

https://dspace.org/

Categories in social interaction Unlocking the resources of conversation analysis and membership categorization for psychological science

E STOKOE; G RAYMOND; Kevin Whitehead

ANNUAL REVIEWS
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/45833
WOS

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ANNUAL REVIEWS

y of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Annual Review of Psychology

Categories in Social Interaction: Unlocking the Resources of Conversation Analysis and Membership Categorization for Psychological Science

Elizabeth Stokoe,[1] Geoffrey Raymond,[2] and Kevin A. Whitehead[2,3]

[1]Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science, The London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom; email: e.stokoe@lse.ac.uk

[2]Department of Sociology, University of California, Santa Barbara, California, USA

[3]School of Human and Community Development, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

ANNUAL REVIEWS CONNECT
www.annualreviews.org
• Download figures
• Navigate cited references
• Keyword search
• Explore related articles
• Share via email or social media

Annu. Rev. Psychol. 2025. 76:531–57

First published as a Review in Advance on September 30, 2024

The *Annual Review of Psychology* is online at psych.annualreviews.org

https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-020124-023147

Copyright © 2025 by the author(s). This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See credit lines of images or other third-party material in this article for license information.

OPEN ACCESS CC BY

Keywords

conversation analysis, membership categorization, research methods, categories, discursive psychology

Abstract

This article reviews two related approaches—conversation analysis (CA) and membership categorization analysis (MCA)—to sketch a systematic framework for exposing how categories and categorial phenomena are (re)produced in naturally occurring social interaction. In so doing, we argue that CA and MCA address recent concerns about psychological methods and approaches. After summarizing how categories are typically theorized and studied, we describe the main features of a CA approach to categories, including how this differs from conventional psychology. We review the core domains of research in CA and how categories can be studied systematically in relation to the basic machinery of talk and other conduct in interaction. We illustrate these domains through examples from different settings of recorded naturally occurring social interaction. After

considering the applications that have arisen from CA and MCA, we conclude by drawing together the implications of this work for psychological science.

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 532
2. CATEGORIES IN PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE 533
3. CATEGORIES ARE FOR TALKING 536
4. CATEGORIES AND THE GENERIC ORDERS OF ORGANIZATION IN TALK-IN-INTERACTION 538
5. APPLICATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS 547
6. CONCLUSIONS: THE IMPLICATIONS OF CONVERSATION ANALYSIS AND MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIZATION ANALYSIS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE 549

1. INTRODUCTION

Categorization of self and other is pervasive in the psychological and social lives of humans. In interactional encounters, from those in ordinary conversational settings to those in institutions and workplaces, we categorize individuals and groups; places, spaces, and settings; events, objects, and actions—unavoidably, in myriad ways. We ubiquitously invoke, describe, and construct categories; we ascribe and resist them; we imply and deny them. Categorizing can be mundane and ordinary; it can be profound and spectacular. Categories are so pervasive that we could pick almost any case of spoken, embodied, visual, or written social text or interaction and find examples of people treating them as relevant to their actions.

Take this British broadsheet newspaper headline: "Migrants side by side in hotels with public" (*The Daily Telegraph*, October 30, 2022). Beneath the headline was a story about the then UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman's plans to reduce "overcrowding at [an] asylum processing center" by temporarily housing "migrants" at hotels. The next day, well-known former soccer player and pundit Gary Lineker posted on X/Twitter a screenshot of *The Daily Telegraph*'s front page with his own replacement headline: "Human beings side by side in hotels with fellow human beings." In both cases, embedded in alternate descriptions of the situation, are categories of persons and their alternatives—"migrants," "public," "human beings." The alternate headlines implicitly convey assertions about the relationship between groups of persons and their rights and entitlements to be side by side with each other as equals ("human beings," "fellow human beings") or not ("migrants," "public"). The alternate ways of categorizing construct competing versions of the events being discussed and even different realities. There are no neutral categories: All engage in actions and thus reveal a stance, a view, a take on the facts at hand. Lineker's tweet went viral, with many further responses and rewordings—and recategorizations—from the banal to the egregious.

This brief example illustrates that (and how) categories matter to everybody, virtually inescapably, and independently of what academic researchers might have to say about them theoretically, methodologically, or empirically. Indeed, people "do not have to consult a textbook before analyzing the world. *They just do it*" (Silverman 1998, p. 86; emphasis added). The aim of this article is to review two related approaches to studying how people "just do it," that is, how categories figure in social interaction: conversation analysis (CA) and membership categorization

Conversation analysis: an approach to analyzing the systematic organization of interaction as an infrastructure for social life and institutions

Membership categorization: how people use categories to structure actions, relations, and occasions in social interaction

analysis (MCA). Both have their roots in ethnomethodological sociology and specifically the work of Harvey Sacks and his collaborators, which gained traction across the social and human sciences including in psychology, where they found footing via discursive psychology (DP; see Edwards & Potter 1992, 2001). Since categories have been a founding concern across a range of disciplines, it is not surprising that they were also a primary focus for Sacks. His approach to categories and social interaction, however, was distinct from those that prevailed in the social sciences at the time and continue to dominate to this day.

Discursive psychology: the study of how people deploy and orient to psychological matters in and for social interaction

We start our discussion of this work in Section 2 by summarizing—briefly, since the landscape is vast—academic work on categories in general and a conventional approach to categories in psychology in particular. In Section 3, we introduce CA (including its family relations in DP and MCA), describing its data and methods as well as the main features of its approach to categories. In Section 4, we summarize the core domains around which CA has coalesced and describe how categories can be studied systematically in relation to the basic machinery of talk and other conduct in interaction. We illustrate these domains through examples of recorded naturally occurring social interaction. In Section 5, we explore applications that have arisen from a CA approach to categories in social interaction, before concluding, in Section 6, by drawing together the implications of this work for psychological science.

2. CATEGORIES IN PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Even before contemporary academia began to theorize categories, the word *category* (from the Greek *katēgoria*) was used by philosophers as a concept and explanatory account for observable regularities and patterns. In contemporary social science, understandings of categories rapidly coalesced around particular groups of people, including "the Big Three" of "sex, race, and age" (Stolier & Freeman 2016, p. 141), plus ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion (e.g., Drew 2021), nationality (e.g., Mendieta & Alcoff 2003), and intersections of these (e.g., Crenshaw 1989, Hill Collins & Bilge 2020). That these categorial groups have been a key focus in social science does not, of course, mean that they have been given undue weight. Nonetheless, we seek to differentiate between the categories on which scholars most commonly focus and those that people use in everyday life. Often, as our examples will show, these are the same categories. However, starting with ordinary people's activities and orientations rather than those of researchers opens up possibilities for investigating new categories from their bottom-up construction, since language evolves constantly and neologisms, including categories, are added to the public lexicon on a daily basis (see, e.g., Ivanov et al. 2023). Thus, our approach focuses explicitly on members' (rather than analysts') categories and categorial descriptions, objects, and actions.

For many psychologists, to categorize is psychological; it is a human cognitive ability and process through which people abstract, classify, and organize things as the basis for acting, behaving, and making decisions (Croft & Cruse 2004). Across huge trajectories of research, psychologists have sought to understand how people self- and other-categorize in ways that are fundamental to understanding group membership and identity, inclusion/exclusion, in-group/out-group dynamics, prejudice, and so on (for overviews, see Haslam & Reicher 2015, Reynolds 2015). Experimental social psychologists Schaller & Neuberg (2012, p. 43) observe that "[h]uman beings are implicit organizers; we like to lump people into categories." They neatly capture a starting point for many kinds of research as well as what laypeople do in everyday talk and texts. However, no single academic discipline, including psychology, owns the study of categorization and categories or of related concepts such as self and identity. Entry points can be found across the social sciences and humanities (Benwell & Stokoe 2006). Across these fields, categories are conceived in ways that

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

are often abstracted from their natural ecological niche in interaction, including viewing them as biological, essential, cognitive, computational, linguistic, communicative, or social—and they are consequently theorized and studied empirically in starkly divergent ways.

Categories are conventionally deployed by researchers as classificatory, conceptual, methodological, or explanatory resources. Specifically, categories are used for (*a*) selecting settings and/or people to study, and describing features of settings and people being studied; (*b*) studying identities or experiences, personalities, abilities, and other attributes shared by members of a group; (*c*) dividing populations into comparable groups, and thus as predictors of and/or explanations for differential actions or outcomes between groups; (*d*) describing and accounting for relationships, conflicts, and so on, between individuals or groups; and (*e*) theorizing social structures and politics. While many of these uses of categories have been criticized on a range of bases—from the ways they create and/or maintain ostensible facts about difference (e.g., Crawford 1995, Richards 2012) to the way they mask "contingent and contextual relationships. . .obscuring the need to specify mechanisms" (Brick et al. 2022, p. 491; see also, e.g., Holth 2001, Williams 2024)—their uninterrogated use persists. Notably, categories are seldom studied where humans mostly use them: in conversation and other occasions of interaction.

In advancing a CA approach to categories and membership categorization, we shift the academic focus from using categories to study people to studying how people use categories. A key feature of categories in this regard is that they "are the store house and the filing system for the common-sense knowledge that ordinary people—that means ALL people in their capacity as ordinary people—have about what people are like, how they behave, etc." (Schegloff 2007a, p. 469). This association between categories and common-sense knowledge enables people to mobilize common-sense knowledge by mobilizing categories, and vice versa—whether doing so explicitly or tacitly—and thereby makes them a rich resource for action and interpretation. This is particularly so for categories of conventional social science interest, by virtue of the expansive stocks of common-sense knowledge associated with them, which arises from their widespread use as bases for structuring societies, allocating resources, managing organizational problems, and so on. Indeed, they have come to be recognized by researchers and members alike as key features of social organization and are maintained as such on an ongoing basis, precisely because they lie in wait for mobilization as resources across a virtually unlimited range of professional and everyday activities. In the moments in which categories are used in this way, they connect the local participants with a wide range of historically sedimented uses of categories by others, thereby relying on and reproducing them as "quiet centres of power and persuasion" (Baker 2000, p. 112).

While this may appear to be simply an account of the workings of stereotypes formulated in different terms, there are important conceptual distinctions between common-sense knowledge underpinning categorization practices and conventional understandings (both social-scientific and common-sense) of stereotypes. These include a view of common-sense knowledge as socially shared but not necessarily personally believed or bought into, in contrast to how stereotypes are conventionally treated as believed by individuals; the assumption made by participants that the common-sense knowledge they are using is accurate for the purpose at hand, until shown to be otherwise, in contrast to conventional understandings of stereotypes as necessarily inaccurate, or at least of questionable accuracy; and the observation that although common-sense knowledge may be morally problematized, in many cases it is treated by participants as mundane and completely unproblematic, with its competent use being morally expected or required, in contrast to the conventional treatment of stereotypes as morally proscribed or improper (see, e.g., McHoul 2007, Schegloff 2007a, Whitehead 2018).

