



Are Norwegians predictable in their talk? Analysing ethnic communication patterns.

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Conversation analysis is an approach devoted to studying the social order as created by participants of social encounters. One of its main characteristics is a strict inductivism and empiricism, realized through a consistent rejection of *a priori* assumptions and hypotheses about the preconditions of communication (Svennevig, 1999). Nonetheless, several scholars have called for equipping conversation studies with tools that would allow for a better understanding of the process of communication as being grounded in the “socio-cultural conventions [that] affect all levels of speech production and interpretation” (Gumperz, 1982: 186). Wierzbicka & Goddard (1997: 231) consider it the main challenge for discourse studies to “show the links between particular ways of speaking and the culture of the people involved”. The presented study provides such a link by developing a method for describing ethnic communication patterns, consisting of cultural FRAMES (Goffman, 1974) and conversational PRACTICES. The paper shows the results of an analysis of two-party casual conversations between native speakers (NS) and Polish non-native speakers (NNS) of Norwegian. The findings suggest that there are observable differences regarding NSs’ and NNSs’ employment of communicative practices. The differences are exemplified in conversational moves manifesting the frame of ‘predictability’, which has been identified as a characteristic for Norwegian discourse. The study sheds considerable light on the nature of communicative competence in a second language.

References:

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