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Silent communications - embodied between the lines : a study describing nonverbal behaviour patterns within the South African multicultural HIV treatment context.

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APPENDIX A

The evolution of a nonverbal transcript:

The transcription procedure was an evolutionary process that was characterised by material and procedure exploration. In particular this developmental journey involved trialling four principle methods of analysis over two years until the ultimate method for transcription was selected. A summary of this process is described below.

Due to the visual component to nonverbal behaviour patterns it was decided initially that an existing transcription recording system which incorporated the use of visual symbols such as those used by Knapp (1978) and Argyle (1996) or transcription systems used to represent signed information within Deaf culture i.e. diacritics would prove to be most appropriate. As the transcription process progressed however, it became apparent that certain weaknesses and disadvantages with these transcription systems existed that would hamper the research process and project in question. These observed weaknesses included (please refer to extract 1 for an example of these initial transcripts):

- the visual transcription systems that were employed using symbolic representations from systems developed by Knapp (1978) and Argyle (1996) failed to effectively incorporate the time domain within the data. Thus it was often not sufficiently apparent if nonverbal behaviours co-occurred simultaneously and for how long these behaviours occurred within the interaction;
- the visual representation system required the researcher to manually mark each picture symbol. This became problematic due to the fact that consistency was

not sufficient in terms of size and picture symbol as a result of human variation between drawings;

- visual representations used by these systems were not always sufficiently transparent which made understanding and reviewing the data tedious and difficult for individuals not familiar with the transcripts;
- the picture symbols required large amounts of transcript space which resulted in the need for copious amounts of paper and made specific patterns and themes difficult to identify and visualise due to the amount of space needed per page for a single topic turn;
- sign language recording symbols are highly language based and thus it was felt using such representations for nonverbal phenomena that were not semantically or syntactically bound but rather were related to pragmatic domains was inappropriate (Sutton-Spence & Woll, 1999); and
- these visual transcription systems also did not draw at all from conversational analytic frameworks - one of the principal tools for data analysis. This previous point thus further confirmed for the researcher that in light of study objectives and the research design, this specific method for transcription was not appropriate.

Extract 1. – Taken from Initial Transcripts of Interaction "a:

G:

D: – whenever she needs it… we will give you today by the pharmacy you can get, as

G:

D:well as some powder that you can mix with the water for her to drink while she's having the diarrhoea

G: alright

D:

In light of these points it was decided that the transcription system to be used for nonverbal behaviours should incorporate conversational analysis principles – thus allowing for the research project to remain in line with methodological tools – whilst also incorporating temporal components related to the observed interactions.

After reviewing the sparse amount of literature pertaining to nonverbal behaviour research and transcription, a modified version of one such system illustrated by Bot (2005) which uses elements of written symbolic language to represent nonverbal phenomena within a broad conversational analytic framework, as opposed to a visually based system, was selected. Although this system loses certain three dimensional aspects which visual representation systems possess, the use of such a system it was felt would be far more accessible to individuals not familiar with research material, due to the fact that written representations within the system do not just incorporate lines, dashes and dots (as previously seen in work by Heath (1986)) but also a combination of abbreviations of specific semantic concepts which are

directly linked to the nonverbal concept being described. Bot's (2005) system as with that of Heath's (1986) can therefore be likened to a means of data mapping where verbal elements of transcripts are "mapped" vertically across the page and nonverbal elements horizontally. This horizontal aspect of nonverbal data transcription, allows for more effective incorporation of temporal aspects within data records as can be seen clearly in extract 2. It must be noted however that in order to create more comprehensive analytic descriptions of nonverbal behaviours within analysed transcripts the researcher did extend Bot's abbreviation system somewhat to include aspects related to type of body movement e.g. rotational movements etc. A key describing this transcription system can be found in appendix C.

Although this system was identified as overcoming certain weaknesses identified within visual systems, it still failed to incorporate temporal domains sufficiently for the purposes of the study and its objectives. In particular it was identified that although gross temporal aspects were able to be illustrated within this system, aspects such as duration of nonverbal events and multiple simultaneous nonverbal occurrences were not able to be accurately represented within transcript records. Literature focussing on transcription methods therefore had to be revisited.

Figure 3. – Taken From Initial Transcripts of Interaction "a":

d* g hg((PoDoW))
d
g*
^ ^ ^
D: – whenever she needs it… we will give you today by the pharmacy you can get, as
d* hg((URW)) hg((DAWG))
g*
^ ^

D:well as some powder that you can mix with the water for her to drink while she's having the diarrhoea