In order to "analyze the workings of categories, not to merely use them as they are used in the world" (Jefferson 2004a, p. 118), we need ways to study how people use categories in the

world. This is a problem for psychology and is recognized as such by scholars of psychology, since this is a discipline that, while teaching students "from the first day of class that psychology is the science of behavior and that its ultimate goal is to describe and explain what people do," it "pays remarkably little attention to the important things that people do"—instead using "introspective self-reports, hypothetical scenarios, and questionnaire ratings" (Baumeister et al. 2007, p. 396; see also de Oliveira & Baggs 2023). Ten years after Baumeister et al.'s critique, Mehl (2017, p. 184) similarly argued that

> [l]aypersons often think of psychologists as professional people watchers. It is ironic, then, that naturalistic observation, as a methodology, has a remarkably thin history in our field. . . . At the same time, there are clear limitations to what self-reports can assess. . . . the psychological scientist's tool kit also needs a method to directly observe human behavior in daily life. . . . naturalistic observation can bring behavioral data collection to where moment-to-moment behavior naturally happens.

It is ironic—and frustrating—that neither of these psychologists mentions CA as a corrective for the situation they critique. CA is a six-decades-old field of observational "cumulative science" (Stokoe 2021, p. 348). It is both a method for capturing, transcribing, and analyzing naturally occurring social interaction and a theory of human sociality (e.g., Heritage 2009, Schegloff 1987), examining how "ordinary activities get done methodically and *reproducibly*" (Schegloff 1992, p. xvii, emphasis added). Yet, even as psychologists press the importance of understanding conversation as "the primary means by which [social connection] is achieved," they claim that "scientists know little about it—about how it starts, how it unfolds, or how it ends" (Mastroianni et al. 2021, p. 1; cf. Stokoe 2021). Indeed, many of the primary preoccupations of psychological science—personality, attitudes, cognition, neurodiversity, and many others—emerge and have their primary consequences felt in human interaction. Moreover, as Levinson (2006, p. 39) notes,

> Much of the speculation about the origins and success of our species centers on the source of our big brains, the structure of our cognition, on the origins of language, the innate structures that support it, and on the striking cooperative potential in the species. These are genuine and important puzzles, but in the rush to understand them, we seem to have overlooked a core human ability and propensity, the study of which would throw a great deal of light on these other issues. It is right under our noses, much more accessible than the recesses of our brains or the fossils that track our evolutionary origins, and quite understudied. It is the structure of everyday human interaction.

Studying interaction across languages and cultures also offers a method for addressing contemporary crises in psychological science. These include critiques centered on the dominance of North American scholarship (e.g., Faye 2012) and of psychology as a WEIRD science—that is, the argument that "psychological data are dominated by samples drawn from Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) nations, and overwhelmingly, the United States" (Muthukrishna et al. 2020, p. 678). The WEIRD critique was prefigured by the articulation of a similar set of issues by critical psychologists, including about the replicability of key psychological research findings, that originally arose during the 1970s (e.g., Lewin 1977, Moghaddam 1987, Nelson & Kannenberg 1976) before reemerging in the 2010s, which Nosek et al. (2022, p. 721) describe on this basis as "psychology's decade of crisis."

These issues partially informed the relevance and recruitment of CA as a radically different approach in psychology to studying human social interaction. DP fundamentally challenged and respecified how psychologists understand, research, and theorize social interaction; the relationship between language and cognition; and how minds and worlds are conceived (Edwards & Potter 1992, 2001). An early paper by Edwards (1991) developed a DP perspective on categorization under the title "Categories Are for Talking." We move now to outline this perspective as the psychological entry point into CA and MCA.

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

3. CATEGORIES ARE FOR TALKING

Ethnomethodology: the study of how social life and institutions are ongoing accomplishments of local processes rather than free-standing objective structures

Jefferson transcription system: a standardized system for transcribing the produced details of talk and other conduct in audio/video-recorded interactions

In the decades since Edwards & Potter (1992) pioneered DP, discursive psychologists have studied how language use, often in naturally occurring social interactions, builds action and constructs the world (Edwards 1997, Potter 1996, Tileagă & Stokoe 2016). In a direct challenge to much of what might be regarded as mainstream psychology, and across the social sciences more broadly, Edwards & Potter (1992) argued that participants in interactions contend on an everyday basis with the full range of phenomena treated by conventional psychologists as objects of study and advocated an understanding of how such processes unfold in everyday discourse. With its antecedents in the discourse and rhetorical approaches of the Loughborough Discourse and Rhetoric Group, or DARG (see Stokoe et al. 2012), discursive psychologists promoted their blend of ordinary language philosophy, social studies of science, social constructionism, ethnomethodology, and CA. Rather than a tool or pathway to accessing cornerstone psychological phenomena, including attitudes, attributions, identities, personalities, emotion, or memory, language is "a domain of public accountability in which psychological states are made relevant" (Edwards 2006, p. 41). For DP, with its methodological partner CA, the core purpose of language—in the broadest sense and across all its modalities—is the production and maintenance of human sociality and intersubjectivity (Stokoe 2020).

In advancing the view that "categories are for talking," Edwards (1991, pp. 517–18; emphasis in original) set out DP's key principles: First, "[c]ategorization is *something we do*, in talk, in order to accomplish social actions (persuasion, blamings, denials, refutations, accusations, etc.)"; and second, "[r]ather than starting with the abstracted content of categories and then theorizing about how they are used, discursive psychology recommends starting with situated usage, and the aim of analysis is to explicate 'what is being done.'" DP thereby played a crucial role in importing the rich seam of (largely sociological) conversation analytic research into psychology, providing a solution (although CA and DP predated these criticisms) to the methodological limitations of psychology described above by Baumeister et al. (2007), Mehl (2017), and Mastroianni et al. (2021).

CA is not just a method, however, but "a recognizably distinct approach to the analysis of social life" (Heritage 2009, p. 300). Despite being unfamiliar to many psychologists, its foundational papers are some of the most highly cited in any academic discipline (Stokoe 2018). CA's roots include the work of Harold Garfinkel and Erving Goffman, whom Heritage (2009, p. 301) credits with "inaugurat[ing] the study of everyday life as a research focus in its own right." In developing CA in collaboration with Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, Sacks's (1984a, p. 26) aim was to develop an observational science of social action that could be grounded in the "details of actual events." CA therefore uses audio and/or video recordings of everyday interactions as data and, with constant improvements and technological innovations, captures increasingly complex interactional environments (Hoey & Webb 2024). This is in stark contrast to widely used "surrogates for the observation of actual behavior" (Heritage & Atkinson 1984, p. 2), namely, interviews, focus groups, surveys, simulations, and experiments—although the fusion of CA with experimental psychology is also increasing (see De Ruiter & Albert 2017, Robinson 2024).

To ground analysis in the "details of actual events," CA uses a standardized system for transcribing recorded data, developed by Gail Jefferson (see Jefferson 2004b). The Jefferson transcription system uses a modified orthography to represent the prosodic, paralinguistic, pace, placement, and perturbation resources through which people compose and make sense of talk, and it has been augmented to include embodied conduct and multimodality (for an overview, see Hepburn & Bolden 2017). Software tools, iterated alongside technological advances, have been developed for automated transcription (e.g., Gailbot; see Umair et al. 2022) and to support the early stages of analysis that transcription constitutes [e.g., the Distributed Open Transcription Environment

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

(DOTE); see McIlvenny et al. 2022]. Crucially, recorded and transcribed interactional data provide a unique basis for grounding analytic claims in the participants' own understandings, as displayed in their conduct. As Sacks et al. (1974, p. 729) note, "[t]he display of those understandings in the talk of subsequent turns affords both a resource for the analysis of prior turns and a proof procedure for professional analyses of prior turns—resources intrinsic to the data themselves."

CA has developed into a powerful method for analyzing and theorizing social interaction (Robinson et al. 2024). It initially focused on developing a systematic framework for analyzing collections of cases that explicate the procedural infrastructure of interaction (e.g., Sacks & Schegloff 1979, Sacks et al. 1974, Schegloff 1996a, Schegloff et al. 1977), as well as on using findings from such analyses to examine how single episodes of interaction unfold (e.g., Schegloff 1987). Although its origins were in English language data, CA research is conducted across multiple languages, including at scale, enabling researchers both to identify universal features of social interaction and to specify features of cross-cultural variability with precision (e.g., Schegloff 2006, Sidnell 2009, Sidnell & Enfield 2012, Stivers & Enfield 2009). Moreover, many of its foundational findings about the organization of social interaction, which we describe in the next section, have been replicated using quantitative analyses of large multi-language data sets, thereby demonstrating their cross-cultural universality and applicability (e.g., Dingemanse et al. 2015, Enfield et al. 2013, Rossi et al. 2023, Stivers et al. 2009). This replication and extension of foundational CA findings are particularly significant achievements considering the WEIRD critique and the crisis of replicability faced by conventional approaches to psychology, as described above.

CA's methods pose interesting questions and challenges regarding replication and reproducibility in research, which we introduce here but return to in the final section. CA is not readily categorizable as either a qualitative or quantitative method; it is neither and both. While CA may work with large data sets, they are not required to do analysis, because the methodic order of interaction is manifest not only in the aggregate but in each of its occasions. Schegloff (1992, p. xlvi, emphasis added) explains this with regards to sampling:

> Taking up the methodological relevance of sampling, Sacks points out that it depends on the sort of order one takes it that the social world exhibits. An alternative to the possibility that *order manifests itself at an aggregate level and is statistical in character* is what he terms the "order at all points" view. . . . This view, rather like the "holographic" model of information distribution, understands order not to be present only at aggregate levels and therefore subject to an overall differential distribution, but to be present in detail on a case by case, environment by environment basis.

For this reason, CA is antithetical to traditional senses of replication: There is no such thing as an interactional component being an outlier and thereby excludable from a data set. Instead, deviant cases that apparently depart from patterns observed in typical cases are examined for how they came to be produced as such by the participants and what this may reveal about the broader patterns from which they appear to depart (see, e.g., Schegloff 1968).

We thus make a fundamental distinction between the way categories are deployed, on the one hand, by academics in their research (analysts' categories), and on the other, by (lay)people (members' categories). That is, instead of using categories to study the social world, we adopt the resources for seeing how participants in social interactions use and self-administer categories. This approach is grounded in Sacks's work on membership categorization, and it intersects with the related field of study termed "membership categorization analysis" by Eglin & Hester (1992, p. 247). It is important to emphasize that Sacks and others developed this work as a set of empirical observations of members' methods (i.e., what people themselves do) in relation to categories and

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

the resources they use in deploying them. He thus underscored the importance of analyses of their uses by participants being "in each and every case, a matter to be *decided empirically*" (Sacks 1966, p. 16; emphasis added). Notably, however, Housley & Fitzgerald (2015, p. 6) describe MCA as "not so much a fully worked out methodology," thus tacitly acknowledging the potential for the development of a more "fully worked out" set of methodological tools. In contrast, CA has been more "developed" and "prolific" than membership categorization (Eglin & Hester 1992, p. 247; see also Stokoe 2012b), including in detailed specifications of its methodological principles and practices (e.g., Robinson et al. 2024, Stivers & Sidnell 2013). In the following section, we sketch out the main contours of this work and propose a framework for CA's integration with the key concerns of MCA.

