



**ESRC SEMINAR SERIES: VISUAL DIALOGUES: NEW AGENDAS IN  
INEQUALITIES RESEARCH**  
**SEMINAR TWO: *Narratives in Video and Film***  
**ABSTRACTS**

**Professor Carey Jewitt** (Institute of Education)

**A multimodal approach to the production of 'ability' in the English classroom**

A multimodal approach to the production of 'ability' in the English Classroom This presentation explores how video data can be analyzed multimodally to understand how ability is produced through teacher and student interaction. Ability is something that is rarely explicitly discussed in the classroom, but which underlies much of the interaction within it. An analysis of the visual-spatial culture of the school English classroom, student and teacher interaction with texts and artefacts, movement and body posture, gesture and gaze is used to look at how this importantly implicit concept is produced and communicated across teachers and students. The way in which this concept is gendered in school English is also tentatively explored.

**Dr Chris Walton** (University of Lancaster) Prof. Charles Antaki and Dr Mick Finlay

**Locating inequalities in services for adults with Learning Disabilities**

The video data collected for the ESRC-funded and snappily titled "Identity conflicts of persons with a learning disability and their professional carers" project have so far informed analyses on such policy and practice oriented concerns as 'how staff offer choice to adults with learning disabilities' (Antaki, Finlay, Walton & Pate, 2008) as well as on more esoteric concerns as 'how staff determine if someone really wants to play a game with them' (Finlay, Antaki, Walton & Stribling, 2008). As yet these data have not been subjected to analysis through a lens that is focussed specifically on dimensions of inequality. This paper will be the first tentative step towards doing that. Drawing upon the same corpus of video data and adopting an augmented form of Conversation Analysis the paper aims to identify asymmetries in the interactions between staff and residents and the implications of these asymmetries, for the support residents receive and for their status relative to staff. Specifically, the paper will focus on asymmetries in the determination of turns at and the topics of talk, in the use and recognition of non-verbal behaviours and in the affective components of interaction.

**Jude Fransman** (Institute of Education)

### **Juggling genre: Using video to explore how 'knowledge' is fixed and framed in a community-based research workshop**

This paper explores the knowledge hierarchies at play in a series of workshops, which were held in 2009 to inform a community-based research project on the history of the 'Latin American community' in London. Drawing on extensive video data, it centres on the ways in which the facilitator juggles multiple identities (including educator, actress, migrant and academic) as she switches the workshop between the multiple discourse-genres (Bakhtin 1986; Lefstein and Snell forthcoming) of 'training course', 'performance-art piece', 'community project' and 'academic lecture'. Grounding my analysis in social semiotic theory and multimodal analysis (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001, Jewitt 2009) I argue that a better understanding of the (de)construction of hierarchies of knowledge might be facilitated by consideration of the ways in which enactments of discourse-genre are composed and (re)framed, how interaction crosses these frames and what happens in the spaces in-between.

Methodologically, I suggest that video ethnography (Heath and Luff 2006, Pink 2007) offers great potential as a tool to facilitate such an analysis and can play (at least) three key roles. Firstly, it can be used in data-collection to identify frames and chart the discourse-genres which shape meaning-making practices within and across frames. Secondly, it can be used as a means of re-framing through participatory editing and digital video production. And thirdly, it can become a frame in its own right (Pink 2007).

Focusing in depth on one excerpt from the workshops as a 'telling case' I identify three key frames which help to configure discourse-genres and multimodal ensembles: the layout of the room, the flip-chart and the video camera. Interaction takes place within and across these frames and participants are included/excluded as the facilitator juggles the multiple genres of training workshop, academia, performance-art and community project. Occasionally, facilitator or participants occupy spaces between frames. The paper argues that such in-between spaces have significant analytical potential as sites of struggle where tensions between modes and discourses may best be observed.

Finally, the paper turns to the facilitator's own efforts to reframe the workshop through her editing and design of a new video text, concluding that video methodologies might provide a useful link between ethnographic, multimodal and participatory research approaches.

