Psychology and Natural Science

The Relation Between the Natural Scientific Attitude, the Theoretical Attitude and the Life-World in Ethnomethodology and Phenomenology

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Murdoch University
I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

____________________________________________
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Abstract

In this thesis I will revisit debates concerning the use of natural scientific methods in the discipline of psychology. I take the position that natural scientific methods are inappropriate for investigating human experience. My central aim is to unravel the dilemma embedded in psychological practice. Psychologists specifically investigate people but, by using methods based on natural science, they are forced to admit that meaningful human experience is either irrelevant or inaccessible to their investigations of human behaviour.

Initially, I take up ethnomethodologically informed discursive psychology (EM-informed DP) as an alternative to, and a viable replacement of, the natural scientific methods in the discipline of psychology. EM-informed DP proceeds from Harold Garfinkel’s appropriation of Edmund Husserl’s critique that natural scientific investigations have lost their life-world foundation. Garfinkel reads Husserl as issuing a practical instruction to go out and investigate lived practices, without any specialised theoretical framework. In doing so, one area that we can investigate, according to Garfinkel, is the lived practices of natural scientists and how they collaboratively produce their research findings. Hence, I proceed by empirically describing how clinical psychologists, as trained natural scientists, interpret people’s everyday experience in and through their actual practices.

Following three investigations of clinical psychological interactions, based on three different interpretations of Garfinkel’s ethnomethodological (EM) program, I demonstrate that, despite claims to the contrary, EM in fact presupposes the same ground as natural science. EM-informed researchers mistakenly conflate the natural scientific attitude with the theoretical attitude and, hence, seek to eliminate both in their attempts to clarify the lived practices of natural scientists or everyday people. By contrast, for phenomenologists, the theoretical attitude and the natural scientific attitude are distinct, but interrelated, attitudes that we can take towards the life-world. According to phenomenologists, the life-world is the starting point of any investigation, including all psychological investigations. However, if we forget that our investigations are theoretical, we perpetuate the same problem associated with the natural scientific method; leading us to replace the meaningful human world in which we live, the life-
world, with the sterile Objective world constructed by the natural scientific observer. As I will suggest, within the discipline of psychology, the substitution of one empirical method for another still leaves us without the world we live in. The challenge in psychology is to reinstate the importance of the theoretical attitude and the life-world.

Through a series of unsuccessful attempts to replace natural scientific methods with an alternative empirical method in the discipline of psychology, I propose that the problem with the natural scientific method is much larger than I originally presupposed. The natural scientific interpretation of human experience is the sedimented interpretation of the life-world in our current historical situation. We cannot simply replace the natural scientific method because, currently, there is no viable alternative. Instead, in order to reinstate the importance of meaningful lived experience, we need to understand the natural scientific attitude in terms of its historical development and grounding assumptions, by engaging with the life-world through the theoretical attitude.
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During the preparation of my thesis, portions of the dissertation were presented at a number of conferences and invited seminars (with thanks for the insightful comments I have received on earlier drafts):


Portions of the thesis submitted for publication:

What effect did the intoxicating success of this discovery of physical infinity have on the scientific mastery of the spiritual sphere? In the attitude directed toward the surrounding world, the constantly objectivistic attitude, everything spiritual appeared as if it were [simply] spread over [the surface of] physical bodies. Thus the application [to it] of the natural-scientific way of thinking seemed the obvious thing to do.


Reason itself, the thinking ability which we have, has a need to actualize itself. The philosophers and the metaphysicians have monopolized this capability. This has led to very great things. It also led to rather unpleasant things – we have forgotten that every human being has a need to think, not to think abstractly, not to answer the ultimate questions of God, immortality, and freedom, nothing but to think while he [sic] is living. And he [sic] does it constantly. Everybody who tells the story of what happened to him [sic] half an hour ago on the street has got to put this story into shape. And this putting the story into shape is a form of thought.

Introduction: Psychology and Natural Science

Introducing the Thesis and Method

In this thesis I argue that psychological methods, despite claims to the contrary, continue to be based upon methods adopted from the natural sciences. In particular, methods used in psychology are underpinned by the concept that there is an Objective\(^1\) standpoint, outside of the world of our living, from which to view human behaviour.\(^2\) Thus, psychological researchers assume that through their methods they can establish general unchanging patterns in human characteristics that explain and predict the way people act in the world.\(^3\) Through adopting methods from natural science, psychology presupposes that the human condition can be understood, categorised, explained and predicted in the same way as can rocks and trees. In

\(^1\) I have adopted a translator’s convention of capitalising the ‘O’ in ‘Objective’, when referring to Husserl’s use of ‘Objekt’, and a small ‘o’ when referring to Husserl’s use of ‘Gegenstand’. As Dorion Cairns (Husserl, 1973a, p. 3) writes in his second translator’s note in Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology, ‘Husserl frequently uses the words Gegenstand and Objekt to express importantly different senses. Having found no acceptable alternative to translating them both as object, I differentiate by spelling this word with a small letter when it represents Gegenstand and with a capital when it represents Objekt. All this applies, mutatis mutandis, in the case of any word derived from Gegenstand or Objekt’. Similarly, for Husserl, ‘subject’ also has two senses: I will use a capitalised ‘Subject’ to refer to the natural scientific interpretation of ‘subjective’ and will not capitalise ‘subject’ when referring to Husserl’s concept of ‘subjectivity’. The two different senses of object and subject, in Husserl’s work, only become important in the second part of my thesis, when I discuss Husserl’s (1999 (1902/03), p. 68) conception of the problem of knowledge – the relation between the objectivity of the known and the subjectivity of the knower. However, for the sake of consistency and clarity, I will use ‘Object/object’ and ‘Subject/subject’ throughout my thesis.

\(^2\) The critique of the assumption of the Objective standpoint within psychology is not a new critique; many other authors from different critical perspectives have made similar arguments to the one I am making here. Some of the most important critical perspectives within the discipline of psychology can be found in the critical psychological literature of abnormal psychology that stems from the anti-psychiatry movement (for example see McHoul & Rapley, 2001; Newnes, 2004; Newnes, Holmes, & Dunn, 1999; Szasz, 1960); the discursive psychological critique of psychological research (for a good example of this style of critique see Potter, Edwards, & Wetherell, 1993); the social constructionist critique of psychological research (for example see K. Gergen, 1985; Prilleltensky, 1994); and the feminist critique of psychology (for example see M. Gergen, 2001; Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988).