4. CATEGORIES AND THE GENERIC ORDERS OF ORGANIZATION IN TALK-IN-INTERACTION

Research in CA has developed a cumulative set of findings regarding the procedural infrastructure for social interaction. As noted above, CA has also developed an expanding array of comparative research projects across languages and cultures, but research on the machinery of social interaction has (generally) paid less attention to the ways in which who the participants are to one another—and, specifically, how they categorize one another—contributes to their understanding of their local contexts, actions, and activities. Research in MCA, by contrast, has primarily focused on showing how categories, and the common-sense knowledge with which they are associated, come to be used in shaping single occasions of interaction, paying less attention to the forms of organization the participants use to conduct their encounters or to how collections of cases might reveal previously unnoticed aspects of how categories are used and oriented to in interaction. The integration of CA and MCA involves conducting analyses that attend both to categorial features of talk-in-interaction and to the set of "generic orders of organization in talk-in-interaction" (Schegloff 2007b, p. xiii) on which many of the foundational advances in conversation analytic research over the past six decades have focused (see also Whitehead et al. 2024a,b). Schegloff (2007b, p. xiv; emphases in original) describes these generic orders as follows:

1. The turn-taking problem: Who should talk next and when should they do so? How does this affect the construction and understanding of the turns themselves?
2. The action-formation problem: How are the resources of the language, the body, the environment of the interaction, and position *in* the interaction fashioned into conformations designed to be, and to be recognizable by recipients as, particular actions—actions like requesting, inviting, granting, complaining, agreeing, telling, noticing, rejecting, and so on—in a class of unknown size?
3. The sequence-organizational problem: How are successive turns formed up to be "coherent" with the prior turn (or *some* prior turn), and what is the nature of that coherence?
4. The trouble problem: How to deal with trouble in speaking, hearing, and/or understanding the talk so that the interaction does not freeze in place when trouble arises, that intersubjectivity is maintained or restored, and that the turn and sequence and activity can progress to possible completion?
5. The word-selection problem: How do the components that get selected as the elements of a turn get selected, and how does that selection inform and shape the understanding achieved by the turn's recipients?
6. The overall structural organization problem: How does the overall composition of an occasion of interaction get structured, what are those structures, and how does placement

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

in the overall structure inform the construction and understanding of the talk as turns, as sequences, etc.?[1]

In addition, the period during which Schegloff (2007b) was writing saw the identification (see Heritage & Raymond 2005, Raymond & Heritage 2006) of what we can now list as a further generic problem of interaction, namely,

7. The epistemics problem: How are relative rights to knowledge displayed and managed in sequentially organized activities?

As Schegloff (2007b, p. xiv) further notes, these interactional problems give rise to a corresponding set of generic "organizations of practice" that are constitutive of conversation and other forms of talk-in-interaction. Schegloff (2007b, pp. 263–64) also provides the following concluding reflections on how these organizations of practice fit together, proposing that they

> operate together all the time to inform the participants' coconstruction of the observable, actual conduct in interaction that is the prima facie, bottom-line stuff of social life. Only by observing them all together will we understand how the stuff of social life comes to be as it is. Only by understanding them one by one will we get into a position to observe them all together.

A crucial feature of these organizations of practice is that, together and separately, they are what Sacks et al. (1974, p. 699) describe as "context-free" forms of organization that are nevertheless "capable of extraordinary context-sensitivity" in any specific occasion of their use.[2] That is, on the one hand, their basic features can recognized as such independently of "one or another aspect of situatedness, identities, particularities of content or context"; and on the other hand, their realization in particular cases and moments is sensitive to "a wide range of situations, interactions in which persons in varieties (or varieties of groups) of identities are operating" (Sacks et al. 1974, p. 699; see also Lerner 2003). Thus, as Schegloff (2007b, p. 260) puts it, "the general always in real life. . .presents itself infused with its particulars, and it is not thoroughly understood without them."

One major and well-established systematic basis for context specificity in relation to generic organizations of practice for interaction is participants' orientations to institutional matters and settings (Drew & Heritage 1992, Heritage & Clayman 2010). Another—and perhaps *the* other—is how people may categorize themselves and each other. This is by virtue of how categories can be mobilized prospectively and retrospectively to achieve accountability; to solve dilemmas or problems in relation to the distribution of social resources; to allocate and manage entitlements and responsibilities; and to anticipate and make sense of conduct, including in relation to goals, motives, projects, etc., and in terms of the valence of actions (e.g., as positively or negatively oriented) and of whatever emotional colorings may infuse them. We can thereby observe that all actions can be inspected for how they are designed by reference to particular categories of actors and/or recipients and/or how features of their design can be taken up as such by recipients. Consequently, participants composing and making sense of actions must contend with the "types of persons in a culture's inventory, by reference to which are composed a society's understanding(s) of 'the sorts of people' there are, what they are like, how the society and the world work—in short, its culture" (Schegloff 1996b, p. 465). Categories thereby constitute a pervasive basis for context sensitivity in the uses and realizations of the generic orders of organization in talk-in-interaction, and an integral part of "how the stuff of social life comes to be as it is."

[1]Note that the ordering of this list is not designed to imply anything about the relative importance of these "problems."

[2]Sacks et al. (1974) made this characterization specifically with reference to turn-taking, but it has since been shown to be similarly applicable to the other organizations of practice described here.

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

This approach offers a framework for empirically examining features of the reciprocal or "mutually constitutive" (Watson 1997, p. 54; cf. Schegloff 2001) relationship between categories and both basic conversational and institutional organizations of practices for talk-in-interaction. That is, it promotes an examination of how these organizations of practice constitute systematic bases for the emergent (re)production of categories, while at the same time considering how categories serve as systematic resources for participants' uses of the organizations of practice and for managing prevailing contingencies in relation to them in particular cases. This leaves intact foundational CA findings on both mundane conversation and institutional interactions. It also provides opportunities to specify some features of "categorial systematics" (Stokoe 2012a,b) that are produced in and through participants' interactional conduct and by reference to which interaction is organized.

While research that integrates attention to the generic organizations of practice and categorial matters in this way is in a relatively early stage of development, numerous studies have provided markers of its prodigious potential. An early line of research in this regard highlighted the significance of intersections between categories and word selection, especially in relation to person reference, as reflected in Schegloff's (1996b, p. 464) recognition of the "deep importance" of "all the category terms for types of persons in a culture's inventory." That is, explicit uses of category terms in referring to persons can mobilize common-sense inferences about both the speaker and the person(s) they are referring to, thereby contributing to what is being done interactionally in one turn at talk (see also, e.g., Kitzinger 2005a,b; Stivers 2007; Whitehead & Lerner 2009, 2022). In another key contribution, Schegloff (2001) examines how participants come to see instances of overlapping talk as associated with categorial, and especially gender-based, asymmetries. He describes features of the relationship between categories and turn-taking and in doing so addresses widespread myths and oversimplifications about gender and interruption reinforced by earlier research grounded in category difference approaches that perpetuate what Cameron (1997) earlier referred to as the correlational fallacy, whereby particular linguistic practices are attributed spuriously to speaker category (see also Kitzinger 2008, Speer & Stokoe 2011).

In a study demonstrating the pervasive relevance of epistemics, Raymond & Heritage (2006) show that sequentially sensitive practices for managing rights to knowledge provide a systematic basis for members to display tacit orientations to their relative category memberships when assessing nonpresent persons. They thereby elucidate some systematic intersections between features of categories, epistemics, action formation, and sequence organization. Subsequent studies have further examined the reflexive relationships between speakers' category memberships and features of the production and interpretation of actions in particular sequential environments, including accusation, complaint, invitation, offer, question, and request sequences (e.g., Liu 2023, Rossi & Stivers 2020, Sterphone 2022, Stokoe 2009, Whitehead 2013). Intersections between categorial systematics and repair[3] have also been a rich source of research, with a number of studies (e.g., Bolden 2014, Bolden et al. 2022, Egbert 2004, Huensch 2017, Raymond 2019) examining how categories are oriented to and/or mobilized by participants in relation to occasions of trouble in speaking, hearing, or understanding, thereby also offering further insights into categorial features of word selection, action formation, and sequence organization. Together these studies, and many more, contribute to our understanding of the interactional organization and reproduction of many of the categories of conventional social science interest, while also

[3] Repair is the domain of practices used to manage the trouble problem described above as the fourth generic organization of practice in interaction.

attending to a range of less commonly studied—and especially setting-based—categories, such as host, guest, and game player, that participants may treat as being of primary relevance for unfolding courses of action and activities (see also, e.g., Sacks 1992, Whitehead et al. 2024b, Zimmerman 1998).

Related lines of research have examined features of the interactional organization of various "-isms" [racism, (hetero)sexism, classism, ageism, etc.] and other social problems, including violence. Prominent in this regard is a set of studies examining how participants manage and mobilize features of preference organization in relation to action sequencing in responding to and resisting actions they treat as racist, sexist, or heterosexist (Land & Kitzinger 2005, Robles 2015, Stokoe 2015, Tadic 2024, Whitehead 2015). Other contributions include Joyce et al.'s (2021) analysis of how the sexist practice of mansplaining is constituted through practices relating to epistemics, action formation, and sequence organization; Edmonds & Pino's (2023) examination of how practices for misgendering trans people can be used in the formation of actions, and how trans people can form up actions to resist these practices; Joyce & Sterphone's (2022) description of turn-taking and sequence organization practices used by bystanders who challenge racist actions produced by antagonists in public disputes; Stokoe's (2010) analysis of how male suspects accused of assaulting women mobilize gender categories in denying violence; and Whitehead et al.'s (2018) demonstration of how categories typically treated as risk factors for violence (e.g., gender, race, and class) are used by participants as resources for producing and interpreting actions across different stages of the overall structural organization of violent conflicts. Studies such as these differ from conventional psychological and social-scientific approaches to social problems by examining how they are contended with in everyday interactions rather than locating them primarily in the minds of individuals or in the structures of society (see also Whitehead & Stokoe 2015).

In what follows, we provide empirical illustrations of the distinctiveness of the CA approach to categories we have described in this section. A first case, transcribed as Extract 1[4] below, shows the opening moments of a call to a holiday company in which the caller (C) categorizes herself during the course of seeking assistance from the salesperson (S).

