THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Substantiated Evaluation in the Selection Interview

by

Marilyn Dove

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES

CALGARY, ALBERTA

MARCH 1988

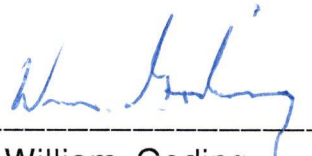
ISBN 0-315-42464-8

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

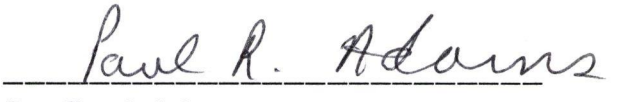
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Substantiated Evaluation in the Selection Interview" submitted by Marilyn Dove in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Chairman, Dr. Richard Heyman
Department of Educational Policy
and Administrative Studies



Dr. William Goding
Department of Teacher Education
and Supervision



Dr. Paul Adams
Department of Educational Policy
and Administrative Studies

March 31, 1988

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the reliability of interview evaluation records in substantiating judgments leading to the selection or rejection of an applicant. An employer may be called upon to use evaluation records in court to justify a selection decision against a formal charge of biased selection. The ability of the document in itself to establish the basis of the judgments expressed therein is in question. This research is intended to show the value of taping/transcribing selection interviews to assist in reviewing, understanding, and substantiating the sources of an interviewer's evaluation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is a special place in heaven for my professors. Their influence throughout the course of my undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of Calgary has been crucial to my success. Foremost in my mind always will be those whose dedication to teaching and to students made the difference between giving up and forging on.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Dr. Richard Heyman (who will long be remembered for his endurance and flexibility) and to Drs. Paul Adams and William Goding who joined us on March 31st as part of the examination committee.

I would also like to acknowledge the people in the Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies who were instrumental in facilitating this "Impossible Dream" - Lynda Krochensky (Support Staff), Dr. Jeffrey Jacob (Graduate Co-ordinator) and Dr. Roger Woock (Department Head). Their faith in my potential has allowed me to create this gift for my sons and their father, my family in Ontario, my friends outside the ivied walls.

From all of us to all of you, many thanks.

DEDICATION

I dedicate the music and metaphor in this thesis
to the memory of my brother Richard Dove,
May 17, 1945 - December 10, 1984.

"The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep."

-Robert Frost

I dedicate the difficulties involved to my understanding sons -
Douglas, Ryan, Jared, and Seamus Owens.

"The road is not the road.
The road is how you walk it."

-Unknown

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM AND OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

INTRODUCTION

Definition and Purpose

Employment/selection interviewing is traditionally a face to face interaction during which an interviewer attempts to determine the suitability of an applicant for a certain position (Stone & Meltz, 1983). There are many variations of the process, but fair and unbiased selection is ideally the invariable aim of the encounter. To this end, most organizations seek experienced interviewers or provide training in the art. High on the training agenda is information on the pitfalls identified in the literature as common to all selection interviews. These errors result in biased evaluation and unfounded decisions (Burack & Smith, 1982;Flippo, 1976; Imundo, 1980; Middlemist, 1983; Stone & Meltz, 1983).

There is little evidence to support the validity of the selection interview in identifying successful performers (Markert & Shores, 1981). T. Walden reports that all studies attempting to correlate the successful performance of selected applicants with interview evaluations have produced "a harvest of locusts" (1979:58). Yet the

practice continues. Few organizations will accept applicants sight unseen - in spite of their credentials and experience. To avoid disharmony, it is generally accepted that newcomers must somehow fit in with an existing network. It may be argued, therefore, that the purpose of the selection interview is not only to determine the ability of a candidate to do what the position requires but also to discover the social suitability of one applicant over others with competing profiles.

What to Evaluate and How

Crucial to the purpose of the selection interview is knowing what to evaluate. Historically, it has been used to explore areas inaccessible through standard paper and pencil channels. Tharp (1983) presents a sample interview format aimed at gleaning information re social skills, maturity, self-confidence, self-image, personal development, and assertiveness (among many other characteristics and activities). Matheny (1984) emphasizes the need to assess motivational factors - goals, expectations, flexibility, and energy. Camuso (1984) and Downs et al (1980) include enthusiasm, communication skills, and appearance.

Another approach is to try and discover how an applicant will actually function in a certain job position. Candidates are glib enough in answering questions about what they have done and will do, but unfortunately their accounts do not always correspond with performance once hired. The assessment center as described by Ed

Yager (1980) is a surer method of finding out what people are capable of doing at the present time.

A superior method for identifying management potential, an assessment center can be set up by any organization. The entire process relies heavily upon common sense notions of what is required and how it is evidenced. The first step is to carefully consider the performance requirements of a job position. Then simulated exercises that test perhaps analytic, decision-making, and interpersonal skills are designed and administered to a group of candidates over a period of several days. Assessors, drawn from a variety of relevant sources, observe and/or participate in the exercises and rate participants, then collaborate on their observations and choose the best performer.

Valid selection is more often achieved via the assessment center than through standard interviewing. It is frequently difficult, however, to assemble a group of applicants at management level who are all available at the same time to work through the process. This impracticality prevents the center from replacing the face to face interview as widely as it might, in spite of its superiority.

Many more studies are concerned with the issue of <u>how</u> to evaluate chosen areas. The evaluation process is an unavoidable difficulty, inviting wide disagreement among employers concerning the tools, timing, and process involved. Some prefer notes or a standard format - scored throughout the interview - while others stand firmly in favor of a post-interview assessment using either

method. There is consensus, however, on the importance of a written evaluation of the interview and applicant, to protect against the charges of rejected candidates or their representatives (Mathis & Jackson, 1982).

Morris (1984) addresses the selection of sales candidates. His suggestion is to set up a system of key words in anticipation of responses that interviewees might produce. These answers would correspond with the organization's potential for satisfying personal objectives. Failure to choose the appropriate key word would indicate a mismatch.

Grove describes the composition of an evidence organizer - "a worksheet with a section corresponding to each 'what counts' factor" (1981:59). Each section has questions to guide the interviewer in collecting the evidence. Grove credits the tool for producing structure, facilitating categorization, and providing documentation.

Mahler (1974) suggests a comparable approach using candidate analysis sheets. The idea is to list the five most important results expected of the new employee and pair them with the five most important requirements needed to produce them. Petit and Mullins (1981) identify the key factors in a similar method as relating to motivation, personality, job skills, and compatibility between the organization and the applicant.

These studies describe evaluation tools and techniques that are used during the interview. Regardless of form, they all stem from a common sense approach to the need for evaluation and should

be understood in this way. Imperfect as they may be, they are still considered preferable to capturing the encounter after the fact, when memory is distorted by overall impression. But how defensible would these evaluations be if challenged in a court of law?

In "The Educated Hunch", E. Kolton (1985) describes an interviewer's ultimate choice as a gut feeling based on the interviewee's personality. This analysis ignores the vital interactional component; there is a great danger that gut reliance may be synonymous with interviewer bias. Employers have focussed on what to evaluate and how, while keeping within the confines of the law (Mathis & Jackson, 1982;Imundo, 1980;Stone & Meltz, 1983) but they have overlooked the importance of being able to produce substantiating evidence to defend the judgments recorded on evaluation forms. The growing body of case law pertinent to employment situations suggests a need for employers to be able to protect themselves against litigation in this area (Cascio, 1981).

Legal Concerns

Bound now by uniform guidelines for employee selection procedures, employers cannot ask applicants information re age, sex, race, religion, or national origin (Stone & Meltz, 1983;Mathis & Jackson, 1982;Imundo, 1980). In addition to these obvious taboos, interviewers may not ask female applicants about their marital status, dependents, current or future plans for childbearing (Harrison, 1980). Gandz and Rush credit the legislation and its application with controlling blatant discrimination. However, to

guard against charges of subtle discrimination they remind employers of the need to prove that applicants were hired solely on the basis of "job relevant knowledge, skill, and personality dimensions" (1983:70). This will require being able to show the relationship between the job description (and associated personal and professional requisites for performance), the substance of written and performance tests, and questions used in the selection interview. Such proof is termed content validation (Yager, 1980).

A lawsuit charging an interviewer with personal bias and requiring substantiation of the evaluation form is not far removed from possibility. Given the subjectivity evidenced in standard evaluation forms and reports and their deficit in facilitating accountability, it may be best to search for a new approach.

This points the way to the emerging field of Conversation Analysis which analyzes the transcripts of taped conversations in an effort to understand how people construct social reality through talk (Atkinson, 1984). The direction this method would imply is to tape selection interviews. The tape (or transcript) would allow accurate recall and review of uncertain areas, more objective assessment, and a verifiable source for the evaluation.

Using the ethnomethodological framework of analysis, this thesis will explore the ability of evaluation records in themselves to establish the basis of judgments expressed therein. The undertaking will bring the reader to an understanding of the necessity for substantiated evaluation in the selection interview.

INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

Ethnomethodology is sometimes referred to as the study of commonsense knowledge. Far from being insignificant, commonsense knowledge is vital to our interpretation of what is happening around us, be that the simplest or most intricate of moments, events, and interactions. It provides us with a basic stock of knowledge about the world in general and a sense of social structure, both gleaned from daily experience and interaction as well as purposeful information givers. The practices of commonsense reasoning allow us to articulate bits of the stock of knowledge with the situation at hand in order to interpret and make sense of what we ponder, observe, and participate in.

Commonsense knowledge is indisputably the foundation upon which all other intellectual and pragmatic pursuits of knowledge are based. It is impossible to imagine a philosophical argument, psychological experiment, sociological study, (or interview) that does not rely upon the provisions and practices of commonsense knowledge and reasoning for design and interpretation. Therefore, far from being incidental, this crucial area is unquestionably meritorious of study in itself (Leiter, 1980).

Ethnomethodology's approach to the study of common sense derives from the wedding of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and Noam Chomsky's transformational generative grammar. The following sections will explain ethnomethodology (EM) as a hybrid of several branches of phenomenology and linguistics.

Phenomenology

Edmund Husserl baptized phenomenology "the study of consciousness" (1981:12), based on the philosophical distinction between phenomena as they exist independently and how they are actually perceived. His conception of the discipline's mission was to examine how the taken for granted knowledge and assumptions of the everyday world impact an individual's perception or experience of phenomena. Husserl believed it was possible to illuminate consciousness as a process by systematically identifying and removing subconscious factors affecting the experience of a phenomenon. Language, used to describe perception, was seen as the key to distilling the essence of pure consciousness.

Philosophical phenomenology gave soul to existential phenomenology as developed by Jean Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Rather than peeling back layers of perception to expose a basic core of meaning, they emphasized the importance of considering commonplace experience as a totality of meaning. They further "stressed the inseparability of the physical self from consciousness" (Barritt et al, 1983:53). A convincing example is the situation where someone is caught peeking through a keyhole. Suddenly aware of being observed while observing, the culprit becomes conscious of how he must appear to the onlooker, destroying his previous focus and radically altering his sensibilities (Barritt, 1983).

In keeping with this holistic concept of experience was the view of language as one of its vital, integral components. Rather than simply a mediator of experience, allowing us to inform ourselves and others concerning the way in which we perceive the world around us, language was recast as one with experience.

At this point of departure, Alfred Schutz gave impetus to the science of consciousness/the study of everyday life by planting the fertile seeds of hermeneutic phenomenology. This interpretive tradition underscored context as an obvious and heretofore overlooked (taken for granted) influence on experience. Initially, it clung to the importance of viewing the world we seek to understand from the contextual standpoint of the signalling entity, remote or immediate. This demanded knowledge of a conglomerate of situational and circumstantial variables. The awareness of their existence and import (though not all overtly accessible) was believed to accommodate a perception closer to the pure or intended essence of a phenomena/experience.

Nurtured by Schutz this fascination for context as a powerful and often subliminal force external to the speaker matured to an awareness of the many evolutions context underwent, funnelled into the fertile brains of active interpreters. Notions of the passive ingestion of force fed meaning gave way to visions of voracious appetites, of people searching actively for meaning through intrinsic but unidentified processes of interpretation. The key to discovering

these processes lay in language as mirror of the mind (Schutz & Luckman, 1974).

Linguistics

Linguistics is the study of language - its nature, acquisition, and structure. Like phenomenology, the discipline has advanced from primitive conjecture to sophisticated speculation. Theoretical linguist Noam Chomsky has devised what the science considers a masterpiece in the form of a generative transformational theory of grammar. Along with phenomenology, this seminal work inspires ethnomethodology's study of meaning.

Chomsky's generative model proposes that language stems from a deep structure consisting of a finite set of propositions. These propositions are manipulated by a limited, identifiable number of processes (transformations) in a repetitive, ordered fashion. The result is what we hear - the surface structure of language. Although the number of propositions and transformations are finite, the products of their interaction are infinite. Conversation and rhetoric continue to emerge original, giving testimony to the boundless capacity of the human mind to create new forms of language. Linguists consider the resulting syntax - word order and classification - responsible for the derivation of meaning (Leiter, 1980).