\(^3\) Predicting behaviour is the main aim of psychological investigations stated by mainstream psychological literature. For example, Roy Baumeister, Kathleen Vohs and David Funder (2007) critique the main methods used in social psychology – self-report questionnaires and reaction time experiments – for falling short of examining and predicting actual behaviour. Another example is Terry Knapp (1986), who specifies the goal of cognitive psychology as predicting behavioural responses from environmental stimuli through understanding how people process information.
adopting the methods of natural science, psychology forgets that it is we who divide up nature. We turn the method by which we divide nature into categories back upon ourselves and, thereby, do not allow consideration of human reasoning and experience, which is presupposed by natural scientific reasoning in the first instance.\(^4\)

In my thesis, I am particularly concerned that by assuming the standpoint of the Objective observer within psychological investigations, we do not pay attention to the theoretical framework through which we make judgements about how to categorise people. Adopting the framework of natural science within psychology leads psychologists to assume that people are unchanging objects that can be classified into natural types. In doing so, the categories that are ascribed to people by psychologists are understood as not dependent on the person making those ascriptions. In overlooking that our categorisations of people are made from a particular standpoint, psychologists run the risk of missing the harm that such categorisations can, and do, have upon people’s lives.\(^5\) By not paying attention to our theoretical standpoint, judgements made about people, within psychological literature and professional practice, are justified through a supposedly Objective method outside of the lived situation, rather than paying attention to our own and others actions, in the world in which we live.

There is a lot of debate about whether psychology is a science or not.\(^6\) Hence, psychologists would generally not agree that they necessarily presuppose that people can be classified into

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\(^4\) The position I am presenting here stems from the phenomenological understanding that lived human experience and reason are primary to explicitly understanding, interpreting and categorising the world in which we live (for example see Heidegger, 2000a, pp. 21-24, 86-90; Husserl, 1973b, p. 41; Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 187-197).

\(^5\) My understanding of the problems associated with categorising people from an Objective standpoint and the harm that this can cause stems from my understanding of the anti-psychiatry movement and the critical approaches to abnormal psychology within the discipline of psychology (Healy, 2004; Moynihan & Cassels, 2005; Newnes et al., 1999; Newnes, Holmes, & Dunn, 2001; Szasz, 1960). However, there are other approaches that critique psychology for its supposedly Objective categorisations on the basis that they are exclusionary, most notably feminist critiques (for an overview see M. Gergen, 2001).

\(^6\) Most notably, Karl Popper (2002 (1963), pp. 43-77) in his book *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge* critiques Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler for not being able to derive falsifiable hypotheses from their theories and, hence, argues that they were not scientific theories. Criticisms of psychology’s scientific status are linked with criticisms of the Objective standpoint within
natural types from an Objective position. Instead, the use of statistical methods, for example, is seen as a useful means by which to make generalisations about people.\textsuperscript{7} However, the methods used within psychology would not work without the assumption of the Objective perspective through which people can be classified into natural types. Without such an assumption, the generalisations made by psychologists would be given no more heed than the generalisations I make on the basis of my lived experience. Hence, I argue that, before we can decide whether psychology should or should not be a science, we first need to attend to the presuppositions upon which psychological methods are based.

My thesis revisits the ‘methodological’ appropriation of the Objective standpoint by showing that psychology continues to rely on the natural scientific attitude. I argue that the problem associated with the adoption of natural scientific method, either acknowledged or unacknowledged, cannot be resolved, for example, by replacing quantitative methods with qualitative methods in the discipline of psychology. To substantiate this claim, I pay close attention to the framework of ethnomethodology (EM) as an exemplar of a self-proclaimed ‘non-scientific’ qualitative approach to social research and its application to psychology. I also pay close attention to the use of psychological testing, by personality psychologists, as a typical and straightforward example of a natural scientific approach to research in psychology. I demonstrate that the statistical examinations of personality and discursive psychological investigations of social interaction, which are often presented as diametrically opposed within psychology and, hence, for examples of the critiques that psychology is not a science also refer to footnote 2, page 1.

\textsuperscript{7} Usually arguments about whether psychology is a science are either attended to by the mainstream literature by advocating a position that psychology, although not a science, is still a useful way of gaining knowledge about how people behave in general; or by stating that psychological science, although not properly a science in the past, has now resolved the problems associated with bad psychological science through becoming more Objective. For an example of these discussions on the status of psychology as a science with regard to psychological testing, a particularly controversial area of psychology because of its links with what has been called ‘scientific racism’ (Williams, 1974); see John Rust and Susan Golombok’s (1989, pp. 22-38) discussion on the ‘true’ versus ‘functional’ account of psychological testing and Gerald Goldstein and Michel Hersen’s (2000) discussion on the scientific progression of psychological assessment.
the psychological literature, in fact both presuppose the natural scientific attitude. Instead of seeking an alternative to the use of natural scientific method in psychology, I argue that we first need to understand the historical development and grounding assumptions of the natural scientific attitude. The underlying question throughout the thesis is why and how the adoption of the natural scientific attitude leads to the elimination of lived human experience within psychological research.

To address these issues, in the thesis, my method employed can best be understood as critical and self-reflective analysis. The thesis is composed of two parts: in part one I adopt an apparently non-scientific method and in the second part I critique my adoption of this method. Through my empirical investigations of clinical psychological therapy I come to realise that I too assume an Objective position through which to view the social world. My adoption of the Objective standpoint from which to analyse interaction is not a result of my own misunderstanding of the EM method but is rather a result of ethnomethodologists aim to study talk-in-interaction from an atheoretical position. By reflecting upon the ‘non-scientific’ method I used in the first part of the thesis, in the second part, I endeavour to explicate what

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8 There are largely considered to be two strands of qualitative methods in psychology; qualitative methods that open up new fields for quantitative psychological research and qualitative methods that are incompatible with scientific research. Of the strands of qualitative research that are considered incompatible with scientific research, DP is only one. For a general discussion on the qualitative/quantitative divide in psychology see the special issue of The Psychologist, Vol. 18, Issue 9, published in 2005 (S. A. Haslam, 2005; Manstead & Wetherell, 2005; Reicher, 2005; Reicher & Taylor, 2005; Spears, Holloway, & Edwards, 2005). However, in order to keep the thesis manageable I will exclusively focus on DP.

9 Mainstream psychological research approaches state quite clearly that they are not investigating meaningful human experience, but do not understand this as a problem. For example, John Watson (1920, p. 180), the founder of behaviourism, notes, ‘I have no sympathy with those psychologists and philosophers who try to introduce a concept of “meaning” (“values” is another sacred word) into behaviour’. In another example, George Mandler, a leading spokesperson for cognitive psychology, states in a conversation with Bernard Baars (1986; emphasis in original), ‘psychology must talk about people. Your private experience is a theoretical construct to me. I have no direct access to your private experience. I do not have direct access to your behaviour. In that sense I’m a behaviourist. In that sense, everybody is a behaviourist’. For similar comments, see Baumeister, Vohs and Funder (2007, p. 339) and John Kihlstrom (1987, p. 1445). For an in depth discussion of how the development of psychology as a scientific discipline has led to a loss of meaningful human experience see Alan Costall (2006). However, to make the claim that DP does not consider meaningful human experience is more controversial; I will address this topic specifically in chapter five.
the natural scientific method is and why, despite my intention to avoid adopting the natural scientific method for researching the social world, I continued to rely upon the natural scientific standpoint. In the second part of my thesis, I argue that the natural scientific attitude taken towards to the human world, which is presupposed by psychological research including my own method for investigating social interaction, points to a more fundamental problem. The significant problem indicated by my unwitting adoption of the natural scientific attitude is that the natural scientific interpretation has become the only viable method through which, as in the case of psychology, we can understand human experience.

