originally founded by Carolyn D. Baker at the University of Queensland as a forum for her students and colleagues to participate in data sessions and discussions about the analysis of transcriptions, has retained a similar format since its inception in the early 1990s. The organising committee for the group now comprises members from three Brisbane universities, including the University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology and Griffith University. Meetings are held fortnightly during the semester across the campuses of three universities, and between 10 and 30 members are present. While data sessions regularly occur in discourse-oriented research within a range of perspectives (see, for example, Antaki *et al.*, 2008), the Transcript Analysis Group has developed a strong analytic focus using the methodologies of Ethnomethodology, Conversation Analysis (CA) and Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA). This group consists of researchers using these data analysis approaches, and is one of the longest-standing and most active groups in Australia, with members from a range of disciplines, including education, communication, sociology, medicine and psychology. Members include research higher degree students, early career and experienced researchers. All members are able to share ideas, discuss new approaches, methods and technologies, and discuss and collaboratively analyse data extracts. In 2010, in acknowledgement of

the diverse range of theoretical interests and skills in transcript analysis, the organisers of TAG initiated a second study group, which shares some members with the original TAG. The second group offers sessions on transcription and transcript analysis, led by experienced members of TAG and open to interested parties. For example, one session focused on using transcription conventions, another was a discussion of a selected reading on analysing video-recorded data.

The data analysis sessions offer a pedagogic arena for engaging in the practices of analysing talk and interaction; in other words, pedagogy-in-action. This chapter details actual occurrences of members going about their everyday business of looking at, and analysing, extracts of talk. The examination of our actual practices shows a shift away from traditional assumptions of experts and learners, to afford members the participation space to move fluidly between roles of participant and analyst; novice and expert.

The analytic process of writing this chapter itself deserves some comment. Members who participated in the two audio-recorded data analysis sessions in mid-2010 became analysts of their own talk and actions as well as those of their colleagues and students, and authors of this chapter. The sessions were carried out in the same way as other data analysis sessions. An underlying process of this chapter is the reflexive process (Gibson, 2009) of analysing members' talk by the members themselves. In informal discussion with each other, we commented on the process of studying transcripts of our own talk in data sessions and our familiarity with what was being studied. There was a 'rich and complex interplay' (Woolgar, 1988:16) as we went about the business of doing analysis in order to write about our own practices of 'doing data analysis'. Our examination of members' work was a study of our actions, as well as the actions of other members present during the audio recorded sessions. The reflexivity of this exercise provided us with opportunities to observe our own behaviour and to ask, 'what's going on here?', as analytic practices were unfolding.

BLURRING THE ROLES OF EXPERTS AND LEARNERS

In this chapter, we discuss three extracts from three audio-recorded Transcript Analysis Group (TAG) sessions. Extract 1 is from a TAG session where Greg, an expert in Conversation Analysis, presented an extract of video-recorded data and involved members in a discussion of transcription practices. Extract 3 is taken from a second session where members participated in a data analysis session using the same transcript and video-recorded data initially used by Greg in the first session. In extracts 1 and 3, we see how postgraduate students, both novice analysts, contribute to noticing something in the transcribed data extract. Extract 2 is taken from a reflexive session where extracts 1 and 3 were being discussed and analysed by members of TAG. Across the three sessions, we, as members of the TAG group, are analysing and writing about our own practices.

Doing noticings

The pedagogic work of data analysis sessions involves experienced researchers and new researchers being immersed in the activity of 'doing' data analysis to produce noticings. In this way, a pedagogic space emerges that resists a traditional expert–learner institutional supervisory order. Methodological guidelines often describe producing a 'noticing' as a first step in data analysis (Pomerantz and Fehr, 1997). Starting with 'unmotivated looking' (Psathas, 1995), doing noticings in group data analysis sessions involves members bringing features of the transcript of talk to the attention of others and, often, offering some form of analytic description. These noticings provide a vital first step for analysis.

The noticing in extract 1 is produced by Tanya (noted on the transcript as 'T'), who is in the early stages of her doctoral study and is attending her first TAG session. The extract below shows how she does her first 'noticing', which is quickly picked by others. Tanya starts her noticing a little hesitantly as she shares her observation that the word 'probably' is used repeatedly in the transcript of talk under examination. (See Appendix 1 for transcription conventions.)