Ethnomethodologist Aaron Cicourel examined Chomsky's theory and found it wanting. Cicourel rejected syntax as the primary monitor of semantics. For example, a noun traced to a dictionary

may have several meanings. The reader must decide which meaning is applicable in the instance provoking referral. He will accomplish this by using the hosting sentence or environment to furnish a reasonable context within which to place the noun he is investigating. This process presumes upon common sense background knowledge and interpretive processes to bring it to fruition.

Another illustration of the point against syntax is evident when deciphering the telegraphic sentences of children who are just learning to talk. Missing all qualifiers such as articles, conjunctions, adjectives, etc., their utterances especially demand that the listener supply a very specific context in order to understand what the speaker is attempting to communicate. An utterance such as "Mommy cookie." can aptly illustrate that word order is insufficient. In considering the variety of meanings the phrase may have, the argument for syntax melts rapidly in the overwhelming heat of the contention for contextual interpretation and determination.

Chomsky's study of the nativeness of language was grounded in a search for deep structure and rules for making transformations to surface structure. The rules of transformation that Chomsky considered causal in producing surface structure, Cicourel perceived merely as glosses - useful to linguists perhaps as categorization devices - analytical aids after the fact. Cicourel maintained that the study of nativeness should address the acquisition of interpretive procedures used to ascertain meaning. His stand is

reinforced by calling to mind the inability of young children to understand double entendre. The fact that this ability develops over time indicates that the interpretive processes required must also be developmental.

Aside from these criticisms, EM credits Chomsky's theory with identifying the generative quality of language in a manner that clearly invited application to the explanation of interpretive processes. Cicourel perceived them as similar to transformational processes and took the liberty of modifying Chomsky's model to accommodate a generative model of semantics/meaning that would be acceptable to EM. As linguists propose that transformational processes transform deep structure to surface structure, Cicourel ventured that interpretive processes generate and select a seemingly appropriate meaning from among a broad range of possibilities (Cicourel, 1980).

Supportive of EM's focus on the role of context and interpretation in assigning meaning is the branch of sociolinguistics known as the ethnography of communication. This vein is unconcerned with the formal aspects and theories of language; it scrutinizes practical, everyday usage. The emphasis is on the strategies and assumptions members of a language group use to create and interpret experience. Ethnography has discovered valuable reinforcement for Cicourel's generative model of meaning via interpretive processes. For example, bilingual/multilingual speakers practice code switching in conversation (alternating between languages). Previously thought of as an adaptive shift

stemming from a lack of vocabulary, the habit became recognized as a way of creating momentary intimacy and transient interludes of mood or status change, cuing the listener to shift his perception of the sending context and alter the receiving context similarly (Gumperz & Hymes, 1982).

With these substantive contributions from theoretical and applied linguistics, EM grew powerful in its approach to the study of common sense knowledge. It embraced language as the ultimate instrument. More than phenomenology's mirror of the mind, language emerged omnipotent - a prism accommodating the resolution of refracting interpretations, both generating and reflecting thought and interaction simultaneously.

OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

Chapter 2

In the second chapter, I delve extensively into the normative literature on interviewing and assessment - sampling a wide range of material to assemble a multi-disciplinary approach to the puzzle. But far from distilling any solution, the effort only seems to thicken the problem.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 gives voice to assistance from a growing camp of ethnomethodologists and conversation analysts whose research on interviewing and assessment helps to illuminate the innate sources of complexity. The discipline offers not solution but solace and suggestion to concerned interviewers in any field.

Chapter 4

This chapter takes published models of interviewing and evaluation to task. Shades of the previous chapter shed light on the problem although the data speaks for itself in exposing the complete inability of evaluation documents to substantiate the judgments they express.

Chapter 5

The last chapter summarizes the findings of earlier chapters, and suggests implications and directions for future research. Its intention is to encourage the reader to bypass standard avenues of approach and adopt a new method and mindset to investigate the problems inherent in the selection interview.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE NORMATIVE LITERATURE ON INTERVIEWING

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 is designed to give the reader a broad familiarity with the particulars of the salient issues that typically absorb researchers and practitioners in the field of selection interviewing. The literature review I have assembled to accomplish this is drawn from the normative literature - books and journals of numerous, related disciplines: psychology, applied psychology, educational psychology, counselling psychology, occupational psychology, social psychology, personnel psychology, interpersonal communication, and management. It describes the concerns of individuals and organizations involved in the recruitment of superior performers for positions in academic, business, and professional environments, as well as the dilemmas of candidates in pursuit of these scarce opportunities.

The difficulties are presented as identified and dealt with from the varied perspectives of the disciplines cited above. The identification and analysis, categorizations and suggested solutions relayed to the reader on behalf of these contributors do not reflect the ethnomethodological understanding of what goes on in

interviewing and assessment situations. To handle and emphasize the disparity in analysis, Chapter 3 will address this chapter through a review of relevant selections from the ethnomethodological literature.

PROBLEMS OF INTERVIEWERS

The continuous publication of articles and studies relevant to selection interviewing indicates a pervasive search for effective methodology, both for training purposes and actual practice. Key issues in the area continue to be: obstacles to impartiality, nonverbal behavior, the reliability of assessment, and subjectivity.

Obstacles to Impartiality

Dennis Morgan, leading American personnel professional, admits that "with every communication encounter there exists a certain degree of subjectivity" (1986:24). The development of preference is a natural byproduct of daily life and need not work detrimentally in the interviewing situation if interviewers are aware of its existence and the triggers that influence it. Certain sources of bias have been widely identified and acknowledged as problematic. They form a common core of interviewer errors that are standardly dealt with in all interviewer training programs.

a) Interviewers often make early decisions about an applicant's suitability - sometimes within the first few moments of the encounter (Middlemist, 1983). This error is difficult to control because it is believed to stem from prior perusal of the application form, causing interviewers to prematurely form a positive or negative impression that affects impartiality (Stone & Meltz, 1983; Dipboye et al, 1984).

b) A related problem arising from prior knowledge is an awareness of the applicant's biographical and demographic information. This can generate the similar-to-me effect where an interviewer identifies and empathizes with the applicant due to perceived or supposed similarities (Stone & Meltz, 1983).

c) The halo effect is a well-known misperception common to employment interviewing. The strong or weak evaluation of an applicant on a single overpowering dimension traps the interviewer into applying his assessment of that characteristic to the candidate in general (Middlemist, 1985). This frequently results in the employment of an underqualified or overqualified person (Imundo, 1980).

d) Another phenomenon is called cultural noise and involves the candidate's skillful production of responses that he perceives the interviewer wants to hear (Mathis & Jackson, 1982;Strauss & Sayles, 1980). An artful applicant can easily project a wide

spectrum of qualities and attitudes valued by the company and inferred by the questions (Mathis & Jackson, 1982).

e) The knowledge that an applicant will try to present his best side can cause the selection interview to become a hunt for negative information (Mathis & Jackson, 1982;Burack & Smith, 1982). In fact, A. Witkin advocates a "search for the derogatory", a purposefully hidden factor that could undermine success (1980:574). But this is an unpopular viewpoint, its focus in opposition to the majority of organizations that propose interviewing time is spent more productively in exploring positive potential.

f) The primacy and recency effects are another problem that relate to the processing of positive and negative information. With the primacy effect, positive information that is uncovered initially softens the impact of subsequent negatives. But negative information, discovered early in the interview, weakens the following positives. In other words, whatever happens first sets the tone of the interview and colors the perception of the interviewer (Middlemist, 1983).

The recency effect has impact in the employment interview when an initial and final evaluation are required to be made within one encounter. In this case, the last strong positive or negative tends to shape the evaluation. John Wanous (1980) attributes this phenomenon to the renewed concentration required of the interviewer in being compelled to produce a second evaluation after

an inattentive interim which standardly follows initial attentiveness.

g) The effect of contrast is to unconsciously provide a comparison between successive candidates (Middlemist, 1983). A string of unsuitable applicants can amplify marginal positives in the first real contender. Conversely, a parade of winsome lovelies can disqualify a bland, but gifted, competitor unless the recruitment is for a managerial position. In this case, attractive women are discriminated against (Heilman & Saruwatari, 1979).

h) Like everyone else, interviewers are inclined to have stereotypes. When selecting for a certain position, an individual's stereotype of the ideal candidate comes into play. This faultless ideal may bear no resemblance to who or what is actually needed to meet organizational demands. (Middlemist, 1984;Stone & Meltz, 1983). Nevertheless, it affects choice and is sometimes reflected in too homogeneous a mixture of employees within an organization - a situation that can imply a violation of equal employment opportunity.

Nonverbal behavior

Nonverbal communication - body language - includes not only gesture, posture, and movement but a whole spectrum of variables that contribute to the spoken message transmitted and received in interpersonal communication. In its broadest interpretation it encompasses paralanguage (ie. tempo and intonation), as well as the use of time and interpersonal distance, color and costume, decor and mood setting audio/visual props (Brooks & Emmert, 1976).

Not surprisingly, the area attracts constant research. It is reported that the nonverbal component of communication may be more important than the verbal in producing positive or negative bias, given that perceivers credit it (fairly or unfairly) with more than 65% of the meaning in interactions (Tubbs & Moss, l981; Burack & Smith, 1982). It can seem to express emotion and intention that are not always congruent with the accompanying words. Communication experts agree that when the verbals and nonverbals do not match, precedence should be given to the message inferred by the nonverbals (Danzinger, 1976).

George Stevens makes a plea for interviewer awareness of the impact of nonverbal interaction in "Taking the Chance Out of Selection Interviewing". He cautions interviewers to "be perceptive and sensitive to the manner in which their behavior affects others (since) certain things cause applicants to alter their manners or expressions" (1981:47). Washburn and Hankel (1973) discuss the same issue in their study of simulated employment interviews and

suggest that interviewers standardize their behaviors to minimize impact.

Fernando Poyatos (1975) explains that through self-synchrony we regulate our own repertoire of behaviors, which conditions the receiver's response. This cyclical and recursive process is unavoidable given the mere awareness of another subject. R. Forbes reiterates the point in saying that the "behavior of participants in conversation is mutually contingent..." (1980:70). His study - "Nonverbal Behaviors and the Outcome of Selection Interviews" - involved 101 students who were leaving school. The findings suggested that interviewers reflected early decisions nonverbally, subconsciously cuing the candidate's response and thereby reinforcing the snap judgment. Interviewee behaviors associated with selection were direct and sustained eye contact, smiling, and nodding; behaviors correlated with rejection were averted gaze, bland expression, and less nodding.

In "Verbal Correlates of Interviewer Empathic Listening and Employment Interview Outcomes", F. Jablin found that the nonverbal dimension of employment interviewing was the key to the interviewee's perceptions of empathy in the interviewer. The only significant verbal correlate was the number of interruptions made by the interviewer (1984:355).

N. Schmitt (1976) undertook an interesting study of simulated employment interviews where observers rated interviewees, based on video displays only (sound extracted from tape). Those they saw being interviewed by enthusiastic interviewers were given

consistently higher ratings. This outcome did not change with the addition of the sound component. D. Nagata (1983) wondered if interviewers displaying a negative attitude would have a dampening effect on the applicants assigned to them. In "Nonverbal and Verbal Content of Behaviours in the Prediction of Interviewer Effectiveness" the author presents evidence to support the suspicion.

Stacks and Burgoon (1981) found more evidence in their work on nonverbal behaviors as distractors in resistance to persuasion. Their findings suggest that nonverbals are not only distractors but impediments to the information processing task inherent in the interview situation. In a subsequent study, Burgoon et al discovered that subjects were more likely to hire applicants who maintained steady eye contact. "Interpretations given to higher amounts of gaze were more intimacy and similarity, more immediacy and involvement, and more composure, informality, and nonarousal." (1985:133).

Gaze must be interpreted cautiously in the case of interviewing cross-culturally. Varying norms may prohibit direct or sustained eye contact in a situation where there is a power differential as in the selection interview. Muriel Saville-Troike (1982) has done extensive research into the difficulties of communicating amidst the confusion of varying nonverbal systems that are culture and language specific.

Albert Mehrabian speaks of his concern for the "nonverbally handicapped" (1971:128) through a personal anecdote, describing

how he hired a young woman who would hardly look at him, but over a period of time was able to interact in a normal way. The excellence of her work made the early discomfort of working with her well worth the extra energy it took. He points out that another interviewer would have rejected her because her behavior appeared odd.

The body of literature on nonverbal communication continues to swell. Interestingly enough, there is a dissenter among the authors who believes that the power of nonverbals in affecting selection decisions has been overrated. J. Hollandsworth's study of on-campus recruiters produced "appropriateness of content and fluency of speech" as leading influencers, followed by stereotypic nonverbal indicators of confidence (1979:363).

Clearly, the selection interview is beset with an assortment of problems. Many of them can be controlled by carefully training interviewers in awareness and technique. Sibson (1976) and Middlemist (1983) report improvement using mock interviews, workshops, videotapes, and practice sessions where questioning techniques are refined. Underlying these efforts is the concept of the guided interview and a standard format that ideally results in the equitable comparison of all applicants and valid selection (Burack & Smith, 1982).

