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1

Introduction

Keith Richards

To every human problem there is a neat and easy solution –
and it's wrong.

H. L. Mencken

One of the strengths of Conversation Analysis (CA) as a research discipline is its capacity to direct researchers' attention to apparently tiny features of interaction and explode their dimensions beyond all expectations, revealing delicacies of design and management that resist the assaults of clumsier instruments. The unwillingness of CA researchers to settle for easy solutions and their concern to elaborate the complexities of human action as revealed through talk have led to an impression in some quarters that the products of their investigations are too delicately wrought to bear the strains of application in the rough and tumble of practice. However, professionals in a range of disciplines from medicine to broadcasting have come to recognize the value of research that respects their peculiar achievements, and the field of Applied Linguistics (AL) has begun to acknowledge the contribution that CA can make to its programme. This book celebrates this important connection and anticipates some of its potential outcomes.

A recognition of the possibilities inherent in exploring the applied dimension of CA gave rise to the seminar that was the genesis of many of the chapters in this book. It brought together conversation analysts from a range of academic and professional contexts and invited them to present examples of CA which arose from or pointed towards the possibility of professional intervention. However, no restrictions were placed on the form that this relationship might take, since the aim was to explore dimensions of application rather than to establish procedures for this. The resulting collection ranges from chapters that begin with practical

problems or conundrums and use CA as a means of understanding and responding to these, to chapters where CA has revealed hitherto unrecognized aspects of interaction that suggest possibilities for productive intervention. So far, issues of application in CA have remained largely unexplored, but developments over the last decade mean that the time is ripe for a consideration of the different forms that this might take. This volume is a first step towards representing the many perspectives – some recognizably mainstream, others more contentious – that will need to be considered if CA is to develop coherently as an applied discipline.

Dimensions of application

In his review of CA at ‘Century’s End’, John Heritage argued that ‘part of the claim of any framework worth its salt is that it can sustain “applied” research of various kinds’ (1999: 73), and he indicated that this aspect might feature prominently in developments within the discipline.¹ Although CA has always been interested in talk in institutional settings (Sacks 1972a), this observation is to some extent a reflection of the rapid growth of CA studies in such settings following Drew and Heritage’s important collection on the subject of talk at work (1992a), embracing not only traditional professions such as medicine or law (e.g. Heritage and Maynard in press, Travers and Manzo 1997), but fields such as business (e.g. Boden 1994), broadcasting (e.g. Clayman and Heritage 2002) and counselling (Peräkylä 1995). It is only natural that professional interest should extend beyond description and towards the potential of such research in terms of training and development interventions, encouraging the emergence of ‘applied CA’ almost by default. However, the concept of ‘application’ is by no means straightforward and in this section I briefly consider the claims of three different models with a view to developing a perspective that is consistent with the nature of CA and within which the wide range of issues raised by the chapters in this volume can be accommodated.

Theory → practice

The traditional view of applied research, associated particularly with work within (post-) positivist paradigms, is that it derives from, and is in some way subordinate to, ‘pure’ research. Crudely put, the aim of pure research is to develop theories that can then be applied in practical situations, an understanding of the process of application being the business of applied research. In the context of AL, discourse framed in these terms has been described as dysfunctional (Clarke 1994), but

debates about the relationship between theories of second language acquisition and language teaching, or the part that interaction has to play in our understanding of these, have over the years generated considerable heat (e.g. Beretta 1993; van Lier 1994; Firth and Wagner 1997, 1998; Gass 1998; Wagner 1996; Seedhouse 1998).

In terms of CA, which is interested in the normative characteristics of interaction and eschews theory-building, this model has no currency, but there is still scope for misunderstanding. In a recent discussion of applied CA, ten Have drew a distinction which, while never designed to promote or even suggest such an orientation, is nevertheless cast in terms associated with it:

In 'pure CA', the focus is on the local practices of turn-taking, sequential organization, etc., in and for themselves, while in 'applied CA' attention shifts to the tensions between those local practices and any 'larger structures' in which these are embedded, such as institutional rules, instructions, accounting, obligations, etc.