Extract 1   Session 1

```
121   T     I: jus u:hm like to sa:y if you go to line sixtee:n the
122         client (0.3) starts using the word probably?
123         (0.2)
124   T     .h and when you go down to line fordy ni::ne (0.8) the
125         cli:ent sstarts saying the word probably (0.2) ve::ry
126         frequently,=
127   G     =Ye:hp,
128         (.)
129   T     a:nd it goes across into line fifty: fifty o:ne?
144   G     (lis)uh- that's nice. yeah.
145   T     wo[w
146   G     [.h ve:ry nice. erm I transcribed this in nineteen
147         ninety seven? [.h
148   ?     [mh
149   G     an' I never noticed that before.=
150   K     =ha[h
151   G     [an I've used it many times since.
152   ALL   ((LAUGHTER))
153   G     bu tha's very nice. ALL those probablies all bunched up
154         in there, righ:t. and yunno might be worth thinking 'bout
155         what he's talking about at that point.
```

Immediately following Tanya's noticing (lines 121–126) Greg, who had provided the transcript of talk used in this data session, gives an assessment. He

displays surprise, saying 'erm I transcribed this in nineteen ninety <u>seven</u>? an' I never noticed that before.' (lines 146–149). His response acknowledges Tanya's competence in accomplishing this important first step of data analysis. He reports that he, as the transcriber of this data, and who is an experienced analyst of this transcript, has never noticed that feature of the talk before and expresses appreciation of her point saying, 'tha's very nice.' (line 153). Greg's assessment confirms that Tanya, a new member, has identified an item that he has not identified previously, even with his extensive experience of this particular transcript, which warrants further investigation.

In this sequence, Tanya can be seen to be doing what 'natives' (Herzfeld, 1983) of data analysis sessions do. That is, Tanya engages in the group discussion by offering an item of interest to other members and discovers something that has not been noticed before. What makes this action stand out from other pedagogic moments is that, while teachers regularly ask students to make observations, the observations produced by the student are usually such that the teacher already knows the answer. That sort of pedagogic probing is exemplified by Mehan (1979) who described classroom pedagogy of questioning as – teacher asks a question (initiation), student responds to the teacher who already knows the answer (response), and the teacher then provides an evaluation (evaluation). In this setting, however, the pedagogy is such that a new member can contribute an observation before being asked, and her contribution may be new to everyone. The actual practice of a new member making a noticing that is new to experienced researchers, or to those who have spent significant time working with a particular transcript, blurs the lines of traditional novice-expert relationships. The context of the session has set up a pedagogic space and our analysis shows how, in practice, a methodological guideline to notice something in the data is actually enacted in practice. In other words, we show pedagogy-in-action.

Fluidity of ownership of 'noticing'

As we saw in extract 1, members with varying levels of expertise were able to produce a noticing in these TAG data sessions. Furthermore, the production of a noticing often affords the member a loose 'ownership' (Sharrock, 1974) of the noticing. As such, we see that various members of TAG carry out the pedagogic work or focusing the direction of the talk at different stages throughout the sessions.

The extract begins with Hannah, an experienced member of TAG, reopening the topic of the 'probably' introduced previously in extract 1. It should be noted that extract 2 is taken from a second data session where members are discussing and reflecting on a transcript of talk (extract 1), taken from the first session.