Reliability of Assessment

Reliability of assessment is viewed in two ways. The first pertains to uniformity in the way an individual interviewer arrives at judgments about candidates applying for the same position. The second involves agreement among interviewers considering the evaluation of a single candidate. Stone & Meltz (1979) discovered that many interviewers tended towards extremes. They rated applicants uniformly high or low. Arvey and Campion (1982) found discrepancies in the weighting of characteristics by different interviewers selecting for the same position. On a scale of 1 to 5, a certain level of proficiency in a particular area might be a 5 in one person's estimation and a 3 in another's (Burack & Smith, 1982;Flippo, 1976).

Another problem in the area of inter-rater reliability is disagreement over the relative importance of various cues. In "Individual Differences in the Decision Process of Employment Interviewers", Valenzi and Andrews (1973) found some interviewers ignoring what others pounced upon. Moreover, the campus recruiters in their study admitted uncertainty as to how their personal decision models worked. Even after arriving at consensus on the relative importance of five cues, they did not process them in a manner that was consistent with expressed agreement. This led the authors to attribute the inconsistencies to configural cue use, where the combination and interaction of cues produces a much more complex and irregular effect than A plus B equals AB.

Allen Reynolds (1979) tested individual and inter-rater reliability with regards to a scored oral interview used to select police officers. Sixty-seven applicants met individually with a three member panel in thirty minute interviews. Using four predetermined questions, assessors rated candidates on dimensions most appropriately evaluated through face to face interaction (oral expression, decisiveness, alertness, interpersonal skills, etc.). The results showed individual rater reliability to be lower than inter-rater reliability. Follow-up research gave evidence that both reliabilities improve with a structured format and a behavioral, rather than adjectival, rating scale.

In addition to these suggestions for improving reliability, Cinnamon and Matulef (1979) recommend that applicants be interviewed more than once, by different interviewers, with healthy intervals between sessions. Byham (1984) supports the recommendation in his study which outlines alternatives to the assessment center.

Walden (1979) reports that better inter-rater reliability is achieved in a single session through the panel interview where multiple raters assess the applicant who addresses the group in general while responding to questions posed by the interviewers in turn. In "Improving the Reliability of the Selection Interview", R. Forbes (1979) describes the panel interview in detail. His suggestions re questions and content are summarized as follows. In a prior briefing session, interviewers should choose specific areas to cover. Then they must formulate questions to tap the behaviors

and attitudes needed to complement the skills the vacant position requires. During the interview, they address the applicant in turn, without interruption from other interviewers. After all the questions are answered, follow-up questions may be directed to the candidate by any interviewer. This fairly tight structure is thought to avoid confusing the applicant with excess input, verbally and nonverbally, too early in the encounter.

There are advantages and disadvantages to the structured vs unstructured format. Structure is believed to allow fairer comparisons on the same dimensions across candidates. With applicants being given the opportunity to respond to the same questions, objectivity is thought to be more probable. On the other hand, strict adherence to a prescribed format can inhibit the naturalness of the interaction and contribute to a candidate's anxiety level - especially if the interrogation does not allow for him to present his best side. To correct this dilemma some organizations use a sheet of prepared questions that the interviewer chooses from in an order that seems appropriate to the situation. This, of course, invites criticism on the objectivity issue in that the order of questions may influence an applicant's answers (Tharp, 1983).

The opposing camp advocates an unstructured approach. Its extremists simply invite a straight narrative from the applicant. "Interviewing in Professional School Admissions: Pros and Cons" (1980) describes how an applicant to medical school simply tells a panel of interviewers everything he thinks valuable in presenting

himself as a suitable or superior prospect. Cinnamon & Matulef (1979) discuss a more moderate approach - asking a few open-ended questions to explore non-cognitive factors (assertiveness, motivation, independence, and creativity), characteristics recurring in the literature as being among the main targets for evaluation during the employment interview .

Subjectivity

Regardless of the care that is taken in training interviewers to evaluate objectively, subjectivity unavoidably colors perception. According to Dennis Morgan, subjectivity causes us "to follow our instincts, to trust our experience, to respond on a more emotional rather than logical level" (1986:24). Morgan's analysis is actually skirting the whole area of person perception and impression management which includes attribution theory and implicit personality theory. These frameworks offer useful perspectives for understanding the subjectivity component of the evaluation process (Arvey & Campion, 1982).

In Impression Management, the author Barry Schlenker discusses attribution theory. This causal theory of behavior proposes that observers deduce a connection between actions/events and causes. Causation (that which sparks and shapes behavior) is explained in terms of personal dispositions or environmental factors. In assessing behavior, a perceiver attributes causation to either dispositional or environmental influences. These attributions are based on his own understanding of, and reaction to, the social

world. This, in turn, affects the way he responds to the person he is perceiving (the perceived).

Tucker and Rowe (1979) discovered a relationship between expectancy, attribution, and selection decisions. If an interviewer entered an interview with an unfavorable expectancy, perhaps due to information on the candidate's application form, he attributed the past accomplishments of applicants to luck (environmental factors) and former mistakes to personal shortcomings (dispositional factors). Conversely, if the interviewer held positive prior impressions the reverse judgments applied.

Tucker and Rowe's study found attribution theory useful in explaining how an interviewer interpreted answers that interviewees gave concerning past behavior and events. But P. Herriot in "Towards An Attributional Theory of the Selection Interview" applies attribution theory to the behavior that takes place within the interview itself. The author defines the interview as a "rule-governed social interaction with clearly defined reciprocal roles allocated to both parties" (1981:165). These roles dictate the demeanor participants should adopt, with definite implications for the expression and observance of status differential and for the content of the conversation. Some of the interaction problems within interviews are then explained as confusion concerning what the roles entail. The resulting transgression of norms or failure to relate as expected has dire effects on impression. Behavior that is congruent with expectations

is attributed to the situational forces; behavior that is anomalous is attributed to dispositional factors.

Herriot suggests that only when participants are in agreement as to what their roles entail, and are able to make unbiased deductions re the causes of behavior, can they form accurate dispositional attributions. The implication is that dispositional attributions are the basis for the selection decision. Since they are based on the interviewee's interactive style, and in-role behavior is interpersonal, the interviewer draws inferences regarding the interviewee's interpersonal style in other situations. H. Acuff would consider this conclusion part of the "basic weakness of the employment interview...when it is viewed as a sample of an individual's life" (1981:564).

Acuff's comment expresses concern for creating actual personality (believed to prevail under most circumstances and in private) from perceived personality. He describes perceived personality as a reflection of the perceiver's attributions re the source of certain characteristics or behaviors. Implicit personality theory proposes that individuals have their own private constellations of traits that they summon unconsciously, triggered by the perception of one or two components of the aggregate. This causes the perceiver to believe that if one characteristic exists, the rest must naturally follow (Hakel, 1974).

In Issues in Person Perception, Mark Cook delves into this presumed association. An individual's idiosyncratic implicit personality theory is thought to be what personality rating scales

actually measure. The semantic or conceptual overlap between terms used in rating scales rests in the interviewer's mind and is reflected on paper in the evaluation. In addition to this problem, Cook points out that the use of standardized personality inventories is unjustifiable since they cannot possibly apply universally to all situations. The traits required for one job can be completely opposite to those required for another, as is the case with librarians and salespeople. Unfortunately, job analyses too seldom include a personality profile of the ideal candidate. The interviewer is left guessing - with a standardized and perhaps irrelevant form or his own implicit personality theory about which traits the job requires and how they are evidenced. Subjectivity allegedly runs rampant in such situations. Keenan (1977) did a study that lends support to the belief that the selection decision is often based simply on how much an interviewer liked the applicant and on how well they interacted.

This brings the problem full circle to the issue of controlling interviewer bias. Rozelle and Baxter studied the effect of accountability and responsibility on the perceiver. When raters knew that their evaluations had to be justified and that they were being depended on for valid selection, their descriptions of target persons more reliably reflected the <u>actual</u> characteristics of the perceived individuals. This is a hopeful contradiction of the standard research in person perception which finds that "perceiver characteristics are a dominant influence and produce highly personalized and undifferentiated descriptions" of the perceived (1981:440).

Since responsibility for the selection decision commonly sits with interviewers (in that consistent failure to hire successful performers would result in being relieved of the interviewing position) it may be suspected that accountability is a mitigating factor in selection. But giving an account of the way a specific or general evaluation came to be made, can be a difficult process using standard rating scales. Some organizations encourage a free response report, allowing for the "uninhibited expression of the interviewer's reactions" (Lopez, 1975:157). Others require the documentation of behavior. The difficulty is in recording behavior objectively and succinctly without ruining the flow of the interaction. It should also be done in such a way that an outsider could review the information and understand how the assessor arrived at the judgments expressed in the evaluation. It is debatable that any of the methods discussed above could produce this result.

CONCLUSION

To achieve a broad representation of the problems inherent in selection interviewing, I have sampled the normative literature widely from a multidisciplinary perspective and found a common core of what are considered the gripping problems - subjectivity and bias, impartiality and reliability. Although the material written on interviewing, assessment, evaluation, and selection is boundless, this coverage is adequate to accomplish the informative purposes of the chapter. It provides a good base for illustrating the concerns that EM has regarding a causative or clinical approach to understanding social interaction in any situation, including the selection interview.

CHAPTER 3

EM RESPONDS TO THE NORMATIVE LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this chapter is to respond from an ethnomethodological perspective to evaluation and assessment as addressed in the normative literature on selection interviewing. To accomplish this, I will draw upon the EM literature for studies and discussions relevant to assessment and selection in a variety of situations. My intention is to pave the way for the following chapter which will present a discussion and analysis of actual interview questions and evaluation schemes. EM being the framework of interpretation, a reader equipped with an understanding of the perspective prior to delving into these murky waters will readily perceive new shapes and undercurrents as they emerge.

BASIC CONCEPTS OF ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

Reflexivity and Indexicality

Having covered the underpinnings of EM in Chapter 1, we can move directly to a discussion of its basic concepts and beliefs and in this way become comfortable with the terminology and mindset indigenous to the literature. Mandatory to an understanding of the discipline is the internalization of its cornerstones - the somewhat elusive concepts of indexicality and reflexivity.

Objects, behavior, and talk share the common properties of reflexivity and indexicality. The interpretive procedures involved in these processes are employed relentlessly in a search for sustained sense and meaning in the social world. Indexicality refers to the fact that objects, events, and talk are dependent on context for meaning, for without context meaning is equivocal. For example: an empty crib can indicate a child in its mother's arms or a child in the grave; tears may stem from sorrow, joy, anger, or a foreign object in the eye; the words "You're something else" can be used affectionately or sarcastically. These examples illustrate how an observer or interactional participant must intuitively or observationally assemble a context within which he embeds a selected focus (object, event, talk). Only then can he assign some kind of meaning (not necessarily the intended meaning) to this fragment based upon his perception of setting and scene, participants, their biographies and relationships to one another, and the purpose and intent of any speakers.

This process of embedding (contextualization) delivers that which can be plurisemantic into unequivocality just momentarily since meaning is never fixed but constantly shifting with the passage of time and additional input. "Context is never a given...context is open-ended...context and meaning illuminate or inform each other" (Heyman, 1987:6). Think of meaning as a miniscule dot of colour in a pulsing kaleidoscope - emerging, expanding, bursting, and assimilating in infinite, orgasmic concert with innumerable others. Such is the essence of indexicality.

Reflexivity holds that accounts and setting (context) are mutually constitutive and elaborative. One cannot exist without the other. Accounts - descriptions and/or explanations of talk and behavior - naturally involve the use of indexical expressions to make the setting associated with the described event observable to the audience in receipt of the explanation. Conversely, the indexical expressions (most of what is said) used to describe the setting depend upon that very setting for their use and intended import. Thus, as one hand washes the other, indexicality and reflexivity must be understood as the inextricably interwoven constituents of meaning (Leiter, 1980).

Accounting Practices and the Documentary Method of Interpretation

EM's interest in the study of meaning extends to the sense making methods people use to conceive (and sustain their conception) of the social world as real, factual - allegedly a product of behavior controlled by an awareness of statuses, norms, motives, and prescriptions for behavior. An example of belief in this facticity is evident in remarks and admonitions to novices who are preparing to penetrate new territory socially. Do's and don't's are prescribed to the inexperienced member to prevent offence and embarrassment to others, if not himself. Rather than allowing the newcomer to experience the mini-society and then form his own opinions about acceptable and appreciated ways of behaving, a dauntless mentor foists caste and protocol upon the fledgling, conscientiously attempting to fit him with a behavioral straightjacket identical to his own. With this preparation they then set out to perpetrate the factual existence of the outlined constellation which they perceive to continue on after their departure, as a separate and identifiable kingdom independent of all interaction.

Members of society manage to accomplish this facticity through the construction of personal and public accounts. The practices involved allow participants to rationalize and/or verbalize interactions and experiences in order to make them understandable to themselves and observable to others. The process whereby these accounts are constructed is our focus of interest.

At this point in the discipline's maturity it is widely accepted that an individual's perception of, and consequent participation in, social interaction may be explained by what are termed ACCOUNTING PRACTICES and the DOCUMENTARY METHOD OF INTERPRETATION. These terms and concepts as presented and explained by Kenneth Leiter in A Primer on Ethnomethodology capture the earlier works of EM pioneers Harold Garfinkel, Alfred Schutz, and Aaron Cicourel.