Extract 1: Holiday booking

01	S:	G'd evenin' Rindley Leisure Hotels, you're speaking to
02		Diane. = ↓How c'n I help.
03	C:	Uh- good evenin' Diane. .hh I'm trying to- um. (0.3) I'm
04		a lady of a certain age and going online's giving me a
05		headache.
06	S:	Mhm he heh, [heh,
07	C:	[h I don't know what I've pressed now.
08	S:	Uh heh heh [heh
09	C:	[(I'm trying) t'do a booking, could you check
10		the availability for me ((*continues*))

Conventional social-scientific approaches might use what we see in this interaction as a catalyst for research on such matters as age differences in uptake and uses of technologies, old(er) people's experiences of using relatively new web-based technologies, and/or possible ways of (re)designing online platforms to make them more user-friendly for old(er) people. That is, such approaches might, as we have noted above, deploy categories as analysts' resources in, for example, selecting

[4]Readers may also consult the analyses of this extract by Flinkfeldt et al. (2022) and Whitehead et al. (2024a,b).

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

people and topics to study, explaining differences between categorically identified groups, and designing evidence-based interventions to improve outcomes for specific categories of people.

In contrast, the conversation analytic approach focuses on how ordinary members of society use, manage, self-administer, or otherwise contend with categories in everyday naturally occurring interactions and in relation to the generic orders described above. In line with this, we can observe how the caller describes herself in a category-relevant way as "a lady of a certain age" (lines 03–05), using this specific word selection to claim membership in this idiomatic category and thereby implying—but not directly stating—self-categorization as "old." Crucially, we can observe how she uses this age self-categorization as a resource for forming up the action of requesting assistance from an institutional representative rather than "going online" (line 04). However, in doing so, the caller also contends with the intersection of her age self-categorization with the gender category in which she concurrently claims membership: While it is evident that age is the primary sequentially relevant category—the caller is accounting for her need for assistance by reference to her age, rather than by proposing herself to be a helpless woman—she nevertheless uses a category formulation that takes into account gender-based prohibitions on naming age. In this way, she manages self-justification without veering into self-deprecation: If stated baldly, "I'm an old lady and. . ." risks being treated as self-deprecation and thereby making relevant a disagreeing response (e.g., "You don't sound old to me"; see Pomerantz 1984, Speer 2019). More generally, participants' uses of such formulations for categories may be designed to respect, acknowledge, or violate normative constraints that make the use of explicit category terms delicate or even prohibited.

Having examined how the caller uses self-categorization in describing herself as "a lady of a certain age," we can note there are potentially many ways this description could be understood. For example, it is the title of a song, a prepositional phrase, a euphemism, and a catchphrase or idiom. It is defined in the Urban Dictionary as an "[i]ronically polite term for a woman who does not want her actual age known, e.g., one who is close to or just over the menopause."[5] Bishop (2018) refers to it as "over 60 at least." Instances of the phrase can be found in literature and other forms of discourse, and analyses thereof appear in research on language, gender, and age(ism) (e.g., Caldas-Coulthard 2010). Instead of looking to such sources, we have focused on what Edwards (2006) calls the "rich surface" of the interaction, which is visible, or treated as such, by the participants themselves. We can further note that "a lady of a certain age" is positioned after the caller has begun to articulate her reason for calling ("I'm trying to-"), before cutting off and hesitating (line 03), and after producing this self-categorization (line 04) the caller returns to the request she had projected (lines 09–10). By using repair to introduce the self-categorization parenthetically in this way (also see Mazeland 2007, Schegloff 2007b), she positions it as an element of her request rather than (for example) elevating it to being the basis for her call, as she might have done had she self-categorized in this way at the call's outset. By responding with the receipt "Mhm," followed by laughter (line 06), the salesperson shows their understanding that the caller's use of these categories is designed in relation to her project of seeking assistance rather than (for example) in pursuit of a similar self-disclosure. As these observations suggest—and consistent with our discussion above of the proof procedure provided by interactional data—the resources and methods the participants use to compose the occasion provide analysts with resources for adjudicating between possible alternative analyses.

The gender and age categories used by the caller in Extract 1 are, of course, among categories of conventional social science interest described earlier and widely used by scholars as analytic

[5] **https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Woman+of+a+Certain+Age**.

resources. However, as this extract demonstrates, such categories are available for a wide range of everyday nonspecialist uses, and their use may involve participants orienting to normative expectations that may be overlooked when categories are administered from above. Analysts' categories may therefore map onto members' categories, although perhaps not in the kinds of ways analysts could easily imagine or anticipate.

We explore these matters further in Extract 2,[6] which provides an empirical illustration of how a gender category gets used and thereby reproduced as a basis for action and interpretation in a different type of interactional encounter. Moreover, this example opens a window into some of the ways participants can resist uses of these categories. The relevant setting-based category for this interaction is "psychology student," with the participants tasked with carrying out a collaborative writing activity in which, as a group, they must produce descriptions of people in a series of photographs. However, the participants (S1–S4 in the transcript) solve an organizational problem in managing the task at hand by using a gender category.

Extract 2: University small group work

01	S1:	D'you reckon she's an instructor then.
02		(0.2)
03	S1:	Of some sort,
04	S2:	Is somebody scribing. who's writin' it.=
05	S1:	= Oh yhe:ah.
06		(0.8)
07	S3:	Well you can't [r e a d m y]=
08	S1:	[She wants to do it.]
09	S3:	=writin' once I've [wri:tten it.]
10	S4:	[.hehhhh]
11	S1:	We:ll secretary an' female.
12		(0.3)
13	S4:	.Hh heh heh heh
14		(0.4)
15	S3:	It's uh::,
16	S4:	Yeah: I'm wearing glasses I must be the secretary.=
17	S2:	= I think- (.) we're all agreed she's physical.
18		(0.2)
...		
27	S3:	Make a good start.
28	S4:	Heh heh heh .hhh (.) .hhh Okay what's her name.
29		(0.5)
...		
104	S4:	Am I wri:ting (then.)
105	S1:	Yes: go on.
...		
123		(0.3)
124	S3:	<Are you getting all this down.=Come on.
125		(1.6)
126	S1:	You've gotta learn this shorthand before you get into
127		the- (0.4) the job market.

[6]Readers may also consult the analyses of this extract by Stokoe (2006, 2008), Stokoe et al. (2021b), and Whitehead et al. (2024b).

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

The extract begins with S1 offering an initial contribution to the task, as he speculates as to the occupation of the woman in the photograph they are looking at: "an instructor" (lines 01–03). This observation, however, occasions a registering that to meet the task demands one member of the group must write down their ideas: S2's query, "is somebody scribing," immediately followed by a further query, "who's writin' it" (line 04), initiates a new sequence prompting a search for the party who will undertake this element of the task. In this way, the resulting search is positioned as ancillary to the main activity—indeed, it is produced as an afterthought (see also Raymond & Lerner 2014) and S1's response (line 05) aligns with it as such. As we shall see, this positions the person who takes on the scribe duties as assisting the other participants, and thus as being accountable to them, rather than as engaging on an equal footing in the main activity.

Following S2's initiation of this activity, other participants seek to manage their possible selection into the role of scribe: S3 offers an account of why he cannot do so (lines 07–09), and S1 nominates S4 using a pointing gesture (see also Goodwin 2003) and claiming to report her desire to take up the task—"she wants to do it" (line 08)—despite S4 offering no indication of this (see **Figure 1**). The use of the pronoun "she" selects S4, as the only woman in the group, for this task. S1 thereby exploits a person reference practice (see Schegloff 1996b) as a tacit method for using gender as a basis for selecting S4 in a context in which the setting-based category "psychology student" does not provide a basis for differentiating among them since all are comembers of this category.

S4's laughing response to S1's claim attempts to treat it as a nonserious transgression rather than an accurate reflection of her willingness to serve as scribe, and it thereby tacitly resists S1's proposal. S1 evidently registers this resistance on S4's part, as he offers a "well"-prefaced justification of his nomination of S4 (line 11). In doing so, he offers the category "secretary" as a replacement for "scribe," treating this category as stereotypically linked to the gender category "female," while producing this connection as having been made in the moment rather than being motivated from the outset by an effort to target S4 as a woman. We further note that S1's turn, in



Figure 1

S1 points at S4 at line 08.

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

providing a categorial basis for who will serve as scribe, mobilizes gender to exclude him and the other male group members from possible incumbency in that position in a way the setting-based category "psychology student" does not.

While S4 concedes to her nomination by picking up her paper and pen, thereby aligning herself with the role and carrying out its preliminary activities, she continues to resist S1's use of gender in nominating her. For example, she finds a different basis for distinguishing her from the other group members as the "secretary," tying this category to wearing glasses (line 16). However, once serving as scribe has been treated as an afterthought and tied to gender, this provides an ongoing resource for the other members to continue to treat her as an appropriate recipient of directives, admonitions, and advice (lines 27, 105, 124, and 126–127) that, although apparently designed as teasing or nonserious, unequivocally position her as a subordinate (see also Stokoe 2008).

Thus, across this extract, participants managing a setting-based task tied to their membership in the "psychology student" category also mobilize a gender category that offers the most readily apparent basis for differentiating their participation in an evidently devalued part of the task. Their use of, and resistance to, this category arises in activities initiated and conducted through sequences of action, introduced through word selection and person reference practices, and subsequently revisited and reinforced as they make their way toward the completion of the overall activity.

In Extract 3,[7] taken from an encounter with the police regarding a disturbance in a convenience store, participants' orientations to the relevance and consequentiality of their visibly available membership in racial categories (Black and white) emerge in the opening moments of the interaction. The encounter was occasioned by a Black civilian (who does not appear in the extract) calling 911 to report a white woman causing a disturbance and using racial epithets.

Having been called, arriving officers routinely claim rights to talk first as a basis for beginning to pursue a policeable project (Meehan 1989, Raymond et al. 2022), seeking to establish control over the scene by (for example) separating the parties and securing subjects of interest. In this case, however, as soon as the officers enter the store, where they encounter a Black male civilian (C1) and a white heterosexual couple (C2 and C3), the former seeks to establish his membership in the setting-based "witness" (and later "peacekeeper") category before the police ever say a word. In this way, C1 exploits an opportunity to take a turn at talk, producing a first action that invites a response as a way of opening the encounter and bringing into play features of the generic orders of turn-taking, sequence organization, and overall structural organization in the course of managing category-related matters. By mobilizing these forms of the organization of interaction, C1 places the other participants in a situation of choice: They can either respond to his turn or leave his claims unaddressed by pursuing some other course of action as an alternative way of beginning the encounter. In what follows we first examine how C1 seeks to shape his participation in the encounter and then consider how the other participants take up that project or seek to pursue an alternative to it.