**Part One: Analytic Descriptions of Clinical Psychology**

**My Research Project**

Initially, I understood Harold Garfinkel’s (1967a, p. 303, 2002) EM program as a viable and promising alternative to the use of natural scientific methods in the discipline of psychology. Not only are ethnomethodologists avid critics of the use of natural scientific methods in social scientific research, but their work has also exerted an influence upon psychology through Derek Edwards and Jonathan Potter’s (1992) proposal of discursive psychology (DP). Hence, I wanted to extend the DP insight that EM could be used within psychology by examining Garfinkel’s EM program specifically.¹⁰

Due to my particular interest in investigating how judgements are made about people in professional psychological practice, I wanted to use EM to investigate the actual practices of clinical psychologists. I specifically wanted to investigate whether the assumption of the Objective standpoint by clinical psychologists could be seen to play a role in therapeutic interactions and to examine whether such an assumption had detrimental effects upon clients;

¹⁰ DP is influenced by EM, CA and social science studies (Edwards & Potter, 1992; S. Wiggins & Potter, 2008) but, once again, in order to keep my thesis manageable I will focus solely upon the influence EM has on DP.
effects that were overlooked by therapists. I thought that through examining the practices of clinical psychology I could carefully describe how clinical psychologists are actually informed by the natural scientific understandings that underpin scientific psychology, and illustrate the tangible problems that natural scientific interpretations of clients’ difficulties lead to in the clinical psychological setting. EM seemed to be a particularly fruitful way to confront these problems because it is a method of investigating the actual practices of any social interaction and its proponents claim to avoid the presupposition of the Objective standpoint. In addition, ethnomethodologists specifically aim to clarify the lived world practices of natural and social scientists.

I started my project by recording, listening to, replaying and transcribing eighteen therapy sessions as a way of both understanding how to apply EM research and examining and describing the actual practices of clinical psychology. The eighteen therapy sessions that formed my empirical data corpus were recorded for me by two clinical psychologists. I was given thirteen individual sessions from one psychologist and five couples counselling sessions from a second psychologist. I refer to the therapists and clients using anonymys for reason of confidentiality. I transcribed all eighteen sessions using the Jeffersonian transcription system (Jefferson, 1984, 2004). EM-informed researchers advocate starting with listening to and transcribing the data as a way of beginning an analysis of social interaction (Antaki, Billig, Edwards, & Potter, 2003; ten Have, 1997). Hence, the first part of my thesis starts with my analytic descriptions of clinical psychological therapy as a way of discovering both what clinical psychological therapy is and as a way of understanding research approaches that stem from Garfinkel’s EM program.

I never intended to judge the practices of the two clinical psychologists featured in my data. My research project is about showing a more general problem with clinical psychology through

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11 See Appendix for details.
examining particular therapy sessions. In the extracts I present in chapters one, two and three I am presenting very short sections of talk from therapy sessions. Paying attention to anyone’s talk to investigate the minutiae of what they are saying and how they are saying it has the effect of immortalising problematic fleeting statements. Hence, I would like to clearly state that it was not my intention to judge the clinical psychologists in the extracts I present, nor do I think it is possible to do so on the basis of the extracts that I have presented.

**Ethnomethodology as Applied Phenomenology**

In the first part of my thesis, I uncritically adopt ethnomethodology (EM) as an applied phenomenological research approach for investigating and clarifying how clinical psychology actually ‘gets done’ within the interactions between therapists and clients. Garfinkel (2007), the founder of EM, claims to appropriate the phenomenological critique that the natural sciences have lost their life-world foundations. Originally adopting Alfred Schütz’s social phenomenology and his notion of common sense knowledge (Garfinkel, 1967a, pp. 37, 55; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970, pp. 343-344) and latter adopting Edmund Husserl’s life-world specifically (Garfinkel, 2007; Garfinkel & Liberman, 2007), Garfinkel proposes that social science prevalently misses its phenomenon of interest: the social world as it is actually lived. Initially, I thought that the phenomenological influence upon EM was what underpinned the radical nature of its project, which was to study the social world as an already orderly phenomenon from a non-specialist position (Garfinkel, 2007; Livingston, 2006, p. 41, 2008, pp. 59-63; Lynch, 1993). Due to the nature of my project, which starts out by understanding EM as an applied phenomenology, and then turns to phenomenology to critique EM, I will now draw out the similarities that I saw between the two approaches, EM and phenomenology, and how I initially understood them to apply to psychology.

In part one of my thesis, I missed the important distinction between idealisation and indirect mathematisation that Husserl makes (1970 (1952), pp. 34-37; Patočka, 1989 (1971), pp. 228-
and understood Husserl’s claims about how the natural scientific attitude indirectly mathematises the life-world as commensurate with EM’s claims about how social researchers formalise and, thereby, idealise the social world. Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, pp. 443-445) take up the problem with the Objectivist standpoint as a problem of incorrectly assuming that there is a specialised position through which to view the social world which is gained through the application of technical apparatus, and leads to a loss of the social world. As Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, p. 339) state, social researchers, using mathematical methods to investigate the social world, for example, Objectify everyday expressions and practices that are inherently contingent. In doing so, according to Sacks and Garfinkel (1970, p. 339), social researchers replace actual expressions with ideal expressions without realising this implication of using formal methods of investigating the social world. Drawing upon EM understandings of phenomenology, I understood the problem of quantitative psychological methods as presupposing a privileged position, and utilising specialised technical apparatus for investigating how the social world actually works that is not available to people in the social world in which they live. I understood that psychological researchers, by adopting technical mathematical methods for accessing privileged information about people, in fact obscured people’s actions and, as such, lost sight of the phenomenon they were interested in. In part one, I understood psychologists as incorrectly assuming that they have privileged access to a people’s own understanding of themselves and I thought I could use EM as an applied phenomenology to show how this assumption plays out in the actual practices of clinical psychology. In examining the actual practices of clinical psychological therapy I thought I could examine whether and how psychologists adopt a privileged position in therapeutic interaction and the actual problems this leads to for clients; problems that are missed by therapists.

\[12\] I am drawing upon Garfinkel and Sacks’s article ‘On the formal structures of practical actions’ because it is considered to be a seminal text that outlines the EM position.