Leiter (1980) proposes that the accounting practices (interpretive procedures) underlying accounts constitute the documentary method in that they not only issue from the method but sustain it as well. These interpretive procedures spring from an idiosyncratic, culture bound, common sense view of the world. Inseparable assumptions about how relationships are, and should be, provide the basis for the selective perception and interpretation of behavior, language, and events. These four assumptions may be simplified to the following briefs:

a) THE RECIPROCITY OF PERSPECTIVES assumes that participants share the same view of the world. If they were to change places they would perceive the scenario exactly as another interactant from his particular point of reference, in spite of divergent biographies.

b) NORMAL FORMS addresses the fact that participants believe they are communicating from within a realm of tacit knowledge and

understanding using standard patterns of contextualization and discourse.

c) The ET CETERA PRINCIPLE is concerned with the retrospective/prospective aspect of meaning as it evolves in talk. It assumes a commonly shared conceptual base allowing participants to fill in unexpressed meaning and intention. It further assumes that as a conversation progresses, speakers will inadvertently clarify previous statements.

d) DESCRIPTIVE VOCABULARIES AS INDEXICAL EXPRESSIONS speaks to the embeddedness of meaning. Accounts are never decontextualized but accepted as being related to, and representative of, a broader reality outside of the immediate situation.

The use of these assumptions sustains the method while the method itself supplies the assumptions. In cyclical symbiosis (reminiscent of the concepts of indexicality and reflexivity) the documentary method provides the interpretive procedures which in turn constitute the documentary method that asserts facticity to the social world (Leiter, 1980).

But even while facilitating communication, every one of these assumptions may also be regarded as a source of trouble. With reference to:

a) THE RECIPROCITY OF PERSPECTIVES - Interactants may not share the same view of the world. Background knowledge and personal experience (integrated and internalized) is individualistic, producing idiosyncratic interpretive frameworks. Since the flow of context supplied to construct meaning is continuously unique in some way, perceptions and interpretations may be shared to a degree but never totally congruent.

b) NORMAL FORMS - Communicating then under the assumption of a common core of tacit knowledge and understanding via "standard" patterns of contextualization and discourse may be an exercise in delusion.

c) THE ET CETERA PRINCIPLE - Relying upon subsequent speech or behavior to incidentally clarify ambiguity can be problematic if clarification does NOT in some way occur.

d) DESCRIPTIVE VOCABULARIES AS INDEXICAL EXPRESSIONS - Given that accounts are perceived as springing from the context that bred them, listeners perceive a speaker who is delivering an account as an actor giving them a peek at a hidden panorama. Listeners intuitively form opinions about the speaker's lifestyle, response pattern, and ways of perceiving and interacting in everyday life. However, such blanket judgment may not be in keeping with "reality".

Reality

We may debate definitions of meaning and reality endlessly. Linguists and philosophers have aimed at economy, precision, and definiteness in arriving at their points of declaration and defence. The Houghton Mifflin Canadian Dictionary of the English Language defines meaning as "...what something represents; sense; import; semantic content; that which one wishes to convey; that which is interpreted to be the goal...; that which is felt to be the inner significance of something" (Morris, 1980:811). It defines reality as "the quality or state of being actual or true; a person, entity, or event that is actual; the totality of all things possessing actuality, existence, or essence; that which exists objectively and in fact; (Philosophy) the sum of all that is real, absolute, and unchangeable" (Morris, 1980:1085-1086). Whatever an individual's preference IS for any particular definition, the mystery concerning the ways in which intended meaning/reality is relayed and perceived continues to haunt us.

Mehan and Wood (1975) discuss reality as a construct of reflexive activity, tacit knowledge, and continuous interactional activity. Their point of contention is that there is no fundamental reality that is socially knowable or communicable. Reality is rather the ongoing construction of meaning wherever we are. We may permeate the realities of other cultures and subcultures and return gratefully (or with regret) to the one we are most accustomed to. In any case, the return does not erase our experience of the foreign reality where we had to make sense of the world as we perceived it

at that point in time (and continue to make sense of it in retrospect) using the interpretive procedures of the documentary method of interpretation.

The tacit, wholesale application of the method's accounting practices as sense making devices is no more evident than when our perception of an immediate reality is threatened. Mehan and Wood report breaching experiments that show how easily we may be undone when our implicit understanding and use of the assumptions discussed in the previous section are not reflected in someone with whom we are interacting. Natural conversation becomes impossible, replaced by a fright, flight, or fight response in the thwarted participant. Garfinkel (1964) describes targets and perpetrators of a range of breaches as admitting to feelings of anomie and angst not only during the experiments but even after the hoaxes were confessed.

Imagine yourself waylaid in conversation by someone who insists that you elaborate continuously upon words and phrases whose meanings and intents are commonly taken for granted in your culture. You may decide that they are teasing you, feigning ignorance in a twisted attempt to aggravate you, or suffering from some sort of mental aberration. If your efforts at making the person communicate normally with you fail, while the same behavior continues, you will somehow escape in order to restore the delicate balance to your understanding of social interaction and reality where indexicality, reflexivity, and the documentary method of interpretation are potent catalysts to gainful conversation.

RESPONSES TO THE NORMATIVE LITERATURE

With this condensed version of EM's approach to the phenomenon of meaning and reality and the way in which people make sense of the social world, let us delve into some works that seem applicable to the difficulties inherent in the selection interview.

Questions

Types of Questions

The commonest tools of evaluation - direct, predetermined questions and categorized answers - typify social science research. An organization preestablishes the indicators of unobservable behaviors and a corresponding coding system. Then, in answering structured or unstructured questionnaires designed to elicit key words or descriptions that evidence these indicators, applicants appear to reflect or lack the targeted attributes. The assigned framework forces the interviewer to interpret and code responses.

The field of logic feeds this empirical approach to question formation and response interpretation. The Law of Identity demands the literal definition of concepts that are not in fact amenable to precise, scientific description. It implies that interactants share these unexpressed, literal definitions and keep them in mind during conversation. The Law of the Excluded Middle assumes that no other

meaning but the intended one is in practice. Thus words and questions (and answers) must have exactly the same meaning for all concerned even though they do not share duplicate knowledge and interpretive systems.

An interviewer is often prevailed upon to categorize a response within the literal definitions available to him on a standard format (key word analysis). Yet Heritage cautions that "literalness can never involve a full disengagement from contextual features." A literal definition that is "transcendent of circumstantial features cannot be achieved." (1984:158). A variation of this impossible request is to require grading the perception of an ability or aptitude. The Law of the Excluded Middle insists upon the use of mutually exclusive, static categories denying allowance for the retrospective/prospective aspect of meaning as well as the possibility that a subject may qualify for ALL categories and grades given the context to support them (Mehan and Wood, 1975).

Probe questions inviting elaboration often elicit irrelevant responses or simply presentable and plausible accounts. In the end, propriety demands the interviewer's acceptance and consistent processing of this additional information. This is a crucial part of spoken language as evidenced in Garfinkel's (1967) breaching experiments and Farrar's (1982) analysis of questions in the classroom. Confusion and distortion inevitably taint the resulting documentation. Even self-evaluative narratives unavoidably offer assessors the same opportunity to identify implicitly perceived

indicators of unobservable behaviors, with or without an attendant code.

Indirect questions, used in a selection interview, can be equally problematic. Using the accounting practices of the documentary method of interpretation, the applicant will attempt to understand the meaning and intention of an utterance. He may ask for clarification and receive an equally hazy qualifier from the interviewer who is bound to maintain a certain degree of indirectness in order to test the creativity, ingenuity, and values of the applicant. Locked into a problem solving mode based on accurate association, the interviewee often flounders insecurely, producing responses that are of necessity evaluated simultaneously for correctness of inference, content, and indications of an invisible, accompanying reality.

The Use of Questions

Questions used in the interview are carefully designed with the specific intention of tapping areas not easily assessed via the application form, resume, and covering letter. In some cases, an interviewer is compelled to adhere to the wording and order of a prescribed list of questions. Other situations allow him to modify either or both at will to accomplish more natural interaction, keeping in mind that designated key concepts must be addressed in the exchange.

In "On Some Questions and Ambiguities in Conversation", Emmanuel Schegloff (1977) observes that linguistically ideal questions are not conversationally or socially ideal. When an interviewer is constrained to observe predetermined word choice and question sequence, there is little hope for interaction to proceed naturally. Such an approach speaks of the mindset that conceptualizes and idealizes the written word as the ultimate in clear communication while ignoring the interactional component of language at work. In such a situation, an interviewee's written response to a question as read would certainly vary with his spoken response to the identical question delivered verbally, the suspicion being that the written response would be given a higher evaluation since there would be a more congenial match between modes of language.

In "Accomplishing Classroom Lessons", Hugh Mehan (1974) reports vagueness, ambiguity, and incompleteness as standard features of teachers' questions. Proponents of rigid adherence to a standard question format may levy the same criticism upon interviewers who use their own words in adapting questions to meet the perceived needs of individual candidates. A concern of the purists may be that continuous adaptation of the wording would invite such a variety of responses that it would be difficult to categorize answers in terms of a preconceived model of what constitutes an acceptable response. Certainly this is the issue where a list of key word responses tabulates the evolving success or

failure of an applicant to produce the replies that will win him membership in an organization.

Mehan continues with an examination of the way in which responses are heard and interpreted for evaluation. His study exposes the preferential treatment of certain answers, a point indicating the unavoidable subjectivity involved in matching a response with a preconceived notion of correctness or acceptability. Interestingly enough, the teachers involved professed impartiality just as interviewers do, until manifest proof of subjectivity is provided through a transcript or videotape of the situation under scrutiny.

In her reassessment of, and addition to, the study of cognitively simple and cognitively complex questions, Mary Farrar (1982) makes a substantial contribution to the area of question formation and use. She demonstrates how questions that on the surface invite the use of recall may actually involve the use of reason and vice versa. Examples of syntactically simple questions, that taken literally ask explicit questions, show how deviously language may be used to transmit an implicit question that couches a response imperative.

Farrar's treatment of power and solidarity as factors affecting successful elicitation (that which evokes response) highlights the supremacy of the interactional component of communication. Faced with an imbalance in power and an unspoken command to answer a direct and complex question, a respondent's ability to retrieve, sort, analyze, and integrate information into a coherent and impressive

response is often seriously impeded. To mitigate the problem, and observe politeness conventions that cultivate solidarity, assessors often rephrase direct questions. By switching to a more indirect style, the teachers in Farrar's study achieved a higher response rate, indicative of a less intimidated respondent.

"The Complexity of the Cognitively Simple" (Farrar, 1982) applied to the field of selection interviewing provides a thoughtful reminder that people interpret language and the way it is used in context, in different ways. The assumption that a question cannot be improved upon in evoking a targeted scope of responses ignores the myriad of interpretive aids that applicants bring to an interview. Aside from the fact that word meaning is negotiable internally but only interactionally upon occasion in this situation, meaning must be remembered as constantly emergent retrospectively/prospectively. Contributing to its evolution are attendant nonverbal clues that match or disagree with the accompanying verbals. In a situation where idealized written language is of necessity delivered by someone who is not the author of the verbiage, the comfortable mesh between verbal and nonverbal communication may suffer, rendering the candidate a most awkward reception of language in action, with success contingent upon his response to it.

Formulations

Speakers use a variety of tactics to accomplish the understanding and logical flow of talk. Conversational markers that help to organize and categorize a series of verbal exchanges are termed formulations. Formulations are the means whereby speakers identify what it is they are talking, have talked, or will talk about. These conversational cues presuppose a shared background of tacit knowledge to facilitate the negotiation of topic and purpose, speaker and current meaning. In order to accomplish the work that must be done in creating the appropriate choice, sequence, and coherence of topics discussed in the interaction, members must jointly produce and recognize formulations by drawing upon the retrospective/prospective aspect of meaning derived in partnership with indexicality and reflexivity.

In "Formulating Topic in the Classroom" Richard Heyman (1986) explores the use and effectiveness of formulations in the classroom. His discoveries are highly applicable to the selection interview where the imbalance of power similarly affects normative interaction patterns to the extent that formulations are unable to operate as expressly intended.

In natural conversation, formulations pinpoint topic and provide topical sequence. In doing so, they indicate appropriate response alternatives. As glosses of accomplished and impending sequences, they seek confirmation of mutual understanding and agreement about the meaning that participants are negotiating

through talk. Speakers have equal rights in challenging formulations as incorrect. The consequences of censure are positive in instigating reformulations and accord, clarifying misperception and assisting communication and rapport immeasurably.

Students and interviewees are handicapped in this regard. The context of their situation delivers the power of challenge and censure into the hands of the assessor. In the classroom, Heyman describes such a move as having pedagogical, not social, implications. In the interview, it may have social implications; consistent violation of the normative structure can have dire consequences in this search for a socially suitable individual. "Our resources for hearing formulations are....our resources as competent members of our linguistic and social group" (Heyman, 1986: 42). It would seem that the successful applicant must appear capable linguistically and socially by relaying perceptivity and deference in acknowledging formulations. Moreover for a candidate to suggest by correction that the interviewer is less than an expert at formulation would be to insult the communicative competence of a superior. Such behavior would be a poor recommendation for a candidate's social suitability.