We begin our analysis in the very opening moments of the encounter, with C1 starting to speak the moment the officers enter the store (line 01). The practices he uses to begin and compose his turn, and the preemptive project it launches, reflect his understanding that he will need to overcome officers' presumptions—based on his status as a young Black male—that he is one of the antagonists. That is, his conduct seeks to counter the categorial biases he thereby treats as bound to the "police officer" category.

[7]Readers may also consult the analyses of this extract by Raymond et al. (2023) and Whitehead et al. (2024a).

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Extract 3: Police encounter
((As two officers walk in))

01	C1:	>Hey. =Honestly sir.< (.) I have no issues=
02	PO1:	=Let's go out[side.
03	C2:	[These guys are cool.
04	C1:	This guy- I- hon[estly- honestly=
05	C3:	[He's cool. He's,
06	C1:	=I'm the- I'm [the one that's keeping th[uh peace sir.
07	C2:	[those dudes out there, [
08	C3:	[He's- he's
09	C1:	I'm fine.
10	PO1:	First of all you're coming outside too
11	C1:	Okay. [No ( ). fine sir
12	C3:	[Hey he's cool though. Please believe me man.

The timing and composition of C1's turn address two elements of the encounter's opening: his understanding that the arriving police officers are entitled to speak first, and that they will likely assume his involvement in the dispute unless he does something to avert this. For example, although he is the first to take a turn at talk, the opening components of his utterance are louder than the surrounding talk and produced at an accelerated pace, two practices speakers use to preempt or subvert potentially competitive talk (Schegloff 2000). Moreover, in using this rushed turn beginning to address the officers, C1 treats recruiting their recipiency as a prerequisite for further action. These elements of C1's turn beginning thereby reflect an orientation to his diminished entitlement to speak.

Once he can see that he has won his bid to take a turn in the clear, C1 slows the pace of his talk to disclaim his involvement in the dispute (line 01). Then, when one of the officers tells him to "go outside" (line 02) instead of taking up his claims, C1 further characterizes his role in trying to resolve the dispute as a means of establishing how he should be treated. That is, in asserting that he is "the one that's keeping thuh peace" (line 06), and thereby claiming membership in a setting-based "peacekeeper" category, C1 specifies an alternative basis for his presence at a scene of trouble that the police have been called to resolve—one that claims alignment with their project rather than acquiescing to their apparent positioning of him as part of those troubles.

Taken together, these practices suggest a concerted effort by C1 to claim membership in the setting-based "witness" category before the officers can act on (any presumed) categorial biases that might lead to his categorization as a suspect. In doing so, C1 addresses what he orients to as the "deficit of credibility" associated with his "provisional status" as a Black person (and possibly, more specifically, his status as a young Black male) in a "white space" (see Anderson 2015, pp. 13–14). C1 thus resists the inferences associated with being categorizable as a member of these categories that he evidently anticipates his interlocutors will otherwise treat as proof of his membership in the setting-based "suspect" category. We can thereby see how the intersection of participants' situated uses of generic organizations of practice for talk-in-interaction and the anticipated relevance of a range of categories place C1 in a situation of choice: He can either act to preemptively establish his status as a witness or attempt to challenge or dispute the officers' treatment of him as one of the involved parties if they go first.

Once C1 has produced a turn addressed to the arriving officers (thereby selecting them as next speakers), whoever speaks next cannot avoid taking a position regarding the competing relevancies set in motion by C1's turn—namely, the officers' institutionally grounded rights to take control of the scene and C1's preemptive claims of innocence. Although PO1's first turn (line

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

02) follows C1's, by producing it as if he was the first to speak he takes a position on the status of C1's claims, asserting his right to speak first. The directive he produces further heightens the situation of choice established by C1's talk: The other copresent civilians can either respond to the officer's directive or address C1's claims. Notably, C2 and C3 take up C1's project by addressing the officers with supportive assessments (lines 03, 05, and 12). Moreover, their talk reveals that they share C1's understanding of the officers' likely racial biases and thus the precarity of his situation. Indeed, in speaking on behalf of C1—and doing so without any apparent concern that they might be viewed as suspects or that their protestations might be treated as resistance warranting the use of force (cf. Sacks 1984b)—they appear to be acting on the privileges (e.g., the presumption of innocence and credibility) associated with their visible membership in the racial category "white." Their assumptions in this regard prove to be well founded: After an officer uses pain compliance techniques to forcefully escort C1 outside (not transcribed), C3 casually walks out with another officer, and a third officer points to C2 (whose conduct prompted the call and who has trailed behind them, unescorted) to ask, "Is she involved too?", thereby displaying an openness to the possibility of her innocence that has not at any time been extended to C1.

The cases we have examined here illustrate that, for participants, categories are used as resources for social action in ways that are sensitive to both proximate and distal contexts. In relation to the former, we have seen how both explicit and tacit uses of categories are unavoidably deployed in particular interactional moments and how these moments are organized by reference to participants' uses of the generic organizations of practice for interaction described above. And yet, our analyses also reveal that, in just the ways categories are used, participants invoke particular distal contexts associated with what is known-in-common by members of a culture about the categories at hand, and these distal contexts thereby enter and shape interactions in these moments. This approach can thus provide psychological science with ecologically valid foundations for studying how persons encounter and contend with the systematic consequentiality of how they and others might be categorized in everyday life. This includes categorization in terms of the categories of long-standing interest for scholars (in these cases, gender, age, and race), but also whatever local, setting-based categories participants may also—or instead—be using to organize their activities (e.g., "salesperson," "customer," "psychology student," "police officer," "suspect," "peacemaker").

5. APPLICATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

In this section, we draw out some of the applications of the conversation analytic approach to categories described in the previous sections for domains outside academia. CA has demonstrated its applied benefits for many years, with a strong track record in delivering practical and policy interventions in institutional settings including education, law, health care, defense, policing, medicine, politics, and media (e.g., Antaki 2011, Lester & O'Reilly 2018). Moreover, there are several decades of CA-influenced research in the domains of work-related technology, design, "situated action" (Suchman 1987), "technomethodology" (Dourish & Button 1998), and other approaches to human-computer interaction, including research conducted directly in and for technology companies (Blackwell et al. 2017, Moore et al. 2018, Rintel 2013). Some of this research includes membership categorization as a key focus, especially in studies of human–robot and human–assistant interaction in conversational AI (e.g., Albert et al. 2019, Krummheuer 2016). The relevance of CA and MCA is clear when we consider that voice assistants, chatbots, and other interfaces are designed for particular categories of users (referred to in these industries as personas), while being shot through with problematic category-relevant biases (e.g., Bedi 2019,

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Venkatraman 2020). At the time of writing, the rapid development and widespread use of large language models have thrust conversational technologies into the spotlight, and conversation analysts are working alongside industry partners to identify common ground as well as to challenge how conversationality is understood and leveraged in product development (see Stokoe et al. 2024).

Analyses of the interactional organization of "-isms" such as those illustrated by Extracts 1–3 have informed the development of evidence-based approaches to communication training and intervention, such as the Conversation Analytic Role-play Method (CARM; Stokoe 2011, 2014). One CARM workshop started out as a response to a request from community mediators to run training on how to respond to hate speech in the communities with which they worked. To best meet this need—and to move away from traditional role-play or experience- or scenario-based training—Stokoe developed workshops in which facilitators and workshop participants could collaboratively examine some of the same recorded interactions used as data for studies on "-isms" in interaction. For example, Extract 4[8] comes from a mediation session in which three parties in a dispute are copresent (Macy, Gary, and Henry), together with two mediators (Joe and Lucy). This extract is over halfway through a 90-minute session, and the ostensible cause of the dispute is a shared garden space that has been, according to Gary and Henry, "colonized" by Macy's plants. Here, Macy is explaining what she sees as the root of the problem.

Extract 4: Barbra Streisand

01	M:	But uh: can I say this[:: uh: when we[:: moved- first]=
02	J:	[Yeh?
03	G:	[Um: it's DANgerous]=
04	M:	=[move]d i:n, and uh: (1.2) I:: remember (0.3) ~uh:~=
05	G:	=[Joe.]
06	M:	=having a word with Gary about something he accu:sed
07		me of being uh- (0.5) like a Barbra <Streisand.>

In the CARM workshop, the audio recording and transcript are stopped at this point. Participants then discuss questions about what kind of accusation this is, examine evidence in relation to their observations, and consider what they may say in response if they were the mediators. Of particular interest here is Macy's claim (lines 01, 04, and 06–07) that Gary had a problem with her before she did anything to the garden, and thus that his issues with her arise out of his prejudice rather than her actions. In support of this claim, she reports that Gary "accused me of being. . .like a Barbra Streisand" (lines 06–07). Note her use of the indefinite article "a" to produce, in this case, a well-known celebrity's name as a category, apparently as a method for accomplishing off-record what would be plainly offensive, and specifically anti-Semitic, if stated more directly. Macy thereby also retains Gary's effort to avoid a more straightforward expression of anti-Semitism and thus his understanding that his conduct is objectionable.

At this point, Macy has not explicated what she assumes Gary to have meant in saying she was "like a Barbra Streisand," but she treats Gary's use of it as designedly offensive or problematic by claiming he "accused her" of this incumbency. However, Macy goes on, as shown in lines 08–09 below, to unpack what she takes to be the features of the category "a Barbra Streisand" being ascribed to her by Gary:

[8]Readers may also consult the analyses of this extract by Stokoe (2015) and Whitehead et al. (2024b).

Extract 4: Barbra Streisand (continued)

08	M:	which meant I must be aggressive: (0.5) Jewish, (0.3)
09		which I am neither,

This unpacking reveals her concern that others may not see its connotations and relevance for the action of complaining. Thus, by Macy's account Gary sees her as "aggressive" and "Jewish," while for Macy, Gary is anti-Semitic. This is the work that the reported categorization, and its disavowal, is doing in and for this occasion (see also Stokoe 2015). In CARM workshops, most participants say that their response at line 10 would topicalize the categorization and explore it further, including asking Gary for his account. This is what actually happens next.

Extract 4: Barbra Streisand (continued)

10		(0.4)
11	M:	Um::
12		(0.4)
13	L:	I- I think- [I'm not- I'm not sure that this is helpful
14	J:	[Is this helpful?

Following a number of delays, hitches, and mitigations (lines 10–12) that foreshadow their disalignment from the preceding action, the mediators simultaneously question whether the course of action Macy has initiated is "helpful" (lines 13–14). In doing so, they decline to address her accusation, instead closing off the sequence in favor of returning to a discussion of the garden and what might happen to the plants. The participants in CARM workshops use this case as the basis for further discussion, including about the nature and purpose of mediation itself. What CARM sessions thereby offer, in contrast to abstracted and individualized survey responses, is that mediators—sometimes from the same organization—are able to discuss actual cases, see actual mediator responses, and discover that not everyone shares an understanding of what counts as an "-ism," how it should be dealt with if it happens in mediation sessions, or whether the organization shares an ethos about the purpose of mediation.

