

Analysis based on video-recorded data

Here are the more detailed instructions on this assignment.

First off, many things could be analyzed, so I'm not here providing a comprehensive list that would state all the interactional behaviors that you should look at in your analysis. Instead, my list includes ideas and points that the research on (real-time) social interaction often analyzes.

The big question behind this – and the overall question to your analysis – is “how did you come to choose a particular approach (the end result of your discussions) and how you, as a group, achieved it through different communicative/interactional actions?” You could think of this in terms of which idea/whose idea won and why.. And, if it was nobody's opinion or idea as such but rather something that was developed during the discussion, what were the actions in interaction that led to this idea.

The rationale is that to do any task together, group needs some specific behaviors (such as 'suggestions', 'agreement'/'disagreement', 'questions', 'confirmation', 'asking for clarification', 'demonstrations of understanding' etc.) to proceed with their task. In the language of leadership, this means that the group is led by using these (mainly verbal and nonverbal) behaviors.

The idea is not to concentrate on specific human actors in the situation, but more on the behaviors that made things happen or prevented things to happen. Of course, this is a good place to practice self-reflection, reflecting on how your own behaviors contributed to the group.

Typical things to address in such analysis:

- Who opened the topic/discussion? How did the opening (the form of it) have an effect on subsequent turns and the discussion as a whole?
- How did the group members orient to others in group (e.g. showing that they listen), and how (through what kinds of behaviors) they oriented to task (all group activity needs both task orientation and people orientation practices)? Can you, even in this short time-frame, see the development of roles (such that somebody and through some specific style of turns, would be the task-person, somebody else the people's person...? Etc.)
- Could you see some patterned ways of dominance or control in the discussion? E.g. did someone dominate the discussion by controlling the topics? If, how did this controlling the topic(s) take place (through what kind of behaviors) and how did it affect the conversation?
- How were suggestions made? Who made them? Everyone...? Or just one member..? How were they acknowledged or received?
- Who asked questions and clarifications and how were they made and received?

- How – through what kind of communicative acts – ideas (and the “end result”) were agreed or disagreed?
- How disagreements (if not disagreements, at least different views) were handled? For example, if somebody would have expressed the idea that let’s just fire the required amount of people randomly by “lottery” – and imagining that the idea/method wasn’t just agreed by everyone nodding and saying “yes” but instead, countered with a different idea or just objection – what happened then? Was there alignment in disagreement for example?
- All things, not only the “human actors” that have an effect on how things are understood, are actors making a difference. So, how did the technology/technologies come exert agency in the situation? (Zoom, possible other things such as even an excel sheet that some groups instantly started to make...)
- How did non-verbal behaviors affect the situation?

There would be many more interactional phenomena of interest to you for your analysis, partly of course depending on what happened there in the discussion. So, the ideas above are just to help you out in giving you some ideas or cornerstones of what to analyze at the micro-level of interaction. And, it was indeed one of the main reasons I wanted you to record the discussion that you go to micro-level, analyzing the behaviors as they happened.

Structure

Start your paper by stating briefly (in one or two sentences) what was the end result – your decision – in your meeting (group discussion).

Then write you analysis; analyze issues that you found interesting and important for your group in proceeding with the task and finally choosing the approach for lay-offs. The style of the analysis is descriptive, so it describes the behaviors that took place in the group discussion. In other words, the emphasis of descriptive analysis is on how, and not on why (which would be a question for explanatory analysis).

You do not have to use subtitles, but if you see them beneficial, use them sparsely – given that this is a short text (900-1200 words). And, you don’t need to reproduce the data to me (e.g. by providing extracts from the conversation in a transcribed form), although, of course, you may want to or even need to (depending on your argumentation) make some points by using verbatim quotes as well. But no need and not enough space to reproduce any longer stretches of interaction (just saying this, because some of you may be familiar with e.g. Conversation Analysis or discourse analysis from your previous studies – they always lean on a style of displaying transcribed interactional sequences).

(There will be a rubric in the submission box. The rubric gives you some more ideas on what is an successful analysis. Note on Thursday October 6: The submission box and the rubric will be ready on Friday October 7...)