The applicant's distress in not being able to freely disagree with, or seek clarification of, the interviewer's formulations compounds the difficulty he faces in responding appropriately. Formulations assume a shared reality in negotiating meaning and sequence but, like the teacher, the interviewer has a greater stock of relevant knowledge affecting evaluation than those under

assessment. The interviewee for the most part passively accepts a formulation, the lack of contradiction indicating the imbalance of power. He must connect the formulation made in the immediate context with prior experience. His response, emerging from within a historical context that is inaccessible to the interviewer, can have an anomalous ring, a futile attempt to mentally decontextualize previous experience and reapply it as applicable to the immediate context. The applicant is challenged to meld a series of past accounts and settings into a testimony of his competence for an audience who experiences only the account and setting he attends momentarily.

Furthermore, the possibility exists that formulations may be exceedingly harmful when used as precursors of evaluative questions in the interview. If an applicant cannot rediscover the focus in the question that he has fixated upon by attending to an introductory formulation, he will be torn between responding to the topic addressed in the formulation and the salient feature of the question. Therefore, the value of formulations as contributors to rational conversation in the interview is limited due to unequal participation rights and the inaccessibility of separate realities.

Social Suitability Concerns

A Socially Acceptable Applicant

Harold Garfinkel, in "Studies of the Routine Grounds of Everyday Activities", inadvertently addresses the issue of the selection interview as a search for the most socially acceptable candidate. Clearly, the interviewer screens the applicant's manners, deportment, clothing, and speech for "What Anyone Like Us Necessarily Knows" (1964:235). This approach carries with it the assumption that the applicant is aware and respectful of the norms operative in the interview, targeted work environment, and associated socioeconomic class and will exhibit comfort in juggling them all into a pleasing interpersonal experience with the interviewer.

An applicant more often experiences intense anomie in an interview situation where he is unable to transpose routine ways of interacting. He can only guess at what is expected of him and respond to the contingencies of a situation as it unfolds. No amount of rehearsal will provide for the uniqueness of the event, even if he is an experienced interviewee. Only personal acquaintance with the interviewer and his reality would allow prior exploration and agreement on the appropriate ways of being, with allowance for the vagaries of circumstance. Divested of the security of a familiar frame of reference, he is likely to exhibit behavior that is suggestive of those who are feeling persecuted, discriminated against, and disoriented.

Indeed, these feelings may be those of the average candidate under scrutiny during the selection interview, although he may be able to control and conceal the evidence to a satisfactory extent. Garfinkel's article emphasizes the difficulties involved for persons who are displaced, plunged into an environment where unconscious, commonplace expectancies are suddenly realized and identified as inoperative. The resulting impact on performance is amplified by the imposition of one reality upon another as described by Mehan and Wood (1975).

The interviewer assesses an interviewee in terms of his own understanding of reality and the assigned perspective of the organization he represents. By happy congruence, art, or luck the candidate may produce the award winning responses or behaviors in spite of widely disparate interpretive systems, but the resulting documentation offers no proof of the cognitive or interactive processes involved nor evidence that the assessment reflects the interviewee's ability or interpersonal style in other contexts. Moreover, such evidence is unrecoverable.

The assessment center is not above reproach in this regard for it also involves the imposition of an undisclosed, ideal reality. Performance assessment is subjective, situation and context specific, based on a model that assumes a reality shared by all participants. The interviewer assesses the perceived reality (he believes to exist outside the situation) in terms of an ideal model. If his search is fruitful, the model is reinforced in a self-fulfilling

experience, rendering him no more informed but ultimately surer of the facticity of the enigmatic social world he claims awareness of.

Equally important to the purpose of recruiting an individual who will fit in with an existing society is the wish to avoid "behavioral contagion" (Cicourel et al, 1974:61). A misfit may foster bureaucratic problems and interpersonal chaos in any number of ways - by failing to observe the pecking order, disregarding the dress code, and revelling in inappropriate behavior. But worse yet, if the renegade is in any way entertaining or charismatic, he may also inspire others to behave similarly - in ways that are contrary to the image of itself that an organization wishes to present to members and to outsiders. This happenstance is typically guarded against at all costs - even if it means disqualifying "the best man for the job" in every other way.

A Search for the Derogatory

The stage is set for high drama when interviewer and applicant finally meet. The interviewer is alert to detect flaws, irregularities, and improprieties. In other words, he searches for deviance. If this were NOT the case, applicants with the ultimate in credentials, experience, and references would standardly be hired sight unseen.

In "Notes on Police Assessment of Moral Character", Harvey Sacks (1984) describes the process policemen use in ascribing deviance to individuals on their beat, viewed as belonging to a

mutually understood social system. The analogy is aptly applied to the interviewing arena.

Policemen and interviewers alike undergo training to prepare them for their positions. Assisted by professional manuals, demonstrations, and supervised practicum, they learn how to regard and categorize the objects of observation. They draw inferences from appearances that serve as grounds for the social treatment of their targets. Nevertheless, to uncover skillful impression management, the trained observer searches for incongruities - clues that a person may be an imposter. In making this judgment, the dilemma lies in accurately recognizing deviance harmful to the situation; an error in this decision may cause the selecting OUT of acceptable types while passing over undetected offenders.

The necessity for interviewers and policemen to perform this function efficiently is problematic. To satisfy a higher authority (Workers' Compensation Board or court of law) it must be done in such a way that the selection decision, if called into question, is understandable and incontestable from the viewpoint of the average, untrained observer (review committee or jury members). And yet these professional observers, who WANT and are AWARDED the status and credibility of professionals, have most often undergone rigorous training themselves, irrevocably modifying their former perspectives as laymen. The bind is in being forced to apply the professional method of identifying deviance while being able to rationally reconstruct the process as one that is common for anyone. The initial experience and the account of it cannot possibly match, a

situation that generates conflict in the observer while perceiving and assessing his target.

Mehan (1983) gives support to the notion of inner conflict in such circumstances. In "The Role of Language and the Language of Role in Institutional Decision Making", he explains the dichotomy that exists between lay and professional accounts. The following contrast is easily assembled from among the items he highlights.

Lay reports, grounded in common sense, stem from unstructured observations. They are volunteered, not commissioned. The opinion and assessment they express are explained as contingent upon the context from which they derive. Without notes or professional jargon to support the account, its validity is open to challenge.

Conversely, professional reports - reliant upon specialized knowledge and proficiency - are based on guided observation. This approach produces a noncontingent, categorical assessment, apparently context free, implying that the subject may be expected to exhibit the identified traits or behaviors everywhere and always. These accounts are supported by documents and obtuse technical jargon, rendering them impressively authoritative and generally uncontested.

Clearly, there is great tension in marrying such incompatible witness. To alleviate this stress, policemen commonly arrange for proof of their selection abilities by setting traps for suspected offenders. Assessment centers used to screen job applicants could (perhaps unkindly) be considered similar traps where individuals are

allowed to participate in staged "crime" - knowable failure and transgression as opposed to predicted inadequacy. An assessor may reconstruct his perceptions more tangibly with shared events and anecdotes from sessions in the center to hang his judgments upon.

From the perspective of the observed, aware of being under severe scrutiny, he does his best to hide all traces of deviance - to appear ordinary. In "On Doing 'Being Ordinary'", Sacks (1984) talks about how people manage the very difficult business of appearing normal, especially in abnormal situations. Abnormal is an apt term to describe the gracious but adversarial relationship that interviewer and interviewee are locked into as they mutually explore one another for negatives. Their efforts to make and interpret the interaction as ordinary conversation require phenomenal energy and work. Such efforts are of course futile since interviewing conversation is in fact carefully crafted technology, steered by the interviewer to navigate a charted course from beginning to end, evidenced in the transitions he uses to connect an applicant's response to the next question on his agenda.

With the opportunity of being ordinary "together" taken away, the ludicrous challenge remains for the interviewee to ape the appearance of ordinariness onstage with a shrewd detective. To survive the ordeal, he will unconsciously focus on pieces of the scenario that are common to people in face to face interaction anywhere. In afterwards giving an account of the experience he will use these particulars as indexical expressions to describe the situation and context.

These mundane features will constitute a portion of the interviewer's account as well - part of the reconstruction he must rationally present to absent inquisitors. Where fact becomes fiction is in the area of person perception when the interviewer tries to explain how using ordinary everyday perception he made standard, objective judgments about a candidate's personality, interpersonal style, and abilities outside the situation.

The crime of interpreting the interview as an average slice of everyday life defies reason. The idea of a trained professional reporting as an untrained observer is equally irreconcilable. Sacks raises some rankling questions concerning the assessment of what is normal as opposed to deviant, normal for a specific situation and context over time, by whose judgment, and on whose behalf - it being impossible to serve two masters well simultaneously.

An interviewer's idea of what he expects as normal (ordinary) behavior from an interviewee may differ greatly from an applicant's perception of how he is expected to behave to appear normal (ordinary). Divergent expectations are further complicated by a candidate's need to be impactful and therefore memorable without being flamboyant or too aggressive and thereby incurring a charge of deviating from situational norms dictated by his role. Participants in these charades do clash, unexpressed distress and quiet regret whitewashing empty words that follow. The assessor's concurrent search for the derogatory can be quickly rewarded - a point not overlooked in the normative literature on interviewer bias.

Progressive and Summary Assessment

Question and answer exchanges - if static capsules - could be isolated, shuffled, and unscrambled to produce logical ladders of conversation. But talk does not occur in such an orderly fashion, nor does the perception and interpretation of what is heard. The spontaneous processing of information involves the complicated and continuous orchestration of internal and external stimuli.

In "Interviewing and Memory" Aaron Cicourel (1974) presents the decision making process as a product of cognitive and conversational weave. A vital part of the cognitive component lies in semantic interpretation. Even rigid linguistic analysis, used to prepare the clearest of questions, cannot guarantee that an interviewee will conceptualize as intended, nor that he will be able to apply a question meaningfully to his own memory and experience in ferreting out a suitable response.

Were the applicant to continuously negotiate the clarification of meaning with the interviewer, he would undoubtedly produce more relevant answers. But in his position as interviewee he is expected to be answering, rather than asking, questions. So handling semantic and pragmatic confusion as best he can, silently attempting to paraphrase perhaps intricate and loaded questions into triggers for his long term memory, he usually forges on in assembling at least syntactically acceptable responses.

A reply - if successfully sprung from the intended area - is formally evaluated. If it is off the targeted topic, an interviewer

may ask for clarification or restatement, or simply finesse the required notation of the response's value. However, as the interaction progresses the applicant will make related and qualifying utterances that will shed new light on preceding remarks. This inherent feature of conversation may cause the interviewer to retrospectively reformulate his judgments on various points. One can only wonder how this change of mind will be reflected on the standard evaluation form, filled out throughout the encounter. Erasures and corrections would imply uncertainty, not to mention their impact on the appearance of such an official document. Consequently, the assessor must somehow compensate in subsequent scaling or summary description for misperceptions already recorded.

In Studies in Ethnomethodology, Garfinkel (1967) exposes a parallel problem that is helpful in understanding Cicourel's observations. Entitled "Some Rules of Correct Decision Making That Jurors Respect", Chapter 4 discusses the way in which jurors come to reconcile disparities in their personal and collective perceptions and evaluations of defendants under interrogation.

As newcomers to the system, each brings his own decision making model and set of behavioral norms, of course unobservable and inaccessible to anyone else, but adjusted to meet the demands of the situation as he perceives it. The situation requires him to objectively and expediently assess the individual in question while operating from within a reality that he assumes his fellow jurors share. He anticipates opposition to his evaluation in spite of the

common core of background knowledge the courtroom will provide to all concerned. Finally, he expects that the jury will negotiate a unanimous verdict without any member losing credibility as an evaluator.

Over time a juror learns to reserve judgment until all the evidence is presented, finding that intermittent assessment requires revision with the emergence of new information. His position is never irrevocable; he often compromises his summary stance in order to facilitate unanimity. The result of waffling on his initial decision is the protection of achieved status as a competent and cooperative member of a panel.

Garfinkel ends his thought provoking chapter by theorizing that experienced jurors do NOT progressively seek out conditions that lead to a final decision. He suggests that they must in fact reverse the process by summarily adopting a position at some point and retrospectively searching for conditions to support it. This theory could be easily substantiated by witnessing a jury deliberating a verdict. Since a unanimous decision requires that all members be similarly convinced of an individual's guilt or innocence, we might expect to hear jurors drawing upon courtroom discourse and facts of the case to justify their points of contention. This attempt to convert other jury members to their perspective could be evidence of a stand taken and defended in retrospect, most definitely (in the case of conversion) of a stand justified and proliferated by an overt exercise in retrospect.

The panel interview (during which an applicant is questioned and assessed by several interviewers) smacks loudly of a jury in careful pursuit of a pool of facts and impressions - fluid enough to be recast into an image that will reconcile all contributors to its creation. The similarity between a defendant facing a jury and an interviewee facing a selection committee is unmistakable, if the face to face interview is considered a search for disqualifying characteristics.

Cicourel and Garfinkel have aptly illustrated how those involved in designing formal assessment are trapped into one of two camps. Insistence upon a piecemeal evaluation does not allow for changing recorded judgments modified by retrospective formulation. Reliance upon a post-interview summary invites interviewer bias where evidence is sought to support decisions already made.