(ten Have 1999: 189)

In so far as ten Have uses the term 'pure CA' to draw attention to the important issues of speech setting and activity, discussed by Drew's 'Foreword', its inclusion seems harmless enough, but abstracted from this particular context its use is more problematic because of a hierarchy implicit in theory-practice models in which 'applied' research is inferior to 'pure' research. It is therefore important to insist that such a distinction has no validity in CA, which refers '– perhaps pre-eminently – to a method of inquiry' (Schegloff *et al.* 2002: 4): however we may choose to characterize applied CA, it must above all meet the analytically rigorous demands of all CA practice worthy of that name.

As far as applied CA is concerned, then, the fact that the data are collected in institutional settings and the findings have relevance to practice in these settings does not imply that the approach to analysis should be fundamentally different from that of the broader discipline. If a distinction is to be drawn between CA and applied CA, it is not to be found in methodological difference but rather in terms of the phenomena to which attention is directed and the relevance of the research to training or professional development.

Discovery → prescription

A model that reflects the importance of directing attention is one in which the researcher discovers some feature(s) of social and/or

professional behaviour and on the basis of this prescribes – or proscribes – certain courses of action. To take a well-known example, if there is a ‘procedural rule . . . that a person who speaks first in a telephone conversation can choose their form of address, and in choosing their form of address they can thereby choose the form of address the other uses’ (Sacks 1992: 4), this information can be incorporated in relevant professional training and perhaps established as ‘standard operating procedure’. There are good reasons for believing that a model of this kind is suited to CA-based research, three of which seem particularly persuasive:

- CA is empirically grounded and therefore well placed to generate the sort of discoveries that can inform practice;
- its focus on practical accomplishment through interaction establishes a natural link with professional practice;
- because its raw materials are publicly observable phenomena, these are available as resources in any subsequent training interventions.

Despite the immediate appeal of this model, it suggests an approach not entirely consistent with CA’s methodological principles. One of the dangers – inherent in any research undertaken with application in mind – is that when a researcher sets out to discover something with a particular end in view, this inevitably serves to direct attention to those aspects of the data that are most likely to serve that end, an approach that is antithetical to CA’s insistence on open-mindedness. At worst, this could lead to a narrowing of vision, influencing treatment of the data and violating a primary consideration in CA that ‘nothing that occurs in interaction can be ruled out, *a priori*, as random, insignificant, or irrelevant’ (Atkinson and Heritage 1984: 4). But even if the analyst avoids this pitfall, as Sacks noted, such an approach precludes the possibility of unexpected discovery inherent in ‘unmotivated examination’ (1984: 27).

Even if analytical dangers are avoided, the notion of prescription brings its own dangers, not least the underlying assumption that it is possible to specify exactly what actors should do in particular circumstances. One of the significant contributions that CA can make to our understanding of social and professional life is its ability to identify regularities in talk and action and this can serve as an invaluable guide to action, but this is not the same thing as laying down laws of behaviour. Unfortunately, it is the latter which has the most allure to materials designers and trainers, with inevitable consequences:

There seems to be a tendency in such situations to summarize the conclusions of a consideration of practical problems and general interests in terms of relatively simple recipes or 'rules of thumb'.

(ten Have 1999: 199)

Problems such as this could be dismissed as peripheral to the main concerns of CA or as matters of the relationship between researcher and client, but if we are to take seriously the issue of applying CA and if it matters to us how our work is understood, we cannot afford to sweep them under the table. One way of addressing the issues they raise is to direct our attention to the way we represent our work, and this is where the choice of model is so important. A representation in terms of discovery and prescription would serve only to reinforce the impression that the application of CA findings is essentially unproblematic, a mere matter of finding the best way of parcelling up and delivering the goods. Something more in tune with the conceptual realities of the discipline is required.