Extract 2   Session 2

80   H   but the ↑INteresting thing is when she's reporting
81   ba<u>:c</u>k from the form, i:n ninety eight, to a

```
82        hundred, she says (.) what you told me before, is
83        you ha:d (.) perhaps [two with=
84   E    [mmm.
85   H    =di[nner.
86   F    [hehe[hehehehehe]
87   B    [ha [ha ha heh]
88   G    [↑oh. RIght.]
89   H    [perH(h)Aps=]
90   F    [hehahahaha heh he he ha ha ]
91   H    [=t(h)wo a night hhhh. .hhhhh]
92   B    [(though different)]
93   G    so tha:t's an episte[mic d- down]grade [right?=li]ke=
94   B    [y e ↑ a: h.]
95   All  [↑ye:ah]
96   G    =she's-
97   E    so- (0.4) perhaps is less [certain] [(than [probably)]
98   ?    [(cough)]
99   J    [y e [a: h.]
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By packaging her turn with '↑INteresting', other members hear how Hannah's
turn might be received, that is as an item of interest. Having successfully gained
the conversational floor, Hannah continues her turn pulling out from the original
transcript that the dietician does not use 'probably' as the client did, rather she
uses 'perhaps' to describe the quantity and frequency of the client's drinking.
Hannah holds the floor for an extended turn, with Frank and Betty responding
to the noticing with laughter. Greg responds with '↑oh. Right.' (line 88), which
may mark some interest in the noticing presented by Hannah.

   At the end of Hannah's turn in line 91, Greg offers a candidate analytic descrip-
tion of Hannah's noticing. His statement, 'so tha:t's an epistemic d- downgrade
right?' (line 93) appears to show him directing the focus of the talk more specif-
ically by explicitly introducing a conversation analysis term that refers to the type
of action that is occurring in the talk. While the talk has focused on Hannah's
noticing from lines 80 to 91, Greg's turn represents a shift that offers an ana-
lytic description of the talk as representing an 'epistemic downgrade' (line 93).
Eric, another experienced researcher, mirrors the opening of Greg's turn, which
is prefaced by a 'so'. He then offers an expansion of Greg's analytic description,
highlighting the fact that the terms they are discussing are 'perhaps' and 'prob-
ably' (line 97). In this way, Eric and Greg both seem to be further focusing or
directing the topic of the talk.

   By self-selecting to offer a candidate noticing, as Tanya does in extract 1 (lines
121–122) and Hannah does in extract 2 (lines 80–83 and 85), individual mem-
bers work to guide the activities or set the agenda at various stages within the
interaction. By producing analytic descriptions, Greg and Eric (lines 93 and 97,
respectively) also are focusing the direction of the talk. These extracts show that

the activities of doing noticings or analytic descriptions can be produced by any member, allowing them to take 'ownership' (Sharrock, 1974) of the data or to direct a particular focus for the conversation. In TAG, the role of who directs the conversation is fluid, the ownership of the data and ownership of the noticing seems to construct who has rights to the conversational floor.

Collaboratively constructing analytic observations

So far, our discussion of these data extracts illustrate how the *in situ* production of interaction differs from traditionally conceived roles of what 'experts' or 'learners' may be expected to do in pedagogic settings. We have shown that any TAG member can produce a noticing and that it is this local production, rather than the pre-determined roles or identities of members, that can determine who leads the focus of the talk. In other words, there is no predetermined pattern of interaction employed routinely by members. Members self-select to offer candidate noticings for discussion, and comment on the noticings that others raise.

The collaborative construction of observations is evident in extract 3. In this extract, Sally is a postgraduate student attending her first TAG meeting, and she offers a noticing that is then picked up by several members of the group for collaborative analysis.

Extract 3   Session 1