d*

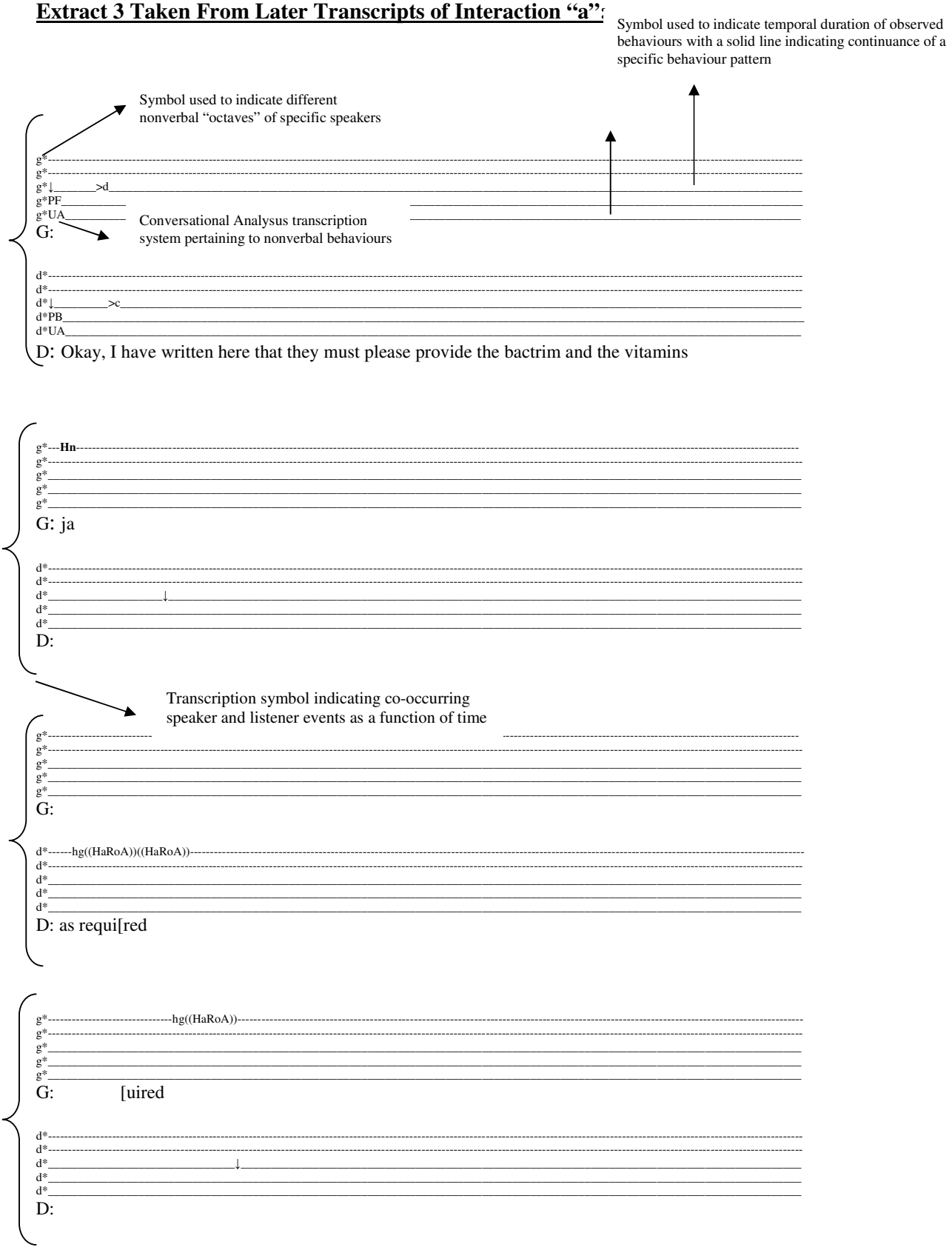
g* hn
^

G: alright

Following the review of certain anthropological papers regarding research transcription and the capture of multiply occurring verbal or nonverbal phenomena at simultaneous instances within time, information came to light regarding the value of polyphonic transcription in achieving desired temporal objectives (Marshall, 2005). Due to the fact that studies incorporating the use of polyphonic transcription methods have not been limited to a single methodological tool for transcription, it was felt that this transcription method could be incorporated with aspects of Bot's (2005) nonverbal conversational analytic tool in order to ensure that the project's research methodology still complied with fundamental conversational analytic principles. Certain aspects of Heath's (1986) transcription system such as vertical and horizontal mapping were also maintained.

Data was thus transcribed in the following format (Please refer extract 3 in conjunction with this description).

Extract 3 Taken From Later Transcripts of Interaction "a"



gᵍ*----------
gᵍ*----------
gᵍ*_____
gᵍ*_____
gᵍ*_____
G:

d*----------hg((PDW))----------
d*----------
d*_____>c_____
d*_____
d*_____
D: – whenever she needs it… we will give you today by the pharmacy you can get, as

gᵍ*----------Hn----------
gᵍ*----------
gᵍ*_____
gᵍ*_____
gᵍ*_____
G:

d*----------hg((URW))----------hg((DAWG))----------
d*----------
d*_____
d*----------
d*_____
D: well as some powder that you can mix with the water for her to drink while she's

gᵍ*----------
gᵍ*----------hn------hnhn----------
gᵍ*_____
gᵍ*_____
gᵍ*_____
G:

d*----------hg((DAWG))----------
d*----------
d*_____
d*----------
d*_____
D:

The coupling of these transcription methods was observed as being highly useful in terms of data analysis and in achieving overall research objectives. However, it was observed that due to the comprehensive nature of this transcription process, significant amounts of spatial resources were required. Thus at times one topic turn could take more than 2 pages of space to be transcribed having marked implications on the reader's ability to view nonverbal behaviour patterns and themes as well as on the length of the research paper itself (initially the results section coupled with transcript extracts totalled more than 200 pages). In light of these challenges the

researcher decided to use the original transcription records containing conversational analysis transcripts combined with a complete form of polyphonic transcription for data analysis (please refer to appendix B to view one entire transcript). However, for the purpose of the research report and to enhance the reader's ability to process analysed transcripts, extracts used within the result section were compressed into an abbreviated version of the original polyphonic transcripts. Thus although these abbreviated transcripts are able to be viewed within the results section of the research report it must be noted that complete transcripts were used within the data analysis process and compilation of research results. The final abbreviated versions of original polyphonic transcripts for each interaction can be viewed within the results section.