\[13\] Practices and expressions are understood in EM to work in the same way (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970, p. 344).
By adopting EM as an applied phenomenology, I took up Garfinkel’s interpretation of Husserl’s critique, that the natural sciences have lost their life-world foundation, and assumed I could clarify the lived practices of clinical psychologists within actual settings. For ethnomethodologists, social theories retain some plausibility, not because social researchers employ technical apparatus or the specialised position that they adopt, but because they draw upon their own practical knowledge of the social world (Garfinkel, 1967a; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Lynch & Bogen, 1994; McHoul, 2001). Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, pp. 341-345) make the claim that specialised sociological techniques used by investigators are, in fact, based upon practical common sense methods that everyday people use to make sense of the social situation that they are involved in. Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, pp. 341-345) maintain that not only do sociological technical methods of investigation obscure the common sense methods by which actual social order is produced and maintained in social situations, but also that social researchers rely upon their own unacknowledged common sense methods to make their findings about the social world. According to ethnomethodologists, it is the commonsense methods used, and not the named methodological technique, that enables sociological theories to remain plausible explanations of the social world (Garfinkel, 1967a; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Lynch & Bogen, 1994; McHoul, 2001). Particularly for Garfinkel (Garfinkel, 2007; Garfinkel & Liberman, 2007), but also for Sacks (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970, pp. 341-345), social and natural scientific research is in need of an ethnomethodological clarification by examining the lived practices through which researchers collaboratively produce their findings; rather than uncritical acceptance that natural and social scientists clarify how the social world works (Lynch & Bogen, 1994, p. 84). From my understanding of EM as an applied phenomenology, I assumed I could investigate clinical psychological practice to see how therapists actually rely upon common sense methods to interpret people’s difficulties; and not specialised psychological understandings of people, or therapeutic techniques.  

14 The position I am stating here is controversial because the role of clinical psychology is defined as a
In part one, I understood, in line with Garfinkel’s (1967b) interpretation of Husserlian phenomenology, that Garfinkel’s claim that the social world is co-produced through members’ actions as compatible with Husserl’s (1970 (1952), p. 108) claim that the life-world is intersubjectively constituted by us. For Garfinkel (1967b), we do not require a specialised position through which to investigate the social world because we can examine the social world from the perspective of being members of the social world (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 223). EM-informed researchers assume that we can investigate the world because we are also members of the social world (Garfinkel, 1967a, p. 31; Lynch & Bogen, 1994, pp. 90-93; Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 173). We can understand and describe the orderliness of the social world because we, too, participate in the co-production of its orderliness, whether we are social analysts or everyday people. Following from an EM reading of phenomenology, I understood that I could investigate and comprehend the world in which I live because I am part of the human world. Hence, I set out to clarify the actual practices of clinical psychology by which psychologists interpret people’s problems within actual clinical settings, from my own understanding of common sense methods.

position in which clinicians bring the accumulated knowledge of scientific psychology to bear on individual problems (Zeldow, 2009). Clinical psychology is based upon the scientist-practitioner model proposed at the Boulder conference in 1949, see Victor Raimy (1950) for the original conference proceedings. For particularly pertinent, more recent discussions on the scientist-practitioner model see the special section dedicated to Boulder at 50 in Volume 55, Issue 2 of American Psychologist (Albee, 2000; D. B. Baker & Benjamin, 2000; Benjamin & Baker, 2000; Nathan, 2000; Peterson, 2000; Routh, 2000; Stricker, 2000) and Timothy Baker, Richard McFall and Varda Shoham’s (in press) article Current Status and Future Prospects of Clinical Psychology. However, following from EM, in starting my analysis my original presupposition was that I could reveal that there could be no expertise on human experience. I now understand that my claim is not, nor could it be, substantiated by analyses of clinical psychological interaction.

15 I will address why they are not compatible in chapter six.
16 Garfinkel (1967b) calls his program ‘ethnomethodology’, meaning the study of members’ methods. In Garfinkel’s (1967b, p. 11) own terms: ‘I use “ethnomethodology” to refer to the investigation of the rational properties of indexical expressions and other practical actions as contingent ongoing accomplishments of organized artful practices of everyday life’. ‘Members’ is used by Garfinkel to denote that he does not start out from a predefined model of the human actor (Sharrock & Button, 1991). ‘Method’ is used by Garfinkel to denote the methodical way in which we do things in the social world. However, because of Garfinkel’s wish to avoid predefined models of the human actor his focus is on publicly shared methods through which people display their own understanding of themselves and
Ethnomethodology and Theory

The distinction that Garfinkel (2007) makes between his EM program and Husserlian phenomenology is that he wishes to avoid theoretical engagement with the social world altogether (Lynch, 1993). In the first part of my thesis, I did not understand the important and crucial difference that Husserl makes between the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude and, hence, uncritically accept Garfinkel’s critique that the problem with Husserl is that he stays within the theoretical attitude. Garfinkel (2007) advocates reading Husserl through an EM lens, and suggests that Husserl’s argument that the natural sciences have lost their life-world foundations can be read as never quite getting to the investigation of actual practices that Husserl advocates in his writings. As Garfinkel and Kenneth Liberman (2007, p. 4) write:

Regrettably, as a certainty, both Husserl’s treatises lose the phenomenon they were written carefully to describe. That is, they lose the phenomenon of the actual work-sites of any science. And there they also lose the instructed actions of the scientists, i.e. their actual world-generating collaborations.

For Garfinkel (2007), the life-world foundations of natural science can only be examined by paying close attention to the actual practices through which natural and social scientists collaboratively produce their findings within actual settings. In keeping with Garfinkel’s understanding of theory, Husserl’s writings are considered to only point toward the possibility of analysing the life-world, because Husserl presents theoretical arguments, rather than descriptions of actual practices.

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17 For Husserl (1970 (1935), pp. 93-99) any investigation is theoretical and must proceed from the life-world; the problem with the natural scientific attitude is that it forgets its life-world foundations. I will discuss Husserl’s important distinction between the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude in chapter four.

18 According to Garfinkel and Liberman (2007, p. 4), ‘The Göttingen Lectures’ and ‘The Crisis’ are Husserl’s two treatises on the life-world. Garfinkel (2007) provides references to two of Husserl’s (1970 (1952), 1999 (1902/03)) works at the end of his article: The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy (The Crisis) and The Idea of Phenomenology. The Idea of Phenomenology was written while Husserl was in Göttingen (Hardy, 1999), which is presumably what Garfinkel is referring to by ‘The Göttingen Lectures’. I do not want to assess the correctness of Garfinkel and Liberman’s claim that the ‘The Göttingen Lectures’ and The Crisis are Husserl’s only two treatises on the life-world because it is beyond the limits of my thesis.
Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, p. 345) propose that in order to avoid adopting a specialised theoretical position vis-a-vis social world, and to stay within the members’ orientation to the social situation, an ‘indifference’ towards the theoretical literature is required. As Garfinkel (1967a, p. viii) instructs, ethnomethodologists should not pay special attention to ‘constructive analytic theorizing, mock ups, or book reviews’, because studies of members’ methods can only be done “‘from within” actual settings’. As Livingston (2006, p. 41) notes:

Standing within the ethnomethodological tradition also means standing somewhat apart from it: in ethnomethodology, emphasis is placed on descriptive terminology; moreover, rather than focusing on the concerns of a professional literature (including that of ethnomethodology itself), the motives for a study are sought in the real-worldly matters made witnessably available through it.