CARM's effectiveness as a method for changing communication practice has been evaluated and demonstrated across multiple sectors: For example, Stokoe & Sikveland (2021) reported that it improved (*a*) the ability of British police negotiators to bring suicide crisis negotiations to a successful outcome; (*b*) the ability of dispute resolution services, government, and court services in the United Kingdom and the United States to engage clients more effectively; (*c*) patient satisfaction at General Practitioner surgery receptions in England; and (*d*) clients' experiences with and the economic success of digital technology products and services in global organizations. CARM has also been evaluated by other researchers in other contexts (e.g., Church & Bateman 2019, White et al. 2021), including in a feasibility randomized controlled trial in teacher education (Sikveland et al. 2023), thus demonstrating some of the range, scope, and impact of applying findings from studies of categories in social interaction across the academy and beyond.

6. CONCLUSIONS: THE IMPLICATIONS OF CONVERSATION ANALYSIS AND MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIZATION ANALYSIS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE

The primary aim of this article was to sketch a systematic framework for investigating how categories and categorial phenomena are (re)produced in naturally occurring social interaction. We also aimed to connect the domains of CA and membership categorization to psychological science.

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

In so doing, we have shown how CA and MCA address a range of concerns raised by psychologists themselves about their methods and approaches, such as Mehl's (2017, p. 184) call, discussed earlier, for the psychologists' tool kit to include methods that can "directly observe. . .where moment-to-moment behavior naturally happens." We conclude by considering five implications of our article for continuing this conversation.

First, we have noted that, when it comes to understanding categories, it is typical in psychology and the social sciences to leverage them (often uncritically) as researchers' resources. We argue that "knowing" from the outset which categories will be relevant to whatever aspect of human sociality is under investigation is an act of "theoretical imperialism" (Schegloff 1997, p. 167) that risks creating and perpetuating, rather than dismantling, stereotypes.

Second, in addressing psychology's failure to directly observe behavior, and to deal with issues such as ecological validity, Mehl (2017; see also Mehl et al. 2001) developed the Electronically Activated Record (EAR) method, which "intermittently records snippets of ambient sounds while participants go about their lives" (Mehl 2017, p. 184). Related to our first point, one key EAR-based study (Mehl et al. 2007) showed that, contrary to the stereotype that women are more talkative than men, women and men spoke roughly the same number of words per day. However, while Mehl's method "can provide ecological, behavioral criteria that are independent of self-report" and "help study psychologically important subtle and habitual behaviors" (Mehl 2017, p. 186), CA and MCA have already contributed enormously to our understanding of these things and more. Why is this work not better known among psychologists?

Regarding the stereotype of the talkative woman, an earlier critical review of 56 studies of verbosity in mixed-gender interactions had already found a very mixed picture with no evidence to support the stereotype (James & Drakich 1993). This review was the product of interdisciplinary research (in this case, between social psychology and linguistics), and it speaks to a third issue. Beyond its current focus on addressing its WEIRD problems, psychology must also address its near-sightedness when it comes to recognizing where theory, method, knowledge, and critique have already been developed inside (e.g., in discursive, critical, or feminist psychology) and beyond (e.g., in CA, MCA, and across the social sciences) psychology, particularly North American psychology.

Fourth, regarding WEIRD problems, Newson et al. (2021) proposed a "WILD" solution: that research and researchers should aspire to be "Worldwide, but also In Situ, Local, and Diverse" and to take "researchers out of the confines of comfortable laboratory walls to work with all kinds of populations in the real world." At least one way to realize the WILD solution—or treat it as already somewhat realized—is to conduct research using CA to study people's methods for interacting.

Finally, mixed into WEIRD discourse is the reproducibility crisis, with studies failing to replicate and several now notorious cases of research misconduct comprising a crisis that challenges the integrity and legitimacy of experimental psychology (e.g., Nosek et al. 2022, Świątkowski & Dompnier 2017). As we discussed above, one way of thinking through this crisis is to consider not only the problems with lab-based studies of narrow groups of participants but also what actually happens in the laboratories themselves in the production of data (cf. Latour & Woolgar 1979). As Dingemanse et al. (2023, p. 1) point out, "[t]hat social interaction matters is recognized by any experimentalist who seeks to exclude its influence by studying individuals in isolation"—and its influence has been exposed, for example, by analyses of experimenter-participant interactions in classic psychology experiments (e.g., Gibson 2019, Hollander & Turowetz 2023) and in standardized survey interviews (e.g., Lavin & Maynard 2001, Maynard & Schaeffer 2006) that reveal the "softness" of ostensibly "hard" data (Stokoe et al. 2021a).

Much of what psychological science has examined using experimental methods depends on studying humans, culture, and society outside of the primary ecological settings in which they act,

develop, and live. De Oliveira & Baggs (2023) call for a "rewilding" of psychology. We suggest that psychology, should it embrace the decades of research in CA and MCA, will discover a rich resource of local, ecologically valid, in situ, diverse, at scale, and comparative knowledge about human sociality in the wild.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The authors are not aware of any affiliations, memberships, funding, or financial holdings that might be perceived as affecting the objectivity of this review.

LITERATURE CITED

Albert S, Housley W, Stokoe E. 2019. In case of emergency, order pizza: an urgent case of action formation and recognition. In *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Conversational User Interfaces*, art. 15. New York: ACM

Anderson E. 2015. The white space. *Sociol. Race Ethn.* 1(1):10–21

Antaki C. 2011. *Applied Conversation Analysis: Intervention and Change in Institutional Talk*. London: Palgrave Macmillan

Baker C. 2000. Locating culture in action: membership categorization in texts and talk. In *Culture and Text: Discourse and Methodology in Social Research and Cultural Studies*, ed. A Lee, C Poynton, pp. 99–113. London: Routledge

Baumeister RF, Vohs KD, Funder DC. 2007. Psychology as the science of self-reports and finger movements: Whatever happened to actual behavior? *Perspect. Psychol. Sci.* 2(4):396–403

Bedi S. 2019. *Marketing's ethical blind spot: catering to consumer preferences*. Kelley Sch. Bus. Res. Pap. 19–50, Ind. Univ., Bloomington

Benwell B, Stokoe E. 2006. *Discourse and Identity*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh Univ. Press

Bishop D. 2018. A woman of a certain age! *Woman of a Certain Age in Paris*, Aug. 7. **https://womanofacertainageinparis.com/blog/2018/08/07/a-woman-of-a-certain-age/**

Blackwell AF, Blythe M, Kaye J. 2017. Undisciplined disciples: everything you always wanted to know about ethnomethodology but were afraid to ask Yoda. *Personal Ubiquitous Comput.* 21:571–92

Bolden GB. 2014. Negotiating understanding in "intercultural moments" in immigrant family interactions. *Commun. Monogr.* 81(2):208–38

Bolden GB, Hepburn A, Potter J, Zhan K, Wei W, et al. 2022. Over-exposed self-correction: practices for managing competence and morality. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 55(3):203–21

Brick C, Hood B, Ekroll V, De-Wit L. 2022. Illusory essences: a bias holding back theorizing in psychological science. *Perspect. Psychol. Sci.* 17(2):491–506

Caldas-Coulthard CR. 2010. "Women of a certain age": life styles, the female body and ageism. In *Femininity, Feminism and Gendered Discourse: A Selected and Edited Collection of Papers from the Fifth International Language and Gender Association Conference (IGALA5)*, ed. J Holmes, M Marra, pp. 21–40. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Sch. Publ.

Cameron D. 1997. Demythologizing sociolinguistics. In *Sociolinguistics: A Reader and Course Book*, ed. N Coupland, A Jaworski, pp. 55–67. London: Macmillan

Church A, Bateman A. 2019. Methodology and professional development: Conversation Analytic Role-play Method (CARM) for early childhood education. *J. Pragmat.* 143:242–54

Crawford M. 1995. *Talking Difference: On Gender and Language*. London: Sage

Crenshaw KW. 1989. Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: a Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics. *Univ. Chicago Legal Forum* 14:538–54

Croft W, Cruse DA. 2004. *Cognitive Linguistics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

de Oliveira GS, Baggs E. 2023. *Psychology's WEIRD Problems*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

De Ruiter JP, Albert S. 2017. An appeal for a methodological fusion of conversation analysis and experimental psychology. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 50(1):90–107

Dingemanse M, Liesenfeld A, Rasenberg M, Albert S, Ameka FK, et al. 2023. Beyond single-mindedness: a figure-ground reversal for the cognitive sciences. *Cogn. Sci.* 47(1):e13230

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Dingemanse M, Roberts SG, Baranova J, Blythe J, Drew P, et al. 2015. Universal principles in the repair of communication problems. *PLOS ONE* 10(9):e0136100

Dourish P, Button G. 1998. On "technomethodology": foundational relationships between ethnomethodology and system design. *Hum.-Comput. Interact.* 13(4):395–432

Drew C. 2021. 8 examples of social identity (race, class and gender). *Helpful Professor*, Sept. 29. **https://helpfulprofessor.com/social-identity-examples/**

Drew P, Heritage J. 1992. *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

Edmonds DM, Pino M. 2023. Designedly intentional misgendering in social interaction: a conversation analytic account. *Fem. Psychol.* 33(4):668–91

Edwards D. 1991. Categories are for talking: on the cognitive and discursive bases of categorization. *Theory Psychol.* 1(4):515–42

Edwards D. 1997. *Discourse and Cognition*. London: Sage

Edwards D. 2006. Discourse, cognition and social practices: the rich surface of language and social interaction. *Discourse Stud.* 8(1):41–49

Edwards D, Potter J. 1992. *Discursive Psychology*. London: Sage

Edwards D, Potter J. 2001. Discursive psychology. In *How to Analyse Talk in Institutional Settings: A Casebook of Methods*, ed. A McHoul, M Rapley, pp. 12–24. London: Continuum

Egbert M. 2004. Other-initiated repair and membership categorization—some conversational events that trigger linguistic and regional membership categorization. *J. Pragmat.* 36(8):1467–98

Eglin P, Hester S. 1992. Category, predicate and task: the pragmatics of practical action. *Semiotica* 88(3–4):243–68

Enfield NJ, Dingemanse M, Baranova J, Blythe J, Brown P, et al. 2013. Huh? What? A first survey in 21 languages. In *Conversational Repair and Human Understanding*, ed. M Hayashi, G Raymond, J Sidnell, pp. 343–80. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

Faye C. 2012. American social psychology: examining the contours of the 1970s crisis. *Stud. Hist. Philos. Sci. C* 43(2):514–21