Description → informed action

The model that best represents the range of application possibilities covered by the chapters in this book is one that relates the nature of the primary research to possible modes of intervention, recognizing its potential for enriching professional practice rather than reframing it in prescriptive terms. Such a model would represent the primary research as oriented predominantly to description rather than discovery, allowing for the possibility of unexpected insights arising from the sort of unmotivated investigation recommended by Sacks. In emphasizing description it would reflect CA's methodological orientation, implying no fundamental distinction between primary research and research undertaken with a view to possible applications, allowing that both might generate insights with the potential to transform practice. All three of the advantages summarized under the previous model would apply here, and description would, of course, embrace discovery.

In terms of application, the emphasis on informed practice would have two important implications. The first of these would be the establishment of a relationship in which CA would be seen as performing an enabling rather than an enacting role in professional development. Instead of thinking in terms of narrow prescription, clients would be encouraged to consider more broadly the ways in which CA might impact on their practice. Taking the findings in the chapter by Dickerson *et al.* (Chapter 2) as an example of this, professional therapists could

be sensitized to interactional possibilities that they had not hitherto considered, not in terms of procedures that they might follow (how far and in what ways these might be specifiable is a professional issue) but in terms of responding to competencies that CA has been able to expose. By thinking in terms of raising awareness, directing attention, developing sensitivity, challenging assumptions, etc., CA can contribute to informed professional action, helping professionals to deepen their understanding and develop new competencies. The aim of this book is to suggest the wide range of possibilities available through CA, extending from what might be described as core professional concerns to work that does no more than suggest where its influence might be felt.

The second important concomitant of a focus on informed professional practice is that it allows for the possibility that CA will become involved in describing not only aspects of professional practice but also the processes of training or development that might be associated with these. The chapters in the final section of the book illustrate what form this might take. Markee's chapter (Chapter 12), for example, shows how CA can be used to reveal aspects of classroom behaviour that may have implications for an approach to teaching using tasks, while Packett's contribution (Chapter 14) demonstrates how CA can be used as part of the teaching process in order to sensitize trainees to aspects of their practice. It is conceivable that over time this aspect of applied CA, which takes it closest to the concerns of AL, is one that will grow significantly.

Dimensions of competence

Instead of working from the assumption that competence is something that one either has or does not have, CA provides a means of exploring the ways in which such competence is constructed in particular circumstances by the participants involved. In adopting this perspective, CA sets aside participant roles such as teacher and student or expert and novice as *a priori* analytical resources and relies instead on a careful analysis of the ways in which the talk is designed – and the purposes and orientations revealed *through* this. What matters in CA is the extent to which identity is procedurally relevant for the participants themselves, and it may well be that the identities oriented to are not those normally associated with the activity taking place. Examined from this perspective, competence cannot be treated as a taken-for-granted quality to be merely assigned or withheld (as a whole or in part), but must be regarded as a subject for scrutiny across different dimensions.

The implications of this for AL, as the chapters here reveal, are profound, and the issues raised in terms of understanding, awareness and sensitivity have ramifications far beyond the confines of the classroom. The book begins with three chapters that explore the nature of competence in the context of therapy, where it is a focus of professional concern. All of them expose aspects of competence that for one reason or another had previously remained unexamined but which point to the possibility of therapeutic advances.

The work of Paul Dickerson, John Rae, Penny Stribling, Kerstin Dautenhahn and Iain Werry (Chapter 2) in examining interaction with an autistic child exposes the limitations of assumptions about the 'asocial' characteristics of such children. Drawing on a careful analysis of visual and verbal coordination, they are able to show that subtle and previously unnoticed orientations to speakers reveal interactional competence of a higher order than had previously been acknowledged. Their subtle and insightful examination of the strategic use of gaze direction as an interactional resource is important not only in terms of the light it sheds on the nature of interaction with autistic children but, perhaps more importantly, in the extent to which it exposes the shortcomings of approaches derived from assumptions of linguistic deficit and highlights the need for a re-assessment of our view of such children based rather on the recognition of competencies.