Within the EM research tradition, engaging with theoretical literature is discouraged; this stems from ethnomethodologists’ distrust of theoretical models which are understood to be misleading and to obscure the social order observable in and through actual practical action that occurs within local settings. For ethnomethodologists the theoretical literature is unimportant because it does not provide accurate descriptions of the social world; and should be avoided because it leads the analyst to only view the social world through the theoretical standpoint adopted in the literature (Garfinkel, 1967a, pp. vi-vii; Lynch & Bogen, 1994, pp. 90-93).

Garfinkel (1967b) seeks to avoid any specialised theoretical position through which to investigate the actual practices of the lived social world and, instead, proposes that we can only study the social world from a perspective of being a member of the social world, using common sense methods (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 173). The understanding that common

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19 Garfinkel and Sacks’ (1970, pp. 345-348) notion of ‘ethnomethodological indifference’ extends to all members’ methods. For Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, pp. 345-348), members’ methods are not questionable because they are just the methods that everybody knows and uses. Garfinkel and Sacks’s (1970, pp. 345-348) notion that members’ methods are not questionable extends to social and natural scientific researchers as well, because they are only using the common sense methods that everybody knows and uses. As Garfinkel (1967a, p. vi) notes, there is nothing to ‘quarrel about’ in the academic literature, it is just that the theoretical literature does not describe the social world in detail. I will address the problems with Garfinkel’s notion that there is nothing outside of common sense methods in chapter six.
sense methods are the basis of the order found in both everyday social situations and sociological research findings leads Garfinkel (1967a, p. 31) to claim that ethnomethodologists’ topic and resource is common sense knowledge. According to Garfinkel (1967a, pp. vii-viii), while formal sociological investigations do not acknowledge that they use common sense methods to make their claims, ethnomethodologists explicitly acknowledge that their observations and descriptions are made on the basis of common sense methods. In addition, Garfinkel (1967a, p. 31) states that ethnomethodologists explicitly acknowledge that the adequacy of their descriptions is derived from common sense methods used in everyday social situations (Lynch & Bogen, 1994, pp. 90-93). Hence, EM-informed researchers’ aim is twofold: they attempt to illuminate the common sense understandings of the social world that underpin scientific investigations, as well as describe everyday interactions through the common sense practices that members use within that setting (Garfinkel, 1967a; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Lynch & Bogen, 1994).

EM-informed research claims to give an alternative conception of the social world that leads to an understanding that we can investigate the social world without assuming any kind of specialised theoretical position (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 173). Garfinkel and Sacks (Garfinkel, 1967a, p. 17; Garfinkel & Sacks, p. 348) avows that they do not wish to give any programmatic statements that would suggest their research follows a strict methodological procedure; instead the methods that EM-informed researchers use are seen to be contingent to the situation they are investigating, because they are using whatever methods the members use within that setting.\(^{20}\) EM researchers are members of the social world first and foremost and are only social analysts in the sense that they pay close attention to the production of social order that every member already knows and uses (Garfinkel, 1967a,

\(^{20}\) I will continue to refer to EM as a method of inquiry throughout the thesis, because it is a distinctive way of investigating the social world proposed by Garfinkel. For EM everything is a method and theory should be avoided. So, apart from Garfinkel’s own term, ‘program’, method seems the most appropriate term.
pp. 36-38). To use a social analyst’s orientation in order to examine social order, i.e. a *specialised theoretical position*, is to go beyond the bounds of Garfinkel’s EM program: it is to miss the point of EM research. For EM, a member’s orientation, i.e. using common sense knowledge of shared methods for doing things, is considered to be the *only* genuine position through which to understand the social world.

**Three Investigations into Clinical Psychological Interaction**

There are many different positions within the EM-informed literature;²¹ in this thesis I will pay particular attention to conversation analysis (CA) since my empirical data is recorded conversations and DP because I am researching within the discipline of psychology. I conduct three investigations into clinical psychological therapy, which examine three different interpretations of Garfinkel’s EM program. Each investigation into clinical psychological therapy can be understood as a separate attempt to take up the EM understanding that the social world is orderly and can be studied from the perspective of being a member of society and not by relying upon specialised theoretical techniques (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 173).

In chapter one, I adopt a CA approach to investigating clinical psychological interactions. I use the established findings of CA to suggest that the therapy session is defined by an asymmetry between different speakers’ rights and obligations, in which therapists have rights and obligations to talk for another whereas clients only have rights and obligations to talk for themselves.²² In concluding my chapter, I suggest that the asymmetry between clinical psychologists and clients, with respect to the speaking positions they hold within therapeutic

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²¹ For a detailed discussion on the diversity in ethnomethodology see Douglas Maynard’s (1991a) article ‘The diversity of ethnomethodology’ and Maynard and Steven Clayman’s (2003) article ‘Ethnomethodology and conversation analysis’.

²² I draw heavily upon Gene Lerner’s (1996) statement that there is a conversational maxim to talk for oneself.
interaction, illustrates that the Objective perspective, adopted by psychologists from the natural sciences, informs the actual practices of clinical psychological therapy.\footnote{23}{The claim I am making here is unsubstantiated, but as I demonstrate in chapter one two and three, it is only through extending my claims beyond what can be substantiated by my analytic description and my methodological position that I realise the problem with the methodological position I adopt in each chapter.}

Drawing out the wider implications of my analyses in chapter two highlights my own assumption of an Objective position vis-a-vis the social world; a position that I was claiming to be a managed speaking position that was, in fact, impossible. I follow Lynch and Bogen’s (1994) argument that suggests the problem with CA is that it has become an established systematic discipline of research in its own right.\footnote{24}{I draw heavily upon Lynch and Bogen’s article because it is considered a seminal paper within the EM/CA literature. In addition, it is a clear exposition of the argument that EM and CA are importantly different.} Lynch and Bogen (1994) suggest that systematic conversation analysts do not, in fact, rely upon members’ methods for analysing and substantiating descriptions of actual practices; rather, conversation analysts often use their own technical methods and academic literature to substantiate their descriptions of members’ methods. According to Lynch and Bogen (1994), conversation analysts, themselves, have lost their foundation in the lived social world and their field has become a scientific discipline. Hence, following Lynch and Bogen’s suggestion, I go to Garfinkel’s and Sacks’s original writings in order to recover Garfinkel’s EM program and show that Garfinkel’s aim is precisely to go against the natural scientific method and its underlying assumption of the Objective perspective.