```
85   G   It could be a jo↑b interview possibly: depending on
86       the snippet you've got, it could be .h a MA:RKET
87       REsearch interview.
88       (0.3)
89   E   °(could be[..)°
90   G   [yeah?=
91   ?   =mm[h,
92   S      [or a cri:me,
93       (0.2)
94   S   hehuh h[eh
95   G          [a cri – o↑h yeh a poli:ce interview[, yeah,
96   S                                              [yeh yeh
97   G   yeah tha's ri:gh? Ya'know like
98   S   because soun's like she's quite judg- imean (.)
99       judgemental?
100  G   yea:h?
101  S   trying to judge hi↑m like have you cha:nge? Li:ke you've
102      already made some changes. have you?
103      (0.3)
104  G   righd. oka↑y? So you're look- at you're re: you're looking
```

105   at the kindev .h gram<u>mat</u>ical construction there. that's
106   actually a: <u>tag</u> question isn't °it°, have you m- .h
107   you've already made some (.) <u>chan</u>ges have you. .hh its an
108   interesting one because its uh its uh two <u>pos</u>itives isn't
109   id you <u>HA</u>ve already made some changes,(.) hhave you.

At the beginning of extract 3, Greg makes the observation that, depending on the extracts of talk examined, this interaction could mistakenly be identified as a range of different types of interviews. In lines 85–87, he lists 'job interview' and 'market research interview' as two candidate forms. Following Eric's quiet and seemingly incomplete addition and Greg's polar response token, Sally adds 'or a crime' in line 92.While Greg treats Sally's suggestion as a possible addition to his list of interviews, it does not match the candidate forms produced by Greg in lines 85–87. Gregthen reformulates her statement by saying, 'o↑h yeh a poli:ce interview' (line 95), which adapts Sally's response to fit in with the category of 'forms of interviews' that Greg had suggested in his original list. Sally accepts this reformulation and offers additional information to support her noticing that this interaction could sound like a 'police interview'.

Sally next accounts for her addition to Greg's list, indicating that members could believe that this interaction was taken from a police interview because one interaction participant 'sounds like she's quite judgemental' (lines 98–99). Greg then produces a polar response token (line 100), which enables Sally to maintain the floor. Sally uses her next turn to produce further evidence of her observation that the participant in the transcript sounds like she is 'trying to judge him' (the other participant in the transcript) (line 101), and she offers a direct quote from the transcript, 'you have already made some changes have you' (line 102), in support of her suggestion. Greg acknowledges the quote and offers another reformulation, this time a reformulation of the entire observation. Between lines 104 and 109, Greg offers a candidate analytic description for the reason that Sally has 'noticed' or produced this observation with regards to the particular segment of the interaction that she has quoted. This turn offers additional information that supplements Sally's original noticing. In this extract, we can see that Sally and Greg are collaborating to construct both an observation and an analytic description. Sally and Greg's collaborative construction of an observation and description continues over multiple turns, from lines 92 to 109.Greg scaffolds Sally's new noticing over a number of turns as he produces and refines these descriptions. While collaborative constructions in data sessions can involve varying numbers of participants, from as few as two and up to six or seven participants, in this extract, only two members collaborated in the construction of Sally's observation.

A pattern observed regarding the collaborative construction of analytic observations in TAG sessions is that members regularly mark the end of these collaborative sequences with a formulation (Heritage and Watson, 1979). Formulations work as a 'summarizing type of utterance' (Jones and Beach, 1995:61) used in a range of institutional settings to summarise or highlight potential implications

of previous talk. In extract 3, Greg offers a formulation that examines a pos-
sible aspect of analytic interest that he has drawn from Sally's observation (lines
104–109). His statement, which begins 'So you're look- at you're re: you're
looking at the kindev .h gram<u>mat</u>ical construction there.' (lines 104–105), ori-
ents to one aspect of the observation that he and Sally have produced and goes
on to explore an upshot of looking at this grammatical construction. While Sally
and Greg collaborate to produce an analytically relevant observation, Greg's so-
prefaced formulation in lines 104–109 also offers a pedagogic scaffolding or gloss
for Sally's suggestion. His turn builds on Sally's noticing to collaboratively pro-
duce an analytic observation as well as to provide a rationale behind why Sally may
have identified this particular part of the data as being of interest.

The so-prefaced formulations are used in a number of ways throughout the
interactions. In our extracts, they either offer an evaluation of the collaboratively
produced observation or to provide a candidate analytic description of a reason
for why a particular observation may be interesting. Jones and Beach (1995)
demonstrate that 'so' can be used to forecast a formulation and we see exactly
that as Greg and Eric, in extracts 2 and 3, visibly mark their utterances as formu-
lations using 'so'. Bolden (2009) demonstrates how this so-prefacing is used to
initiate new actions and, here, Greg and Eric use the so-prefaced formulations to
redirect the course of the data sessions. In redirecting the focus of the talk, so-
prefaced formulations can expose power relationships within interactions Jones
(2008), demonstrating how the experts, Greg and Eric, work to set the topical
agenda while at the same time scaffolding the analytic noticings of the novices.

THE SOCIAL PRACTICES OF PEDAGOGY-IN-ACTION

By engaging in a close analysis of practices that explicate how participants are
exposed to and share ways of doing analysis, we make visible what might often
go unnoticed or invisible, the unfolding pedagogic practices happening moment-
by-moment. The practices are pedagogically framed in that the participants are
doing what the 'natives' (Herzfeld, 1983) expect analysts of transcripts to do.
In examining 'how' the activity of 'doing data analysis' happens, we show how
pedagogy is enacted through the actions of the participants, both novice and