The problem is very likely without solution. EM has no interest in proving one method superior to another, nor in debating the fruitlessness/benefit of the whole endeavour in any form. It simply pleads an awareness of the interpretive processes (sense making devices) participants use that lead to formal, written evaluation. It encourages responsibility for capturing the interactions involved, to facilitate reexamination and reassessment of the conversation attending the interlude, wherein sense making is hearable and upon which evaluation is based.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have attempted to explain the most basic concepts of EM: reflexivity, indexicality, the documentary method of interpretation, the social construction of reality. The discussion involved the way in which we consciously and unconsciously rely upon these concepts to create meaning. Then drawing upon the ethnomethodological literature, I related the discipline's perspective on evaluation and assessment to the selection interview. This completes the groundwork for the presentation of professional interview and evaluation schemes that will be the focus of our attention in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

A SEARCH FOR SUBSTANTIATED EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this thesis - substantiated evaluation in the selection interview - was captured in its title and introduced briefly in Chapter 1. The next two chapters indulged in a debate between the normative and ethnomethodological literature on what may be broadly termed process and assessment - standard areas of concern to interviewers and interviewees.

EM would invite the inclusion of transcripts from actual or published interviews at this juncture to support and illustrate the points made in Chapter 3. But such an endeavour, as interesting and valuable as it would undoubtedly be, is not vital to my purpose - to investigate the ability of evaluation records to independently substantiate the judgments expressed therein. So keeping on course we move directly to published data that lends itself to the investigation of substantiated evaluation.

INTERVIEWING AND ASSESSMENT SCHEMES

Scored Oral Interview for Police Officers

The first example derives from a prescribed interview format and evaluation scheme, presented in an article by Allen Reynolds (1979) cited earlier - "The Reliability of a Scored Oral Interview for Police Officers". The author's intention of exploring inter-rater reliability in no way lessens the value of the attendant documentation as a relevant exhibit in our search for verifiable assessment.

The partially structured oral interview for police officers was to be administered by a three member panel using four predetermined questions plus probes if necessary for clarification. Following the thirty minute session each interviewer was to award the applicant a separate score on several dimensions. The allowable choices were listed in the adjectival rating scale below.

Outstanding
Above Average
Average
Below Average
Barely Acceptable
Unacceptable

(Reynolds, 1979:327)

Interviewers were of course provided with the questions, the scale, the dimensions and their definitions in advance. (Prior study of the materials and anticipation of the kinds of responses that might be elicited during the interview were considered adequate preparation for conscientious assessment.) But the reader will be concerned in light of previous chapters with the subjectivity and finality inherent in this method of recording assessment.

Through training or intuition, individual interviewers could be thought to have acquired fairly concurrent and consistent notions of what constitutes a response or observation that merits a score at the top, bottom, or middle of the rating scale. But there are several points on the continuum that vacillate in hazy areas. Between Average and Outstanding there is a category called Above Average where indecisive interviewers can place applicants in limbo when they don't quite seem to belong in either of the neighboring camps. At the bottom end of the scale between Average and Unacceptable, a similar but broader wasteland waits to harbour those an interviewer cannot locate in <u>those</u> basic slots. His task becomes to choose between two nebulous areas - Below Average and Barely Acceptable - sandwiched in between Average and Unacceptable. One has to wonder where the internal dividing line is between Below Average and Barely Acceptable and finally how the border is crossed between Barely Acceptable to Unacceptable - the point of no return.

Along with the issues of interpretation, indecision, and bias, the greater concern from an ethnomethodological standpoint is in the absoluteness of the recorded judgments. With no possibility of

recovering the interaction from which they derived, how can anyone be convinced of their accuracy or worth except to have complete faith in the interviewer and the format he has been assigned to use? Such blind discipleship is a thing of the past in today's informed society where employers and organizations are routinely taken to court on behalf of the underdog.

The following interviewing scheme to which the rating scale belongs, invites criticism in itself even without the application of the scale as an assessment device. The reader is asked to pay particular attention to the words or phrases within the definitions that I have taken the liberty of underlining in order to highlight their location.

Police Officer Oral Interview Dimensions and Definitions

Personal Appearance - Neat, well-groomed, clean, neither underweight nor overweight, healthy looking

Oral Communication Skills - Speaks clearly, uses acceptable grammar, makes himself understood

Decisiveness - Responds with ease, confidence, and with assurance to problems and situations

Mental Alertness - Quick to perceive, understand, analyze and react

Pride in Job - Desires to be a policeman, wants to learn, has respect for the position

Dealing Effectively with People - Understands public relations and exhibits compassion, firmness, fairness, and courtesy

Judgment - Possesses common sense, recognizes the problem, takes best or proper action among alternatives

(Reynolds, 1979:326)

The tension involved in assigning a candidate a point on a rating scale has already been dealt with. Apart from this game of "eeny, meeny, miney, mo", our fascination now lies in the many possible interpretations of the definitions, (not to mention how evidence of any interpretation of a dimension or response could be confidently captured by a digit from an unavoidably subjective adjectival, rating scale).

Personal Appearance demands neither underweight nor overweight. Those outside of the force (including judges and jury members) can only imagine what kind of a perfect body type would satisfy this requirement. One could assume that there would need to

be a height and weight correlation and wonder if a measuring tape and scale might not be more verifiable tools of assessment than the naked eyeball. The possibility of a chubby applicant slimming down or a scrawny reject beefing up before publicly contesting a disqualifying selection decision (given the time it takes red tape to unfold) reinforces the shakiness of recorded assessment on even something as tangible as what can be observed.

Oral Communication Skills request acceptable grammar. What would count as acceptable grammar from a policeman, and where? Considering the man on the beat (perhaps dealing with thugs and fracases), his use of the neighborhood's vernacular might stand him in far greater stead than reliance upon the queen's English. Quite possibly an interviewer could test such an applicant's sociolinguistic skill, requiring him to demonstrate how he would negotiate with someone who was breaking his arm as opposed to asking for a raise. But most likely the grammar evaluated will be encased in the conversation of the interview. There is no indication of how many (if any) "shoulda went's" or "I seen's" are allowed. A transcript would be valuable in review if that kind of faux pas matters (and it most often does) in the conservative, middle class environment of the interviewing time capsule. But remember, a bypassed interviewee might contend that his particular conversational style is the very thing that helps build rapport on the street with the clientele there. We are left wondering how to defend an interpretation of the phrase acceptable grammar.

Decisiveness calls for the evaluation of a candidate's response to situations. What EM would suggest is that an individual gives accounts that directly or indirectly give an interviewer the opportunity to detect past and recent response patterns as he is bound to do. Since role play is not included in this interview, it is fraud to claim that a response to a situation has been observed. All that has been accomplished is the shared creation of a perception.

Mental Alertness makes the same mistake in contending to discover how quick to react an applicant is. If quickness of verbal response were the point in question, it would be slightly more amenable to investigation with a stopwatch. But the word "react" implies activity and once again without role play, any assessor is only dealing with plausible accounts concerning behavior he perceives to be related to that required on the job in question.

Pride in Job is indicated by respect for the position. Would respect shown to an interviewer imply such an attitude and disrespect the opposite? Any applicant would be expected to treat any interviewer with deference regardless of the position applied for. How else would respect/disrespect for the position be shown? Surely an aspiring police officer would not enter the ring complaining about his future lot in life as a member of the force. It would almost seem that the phrase is excess baggage, in which case

it should be deleted from the definition (along with many other phrases the reader may by now reject).

Dealing Effectively With People gives the interviewer the responsibility of judging how an applicant exhibits compassion, firmness, fairness. What sort of antics an interviewer might undertake to bring out traces or volumes of these traits piques our imagination. Indeed the interviewer's ability to fantasize is mandatory to this exercise where stories of what has taken place in a reality outside the interview must be transposed to match predestined description and further understood vicariously in terms of strength. And what of the individual who relays firmness but not necessarily fairness? Composite definitions are problematic in any context. They are certainly more so in situations where recorded assessment is expected to satisfy legal requirements.

Judgment purports to discover how well an individual takes best or proper action among alternatives. The inability of the situation to provide opportunities to observe someone in the act of taking such action makes the definition and resulting score on the rating scales guesswork - grossly misrepresentative of what went on in the interview.

This interview as presented in Reynold's article repeatedly treats accounts of behavior as actual behaviour. Obviously, if called upon to defend his evaluation, an interviewer would have no hope of verifying the judgments or reproducing the conversation

(much less the scenarios that bred them since he was not an interactional participant) to allow interested parties access to the reality of the interview as he remembers it. It could be argued that the documentation stemming from such a source is valuable only as proof of the fact that an interview did take place.

Designing a Scorable Interview Test

The second example comes from an article by Michael W. Mercer and John J. Seres (1987) entitled "Using Scorable Interview 'Tests' in Hiring". The development of the particular test described in the article stemmed from a company's need to reduce expensive turnover among salespeople. With the intention of identifying applicants who would be productive and satisfied sales representatives for their bottled water firm, Hinkley and Schmidt designed a scorable interview claiming to have attended to the usual concerns for validity and reliability through careful job analysis and interviewer training. The article includes this sample of the test. Underlining again highlights the phrases I have chosen to bring to the reader's attention. To avoid doubling back to this somewhat awkward format, analytical comments (in bold print) will immediately follow each question and response sequence.

EXCERPT FROM TEST

I would like you to go back again through that list of jobs, and this time tell me briefly what you liked most about each job. (If appropriate add: This can include part-time jobs.)

+2 Liked or disliked the money.

0 All other responses.

_____

_____

_____

The underlined phrase invites an all inclusive response from the applicant. Put in the position of having to recall a positive common denominator (and one he thinks the interviewer is looking for), the interviewee is required to combine his psychic powers with some quick mental gymnastics. By chance, a lucky individual may leap upon the topic of salary without even knowing that it is the only qualifying response. Curiously enough, it appears that a negative reply concerning past remuneration is just as valid as a positive one in winning a +2. When the question explicitly asks what the respondent liked, would an attentive participant respond with what he didn't like? In most interviewing situations, such an occurrence would

be considered trouble in the talk (a poor recommendation for any position requiring the strong communication skills salespeople need) but in this interviewing scheme, it gets honors. Anyone contesting this written evaluation, with or without transcripts, would have a field day with this discrepancy.

(Add after person has completed response: Thinking back over all those jobs, does anything else come to mind that you really liked? Interviewer may ask follow-up question several times to make sure the question is answered completely.)

+2 Liked responsibility, freedom and independence, ability to work on own.

0 All other responses.

_____

_____

_____

Asking an interviewee if "anything else" comes to mind after he has just responded to the preceding loose question could very likely unnerve him completely, especially if the interviewer is being very bland nonverbally. It may convince the applicant that he has

already disappointed his assessor who is now resorting to prompts and probes. If (in a sincere attempt to produce a desired response) money is suggested as a priority this time, it nets the respondent a zero.

Moreover, the interviewer has firm control at this point in drawing out the qualifying response. He "may ask follow-up questions several times to make sure the question is answered completely". This clause can be accused of breeding blatant subjectivity. Rejected contestants may rightfully ask why they were only queried once or twice if a successful contender reports having received greater encouragement to produce prize winning verbiage.

(Add if appropriate: I know you've covered some of this already...) Now I would like you to go through that list of jobs again, but this time tell me briefly what you disliked about them and why you left each job.

+2 Liked or disliked the money.

0 All other responses.

- 1 Disliked physical work, heavy work demand.

0 All other responses.

- 1 Disliked or had problems or strained relations with people; disliked management, supervisors, customers.

0 All other responses.

- 2 Disliked hours, weekend work, time demands.

0 All other responses.

Once again, the underlined portion of the question requests a certain type of reply - this time negative in nature - yet the prime response also welcomes a positive comeback. It is unlikely that any applicant, trying to psyche out an interviewer, would ever guess that such a response would be in order. The rewarding of mismatched communication (as discovered in the initial sequence) is obvious a second time.

But the greater offence in this particular frame is the way that "0 All other responses" is tucked under the three disqualifying expressions of discontent. What could an applicant say (as requested) concerning his dislike for work load, interaction, or time commitment (basically the

topics assessed with negative scores) that would move an interviewer to give him a zero instead of the assigned minus quantity for unfortunately hitting upon one of the topics?

Again, looking back on these different jobs and experiences you've had, I'd like to know what you would say are your most significant strengths and assets.

+2 Dealing with people, selling, drive, aggressiveness.Being self-motivated; working independently; being dependable, reliable, persistent.

0 Only technical skills, all other responses.

-1 Do not know; no response; all other responses. Person blemishes self in regard to something that could be a strong negative in performance.

0 All other responses.

_____

_____

_____

The question "what would you say are your most significant strengths and assets" gives an applicant a free

hand in selling himself to the interviewer. What the score will reflect is the interviewee's ability to produce an account that his assessor will be encouraged to interpret to fit within the winning category. The veracity of the self-description is apparently taken for granted.

The benefit of the doubt is not operative, however, in the final opportunity given the interviewer to downgrade unsuitable types. Should the applicant be suddenly struck dumb or bewildered by such an overwhelming request for self serving information, he gets an automatic -1. The instructions also allow one final search for the derogatory in "Person blemishes self in regard to something that could be a strong negative in performance." In the absence of an attendant list of blemishes, it may be suspected that each interviewer will fall back on his personal agenda of offending talk and behavior, not quite a point in favor of the objectivity of the instrument.