Steven Bloch's chapter (Chapter 3) also reveals previously unrecognized competence, but this time the spotlight falls on the ways in which this is revealed in talk between an individual with a severe speech disorder (dysarthria) and a lay person, in this case his mother. As the author points out, although previous studies of dysarthria have included theoretical discussion of message co-construction, they have not extended to detailed analysis of everyday talk. Once attention is shifted away from the mechanics of speech production, and from dysarthria as a medical condition, towards the social dimension in which two participants achieve together what in normal circumstances might be the product of a single individual, this exposes hitherto unrecognized interactional resources. What is perhaps most interesting, and certainly most moving, about Bloch's sensitive and insightful analysis, is the way that the participants 'make ordinary' talk which is to an outsider so clearly different from the exchanges with which we are familiar in our everyday encounters.

Interaction between parent and child is also the focus of Hilary Gardner's chapter (4), but where Bloch's study revealed what specialists can learn from lay persons doing 'ordinary' talk, here attention is

directed to the non-specialist acting as therapist. The outcomes are strikingly different. The chapter concentrates on a mother's attempt to help her child overcome phonetic problems, showing how, despite her extended efforts, this does not lead to improvement and in some cases actually serves to introduce new errors. When these efforts are compared with those of a professional therapist, interesting differences emerge, the most obvious of which is the length of the *bouts* (or number of turns used for dealing with a target word) involved. In showing how the professional therapist achieves success in much shorter bouts than those of the mother, Gardner highlights significant differences in the turn types that feature in their talk. By exposing underlying assumptions through the careful analysis of particular stretches of talk, Gardner is able to establish a basis for helping the lay therapist develop awareness and skills that will improve the quality of therapeutic engagement with the child and so extend the latter's exposure to remedial intervention.

The three chapters concerned with therapy all offer a widening of traditionally conceived views of what constitutes interactional competence, elaborating aspects of its social construction. Although none of them offers prescriptions for intervention, all three indicate clearly the dimensions along which such intervention would operate and the considerations that would inform its shape and character. They are all characterized by a respect for existing professional practice and are essentially augmentative in orientation. The outcomes of applied research, however, need not necessarily be augmentative; its programme can also embrace work that revisits sites of professional talk and reveals aspects that challenge everyday assumptions about, or interpretations of, its construction. This is where the contribution of the next three chapters is to be found.

Challenging assumptions

The four treatments of professional interaction in this volume range much wider than those in any other section, in terms of both professional and interpretive focus. In different ways, however, all of them challenge natural or commonly held assumptions about interaction in the institutional settings with which they are concerned.

Joseph Gafaranga and Nicky Britten's study (5) provides a valuable example of how CA's interest in local orderliness can deepen our understanding of small but significant aspects of professional practice. Their research, which builds on earlier work, examines the apparently innocuous topic initial elicitors such as 'How are you?' or 'What can

I do for you?' that occur at the start of General Practice consultations, showing how these are significant in terms of the professional encounter taking place. The chapter serves as a powerful challenge to comfortable assumptions about 'professional language', demonstrating conclusively that what might easily be dismissed as a necessary social preliminary in such consultations, a mere prelude to the business in hand, is in fact fundamental to them, a constituent activity with procedural implications.