Lynch and Bogen (1994) state that although Sacks did suggest that he wished to build CA into a natural science of the social world, because of Garfinkel’s influence upon Sacks it is possible to read Sacks in light of Garfinkel’s EM program and, hence, avoid the scientistic tendencies in Sacks’s own writings. In chapter two, I take up Sacks’s (1984b, 1995a, pp. 215-221) notion of ‘doing being ordinary’ as a useful way of understanding how clients talk about their
experiences and therapists interpret those experiences. Sacks’s (1984b, p. 417) notion of doing being ordinary is that we monitor situations we are in for ‘storyable possibilities’ so that we can describe our experiences in an ordinary manner. I understand Sacks’s (1984b, 1995a, pp. 215-221) notion of doing being ordinary as referring to the same thing as Garfinkel’s (1967a, pp. 36-38) notion of common sense knowledge, but in a way that is more applicable to the conversational data that I am analysing. Drawing upon Sacks’s (1984b, 1995a, pp. 215-221) notion of doing being ordinary, I suggest that therapists can proceed by asking questions about what is likely to be linked to clients’ tellings of their experiences and what is hearably missed from their descriptions of their experiences, as well as formulate those experiences for the client on the basis of how stories are ordinarily told. Drawing out the wider implications of my analytic descriptions I suggest that clinical psychological therapy is not a specifically technical domain of talk-in-interaction, as the clinical psychological literature suggests, but is largely composed of everyday common sense reasoning.

The combination of my analytic findings in chapters one and two, taken together, suggests that I have found exactly what I originally set out to find: clinical psychologists manage their speaking position as Objective, but they interpret clients’ problems using completely ordinary conversational methods. However, this particular implication of my analytic descriptions, although in line with my own descriptions of therapy and EM research, leads me to another problem. If clinical psychological practice is based upon ‘doing being ordinary’, or on common sense methods for doing things, there is actually nothing to critique, or indeed clarify, about clinical psychological practice because therapists’ methods are common methods for doing

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25 EM does not necessarily study recorded data; CA exclusively focuses on recorded social interactions for their investigations (ten Have, 1997). EM investigations are often conducted through participation in the actual setting being investigated (for example see Garfinkel & Livingston, 2003; Livingston, 2006).

26 The role of the clinical psychologist is defined in the literature as bringing the findings of scientific psychology to bare upon individual client’s problems (Rainy, 1950; Shakow, 1939). Also refer to footnote 14, on page 9, for the relevant literature on the scientist-practitioner model of clinical psychological training and the professional role of clinical psychologists. The scientist-practitioner model of clinical psychology is not without its critics (for example see Albee, 2000; Newnes, 2004; Rowe, 1988).
being ordinary and are just what everyone knows and does. In chapters one and two, through my analytic descriptions and methodological orientation, I have turned clinical psychological interaction into a completely ordinary site of conversation.\textsuperscript{27}

In addition, the notion that it is everybody and anybody’s job to do being ordinary seems to suggest that critique or clarification is unnecessary, not just in clinical psychological therapy, but in all domains of human action. If anybody and everybody already knows and uses the common sense knowledge that I describe, the point of an ethnomethodological description seems to be lost. As such, the approach of looking for the ordinariness in everyday interaction, although respectful of people’s practices and can be made observable when looked for, seems to put psychological understandings of self beyond question in all domains.

In chapter three, I investigate the use of a particular psychological concept that is understood in natural scientific terms. I argue that the concept of personality is generally understood, both within academic psychology and in the popular media, as a category of individual difference that can be Objectively assessed through the use of psychological tests that establish a person’s character in terms of underlying Objective dimensions. Drawing upon DP, I investigate how the term ‘personality’ is used in clinical psychological therapy. I adopt DP as a methodology that utilises EM as a critical approach to scientific psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter et al., 1993). I suggest from my analyses of the categorical term ‘personality’, that the term ‘personality’ is a useful device for a therapist to employ in managing an ongoing dispute between a couple in a therapeutic interaction.

Once again, I draw out the larger implications of my analytic descriptions to suggest that the term ‘personality’ is used because it is understood as an Objective natural category by the

\textsuperscript{27} My claim here is not that clinical psychological interactions are the same as ordinary conversations, but rather that, using the method of EM/CA, I can only attend to the ordinary aspects of the interaction. My empirical chapters display my theoretical understandings and not the ‘factual’ inner workings of clinical psychology. Therefore, I am claiming only that if you start from an assumption that the interaction is ordinary, then all you ‘see’ in the empirical data is ordinariness.
participants in the therapy session. Understanding the term ‘personality’ as an Objective scientific psychological type provides a means by which clinical psychologists can claim knowledge and insight about clients, which they may not know about themselves or each other. This larger implication goes beyond what I can substantiate using descriptions from my DP perspective; but it nevertheless highlights that I am using a different theoretical understanding of personality to the participants in the therapy session. In chapter three, I realise that I too have a theoretical orientation to social interaction, because DP and EM are theories.

If I continue to assume that a theoretical lens distorts social practices, I am presented with two equally unsatisfactory positions; objectivism and relativism. On the one hand, I can maintain that the empirical data does speak for itself. On the other hand, I seem to be stuck within my own theoretical understandings, which have no relation to the social world. I could continue empirical research, in order to substantiate one interpretation of clinical psychological therapy with more empirical data. Alternatively, I could state that anything can be said of the empirical data – it just depends upon your particular interests or concerns – which leaves me with no way of substantiating my claims. When the empiricist assumption upon which my project is based, following from EM, is pushed to its limits, I can either adopt an Objectivist position that one action, in one setting, at one time, can be understood in one way, or I can adopt a relativist position which suggests that anything can be said, but nothing can be substantiated.

Hence, my adoption of EM, with its stated avoidance of theory as part of its aim to investigate actual practice, leaves me with two equally problematic positions, leading me to understand

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28 For a similar claim see Martyn Hammersley’s (2003a, pp. 764-765) article ‘Conversation analysis and discourse analysis: Methods or paradigms?’.

