






INSTITUTIONAL TALK







Casual conversation


- It is spoken
 - It happens in real time
 - It takes place in a shared context
 - It is interactive.
 - It is interpersonal.
 - It is informal .
 - It is expressive of identity
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- **Institutional conversations have an overall structure and are organized into phases.**
 - **Beginning, end.**
 - **Conversationalists know what to expect from the talk.**
 - **What topics to be dealt with**
 - **Differences with everyday conversation.**

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- **In I.T.:**
 - **Mostly asymmetrical encounters.**
 - **Turns are pre-allocated. (there is normally somebody chairing the encounter.**
 - **Participants have different rights and responsibilities. (this has a bearing on their discourse identities)**


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- **Interviews:**
 - **Interviewer presents the questions**
 - **Interviewee is obliged to answer**
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- Although I.C. uses the resources from ordinary interaction, there are differences:
 - Doctor: How are you today?
 - Patient * Fine, how are *you*?
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- **Institutionality: not dependent on setting**
 - **BUT**
 - **On conversational rights and responsibilities of the participants.**
 - **Their orientation to each other's roles**
 - **Orientation to specific tasks that constitute the institutional nature of a conversation**
 - **I:T: has typically a goal or purpose.**





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- **A lot of research has been carried out on dyadic conversations between lay/professional speakers in face-to-face encounters.**
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- **These interactions share one feature:**
 - **Orientation to question-answer format.**
 - **E.g.:**
 - **Courtroom interaction (Atkinson & Drew 1979)**
 - **Police interrogation (Linell & Jönsson 1991)**
 - **News interviews (Clayman, Heritage & Greatbatch 2002)**

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- **Intensive therapy talk (Labov & Fanshel 1997)**
 - **Medical interaction in general (Heritage & Maynard 2004)**
 - **Classroom interaction (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975)**
 - **As the goals of these activities are quite different, and the agenda of the professional who proposes the questions as well, the sequential outcome may differ.**

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- **Certain institutionalized multi-party conversations have systematically exploited ways of conversing**
 - **Alcoholics-Anonymous-talk: strict rules**
 - **One speaker at a time, no interruptions or questions. Each turn has an end that will inform others of the imminent change of speakers.**
 - **Aim: to produce 'second stories'**

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- Having an institutional role (e.g. scientist) does not make the talk produced as representing institutional talk.
 - E.g. talk among colleagues over a specimen in the microscope, or over a piece of linguistic data on a tape, may come close to everyday talk (Goodwin 1998)