Although Erik Vinkhuyzen and Peggy Szymanski (6) also focus on a very specific interactional sequence, the motivation for their study in professional – or more specifically organizational – terms is specifiable at the outset: where provider and customer goals conflict, how can a company maximize customer satisfaction while minimizing costs (via inconvenience, extra work, etc.) to itself? Their interactional interest lies in the ways that customer requests are formulated and how employees manage the non-granting of these. By examining a range of examples involving new and experienced customers with different service expectations and studying the sequential development of the talk and the service provider's management of this, the authors are able to identify strategies used by employees to maximize benefits to the company. Their work challenges the assumption that meeting service requests is a matter of orienting to customers' needs in terms of services available, showing that such exchanges are embedded within wider organizational concerns to which employees orient in the design of their talk. This connection between particular linguistic or interactional constructions and wider social or organizational goals lies at the heart of AL, and this chapter serves as a useful reminder that an orientation to client interests does not commit the researcher to constraints associated with a purely instrumental approach to applied research.

Maria-Carme Torras (7) also takes service encounters as the source of her data, but her interest lies in how linguistic identity bears on the ways in which talk is constructed. She demonstrates that the institutional character of service encounters lies not only in the participants' ascription of the membership categorization device 'service parties', but also in their display of other identity sets in the talk. The chapter examines the ways in which 'acquaintanceship' and 'language preference' are managed and in the case of the latter shows how participants resort to renegotiation of identities in order to deal with actual or potential unsuccessful compliance. With increasing globalization, where intercultural communication is likely to become the norm in some service encounters, this work has important implications for staff training and development. Its discussion of one-in-a-series

encounters also connects with Gafaranga and Britten's research, and its interest in the way that compliance is achieved links it to Vinkhuyzen and Szymanski's work. Taken together, these chapters show how AL might widen its interactional horizons away from the 'standard' encounter that currently appears in most coursebooks featuring interaction and towards a broader view of the multiple dimensions brought into play in such encounters.

The work of Bethan Benwell and Elizabeth Stokoe (8) shifts attention away from service encounters but remains firmly in the sphere of awareness raising. Their contribution represents a case for broadening the scope of university teacher preparation beyond teaching methodology to include sensitivity to the way in which students orient themselves to the teaching and learning process. In an interesting extension of the considerable body of research providing strong evidence of male resistance to academic identity in compulsory education in the UK, the authors direct their attention to post-compulsory education, where much less research has been done and where the same assumption persists. By adopting a CA approach and thereby rejecting 'male' and 'female' as *a priori* categories within which their investigation is framed (a feature of earlier research), they are able to explore how students construct aspects of their institutional identity through engagement with tutorial tasks. Their analysis suggests that, at least as far as university settings are concerned, resisting academic identity and appearing not to work hard is a prevalent interactional characteristic and not gender-specific. By challenging the extension of traditional conceptions of gendered performance in education to post-compulsory contexts, this research therefore opens up new avenues of investigation that should eventually be used to inform the design of materials for the induction of students and the preparation of university teachers.

Orienting to grammar

The third part of this book sees a move from the professional contexts in which AL is typically involved and towards two topics that have always lain at its intellectual core: the relationship between native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) of a language, and orientation to grammatical issues, the latter a subject in which CA also has a keen interest (e.g. Ochs *et al.* 1996). Once again, our aim has been to encourage a rethinking of traditional assumptions and approaches in the light of the distinctive contribution that CA can make. Although there is a considerable body of work in AL on NS–NNS interaction, most of it

has relied heavily on approaches that concentrate largely on linguistic form, taking social identity for granted, though there is evidence that a more balanced picture is emerging, and the chapters in this section suggest directions this might take.

The chapters demonstrate clearly that CA does not take linguistic competence for granted, but rather offers a way of examining how it is constructed through talk. The participants are not all monolingual speakers and each chapter features a different language, a balance that is in fact atypical of AL, where the traditional concentration on English suggests a narrower research base than is actually available.