(Mercer & Seres, 1987:59)

Not only does Hinkley and Schmidt's interview design leave much to the ingenuity and bias of the user, it clearly defies validity and reliability contrary to the assertion of its designers. The resulting documentation has little credibility since the scoring section is so bizarre that it tends to discredit any subsequent explanatory notation.

In sifting through the sequences, it is once again obvious that apart from any quarrels one may have concerning the rationale or ethics behind such a vehicle of recruitment/elimination, the written evaluation is completely unsupportable since it cannot be substantiated in any way. If a rejected applicant were to challenge the selection decision by asking to see the evaluation, he would undoubtedly recall any number of remembered responses from the bygone interaction that should have been interpreted to meet the sought after response. Even if the interviewer has attempted to paraphrase or quote the applicant in the few lines provided at the end of each question, there is no proof that what is written is really representative of what was actually said. There is no way to reconstitute evaporated interaction without tapes or transcripts of an experience.

The Competency Profile

In the third example, drawn from "Hiring the Right Stuff", John Hendrickson makes a plea for the compelling advantages of "strategic assessment" (1987:71). Through the observation of successful performers a company can draft a blueprint of the talents, traits, and attitudes required for any position within the organization. The process takes concrete shape in a competency model or profile which is then adapted to the interviewing and evaluation process in an attempt to ensure the recruitment of prime candidates.

Hendrickson advocates using the competency profile with a one hour critical behavior interview during which applicants are asked to give detailed accounts of isolated incidents - past or current - that indicate high performance and therefore potential. Hendrickson claims that this procedure "allows the interviewer to review what the candidate was thinking about and feeling during the situation" (Hendrickson, 1987:74).

EM would find this claim of access to past or present mental and emotional states extremely disturbing even with the support of interview tapes (as recommended by Hendrickson for use when reviewing notes to help identify competency behaviors). The inclusion of cassettes is nevertheless an important point that will be returned to in our search for substantiated evaluation.

Extracted from the article is a section of the competency profile. The areas of investigation (competencies) and alleged behavioral indicators of their existence are listed on the left and space is provided on the right for the interviewer to note "evidence" that satisfies expressed behavioral requirements. It is important to note that the title of the profile includes the words "Examples Demonstrated". EM must take issue with this phrase since talk - not behavior - is the source of assessment and neither demonstration, task, nor role play provide examples of observable action in this interview where accounts are treated as actual behavior in formulating an evaluation.

Competencies and Behaviors---Examples Demonstrated by Candidate

Customer Orientation

Listens carefully and thoughtfully to customer's needs and problems *example

Responds to customer's needs and requests with a sense of urgency *example

Stays in touch after the sale to make sure that customer's needs are met.

Does special favors for current or potential customers

Networking

Gets others involved who can influence the customer to make the decision to buy *example

Cooperates and coordinates with other company groups - Marketing, Production, Research, etc. - and knows on whom to call for help in problem-solving *example

Knows own and customer upper management and arranges for high-level contacts as appropriate

Persuasion

Plans call strategy and organizes data prior to customer contact	*example
Translates product advantages into owner benefits for greater impact on customer	*example
Positions products within context of customer's business, technology and stated needs	*example

Product Knowledge

Diagnoses and solves technical problems for customers	*example
Can identify product development opportunities in market environment	
Has high level of knowledge about product line	

"This illustration provides the behaviors that the recruiter looks for when evaluating a candidate's competencies in the Technical and Selling Skills cluster. As the candidate relates his/her story, the recruiter writes down examples of how the candidate demonstrated the competency behavior...."

(Hendrickson, 1987:71)

Glancing back, the reader can see that this excerpt from Hendrickson's Competency Profile ends on the same false note it struck in the title - "examples.....demonstrated.....". But demonstrations simply don't occur in dialogue. Nevertheless, after reviewing his notes and tapes from the interview, an interviewer is instructed to tally up the number of times a competency was noted (in actual fact - perceived or mentioned) and enter the frequency on a bar graph to indicate potential. (One has to wonder if fast talkers have the edge on more deliberate speakers in these interviews.)

The obvious shortcomings of the Police Officer Oral Interview, the Scorable Interview, and the Competency Profile surely lead to the observation that the documentation commonly considered a professional record of any interview may indeed be close to worthless under attack without the interview tapes to substantiate expressed judgments albeit subjective in any case. I submit that transcripts alone are insufficient because they lack the paralinguistic signals that implicitly relay attendant nonverbal behavior, so powerful in shaping and reflecting the emergence of interaction.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have examined several interviewing packages in terms of process and assessment. In each case the resulting documents were exposed as being completely unsupportable, obviating the need for recoverable records of the interpersonal communication that took place in the interview. The retention of tape recordings of interview dialogue was suggested as a viable solution.

In relation to the lusty crusade that precedes it, the chapter may seem somewhat scant - in actual fact an anticlimactic abortion of a promising conception. But there is no value in belabouring the obvious with voluminous redundancy to impress the reader. Chapter 4 was originally intended to house the transcripts and analyses of actual selection interviews. The study was blocked, however, due to the continued reluctance of the hosting organization's interviewers to participate, a factor not anticipated by those of us who collaborated so carefully on the research with the utmost concern for the interviewee.

Martha Komter (University of Amsterdam) experienced the same kind of difficulty in doing her thesis - Conflict and Cooperation in Job Interviews (1987). She states "the original idea was to study job interviews on the basis of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis. Hence the material was to consist solely of transcribed tape recordings of authentic job interviews (Komter, 1981a). In the course of the entry negotiations the full extent of the

inaccessibility of job interviews to outsiders was demonstrated....." (Komter, 1987:9). Seven years of dedication to the task of winning cooperation and entry is evident in Ms. Komter's outstanding thesis which does after all contain transcribed tape recordings of real employment interviews.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

This thesis has examined interviewing and assessment from the standpoint of substantiated evaluation. In order to accomplish this objective, I began by providing the reader with an overview of the selection interview - definition and purpose, foci of assessment, documentation, and legal concerns. Paving the way for an in depth exploration of the field across related disciplines, this preparation led to a lengthy discussion of longstanding issues still salient in the normative literature: obstacles to impartiality, the impact of nonverbal behavior, reliability of assessment, subjectivity and bias. I then turned to EM as an alternative framework of analysis, embellishing an earlier description of the discipline's intellectual foundations with an explanation of its basic concepts: indexicality, reflexivity, the documentary method of interpretation, and the social construction of reality. A broad sampling of the literature from EM and Conversation Analysis provided relevant illustrations of the ethnomethodological perspective on interviewing and assessment.

The consummate research, applied to a series of published interview formats and associated documents of assessment brought

to the fore the reservations EM has concerning the way in which meaning is constructed during interviews and frozen in written reviews. The kind of talk that takes place between interviewer and applicant is not governed by typical conversational norms, yet evaluation and selection is contingent upon this dialogue. A very normal sounding document in the end embodies this abnormality, concealing all evidence of the atypical communication that generated it.

Most importantly for the purpose of this thesis, the research in total exposed the complete inability of any written evaluation to be self substantiating, to stand alone as incontestably indicative of the situation and context from which it derived. It became obvious that under attack, paper work reduces to one person's word against another. But furnishing the cassettes of an interview to support recorded judgments expressed literally or graphically casts a different hue altogether on even stale documents. The tapes become fodder for disagreement or consensus - at least partial access to past interaction for those who would challenge the record. Ensuing discussions give testimony to the existence of the common interpretive procedures as conceived of and presented by EM: The Reciprocity of Perspectives, Normal Forms, The Et Cetera Principle, Descriptive Vocabularies as Indexical Expressions. (For ease of reference they are reinserted here.)

a) THE RECIPROCITY OF PERSPECTIVES assumes that participants share the same view of the world. If they were to change places

they would perceive the scenario exactly as another interactant from his particular point of reference, in spite of divergent biographies.

b) NORMAL FORMS addresses the fact that participants believe they are communicating from within a realm of tacit knowledge and understanding using standard patterns of contextualization and discourse.

c) The ET CETERA PRINCIPLE is concerned with the retrospective/prospective aspect of meaning as it evolves in talk. It assumes a commonly shared conceptual base allowing participants to fill in unexpressed meaning and intention. It further assumes that as a conversation progresses, speakers will inadvertently clarify previous statements.

d) DESCRIPTIVE VOCABULARIES AS INDEXICAL EXPRESSIONS speaks to the embeddedness of meaning. Accounts are never decontextualized but accepted as being related to, and representative of, a broader reality outside of the immediate situation.

Divergent opinion reveals the presupposition of these shared assumptions as an occasional source of trouble in negotiating meaning, a caveat put upon them previously in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In its absorption with accomplishing and recording what is considered objective assessment, the field of interviewing has overlooked the need for substantiated evaluation and by all appearances not even considered the concept of negotiated meaning in designing recorded assessment. Preoccupied instead with finding new and better ways to search for evidence to match fixed requirements, interviewers have manipulated obvious, controllable variables: interview setting, structure, content and format, the number of encounters with one individual, the ratio of interviewers to interviewees. The interviewer has become a hunter, harpooning likely tidbits to fill the collective net in vogue that season.

A brief recapitulation of the many shapes the selection interview and evaluation can take will assist the closing comments of this thesis. In a tightly structured interview, a set list of questions is used, with strict adherence to wording and sequence. This format is believed to give every applicant an equal opportunity. (One may in fact argue that it guarantees a uniform handicap.) It results in an aura of interrogation, emphasizing the power differential between interviewer and interviewee. The negotiation of meaning is for the most part taboo, the incident often marred by clipped responses and sudden thematic switches, minus the assuaging transitions that happen so naturally in normal conversation.

Its direct opposite is the unstructured interview where applicants are simply invited to deliver a narrative to strengthen the written application they have submitted. This approach is supposed to allow each interviewee the optimum presentation of self without the risk of incurring inhibiting or intimidating responses from an assessor. Minus intermittent feedback it has the essence of venturing forth into No Man's Land, with interviewers being advised against emitting even nonverbal cues during a candidate's soliloquy to encourage or discourage the continuance of his discourse as designed. Denied the opportunity to modify his speech to please the listener (a common strategy observed in ordinary interpersonal communication) a hapless contestant forges on, tightening the noose about his own neck. In fact, it could be debated that this structure does not even qualify to be included in the gamut of interviewing strategies since it does not meet the accepted criteria of face to face interaction.

The best facilitation of natural interaction within the standard spectrum flows from the semi-structured interview which takes varying forms. The degree to which the social construction of meaning and reality flourishes depends upon the variation used, but a common feature is usually a set of questions which an interviewer uses at his discretion, the only mandate being to ensure the coverage of several key concepts. He may vary the wording, sequence, and number of questions posed to an applicant. This structure is highly criticized however, in terms of subjectivity and bias, the charge being that some candidates enjoy a greater

advantage than others due to the particular choice and sequence of questions, as well as the wording improvised by the interviewer to meet the needs of the individual as he perceives him in that moment.

Moving on to the issue of evaluation applied to these structures which encompass the panel interview as generally structured and the assessment center as semi-structured, there remains the choice between progressive and summary assessment or a combination of both practices. Considering at this point nothing more than feasibility, in the case of the unstructured, uninterrupted narrative, an interviewer would certainly be free to record his impressions of the speaker <u>during</u> the speech as easily as afterwards. But in the structured or semi-structured situations, surely it is completely unrealistic to expect an interviewer to be able to converse sensibly, assess fairly, interact naturally, and record accurately in harmonious concert from beginning to end. Postponing the recording of assessment until after the meeting is over leaves both participants freer to communicate more naturally, but then the accuracy of the evaluation is in question.

EM contends that regardless of the timing or label - free response, key word analysis, evidence organizer, candidate analysis sheet, critical behavior review, competency profile, (etc.), the inefficacy of all interviewing systems to deliver truly credible documentation progressively <u>or</u> summarily is unavoidable. The discussion comes again and again (in full and tightening circles) to the same inescapable, gripping point. <u>Any</u> evaluation is

unsupportable without cassettes or videotapes of the related episode to verify the assessment.

The obviousness of this approach to solving the problem of substantiated evaluation is so clear that it scarcely warrants further address. Recruiting organizations could easily catalogue and store tapes of their selection interviews for an arbitrary period of time to defend their choices if the need arises. Especially in the case of an administrative position, where a conviction of lost wages and opportunity could be an expensive lesson for the entity charged, the practice of accumulating and storing cassettes of the interviewed short list may well be worth the minimal nuisance involved. Of course, the purpose of the taping would have to be explained to interviewees and their permission gained.

There are some forseeable problems with the plan. With the idea planted in their minds, disappointed applicants might decide to initiate a charge of biased selection. Then the hosting agency would have to justify the selection decision by producing the tape and illustrating the basis on which the evaluation was made. Many interviewers would admit that this could put them in a very embarrassing position because in the end they have relied upon intuition. The piecemeal evaluation that bears their signature was just a necessary headache, a fill in the blank or blanket exercise that hung like a shadow over the interaction, impeding the conversation that helped develop the overall impression they call intuition.

