

Abstract

This dissertation is concerned with research methodology and the empirical respecification of theoretical phenomena as social, interactional phenomena and how this affects methodological choices. Using trust and trustworthiness as exemplary cases, it explores current trust research methodology as well as the process of conceptualizing, defining, and operationalizing complex, abstract social phenomena as empirical interactional phenomena. It investigates ethnomethodologically (EM) and conversation analytically (CA) informed measurement of social phenomena more generally. The dissertation consists of three books which are presented below.

The first book, *Challenging Methodology in Trust Research*, is concerned with methodology in empirical trust research. It presents 10 different views of trust and trusting found in the social sciences and psychology, and it discusses their knowledge interests in relation to their use of data. Drawing on EM founded premises for the utilization of different empirical data, Garfinkel's trust conditions (Garfinkel, 1963), and Mead's theories of the self, it challenges the use of some widely applied methods in trust research. The book points to a range of underestimated errors and offers EM/CA-based methodological solutions. It argues for a new understanding of the usability of self-reported data in trust research, proposes that the study of trust as empirical object at work in the social world is both essential and understudied, and suggests extended use of video-ethnographic data for exploring understudied aspects.

The second, book *Revisiting Trustworthiness as a Sensorially Observable Phenomenon in Social Interaction*, picks up on this latter issue and dives into the molecular structure of realized trust in social interaction. Bringing together trust research, rhetoric, and ethnomethodology, the book conceptualizes, respecifies, and operationalizes trustworthiness as a research object in mundane and professional social interaction. It formulates an EM/CA-based analytical program for trustworthiness as a relational and dynamic interactional phenomenon achieved in social interaction and coins the term character-bound displays, as observed as clusters of indicators. It identifies four participant orientations of trustworthiness that may be foregrounded in participants' dynamic identity projects: orientation to truth and honesty, to stake and interest, to ability and knowledge, and to consistency and predictability. Turning the theoretical concept of trustworthiness into an empirical object of CA-informed interaction analysis—allowing for the exploration of whether and how interactants display, test, and negotiate their mutual trustworthiness in an encounter—it identifies codable interactional phenomena indicative of participants' orientation to one or more components of trustworthiness. It analyzes exemplary cases from each of the four orientations using ethnomethodological multimodal conversation analysis.

The third book, *Measurement in Social Interaction: A Conversation Analytic Approach to the Measurement of Social Phenomena*, picks up the challenge of identifying and measuring different types of social phenomena in an EM/CA frame. It initially introduces both CA's transition from a radical novel discipline to a well-established method for interaction research and how this has influenced CA's approach to formal quantification. It explores the difference between CA-informed operationalization of social phenomena and the formal approach found broadly in sociology and linguistics. It provides an overview of the discussion on quantification in CA before respecifying and defining measurement in an EM/CA context. It presents a taxonomy of CA studies applying formal quantification over the past 40 years. Finally, it addresses the subject of practical measurement, demonstrating how to identify

relevant measurement objects and their “environments of relevant possible occurrence” (Schegloff, 1993:103). It provides guidelines for how to proceed with measurement in CA research without succumbing to reification or oversimplification and points to perspectives and possibilities for measuring both countable objects and uncountable phenomena by combining CA methodology and formal quantification.