**Miranda Sharp** (Independent Artist)

### **Can art be used as research?**

Can live performance and its visual documentation be used as a viable research tool to investigate community and place? The paper examines the role of art as a research methodology and the political conflicts with commissioning an artwork that embraces and highlights inequality within a community. I love Basildon, (2009) was commissioned by Essex County Council's temporary site intervention programme Open Space in 2008 as part of their wider Genius Loci ('Spirit of Place') programme of permanent public art. Genius

Loci's funding links directly to Essex County's Council's major capital development and Essex Design initiatives with the aim to 'enhance the image of Essex'. I love Basildon also received additional funding from Arts Council England.

The open brief was to respond to the spirit of place in Basildon. I used a hybrid of overt participant observation and live performance art to examine a community's relationship to place, the nature of place and the extent of intimacy in public and private spaces. I self-funded professional training to become a qualified nail technician and set up a 1950's style mobile nail stall at different locations on the Laindon estate in Basildon. The documentation of my live public work, observations through video, still image and written accounts attempt what Rosalyn Deutsch calls making the invisible, visible\*.

The resulting documentary of the live performances was screened at Basildon market alongside the nail stall installation in September 2009. The paper asks whether it's possible that the project can be launched independently as a work of art and social research.

(\*Rosalyn Deutsch discussed how "working with the public makes the invisible, visible" in her presentation at the symposium Making Public at Tate Modern, London 2005)

**Dr Chris High** (The Open University)

### **Where did PV come from?**

Participatory research has attracted increasing interest amongst the social research community. This presentation will look at one particular approach which sits at the junction between visual methods and participatory action research - the use of participatory video in research. On one hand, the literature on participatory video is thin, but developing fast and the field is perceived as novel. On the other hand there is much broader and deeper history of participatory video as a practice in community development, teaching and youth work.

The presentation will explore the links between this history of practice and the way the approach is conceived of and used in research today.

**Dr Stephen Parkin** (Drug and Alcohol Research Unit, The University of Plymouth)

### **Using visual methods to record health inequality and social suffering amongst those that inject illicit drugs in public settings: implications for policy and practice**

This paper concerns the application of visual methods employed during research located in the South West of England, in a study that addressed the effect of place on health risk (associated with injecting drug use in public settings). This research was qualitative in design and utilised digital (visual) technology as part of ethnographic observations at over 70 public injecting sites. These places were temporarily appropriated by (mainly) homeless drug users on a daily basis for administering substances such as heroin, crack-cocaine and/or amphetamine sulphate. All research was overt and given full ethical approval by the relevant bodies.

More specifically, this paper presents and discusses visual data collected during fieldwork that sought to answer questions relating to the lived-experience of public injecting drug use and to visualise the injecting environments endured by some of society's most vulnerable and marginalised members. All such data were analysed, interpreted and here presented within an epistemological framework of 'harm reduction' (i.e. aspect of UK drug policy that seeks to reduce drug-related harm within communities and individuals).

This paper primarily aims to summarise the harmful effect of public injecting sites upon the health of injecting drug users, in which the environmental bases of these harms are illustrated with visual data. A second aim is to provide an account of the way in which applied visual methods may provide meaningful, service relevant data that have the potential to motivate development and/or intervention within local settings. In addressing these aims it is envisaged that a greater understanding of a particular health inequality and related social suffering will emerge, alongside an appreciation of the applied nature of the visual methods concerned. (This presentation will include moving/still images gathered during fieldwork).

**John Oates** (Child and Youth Studies Group, The Open University)

### **Documentary Film as Advocacy**

With screened excerpts from two films that I have made in Hungary I will discuss the issues involved in taking a social science-based approach to using the medium of documentary film as a means of social and political action research. I will explore the complex ethics questions that arise; the tensions between 'giving voice' and 'exploitation' perspectives on 'intimate' or, framed alternatively, 'invasive' attempts to gain and display insider perspectives on lived experience in conditions of extreme poverty. In addition, the emotional impact of extended close involvement with families in desperate situations carries its own moral dilemmas. The path from academic research and study, through producing teaching materials in various media, working on broadcast projects such as *Child of Our Time*, engaging with the film industry and now using film to address serious political issues such as the position of the Roma in Eastern Europe has involved an illuminating and at times very tough journey.