



ARGUPOLIS
Argumentation practices in context

FNSNF
Pro*Doc

Theoretical and Methodological Issues in the Analysis of Social Interactions

Version 31.8.2009

September 2009, 8-11

University of Lausanne
Amphimax, Room 412


UNIL | Université de Lausanne

Université
de Neuchâtel **unine**
[home]

Università
della
Svizzera
italiana

Presentation

This module of the Argupolis Doctoral Programme is focused upon methodological issues in the analysis of social interactions. Starting from the assumption that argumentation is a social practice embedded in complex activities, its aim is to show the way in which argumentation is shaped through interactional dynamics.

The scientific programme has been planned in order to assure coherence between the various contributions and to encourage an articulation between theory and method. The various methodological steps going from the collection of the data to their analysis and interpretation will be closely examined and connected to theoretical key-notions of the Argupolis Doctoral Programme, such as argumentation, language, context and social practices.

On a practical level, this module will be organised according to various formats:

- *Keynote talks*: Christian Plantin will offer a general frame for an interactional analysis of argumentation. Three other speakers (Lorenza Mondada, Charles Antaki and Alessandra Fasulo) will present a single case analysis according to a similar presentation format: A talk will first make explicit the way in which the corpus has been collected, annotated and transcribed. Then, an analysis of a fragment of data will show the contribution of detailed interactional analysis (mainly inspired by Conversation Analysis) to the comprehension of argumentation, discussion, debate, critique, decision-making, etc.
- *Data session*: A few doctoral students will be invited to present a short excerpt of their data with their transcriptions and other relevant material (written documents for example).
- *Presentation of the doctoral students' work*: A few students will be invited to give a 20 minute-talk in which they present their own method of collecting and analyzing the data. These talks will focus upon specific problems or difficulties experienced by the students and try to integrate ideas and suggestions that came up during the previous days.

The whole module will give much space to open discussion and debates.

Organisation

Michèle Grossen, University of Lausanne.

Lorenza Mondada, University Lumière Lyon 2.

Speakers

Charles Antaki, University of Loughborough (UK) — Alessandra Fasulo, University of Portsmouth (UK) — Michèle Grossen, University of Lausanne — Lorenza Mondada, University Lumière Lyon 2 — Christian Plantin, University Lumière Lyon 2.

Programme

Tuesday, September 8

- 13:30 – 14:00 Welcome and introduction to the course
- 14:00 – 14:30 *The analysis of social interactions: a multi-disciplinary research object* — Michèle Grossen
- 14:30 – 15:30 *Recording and transcribing video data for the multimodal study of social interaction* — Lorenza Mondada
- 16:00 – 17:15 General discussion on the articles to be read beforehand

Wednesday, September 9

- 9:15 – 12:30 *The collective production of proposals in participatory democracy meetings* — Lorenza Mondada
- 14:00 – 15:30 *Argumentation, dialogue and interaction: A tentative state of the art* — Christian Plantin
- 16:00 – 17:00 *Multilingualism in the institutional context of the university: with which language(s) does the institution equip its communication flows*
Dissertation in progress — Sabine Christopher Guerra, USI

Thursday, September 10

- 9:15 – 12:30 *Do psychotherapists argue with their clients?* — Charles Antaki
- 14:00 – 15:15 *Argumentation and concepts in Newtonian physics*
Data session introduced by Alaric Kohler, UNINE
- 15:45 – 17:00 *Annual shareholders' meeting at McDonald's: Shareholders' proposals*
Data session introduced by Camilla Palmieri, USI

Friday, September 11

- 9:15 – 12:30 *Family business: argumentative talk in household interactions*
Alessandra Fasulo
- 14:00 – 15:00 General discussion
- 15:30 – 16:00 Conclusion

Abstracts

Do psychotherapists argue with their clients?