CONCLUSION

Interviewers have traditionally been locked into a conflict of interest situation. They have been asked to evaluate an individual objectively while interacting with him, yet interaction can only be accomplished subjectively. Foiled by a situation that requires opposing attitudes, the expressed intention of the exchange is aborted; the complete inability of the selection interview to identify successful performers (Walden, 1979; Markert & Shores, 1981) is evidence of the double bind.

My suspicion after researching this thesis is that what supercedes all is the unexpressed agenda - to discover the social suitability of the applicant for the hosting environment. Selection hunches are oftener based subconsciously on a match between the personal styles of interviewee and interviewer (or interviewee and receiving staff) than on perceived performance potential. Documentation requirements frustrate an interviewer whose intuitive selection decision is progressively and summarily enmeshed with the integrated experience, not by what he has written progressively or can write summarily.

In wondering how to approach the solution of this problem, I thought of separating the functions of interacting and formal evaluation to resolve the tension between the subjective and objective dichotomy. This could be accomplished by modifying the blatant question and answer format that interviews typically follow to accommodate a more conversational episode where the

negotiation of meaning is invited and appreciated. Counselling the applicant in this direction at the onset of the interview would hopefully allow the more natural evolution of talk, giving indexicality, reflexivity, and the mutual exploration of message and interpretation an open opportunity to facilitate the construction of intended meaning.

Along with this adaptive shift, taping the experience would produce a permanent record and also relieve the interviewer of any burden of evaluation during OR after the interview. That function could be assigned to another interviewer who would review the tapes and be better able to evaluate the interaction more objectively in terms of what the situation was overtly designed to assess. His evaluation, bolstered by the initial interviewer's perception of the applicant's social suitability, might come closer to identifying successful performers. The idea bears investigating on behalf of interviewers and interviewees in every field who are sincerely interested in unbiased and substantiated evaluation leading to successful selection.

Bibliography

Acuff, H. A. "Quality Control in Employee Selection". Personnel Journal, Vol. 60, July, 1981. Pp. 562-565.

Arvey, R. D., and J. E. Campion. Personnel Psychology, Vol. 35, Summer, 1982. Pp. 281-322.

Atkinson, Maxwell, and John Heritage. The Structure of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Barritt, Loren S., Tom Beekman, Hans Bleeker, and Karel Mulderij. A Handbook for Phenomenological Research in Education. Michigan: School of Education, University of Michigan, 1983.

Brooks, William D., and Philip Emmert. Interpersonal Communication. Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company Publishers, 1976.

Brotherton, Chris. "Paradigms of Selection Validation: Some Comments in the Light of British Equal Opportunities Legislation". Journal of Occupational Psychology, Vol. 53, 1980. Pp. 73-79.

Burack, Elmer H., and Robert D. Smith. Personnel Management: A Human Resource Systems Approach. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1982.

Burgoon, Judee et al. "Effects of Gaze on Hiring, Credibility, Attribution, and Relational Message Interpretation". Nonverbal Behavior. Vol. 9, 1985. Pp. 133-146.

Byham, B. "Assessing Employees without Resorting to a Centre. Personnel Management, Vol. 16, Oct., 1984. Pp. 56-57.

Camuso, M.A. "The Recruitment Trip: before, during and after". Personnel Journal, Vol. 63, Nov., 1984. Pp. 66-72.

Cascio, Wayne F. and Elias M. Awad. Human Resources Management: An Information Systems Approach. Reston, Virginia. Reston Publishing Co., 1981.

Cicourel, Aaron V. Cognitive Sociology. London: Penguin, 1973.

Cicourel et al. Language Use and School Performance. New York: Academic Press, 1974. Pp. 17-75.

Cicourel, Aaron. "Interviewing and Memory". In Pragmatic Aspects of Human Communication. Ed. Colin Cherry. Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1974. Pp. 51-82.

Cinnamon, K., and N. Matulef (eds). Applied Skills Training Series: Assessment and Interviewing. Kansas City, Missouri: Applied Skills Press, 1979.

Cook, Mark. Issues in Person Perception. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1984.

Danzinger, Kurt. Interpersonal Communication. New York: Pergamon Press, Inc., 1976.

Davenport, R. "Sharpening Interviewing and Selection Skills". Sales and Marketing Management, Vol. 121, Dec., 1978. Pp. 67-69.

Dipboye, Robert L., Carlla S. Stramler, and Gail A. Fontenelle. "The Effects of the Application on Recall of Information from the Interview". Academy of Management Journal, Vol. 27, No. 3, 1984. Pp. 561-575.

Downs, Cal et al. Professional Interviewing. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1980.

Farrar, Mary Thomas. "The Complexity of the Cognitively Simple". 1982.

Flippo, Edwin B. Principles of Personnel Management. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976.

Forbes, R. J.. "Nonverbal Behavior and the Outcome of Selection Interviews". Journal of Occupational Psychology, Vol. 53, 1980. Pp. 65-72.

Gandz, J., and J. C. Rush. "Human Rights and the Right Way to Hire". Business Quarterly, Vol. 48, Spring, 1983. Pp. 70-77.

Garfinkel, Harold. Studies in Ethnomethodology. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967. Chapter 3.

Garfinkel, Harold. "Studies of the Routine Grounds of Everyday Activities". Social Problems, Vol. 11, Winter, 1964. Pp. 225-250.

Grove, D.A. "Behavioral Consistency Approach to Decision-Making in Employment Selection". Personnel Psychology, Vol. 34, Spring, 1981. Pp. 55-64.

Gumperz, John J., and Dell Hymes (eds). Directions in Sociolinguistics: the Ethnography of Communication. New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston, Inc.

Hakel, M. D. "Normative Personality Factors Recovered from Ratings of Personality Descriptors: The Beholder's Age." Personnel Psychology, Vol. 27, 1974. Pp. 409-421.

Harrison, E. L. "Winning the EEO Game". Management World, Vol. 9, May, 1980. Pp. 12-14.

Heilman, M. E., and L. R. Saruwatari. "When Beauty Is Beastly: The Effects of Appearance and Sex on Evaluations of Job Applicants and Managerial and Nonmanagerial Jobs". Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, Vol. 23, 1979. Pp. 360-372.

Hendrickson, John. "Hiring the Right Stuff". Personnel Administrator, Vol. 32, No. 11, Nov., 1987. Pp. 70-74.

Heritage, John. Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984.

Herriot, P. "Towards an Attributional Theory of the Selection Interview". Journal of Occupational Psychology, Vol. 54, Sept., 1981. Pp. 165-173.

Heyman, Richard. "Formulating Topic in the Classroom". Discourse Processes. Vol. 9, 1986. Pp. 37-55.

Heyman, Richard. "Managing Turns in Computer Conferencing and Face-To-Face Talk". Paper presented to the Eighth International Institute on Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis, August 27-31, 1987, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts.

Hollandsworth, J. G. Jr. et al. "Relative Contributions of Verbal, Articulative, and Nonverbal Communication to Employment Decisions in the Job Setting". Personnel Psychology, Vol. 32, 1979. Pp. 359-367.

Imundo, Louis V. The Effective Supervisor's Handbook. New York: AMACOM, 1980.

"Interviewing in Professional School Admissions: Pros and Cons". College and University, Vol. 55, 1980. Pp. 333-334.

Jablin, F. "Verbal Correlates of Interviewer Empathic Listening and Employment Interview Outcomes". Communication Monogram, Vol. 51, 1984. Pp. 353-371.

Keenan, A. "Some Relationships between Interviewers' Personal Feelings about Candidates, and Their General Evaluation of Them." Journal of Occupational Psychology, Vol. 50, 1977. Pp. 275-283.

Kolton, E. "The Educated Hunch". Inc., Vol. 7, 1985. Pp. 93-94+.

Komter, Martha. Conflict and Cooperation in Job Interviews. 1987 Thesis, University of Amsterdam. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press.

Leiter, Kenneth. A Primer on Ethnomethodology. New York: Oxford, 1980.

Lopez, Felix M. Personnel Interviewing: Theory and Practice (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975.

Mahler, W. Diagnostic Studies. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1974.

Markert, R. et al. "Assuring Fairness in the Medical School Admission Interview". College and University, Vol. 56, 1981. Pp. 160-166.

Matheny, P. R. "How to Hire a Winner". Supervisory Management, Vol. 29, May, 1984. Pp. 12-15.

Mathis, Robert L., and John H. Jackson. Personnel. New York: West Publishing Company, 1982.

McCormack, Peter, and Frederick A. Elliston (eds). Husserl: Shorter Works. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

Mehan, Hugh, and Houston Wood. The Reality of Ethnomethodology. New York: Wiley, 1975.

Mehan, Hugh. "Accomplishing Classroom Lessons". In Language Use and School Performance. Ed. A. Cicourel et al. New York: Academic Press, 1974. Pp. 76-142.

Mehan, Hugh. "The Role of Language and the Language of Role in Institutional Decision Making". Language in Society, Vol. 12, 1983. Pp. 187-211.

Mehrabian, Albert. Silent Messages. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co. Inc., 1971.

Mercer, Michael W., and John J. Seres. "Using Scorable Interview 'Tests' in Hiring". Personnel, Vol. 64, No. 6, June, 1987. Pp. 57-60.

Middlemist, R. Dennis, Michael A. Hitt, and Charles R. Greer. Personnel Management: Jobs, People, and Logic. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983.

Morgan, Dennis F. "Personnel Selection and Interviewing: Professional and Personal Perspectives". Records Management Quarterly, July, 1986. Pp. 20-24.

Morris, R. J. "Objective Interviewing: Discerning the Best in Sales Candidates". Business Marketing, Vol. 69, Dec., 1984. Pp. 58+.

Nagata, .D. et al. "Nonverbal and Verbal Content Behaviors in the Prediction of Interviewer Effectiveness". Journal of Counselling Psychology, Vol. 30, 1983.

Petit, T. A., and T. W. Mullins. "Decisions, Decisions: How to Make Good Ones on Employee Selection". Personnel, Vol. 58, March, 1981. Pp. 71-77.

Poyatos, Fernando. "Cross-cultural Study of Paralinguistic Alternants". In Organization of Behavior in Face-to-face Interaction. Ed. Adam Kendon et al. The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1975.

Reynolds, A. H. "Reliability of a Scored Oral Interview for Police Officers". Personnel Management, Vol. 8, 1979. Pp. 324-328.

Rozelle, R. M., and J. C. Baxter. "The Influence of Role Pressure on the Perceiver". Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 66, No. 4, 1981.

Sacks, Harvey. "Notes on Police Assessment of Moral Character". In Structures of Social Action. Ed. J. Maxwell Atkinson and John Heritage. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pp. 280-293.

Sacks, Harvey. ""On Doing 'Being Ordinary'". In Structures of Social Action. Ed. J. Maxwell Atkinson and John Heritage. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pp. 413-429.

Saville-Troike, Muriel. The Ethnography of Communication. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher Ltd., 1982.

Schegloff, Emmanuel. "On Some Questions and Ambiguities in Conversation". In Current Trends in Textlinguistics. Ed. Wolfgang Dressler. Berlin: Gruyter, 1977. Pp. 81-102.

Schlenker, Barry R. Impression Management. California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1980.

Schmitt, N. "Social and Situational Determinants of Interview Decisions". Personnel Psychology, Vol. 29, 1976. Pp. 79-101.

Schutz, A. and Luckman, T. The Structures of the Life-World. London: Heineman, 1974.

Sibson, Robert E. Increasing Employee Productivity. New York: AMACOM, 1976.

Stacks, D., and Judee Burgoon. "The Role of Nonverbal Behavior as Distractor in Resistance to Persuasion in Interpersonal Contexts". Central States Speech Journal, Vol. 32, 1981. Pp. 61-73.

Stevens, George. "Taking the Chance Out of Selection Interviewing". Journal of College Placement, Vol. 41, 1981. Pp. 44-48.

Stone, Thomas H., and Noah M. Meltz. Personnel Management in Canada. Toronto: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston of Canada, Limited, 1983.

Strauss, George, and Leonard R. Sayles. Personnel: The Human Problems of Management. (4th ed.) Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980.

Tharp, C. G. "A Manager's Guide to Selection Interviewing". Personnel Journal, Vol. 62, Aug., 1983. Pp. 636-639.

Tubbs, Stewart L., and Sylvia Moss. Interpersonal Communication. New York: Random House, 1981.

Tucker, D. H., and P. M. Rowe. "Relationship between Expectancy, Attributions, and Final Hiring Decisions in the Employment Interview". Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 64, 1979. Pp. 27-34.

Walden, T. "Graduate Admissions Interview: Benefit and Costs". College and University, Vol. 55, 1979. Pp. 50-59.

Wanous, John P. Organizational Entry: Recruitment, Selection, and Socialization of Newcomers. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1980.

Washburn, P.V., and Hakel, M.D. "Visual Cues and Verbal Content as Influences on Impressions Formed after Simulated Employment

Interviews". Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 58, 1973. Pp. 137-151.

Witkin, A. A. "Commonly Overlooked Dimensions of Employee Selection". Personnel Journal, Vol. 59, July, 1980. Pp. 573-575.

Yager, Ed. "When New Hires Don't Make the Grade". Personnel Journal, Vol. 59, 1980. Pp. 387-390.