Flinkfeldt M, Parslow S, Stokoe E. 2022. How categorization impacts the design of requests: asking for email addresses in call-centre interactions. *Lang. Soc.* 51:693–716

Gibson S. 2019. *Arguing, Obeying and Defying: A Rhetorical Perspective on Stanley Milgram's Obedience Experiments*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

Goodwin C. 2003. Pointing as situated practice. In *Pointing: Where Language, Culture and Cognition Meet*, ed. S Kita, pp. 217–41. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Elrbaum

Haslam SA, Reicher SD. 2015. Self-categorization theory. In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. JD Wright, pp. 455–59. Amsterdam: Elsevier

Hepburn A, Bolden GB. 2017. *Transcribing for Social Research*. London: Sage

Heritage J. 2009. Conversation analysis as social theory. In *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*, ed. BS Turner, pp. 300–20. Malden, MA: Blackwell

Heritage J, Atkinson JM. 1984. Introduction. In *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis*, ed. JM Atkinson, J Heritage, pp. 1–17. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

Heritage J, Clayman S. 2010. *Talk in Action: Interactions, Identities, and Institutions*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell

Heritage J, Raymond G. 2005. The terms of agreement: indexing epistemic authority and subordination in talk-in-interaction. *Soc. Psychol. Q.* 68(1):15–38

Hill Collins P, Bilge S. 2020. *Intersectionality*. London: Polity

Hoey EM, Webb J. 2024. Conversation-analytic methods of data collection. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Methods in Conversation Analysis*, ed. JD Robinson, R Clift, K Kendrick, CW Raymond. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press. In press

Hollander MM, Turowetz J. 2023. *Morality in the Making of Sense and Self: Stanley Milgram's Obedience Experiments and the New Science of Morality*. Oxford, UK: Oxford Univ. Press

Holth P. 2001. The persistence of category mistakes in psychology. *Behav. Philos.* 29:203–19

Housley W, Fitzgerald R. 2015. Introduction to membership categorization analysis. In *Advances in Membership Categorization Analysis*, ed. R Fitzgerald, W Housley, pp. 1–22. London: Sage

Huensch A. 2017. How the initiation and resolution of repair sequences act as a device for the co-construction of membership and identity. *Pragmat. Soc.* 8(3):355–76
Ivanov A, Nikonova Z, Frolova N, Muratbayeva I. 2023. Linguistic potential of COVID-19 neologisms in the metaphoric language of socio-political discourse. *Commun. Public* 8(3):237–53
James D, Drakich J. 1993. Understanding gender differences in amount of talk: a critical review of research. In *Gender and Conversational Interaction*, ed. D Tannen, pp. 281–312. Oxford, UK: Oxford Univ. Press
Jefferson G. 2004a. A note on laughter in "male-female" interaction. *Discourse Stud.* 6(1):117–33
Jefferson G. 2004b. Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation*, ed. GH Lerner, pp. 13–23. Amsterdam: John Benjamins
Joyce JB, Humă B, Ristimäki H-L, de Almeida FF, Doehring A. 2021. Speaking out against everyday sexism: gender and epistemics in accusations of "mansplaining." *Fem. Psychol.* 31(4):502–29
Joyce JB, Sterphone J. 2022. Challenging racism in public spaces: practices for interventions into disputes. *J. Pragmat.* 201:43–59
Kitzinger C. 2005a. Heteronormativity in action: reproducing the heterosexual nuclear family in after-hours medical calls. *Soc. Probl.* 52(4):477–98
Kitzinger C. 2005b. "Speaking as a heterosexual": (How) does sexuality matter for talk-in-interaction? *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 38(3):221–65
Kitzinger C. 2008. Conversation analysis: technical matters for gender research. In *Gender and Language Research Methodologies*, ed. K Harrington, L Litosseliti, H Sauntson, J Sunderland, pp. 119–38. London: Palgrave
Krummheuer AL. 2016. Who am I? What are you? Identity construction in encounters between a teleoperated robot and people with acquired brain injury. In *Social Robotics. ICSR 2016. Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, Vol. 9979, ed. A Agah, JJ Cabibihan, A Howard, M Salichs, H He. Cham, Switz.: Springer. **https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-47437-3_86**
Land V, Kitzinger C. 2005. Speaking as a lesbian: correcting the heterosexist presumption. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 38(4):371–416
Latour B, Woolgar S. 1979. *Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press
Lavin D, Maynard DW. 2001. Standardization vs. rapport: respondent laughter and interviewer reaction during telephone surveys. *Am. Sociol. Rev.* 66(3):453–79
Lerner GH. 2003. Selecting next speaker: the context-sensitive operation of a context-free organization. *Lang. Soc.* 32:177–201
Lester JN, O'Reilly M. 2018. *Applied Conversation Analysis: Social Interaction in Institutional Settings*. London: Sage
Levinson SC. 2006. On the human "interaction engine." In *Roots of Human Sociality: Culture, Cognition and Interaction*, ed. NJ Enfield, SC Levinson, pp. 39–69. Oxford, UK: Berg
Lewin MA. 1977. Kurt Lewin's view of social psychology: the crisis of 1977 and the crisis of 1927. *Personal. Soc. Psychol. Bull.* 3(2):159–72
Liu R-Y. 2023. Constructing childhood in social interaction: how parents assert epistemic primacy over their children. *Soc. Psychol. Q.* 86(1):74–94
Mastroianni AM, Gilbert DT, Cooney G, Wilson TD. 2021. Do conversations end when people want them to? *PNAS* 118(10):e2011809118
Maynard DW, Schaeffer NC. 2006. Standardization-in-interaction: the survey interview. In *Talk and Interaction in Social Research Methods*, ed. P Drew, G Raymond, D Weinberg, pp. 9–27. London: Sage
Mazeland H. 2007. Parenthetical sequences. *J. Pragmat.* 39(10):1816–69
McHoul A. 2007. 'Killers' and 'friendlies': Names can hurt me. *Soc. Identities* 13(4):459–69
McIlvenny P, Davidsen JG, Stein A, Kovács AB. 2022. DOTE: Distributed Open Transcription Environment. *Software*. **https://github.com/BigSoftVideo/DOTE/**
Meehan AJ. 1989. Assessing the "police-worthiness" of citizen complaints to the police: accountability and the negotiation of "facts." In *Interactional Order: New Directions in the Study of Social Order*, ed. D Helm, WT Anderson, AJ Meehan, A Rawls. New York: Irvington Publ.
Mehl MR. 2017. The Electronically Activated Recorder (EAR): a method for the naturalistic observation of daily social behavior. *Curr. Dir. Psychol. Sci.* 26(2):184–90

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Mehl MR, Pennebaker JW, Crow DM, Dabbs J, Price JH. 2001. The Electronically Activated Recorder (EAR): a device for sampling naturalistic daily activities and conversations. *Behav. Res. Methods Instrum. Comput.* 33(4):517–23

Mehl MR, Vazire S, Ramírez-Esparza N, Slatcher RB, Pennebaker JW. 2007. Are women really more talkative than men? *Science* 317(5834):82

Mendieta E, Alcoff LM. 2003. *Identities: Race, Class, Gender, and Nationality*. Malden, MA: Blackwell

Moghaddam FM. 1987. Psychology in the three worlds: as reflected by the crisis in social psychology and the move toward indigenous third-world psychology. *Am. Psychol.* 42(10):912–20

Moore RJ, Szymanski MH, Arar R, Ren G-J. 2018. *Studies in Conversational UX Design*. Cham, Switz.: Springer

Muthukrishna M, Bell AV, Henrich J, Curtin CM, Gedranovich A, et al. 2020. Beyond Western, educated, industrial, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) psychology: measuring and mapping scales of cultural and psychological distance. *Psychol. Sci.* 31(6):678–701

Nelson CE, Kannenberg PH. 1976. Social psychology in crisis: a study of the references in the *Handbook of Social Psychology*. *Personal. Soc. Psychol. Bull.* 2(1):14–21

Newson M, Buhrmester M, Xygalatas D, Whitehouse H. 2021. Go WILD, not WEIRD. *J. Cogn. Sci. Relig.* 6(1–2):80–106

Nosek BA, Hardwicke TE, Moshontz H, Allard A, Corker KS, et al. 2022. Replicability, robustness, and reproducibility in psychological science. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* 73:719–48

Pomerantz A. 1984. Agreeing and disagreeing with assessments: some features of preferred/dispreferred turn shapes. In *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis*, ed. JM Atkinson, J Heritage, pp. 57–101. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

Potter J. 1996. *Representing Reality: Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction*. London: Sage

Raymond CW. 2019. Category accounts: identity and normativity in sequences of action. *Lang. Soc.* 49(4):585–606

Raymond G, Chen J, Whitehead KA. 2023. Sequential standoffs in police encounters with the public. *J. Lang. Soc. Psychol.* 42:653–78

Raymond G, Heritage J. 2006. The epistemics of social relations: owning grandchildren. *Lang. Soc.* 35(5):677–705

Raymond G, Jungleib L, Zimmerman D, Jones N. 2022. Rules and policeable matters: enforcing the civil sidewalk ordinance for "another first time." In *The Ethnomethodology Program: Legacies and Prospects*, ed. J Heritage, DW Maynard, pp. 162–87. Oxford, UK: Oxford Univ. Press

Raymond G, Lerner GH. 2014. A body and its involvements: adjusting action for dual involvements. In *Multiactivity in Social Interaction: Beyond Multitasking*, ed. P Haddington, T Keisanen, L Mondada, M Nevile, pp. 227–46. Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Reynolds KJ. 2015. Social identity in social psychology. In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. JD Wright, pp. 313–18. Amsterdam: Elsevier

Richards G. 2012. *Race, Racism and Psychology: Towards a Reflexive History*. London: Routledge

Rintel S. 2013. Tech-tied or tongue-tied? Technological versus social trouble in relational video calling. In *2013 46th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, pp. 3343–52. New Brunswick, NJ: IEEE

Robinson JD. 2024. Collecting interaction data in the "lab" versus the "field": rationale, ramifications, and recommendations. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Methods in Conversation Analysis*, ed. JD Robinson, R Clift, K Kendrick, CW Raymond. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

Robinson JD, Clift R, Kendrick K, Raymond CW, eds. 2024. *The Cambridge Handbook of Methods in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press. In press

Robles JS. 2015. Extreme case (re)formulation as a practice for making hearably-racist talk repairable. *J. Lang. Soc. Psychol.* 34(4):390–409

Rossi G, Dingemanse M, Floyd S, Baranova J, Blythe J, et al. 2023. Shared cross-cultural principles underlie human prosocial behavior at the smallest scale. *Sci. Rep.* 13:6057

Rossi G, Stivers T. 2020. Category-sensitive actions in interaction. *Soc. Psychol. Q.* 84(1):49–74

Sacks H. 1966. *The search for help: no one to turn to*. PhD Thesis, Univ. Calif., Berkeley