Charles Antaki

On the face of it, psychotherapy might seem a genre of talk that precludes argument, in the sense of outright opposition, disagreement and quarrelling. There is something about (most kinds of) psychotherapy that respects the authority and feelings of the client. The psychotherapist may know better, but is not meant to sound hostile or disagreeable. Yet sometimes the psychotherapist hears the client say something that requires (from the therapist's point of view) correction or challenge, in the client's own best interests.

I'll explain how I got a corpus of psychotherapy data (with careful regard to ethical issues and anonymity, given the sensitivity of what was being said), how I transcribed it, and how I started to come across regular features of 'argument' in the conversation. I'll use examples to illustrate the gradient of directness available to the therapist, and show how Conversation Analysis can help us identify subtle practices by which the therapist can maintain a sympathetic footing while also confronting the client in a hopefully constructive way.

Family business: argumentative talk in household interactions

Alessandra Fasulo

A family is an institution in which members' worldviews, tastes and ways of doing things may be different, but in which the presupposition holds that such things are made available to the others, and can be subject to discussion on the background of the views, tastes and methods that the family ascribes to itself as a meaningful collectivity. In the light of such premise, argumentative talk can be occasioned by a variety of circumstances: family members are not only often co-present so that their action is visible and accountable for, but they can also have a say on one another's past activities, funneled into the common arena through narrative as well as other means, and on their plans and incumbent activities in general.

I will present data from an ethnographic research on family households in Rome, Italy; I will briefly introduce the wider international project it is part of, explain the methodology and illustrate its specific problems and advantages with examples of topical passages from the recordings and from transcripts. I will then show selected excerpts illustrating argumentative interactions, focusing on issues of intersubjectivity, mutual knowledge, and morality.

The collective production of proposals in participatory democracy meetings
Lorenza Mondada

This talk focuses on the practices through which citizens propose, contend, discuss, and debate ideas in participatory democracy meetings. Participatory democracy meetings are a perspicuous setting for the observation of the way in which the collective production of ideas is managed within groups. They are also an interesting setting for the study of the trajectories of these ideas, within their ‘migration’ from the original context of their first formulation in face to face to other arenas and other materialities (such as written texts summarizing proposals, circulating in the political and public sphere).

The talk discusses the way in which fieldwork has been carried out in a big French town, comprising the video-recording of a series of meetings held by public agencies to foster the production of creative ideas for the transformation of a military site into a public park. Issues related to the use of these video materials, their transcription, and their articulation with written materials (such as publicly written notes during the meeting but also written reports established after the meeting) will be presented. The analysis will focus on the practices which characterize the collaborative construction of a proposal but also the expression and management of disagreement within the participants.

Where

University of Lausanne, Dorigny Campus, Building Amphimax, room 412.
Website : http://www.unil.ch/acces/page36432_fr.html

Registration

This course of the Argupolis Doctoral Programme is open in priority to the doctoral students who are registered in the doctoral programme. On request, other doctoral students, or researchers may also participate. Requests for application should be addressed to [Agatha Filimon \(ioana.agatha.filimon@usi.ch\)](mailto:ioana.agatha.filimon@usi.ch), Argupolis coordinator, University of Lugano, in accordance with the rules published on www.argupolis.net.

Deadline for registration: 31th of July 2009.

Due to the work modalities, the number of participants is limited.

Accommodation

For the students of the Argupolis Doctoral Programme, accommodation, travel expenses and food are taken in charge by Argupolis.

Texts to read beforehand

Two texts should imperatively be read before the beginning of the course since they will be discussed on Tuesday. These texts are on the ARGUPOLIS website www.argupolis.net for the doctoral students who are regular members of the doctoral programme. The other participants will receive them on the online course “Theoretical and Methodological Issues in the Analysis of Social Interactions” to which all the participants (Argupolis PhD students and external guests) will be given access by e-mail as soon as their registration is accepted.

Contact

For any question regarding the registration and programme, please contact [Agatha Filimon \(ioana.agatha.filimon@usi.ch\)](mailto:ioana.agatha.filimon@usi.ch), Argupolis coordinator, University of Lugano.