

Workshop: Developing methods for the microanalysis of online data

Date: 9-10 January 2013

Venue: Radboud University Nijmegen

Organisers: David Giles (Winchester University), Jessica Lester (Washington State University), Trena Paulus (University of Tennessee) and Wyke Stommel (Radboud University Nijmegen)

Although computer-mediated communication (CMC) has been studied extensively for the last three decades, few researchers have explicitly addressed methodological issues in this field, particularly at the level of microanalysis – the intensive study of language use typically found in traditions such as conversation analysis, discursive psychology and discourse analysis. Partly this is due to the plethora of different types of online data, from text-rich discussion forums (the descendants of bulletin boards and newsgroups), e-mail and blogs to the shorter messages found in social media such as *Facebook* and *Twitter*, and synchronous online communication such as internet relay chat (IRC). An equally diverse variety of qualitative and quantitative methods have been used to analyse such data. However, the uncritical application of traditional methods to online data is not without its problems. It is important to distinguish between communication media because they each problematize different aspects of method: asynchronous vs. quasi-synchronous, dyadic vs. multiparty (participation framework), archival organisation (threads), institutional interaction through various channels (e-mail and chat, telephone and chat), each relating to turn taking, sequence organisation and other interactional facets.

In this workshop we will be discussing the relevance of mediated context to the qualitative microanalysis of online data. We will use thematic sessions introduced by one of the organisers. During these sessions we will work in small groups in order to enhance (inter)active participation and hands-on discussion. Participants are asked to bring their own online data (in English translation) so that these can be used as input for the small group work. Groups will collaboratively analyse data (data session) and/or discuss the theme in the context of participants' own research projects and plans. Each workshop session will end with brief presentations of the methodological considerations or "findings" of each small group. In addition to the thematic sessions, a demonstration will be given on the use of Atlas.ti-software for analysing online data.

The short-term aim of this workshop is to have a special issue in a renowned journal on methodological issues around the microanalysis of online data. The long-term aim is to build a network of qualitative researchers who study online communication in order to move forward the development of new and/or adapted methodologies that can better inform data analysis in the social sciences and humanities. Among the specific topics to be covered are:

- Using techniques and concepts from conversation analysis in the analysis of online data
- The relevance of the online/offline divide for the study of online communities
- Challenges in applying methodologies developed for speech to the study of written communication
- The use of qualitative software for analysing online data
- Developing methodologies for specific data formats (e.g. discussion threads)
- Comparative analysis of interaction through various channels

- Ethical issues in analysing online data
- Situating microanalytic techniques within broader research frameworks in the study of online communities

The workshop will bring together participants from different disciplines (communication, sociology, psychology, linguistics, media studies) who research a wide range of substantive topics, from health to education to media audiences.

Preliminary program

9 Jan:	1:30-2pm	Registration
	2pm - 3pm	Opening presentation David Giles
	4pm - 6pm	Thematic session 1: Identifying interactional problems in online data – introduced by Wyke Stommel
10 Jan:	9am - 10:45am	Thematic session 2: The unit of analysis – introduced by David Giles
	11am - 12:30am	Thematic session 3: Ethics and applied research – introduced by Trena Paulus
		Lunch
	1:30pm - 3:30pm	Thematic session 4: to be announced
	3:30pm - 4:30pm	Demonstration Atlas.ti – Trena Paulus and Jessica Lester
	4:30pm - 5pm	Closing

Workshop fee: none. Lunch and dinner (day 2) and coffee/tea are included.

There are 25 places available for this workshop. We prefer participants that attend both days, but it is also possible to come for one day of the workshop. For registration, send an e-mail including:

- Name
- E-mail address
- Affiliation
- Goals statement/ motivation (250 words max.)
- DAY 1 (9 Jan.) / DAY 2 (10 Jan.) / BOTH
- Dinner (9 Jan.) YES / NO

We will send you a notification of acceptance before 4 Dec. 2012.

Deadline for registration: November 16, 2012

For registration and/or information: [w.stommel@let.ru .nl](mailto:w.stommel@let.ru.nl)

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