Sacks H. 1984a. Notes on methodology. In *Structures of Social Action*, ed. JM Atkinson, J Heritage, pp. 21–27. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

Sacks H. 1984b. On doing "being ordinary." In *Structures of Social Action*, ed. JM Atkinson, J Heritage, pp. 413–29. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press
Sacks H. 1992. *Lectures on Conversation*. Malden, MA: Blackwell
Sacks H, Schegloff EA. 1979. Two preferences in the organization of reference to persons in conversation and their interaction. In *Everyday Language: Studies in Ethnomethodology*, ed. G Psathas, pp. 15–21. New York: Irvington Publ.
Sacks H, Schegloff EA, Jefferson G. 1974. A simplest systematics for the organization of turn taking in conversation. *Language* 50:696–735
Schaller M, Neuberg SL. 2012. Danger, disease, and the nature of prejudice(s). *Adv. Exp. Soc. Psychol.* 46:1–54
Schegloff EA. 1968. Sequencing in conversational openings. *Am. Anthropol.* 70:1075–95
Schegloff EA. 1987. Analyzing single episodes of interaction: an exercise in conversation analysis. *Soc. Psychol. Q.* 50(2):101–14
Schegloff EA. 1992. Introduction. In *Lectures on Conversation*, ed. G Jefferson, pp. ix–lxii. Malden, MA: Blackwell
Schegloff EA. 1996a. Confirming allusions: toward an empirical account of action. *Am. J. Sociol.* 102(1):161–216
Schegloff EA. 1996b. Some practices for referring to persons in talk-in-interaction: a partial sketch of a systematics. In *Studies in Anaphora*, ed. B Fox, pp. 437–85. Amsterdam: John Benjamins
Schegloff EA. 1997. Whose text? Whose context? *Discourse Soc.* 8(2):165–87
Schegloff EA. 2000. Overlapping talk and the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Lang. Soc.* 29(1):1–63
Schegloff EA. 2001. Accounts of conduct in interaction: interruption, overlap and turn-taking. In *Handbook of Sociological Theory*, ed. JH Turner, pp. 287–321. Cham, Switz.: Springer
Schegloff EA. 2006. Interaction: The infrastructure for social institutions, the natural ecological niche for language, and the arena in which culture is enacted. In *Roots of Human Sociality: Culture, Cognition and Interaction*, ed. NJ Enfield, SC Levinson, pp. 70–95. Oxford, UK: Berg
Schegloff EA. 2007a. A tutorial on membership categorization. *J. Pragmat.* 39(3):462–82
Schegloff EA. 2007b. *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press
Schegloff EA, Jefferson G, Sacks H. 1977. The preference for self-correction in the organization of repair in conversation. *Language* 53(2):361–82
Sidnell J, ed. 2009. *Conversation Analysis: Comparative Perspectives*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press
Sidnell J, Enfield NJ. 2012. Language diversity and social action: a third locus of linguistic relativity. *Curr. Anthropol.* 53(3):302–33
Sikveland RO, Moser T, Solem MS, Skovholt K. 2023. The effectiveness of the Conversation Analytic Role-Play Method (CARM) on interactional awareness: a feasibility randomized controlled trial with student teachers. *Teach. Teacher Educ.* 129:104136
Silverman D. 1998. *Harvey Sacks: Social Science and Conversation Analysis*. Oxford, UK: Oxford Univ. Press
Speer SA. 2019. Reconsidering self-deprecation as a communication practice. *Br. J. Soc. Psychol.* 58(4):806–28
Speer SA, Stokoe E. 2011. *Conversation and Gender*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press
Sterphone J. 2022. Complaining by category: managing social categories and action ascription in wargame interactions. *Lang. Commun.* 84:46–60
Stivers T. 2007. Alternative recognitionals in person reference. In *Person Reference in Interaction: Linguistic, Cultural and Social Perspectives*, ed. NJ Enfield, T Stivers, pp. 73–96. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press
Stivers T, Enfield NJ, eds. 2009. *Person Reference in Interaction: Linguistic, Cultural and Social Perspectives*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press
Stivers T, Enfield NJ, Brown P, Englert C, Hayashi M, et al. 2009. Universals and cultural variation in turn-taking in conversation. *PNAS* 106(26):10587–92
Stivers T, Sidnell J, eds. 2013. *The Handbook of Conversation Analysis*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell
Stokoe E. 2006. On ethnomethodology, feminism, and the analysis of categorial reference to gender in talk-in-interaction. *Sociol. Rev.* 54(3):467–94

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28

Stokoe E. 2008. Categories and sequences: formulating gender in talk-in-interaction. In *Gender and Language Research Methodologies*, ed. K Harrington, L Litosseliti, H Sauntson, J Sunderland, pp. 139–57. London: Palgrave

Stokoe E. 2009. Doing actions with identity categories: complaints and denials in neighbor disputes. *Text Talk* 29(1):75–97

Stokoe E. 2010. "I'm not gonna hit a lady": conversation analysis, membership categorization and men's denials of violence towards women. *Discourse Soc.* 21(1):59–82

Stokoe E. 2011. Simulated interaction and communication skills training: the "Conversation Analytic Role-play Method." In *Applied Conversation Analysis: Intervention and Change in Institutional Talk*, ed. C Antaki, pp. 119–39. London: Palgrave Macmillan

Stokoe E. 2012a. Categorial systematics. *Discourse Stud.* 14(3):345–54

Stokoe E. 2012b. Moving forward with membership categorization analysis: methods for systematic analysis. *Discourse Stud.* 14(3):277–303

Stokoe E. 2014. The Conversation Analytic Role-play Method (CARM): a method for training communication skills as an alternative to simulated role-play. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 47(3):255–65

Stokoe E. 2015. Identifying and responding to possible *-isms* in institutional encounters: alignment, impartiality and the implications for communication training. *J. Lang. Soc. Psychol.* 34(4):427–45

Stokoe E. 2018. *Talk: The Science of Conversation*. New York: Hachette

Stokoe E. 2020. Psychological matters in institutional interaction: insights and interventions from discursive psychology and conversation analysis. *Qual. Psychol.* 7(3):331–47

Stokoe E. 2021. The sense of a conversational ending. *Nature* 593:347–49

Stokoe E, Albert S, Buschmeier H, Stommel W. 2024. Conversation analysis and conversational technologies: finding the common ground between academia and industry. *Discourse Commun.* 18(6). In press.

Stokoe E, Antaki C, Bracher M, Christostomou L, Henderson E, et al. 2021a. The softness of hard data. *Medium*, Nov. 10. **https://elizabeth-stokoe.medium.com/the-softness-of-hard-data-475743d8a2f2**

Stokoe E, Hepburn A, Antaki C. 2012. Beware the "Loughborough School" of social psychology? Interaction and the politics of intervention. *Br. J. Soc. Psychol.* 51(3):486–96

Stokoe E, Huma B, Edwards D. 2021b. Sacks, categories, language, and gender. In *On Sacks: Methodology, Materials and Inspirations*, ed. RJ Smith, R Fitzgerald, W Housley, pp. 62–76. London: Routledge

Stokoe E, Sikveland RO. 2021. *Transforming communication training to improve engagement and experience in public, private, and third sector organizations*. Impact Case Study, Loughborough Univ., Loughborough, United Kingdom. **https://results2021.ref.ac.uk/impact/179ac72d-cbac-4325-b9e6-639cebf1ed1c?page=1**

Stolier RM, Freeman JB. 2016. The neuroscience of social vision. In *Neuroimaging Personality, Social Cognition, and Character: Traits and Mental States in the Brain*, ed. JR Absher, J Cloutier, pp. 139–57. Amsterdam: Elsevier

Suchman LA. 1987. *Plans and Situated Actions: The Problem of Human-Machine Communication*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press

Świątkowski W, Dompnier B. 2017. Replicability crisis in social psychology: looking at the past to find new pathways for the future. *Int. Rev. Soc. Psychol.* 30(1):111–24

Tadic N. 2024. Preference organization and possible -isms in institutional interaction: the case of adult second language classrooms. *Lang. Soc.* 53(2):211–37

Tileagă C, Stokoe E. 2016. *Discursive Psychology: Classic and Contemporary Issues*. London: Routledge

Umair M, Mertens JB, Albert S, de Ruiter JP. 2022. GailBot: an automatic transcription system for Conversation Analysis. *Dialogue Discourse* 13(1):63–95

Venkatraman V. 2020. Bias in the machines. *New Sci.* 247(3295):30

Watson R. 1997. Some general reflections on "categorization" and "sequence" in the analysis of conversation. In *Culture in Action: Studies in Membership Categorization Analysis*, ed. S Hester, P Eglin, pp. 49–76. Lanham, MD: Univ. Press America

White SJ, Ward K, Hibberd E. 2021. A pilot of modified Conversation Analytic Role-play Method for one-to-one clinical communication training. *Patient Educ. Couns.* 104(11):2748–55

Whitehead KA. 2013. Managing self/other relations in complaint sequences: the use of self-deprecating and affiliative racial categorizations. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 46(2):186–203
Whitehead KA. 2015. Everyday antiracism in action: preference organization in responses to racism. *J. Lang. Soc. Psychol.* 34(4):374–89
Whitehead KA. 2018. Managing the moral accountability of stereotyping. *J. Lang. Soc. Psychol.* 37(3):288–309
Whitehead KA, Bowman B, Raymond G. 2018. "Risk factors" in action: the situated constitution of "risk" in violent interactions. *Psychol. Violence* 8(3):329–38
Whitehead KA, Lerner GH. 2009. When are persons "white"? On some practical asymmetries of racial reference in talk-in-interaction. *Discourse Soc.* 20(5):613–41
Whitehead KA, Lerner GH. 2022. When simple self-reference is too simple: managing the categorical relevance of speaker self-presentation. *Lang. Soc.* 51:403–26
Whitehead KA, Raymond G, Stokoe E. 2024a. Analyzing categorial phenomena in talk-in-interaction. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Methods in Conversation Analysis*, ed. JD Robinson, R Clift, K Kendrick, CW Raymond. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press. In press
Whitehead KA, Stokoe E. 2015. Producing and responding to *-isms* in interaction. *J. Lang. Soc. Psychol.* 34(4):368–73
Whitehead KA, Stokoe E, Raymond G. 2024b. *Categories in Social Interaction*. London: Routledge
Williams DT. 2024. Racial disparities without racism: some conceptual and analytical considerations. *Sociol. Compass* 18(2):e13182
Zimmerman DH. 1998. Identity, context and interaction. In *Identities in Talk*, ed. C Antaki, S Widdicombe, pp. 87–106. London: Sage

Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org. University of the Witwatersrand (ar-229930) IP: 146.141.14.49 On: Tue, 12 Aug 2025 09:58:28