expert. They orient to, and make and remake, the pedagogic order through their
engagement and participation. This shaping is most evident in extracts 1 and 3,
which show clearly how the practical actions of the novice students constitute the
social and pedagogic order of the data analysis session and, in so doing, remake
the social order.

Data sessions are situations in which analytic noticings about data are pro-
duced, reformulated, described and perhaps empirically tested, on an impromptu
basis by members engaged in collaborative and interactive practices. However,
it is an open question as to what a research novice who goes into a data session

might walk away with compared to an experienced professional researcher. It is also an open question as to how participation in data analysis sessions translates within members' own research practices. Such questions, though, do not diminish the importance of data analysis sessions to the discourse research community because they are undeniably an expression of the discourse research community that encompasses what might be called pedagogic work. While this chapter examined how members of the data sessions went about looking at and analysing extracts of talk, we do not claim that the findings are generalisable to all data analysis sessions, and nor would we argue that they represent best practice of analysis. Rather, the purpose here was to show how social practices associated with stances of expert and novice are enacted and how, through the data analysis sessions, analytic expertise of analysis sessions is available for all members.

Analysis has shown both the fluidity of analytic ownership and the collaborative construction of analytic observations. All members may collaborate in doing what is everyday and mundane behaviour for TAG members, including identifying aspects of a transcript of talk and producing a noticing. These noticings shape how the talk, in which all members participate, and analysis proceeds. Indeed, as we saw in extract 1, researchers with significant experience may find out something new about the data (even their own data used over many years) from the noticing of other members. Fluidity is seen especially in how noticings, not institutional roles, are treated as conveying rights to the conversational floor. Members with varying levels of experience, both in participating in data analysis sessions and the use of ethnomethodological and conversation analysis methods, are afforded the space to identify and develop their noticing over multiple turns of talk. Their rights to maintain the conversational floor in these cases are more related to the group interaction and how the actions are produced *in situ* than to their level of experience in using the method or the length of their membership in the group. Detailed analysis of the actual practices of talk from these extracts, including the ways in which analytic noticings are made, collaboratively produced and 'owned' in the discussion, show that the data analysis sessions provided a democratic and collaborative environment in which the lines of distinction between novice and expert members were blurred. All members had the opportunity to develop and hone their analytic skills through practical application and collaboration with other members.

While the relationships between novices and experts may be blurred in terms of rights to participation in the analysis and discussions, the so-prefaced formulations observed within the talk suggest that another layer of pedagogic work may also be at play. In investigating how the experts, those with the greatest level of expertise in the analytic approach, interacted with other members who made a contribution to understanding the data but who did not use specific analytic terms (such as epistemic downgrade), we see that their 'expert' status as a researcher or experienced academic was constructed and maintained by their contribution of analytic descriptions to describe the noticings. In other words,

their practical actions maintained and reproduced their 'expert' status, contributing to producing the pedagogic social order underway.

In this chapter, we have offered one example focusing on *in situ* practices in doctoral education, by examining pedagogy-in-action within data sessions. By focusing on the details of the analytic talk, we showed that the actual practices that take place within data analysis sessions, including who produces the noticings and analytic descriptions, and who focus the direction of the talk, are far from pre-determined and cannot be simply explained by fixed ideas of members' roles or identities. By examining transcripts of actual practice, we are able to demonstrate that assumptions regarding the identities and relationships between experts and novices may not always hold true. Expertise is a fluid social achievement and, in these cases, a collaborative accomplishment.

Our research contributes one approach to understanding social practices associated with pedagogy-in-action. We show that, rather than being pre-determined by institutional roles or strict invocations of the roles of expert and learner, concepts of expertise and learning can be built through contributing to collaborative talk and analysis, and enacting stances of learner and expert. The data analysis session is just one of many possible settings of doctoral education where *in situ* practices could be examined. The value of such examination is a greater understanding of just how and where, in any given discipline, pedagogy actually occurs as a relationship between programmatic learning and practical application.

Appendix

Basic conversation analytic transcription conventions[1]

hello.	falling terminal pitch
hello;	slight fall in terminal pitch
hello_	level pitch terminally
,	slight rise in pitch
¿	rising intonation, weaker than that indicated by a question mark
?	strongly rising terminal pitch
=	temporally latched talk
hel-	talk that is cut off
HELLO	talk is louder than surrounding talk
°hello°	talk is quieter than surrounding talk
↓↑	marked falling and rising shifts in pitch
**	creaky voice
he::llo	an extension of a sound or syllable
hello	emphasis
(1.0)	timed intervals
(.)	a short untimed pause
.hh	audible inhalations

hh   audible exhalations

he he   laughter pulses

[ ]   overlapping talk

( )   uncertainty or transcription doubt

(( ))   analyst's comments

Notes

1 Transcription conventions are based on Jefferson (2004) and Schegloff (2007).

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