The language on which Salla Kurhila (9) draws is Finnish. Although her focus is on grammatical self-repair, the author's interest lies in the ways in which speakers orient to grammatical correctness and specifically how the linguistic competence of NNSs, far from being a point of orientation within the talk, is actually constructed through it. An important difference between this work and most of the work on this topic in AL literature is that, while CA recognizes NS and NNS as descriptive terms, they are not used as analytic categories. Kurhila shows how they may or may not be relevant at different points in the talk and how the NS can decline to adopt the role of linguistically knowledgeable participant, exploring what kind of interactional consequences or problems may emerge as a result of this. The importance of such work is that it underlines the importance of looking beyond matters of grammatical accuracy as such and exploring the ways in which participants orient to this.

Jean Wong's chapter (10) also adopts this perspective, but where Kurhila's interest lies in how participants orient to grammar, her attention is directed specifically to non-attendance to grammatical error. Using examples from NS–NNS conversation, she presents evidence of native speakers side-stepping or disattending to NNS error in pursuance of social goals. The author shows how other repair of the talk, as opposed to other correction of the grammar, is an interactional achievement of the participants involved, reflecting aspects of their social and linguistic identities. By focusing on 'what is displayed (in the data) *for the participants as acceptable talk*' she throws refreshing light on old debates about the place of 'accuracy' in NNS talk and the nature of communicative competence. Her work has important implications for the teaching of 'conversational' English in a classroom context, where 'disattending' to grammar may have other implications, and for our notions of competence in terms of the relationship between grammar and social interaction.

The three previous chapters all have direct relevance to the immediate concerns of AL; the relationship of Maria Egbert's work (11) is more oblique, but no less important for that. Her analysis is situated in the uncertain and contentious waters of discriminatory practice and her conclusions must at best be tentative. Concentrating on a single telephone exchange that was described as discriminatory by native speakers who listened to it, she tries to account for how such an impression might have arisen, something that none of these was able to do. The call, in German, is between a lessor and a caller in search of an apartment, and Egbert is able to show how responsibility for an early lexical error made by the lessor is represented as a mistake on the part of the non-native speaker caller. Her analysis of the subsequent talk and the ways in which the caller is discouraged from pursuing her enquiry raise awkward questions about identity and power, particularly salient in the context of debates on the relationship between critical discourse analysis and both CA (Billig 1999; Schegloff 1999) and AL (Widdowson 2000). More broadly, research of this type raises very important questions about the way data should be presented in sensitizing those who are likely to have to deal with discriminatory situations as part of their professional lives.

Language learning

The final part focuses explicitly on language learning from a classroom perspective. Interest in interaction in the language classroom has a respectable pedigree in AL dating back at least 30 years, and its importance has long been explicitly recognized (e.g. Allwright 1984). Although specific features of talk associated with the work of conversation analysts, such as repair (e.g. van Lier 1988), have received attention, evidence of a genuine CA approach is more recent, though the situation is now changing (e.g. Egbert 1998; Hosada 2000; Iles 1996; Jung 1999; Lazaraton 1997; Markee 1995, 2000; Seedhouse 2004; Wong 2000b) and it is interesting to note that CA featured as one of the three traditions chosen to feature in a recent special edition of *Applied Linguistics* on microanalyses of classroom talk (Zuengler and Mori 2002). The three chapters featured here approach language learning and teaching from very different perspectives, each of them important.

Behind Numa Markee's interest in a topic of current concern in AL (12), task-based learning, lies a radical shift in perspective on the concerns of classroom researchers. His notes on video recording and transcription provide more than a mere appendix to an interesting chapter; they address methodological issues classroom researchers in AL cannot afford to

ignore. By carefully examining the choreography of on-task and off-task behaviour in a language class, he is able to show how students orient to two different interactional agendas, managing each within acceptable institutional parameters. His discussion explores an interesting tension between the benefits in terms of second language acquisition of off-task talk and the potential importance of on-task learning. The commonplace claim that interesting and motivating materials and tasks matter is here given interactional substance, albeit in terms of the potential these students reveal through their off-task behaviour. Using CA to expose 'what really happened', Markee is able to suggest subtle shifts in our ways of seeing and understanding that have the potential to change how professionals go about their business in both teaching and research.