29 I am not saying that either of these positions are held by EM informed researchers; rather I am showing the position of EM when take to its reduction ad absurdum. Here, I am drawing upon Husserl’s reflections upon the problem of knowledge in ‘Lecture I’ of The Idea of Phenomenology here. Husserl (1999 (1902/03), p. 16) writes, ‘once reflection on the relation between knowledge and the object is awakened, abysmal difficulties open up. Knowledge, the thing taken most for granted in natural thinking, suddenly stands before us as a mystery’.
that the natural scientific interpretation of human experience is not limited to quantitative psychological methods of investigation. The divide between qualitative and quantitative methods in the discipline of psychology does not seem to present an option between non-scientific and scientific methods respectively; rather, both qualitative and quantitative methods seem to presuppose the Objective natural scientific observer and the importance of empirical data. In addition, examining the practices of natural science informed clinical psychologists does not allow me to investigate the actual problems with the natural scientific interpretation of human experience, as I had presupposed. The problem with natural science cannot be addressed through an empirical approach because it is the exclusive focus upon empirical data that leads me to perpetuate the problems associated with the natural scientific attitude. It is not enough to go back to Garfinkel and Sacks’s original writings, as Lynch and Bogen (1994) suggest, to address the problem with natural scientific methods of investigation, because EM presupposes the same Objective standpoint for which I have criticised quantitative psychological methods. Rather, it is necessary to look at Husserl’s phenomenological writings in order to rethink the relation between the theoretical attitude and the life-world, because bracketing out the theoretical attitude in our investigations of social interaction is not possible and, in fact, the atheoretical perspective is the Objective standpoint. In the second part of my thesis, then, I move away from examining clinical psychology, and I trace EM back to Husserl’s phenomenology in order to address and understand the problems I have encountered with the EM-informed approach to research I have adopted.

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30 As mentioned in footnote 8, page 4, there are different approaches to qualitative methods with different understandings of how to examine empirical data. Although I do not claim that all qualitative methods have the same problems that I am pointing to in EM informed DP, I do wish to bring into question the widespread reliance upon empirical data in all forms of qualitative methodology in the discipline of psychology. However, throughout my thesis I will continue to specifically talk about EM informed DP.

31 For a discussion on the atheoretical perspective and the Objectivist standpoint see John Shand’s (2009) article ‘Limits, perspectives and thought’.
Part Two: A Phenomenological Critique of EM-informed Discursive Psychology

Science has become the authority in every realm; we could no longer exist without it. Yet reason, its foundation, no longer attracts us, no longer appears to us as the key to the cosmos. Men are turning to something different, to action which casts off reason’s yoke (Patočka, 1976, p. 224).

In the second part of my thesis, I argue that Husserl’s historical analyses of the problem of knowledge in the natural sciences are relevant to my analyses of clinical psychological therapy, because Husserl’s work applies to EM-informed DP. Garfinkel’s appropriation of Husserl’s critique of science overlooks the most significant contribution that Husserl made in his analyses of the life-world. Husserl’s analyses of the life-world require the theoretical attitude, so that we can critique the natural scientific interpretation of human experience that has become the sedimented interpretation of the life-world in our historical situation. For Husserl (1970 (1935), 2001 (1913), 2008 (1906/07)), there is an important distinction to be made between the natural scientific attitude, which is a particular theoretical framework, and the theoretical attitude, which underpins all theoretical frameworks. According to Husserl (1970 (1935)), it is only through analysing the historical life-world through the theoretical attitude that we can begin to understand the natural scientific interpretation of human experience.

In chapter four, I outline how DP, which draws upon EM, conflates the pure theoretical attitude with the normative natural scientific attitude and, hence, seeks to avoid the theoretical attitude altogether. I argue that the theoretical attitude is necessary in any investigation into the life-world, because otherwise we do not question the assumptions that underpin our theoretical approach and, hence, lose sight of the life-world once again. My central aim in chapter four is to argue for the importance of the theoretical attitude as a mode of critique through which we can bring into question the natural scientific attitude.32

32 I mainly draw upon Husserl’s arguments presented in the ‘Prolegomena to Pure Logic’ in Logical Investigations (2001 (1913)) to make my argument in this chapter, as well as ‘The Vienna lecture: Philosophy and the crisis of European humanity’ (‘The Vienna lecture’), (1970 (1935)).
In chapter five, I proceed by adopting the theoretical attitude as a mode of bringing into question the natural scientific attitude through historical analyses and argue for a difference between empirical data and lived experience. In this chapter, I broadly trace Husserl’s understanding of the historical development of the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude.33 Following from this, I argue that both statistical personality psychology and DP, following the adoption of the CA method of transcription, proceed from empirical data that is indirectly mathematised (Husserl, 1970 (1952), p. 34), and not simply generalised from, lived experience. Hence, both statistical personality psychology and CA informed DP lose sight of the life-world and instead study human experience as if it can be explained through Objective formal properties of mind or language respectively.34

In chapter six, I attend specifically to the life-world as an intersubjectively constituted human world of shared meaning, following Husserlian phenomenological philosophy. I argue that an important reason why EM cannot be a critical approach, and cannot clarify the use of natural scientific methods in psychology, is that Garfinkel empiricises the life-world. I explore an important difference between Garfinkel’s and Schütz’s notion of common sense knowledge. While for Garfinkel (1967a, p. 31) commonsense knowledge is only the unquestioned background to everyday affairs, for Schütz (1970, p. 271; emphasis added) common sense knowledge is the ‘unquestioned but always questionable background’ to everyday affairs. Drawing upon Husserl’s writings, Schütz (1970, pp. 53-56) argues that analyses of the life-world require the theoretical attitude. Therefore, I argue that EM does not offer an alternative to the use of natural scientific methods within the discipline of psychology, nor allow for a critique of the natural scientific interpretation of human experience, because it is based upon the unquestioned sedimented natural scientific attitude.

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The Problem with the Natural Scientific Interpretation of the Life-World: The Crisis of Meaning

We all start out as dogmatists in one way or the other; ... One’s first reaction against this, triggered off by inescapable experience of many dogmas, all of which claim to possess the truth, is scepticism: the conclusion that there is no such a thing as truth ... The critical position stands against both of these. It recommends itself by its modesty. It would say: ‘Perhaps men [sic], though they have a notion, an idea, of truth for regulating their mental processes, are not capable, as finite beings, of the truth. ... Meanwhile, they are quite able to inquire into such human faculties as they have been given—we do not know by whom or how, but we have to live with them. Let us analyse what we can know and what we cannot’ (Arendt, 1989, pp. 33, italics in original).

In concluding my thesis, I suggest one key problem with the natural scientific interpretation of human experience: it leads us to a crisis of meaning in our current historical situation (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 5-7). The natural scientific method, with its ideal of the Objective observer and the ideal aim of establishing a universal understanding of nature – including human nature, in the case of psychology – empties the life-world of the meaning it has for us. The meaning of the life-world cannot be established through an Objective standpoint: the meaning of the life-world is intersubjectively constituted by us (Husserl, 1970 (1952), p. 108; Patočka, 1989 (1971), p. 223). We can know the world in which we live because it is our world, but we cannot establish, Objectively, certain knowledge about the world in which we live from a singular perspective, because we are finite human beings (Arendt, 1978, p. 38; Husserl, 2001 (1913), p. 120). Our ability to meaningfully talk about things is based upon our lived experience of the world in which we live and the idea of theory (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), p. 46). In order to bring into question the natural scientific interpretation that strips our lives of meaning, we require the theoretical attitude to appreciate and grasp the historical character of the life-world (Husserl, 1970 (1935)).

