

Micro-Discourse Analysis Data Sessions

Anyone with an interest in spoken data is warmly invited to join us for the MDA sessions, run by the LDC and taking place about 3 times per term. They take place on Thursdays at 1-3pm, mostly on-line.

Each session involves one member of the group bringing a piece of data, usually audio or audio-visual data with an accompanying transcript. The data tends to be only a few minutes (a couple of pages of transcript), and once it has been introduced and contextualised, the group is invited to listen to the data several times and analyse it individually for about 15 minutes. After we've all had a chance to listen to it, look at it and think about it, we discuss our approaches, interpretations, confusions and conclusions.

Although the person who brings the data is invited to introduce the data and to suggest angles that they would find useful (for example, a focus on narrative or turn-taking), the sessions differ from ordinary seminars in that they are not presentations, but two-hour-long interactive discussions. Indeed, to prevent it becoming a one-way question-&-answer session, the person who brings the data mostly only listens, taking a speaking role only in the last 10 minutes.

The sessions are a great way to share ideas about how to approach data for the first time, to get exposed to other people's data, and most importantly to practice close analysis of discourse data. The workshops are one of the few chances that post-grad students have to get this kind of practice, and our visitors from outside King's have frequently commented on what a unique and useful experience the sessions are. Finally, when your turn comes to bring your data, you are likely to find as many new ways of looking at it as there are people in the room!

If you'd like to come along for a session, let us know and we'll put your email address on the list, which will keep you informed of the data and place of the next session, as well as the data to be analysed.

If you are presenting:

You will need to choose a short piece of audio or video data (no more than 3 minutes) to discuss, and bring it along on a memory stick or your own laptop if you prefer. Please make sure your data is easily found (e.g. if you want to look at 3 minutes on a 2 hour recording, edit the 3 minute data into its own clip).

If we're meeting in person, rather than online, you will need to bring 8-10 transcripts of the data for the group to look at.

Guidelines for transcripts:

- Use standard conversation analysis transcription conventions, but only go into the amount of detail that's necessary for you. E.g. if you aren't interested in pauses, you don't need to differentiate between a 0.2 second pause and a 0.7 second pause!
- Double space the transcript
- Put line breaks at the end of clauses or other 'sense making units', rather than the lines running on as prose.

- Include line numbers
- Include time stamps every 5 seconds or so, so that we can all follow the transcript
- If your data is not in English, it will need an accurate English line-by-line translation in the transcript too, ideally in a different font.
- Finally, you should come prepared to point to a short section of the transcript (up to 20 lines) that you particularly want us all to focus on.

Priority will be given to those who are regular attendees, and you usually need to volunteer to present your data the term before. Please contact if you would like to present.

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