Don Carroll's data (13) are not collected from the classroom, but his research is concerned with language learners and provides a powerful demonstration of what can be achieved when CA is used to explore prominent but previously unexamined aspects of learner talk. Investigating the interaction of novice Japanese speakers of English and directing his attention to the common practice of adding vowels to word-final consonants, he challenges an assumption that language teachers (in common with others) have taken for granted: that this is a pronunciation problem arising from negative transfer and that it should be corrected accordingly. He is able to demonstrate conclusively the inadequacy of this explanation and reveal instead that such *vowel-marking* is far from random, serving as an important interactional resource. In terms of practice, the implications of Carroll's research are clear and important, and of particular relevance to ESL teachers world-wide working with Japanese learners, highlighting the potential value of raising awareness of 'interactionally equivalent micropractices' as an alternative means of addressing certain so-called pronunciation errors. However, it has even more profound implications in at least two respects, both touched on by Carroll in his conclusion. The first raises issues of the NS–NNS relationship from the perspective of the analyst and the methodological demands associated with the treatment of non-native discourse. The second, in common with the chapters in the first section, lies in its shift of attention away from a linguistic deficit model based on grossly apparent features of talk and towards a recognition of the subtle ways in which interactional competencies may be revealed through the careful analysis of interaction.

The following chapter (14) serves as an example of the direct relevance of CA to the pedagogic context and as a refutation to those who challenge its potential for application. Andrew Packett teaches English to Portuguese students of journalism and uses CA in his work at the

University of Coimbra. In this example he illustrates how the effective deployment of insertion sequences in broadcast interviews can be taught using CA data as classroom materials. The analytical base of the chapter, highlighting an interactional feature of broadcast interviews not previously noted in the literature, is impressive in itself, but what makes it particularly valuable is the way the author develops a coherent 'CA-informed pedagogy' that enables him to pin down the sources of learners' difficulties and help them to develop vital professional skills through the comparison of their own efforts with those of accomplished performers. Packett provides helpful outlines of the pedagogic context and relevant procedures together with an analysis sensitive and detailed enough to enable the reader to see how a minimal exchange can produce a 'key pedagogic insight'. The success of this project as an example of CA and of classroom practice serves as a final resounding endorsement of the contribution CA is already making to AL.

Conclusion: openings and closings

How far and in what ways applications of CA will develop over the coming years will be determined in part by the extent to which its contributions are understood and valued by those who are asked to learn from them and make use of them: therapists, doctors, teachers, salespeople and interviewers, to name just some who might be influenced by this book. That CA has much to offer, in a field hitherto dominated by psychologists and communication specialists relying on secondary data sources such as reports and interviews, is perhaps an argument that no longer needs to be made, but the dimensions of its contribution in terms of both mode and content have yet to be explored. This book represents a first step towards mapping the contours of this new territory and showing in what respects it might relate to a field where matters of application have long been of prime concern. Its emphasis lies in exploring possibilities rather than laying down parameters, secure in the knowledge that the rigours of CA offer adequate protection against the seductive appeal of the neat and easy solutions.

Notes

- 1 This section should be read in the light of a categorization of potential markets for applied CA proposed by Heritage at the 2004 annual conference of the American Association of Applied Linguistics (Portland, 1–4 May). He identified three potential markets:

Disorganized markets, with a 'tell us what to do' orientation, where the aim is to solve problems, a small evidential base provides an adequate resource, and participants are interested in sharing common experiences and understandings.

Organized markets, where a different order of persuasion is needed to convince policy-makers, who require evidence that an intervention is worthwhile before they introduce it. Here, the outcomes of CA will need to be supported by quantified evidence of their impact.

Resistant markets, where there is no interest in acting on the findings of CA, which may expose uncomfortable evidence of, for example, racist or sexist behaviour. These require very different strategies of persuasion.

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