Through a failed attempt to replace the adoption of natural scientific methods by psychology with an alternative ‘non-scientific’ method, I have realised that the natural scientific interpretation of human experience is a much larger problem than scientific psychology. We cannot find an alternative to the natural scientific interpretation in our historical situation, because there is currently no alternative available (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 272). Instead, we
need to regain the importance of our reasoning capacity and our lived experience, which 
grounds the natural scientific attitude but has been destroyed by it (Adorno, 2001 (1965), p. 3; 
Husserl, 1970 (1935), pp. 294-295). Thinking is founded upon our meaningful dialogue with 
others. Hence, to bring into question the natural scientific attitude is to think about the 
historical life-world; a world of shared meaning that is passed down to us, and shared with 
others like ourselves.

**Limitations to My Research Project**

In the first part of my research project I uncritically adopted ethnomethodology as an 
alternative to, and critique of, quantitative research methods used in psychology. My uncritical 
adoption of ethnomethodology led to two main problems; one of which I address in my thesis 
and one of which I do not. Firstly, in understanding ethnomethodology as an applied 
phenomenology, I misinterpreted Husserl’s phenomenological project which becomes the 
subject of the second part of my research project. Secondly, through conducting an 
ethnomethodological investigation of clinical psychology in order to understand the practices 
of clinical psychology more concretely as they happen rather than how they are theoretically 
described, I simplify the theoretical discussions of clinical psychology and reinstate my original 
prejudices about clinical psychology in my description of the actual practices of therapy. 
Correcting my simplified discussion of clinical psychology would require a separate research 
project because it would require an investigation of the history of clinical psychology and the 
nuances in the arguments presented concerning clinical psychological therapy by practitioners. 
Due to my struggle with the methodological orientation to research, my thesis became a thesis 
on method and my investigations of clinical psychology became a working example of my 
methodological approach. My thesis does not engage with the nature, definition, practice or 
theory of clinical psychology; clinical psychology as it is discussed in this thesis is no more than 
the example of my failed methodological approach. My methodological approach to
researching clinical psychology fell short of actually talking about clinical psychology because my question concerning clinical psychology could not be answered by adopting an ethnomethodological approach. However, I do continue to talk about clinical psychology throughout the first part of the thesis and, hence, before introducing my empirical investigations I would like to clarify the definition of clinical psychology that I adopt.

Throughout the first part of my thesis, I adopt the definition of clinical psychology as the scientist-practitioner model because it is the definition that was agreed upon at the inception of clinical psychology as a professional title.\(^{35}\) The scientist-practitioner model of clinical psychology is that a clinical psychologist should be both a scientist, in that they draw upon the results of psychology, and a practitioner, in that they are engaged in working with people.\(^{36}\) The definition of the model of clinical psychology as the scientist-practitioner model is incredibly broad and, hence, ever since this model was proposed at the Boulder conference in 1949, how the scientist-practitioner model should actually be applied in clinical settings has been hotly debated.\(^{37}\)

In addition to debates within clinical psychology about exactly what constitutes the scientist-practitioner model, some clinical psychologists argue against the scientist-practitioner model being the most appropriate model for clinical psychology. Clinical psychologists, such as Craig Newnes (2004), Dorothy Rowe (1988), George Albee (2000) and Jeffrey Masson (1988), argue that clinical psychology should not be based upon the model of science. While Masson (1988) famously argues against clinical therapy per se, Newnes, Rowe and Albee argue that clinical psychology should be based upon a different model. Newnes (2004) argues that clinical

\(^{35}\) See Raimy (1950) for the proceedings of this conference.

\(^{36}\) See Raimy (1950) for this definition. See Shakow (1939, 1942) for the original version of this definition. See Shapiro (1967) for an updated version of this definition.

\(^{37}\) For example see the special issue on the Boulder Conference (Albee, 2000; D. B. Baker & Benjamin, 2000; Benjamin & Baker, 2000; Nathan, 2000; Peterson, 2000; Routh, 2000; Stricker, 2000). Also see O’Sullivan and Quevillon (1992). For a more recent discussion see Baker, McFall and Shoham (in press). For a discussion of the scientist-practitioner model in the Australian context see Martin (1996).
psychology could be a place in which we could counteract the medicalisation of human emotions. Rowe (1988) argues that clinical psychologists can provide a promising alternative to psychiatry that relies upon talking to people rather than prescribing medications. Albee (2000) argues that clinical psychologists should adopt a social model that addresses people as social beings rather than as people with diagnosed problems. However, in the first part of my thesis I do not attend to the arguments presented by these authors as I am interested in the literature that argues for clinical psychological therapy being a place where people can receive scientifically researched treatments for their ills. I am interested in the scientist-practitioner model precisely because I am concerned with investigating whether there is evidence of this model of clinical psychology being used within the actual practices. I do indeed find that the scientist-practitioner model, at least in regards to finding evidence for the natural scientific attitude being adopted within clinical psychological therapy, but, as I acknowledge, my findings do not justify my view of clinical psychology they only reveal my original prejudice towards clinical psychology.

Hence, before I commence my discussion of my empirical findings, I would like to state that my adoption of the scientist-practitioner model as the only model of clinical psychology that I discuss runs the risk of running together several heterogeneous approaches into one seemingly homogenous group. In addition, only discussing a theoretical model of clinical psychology does not give due credit to, or acknowledgment of, the way individual therapists work with particular clients. However, such a simplification of clinical psychology to one model is inevitable given the concern in my thesis is psychological methods and not clinical psychological therapy.
In Summary

In moving from the introduction of the thesis to my empirical chapters I would like to quote a passage from Albert Einstein (2009, p. 300), because the sentiment of the quote captures the experience of doing empirical research:

If you wish to learn from the theoretical physicist anything about the methods which he [sic] uses, I would give you the following piece of advice: Don’t listen to his [sic] words, examine his [sic] achievements. For the discoverer in that field, the constructions of his [sic] imagination appear so necessary and so natural that he [sic] is apt to treat them not as the creation of his [sic] thoughts but as given realities.

In my experience of conducting empirical investigations of clinical psychology, I did not attend to the theoretical basis of my own methodological practices – how I arrived at the claims I make about the empirical data or my own interests in examining therapy – because I was so focused on getting the description ‘right’. It was only in reflecting upon the analytic descriptions given in each of the chapters that I began to grasp the problems with EM, CA and DP, which I attend to at the conclusion of each chapter. In doing the actual analysis, I was treating the recorded therapy sessions as a ‘given realities’ that I was closely and painstakingly, ‘factually’ describing. By way of introducing my analytic chapters: in my empirical descriptions of clinical psychological interactions, which I present in chapters one, two and three, I want to give the reader an insight into how EM descriptions are produced, through showing what I have ‘achieved’ through adopting this approach.
PART ONE: Analytic Descriptions of Clinical Psychology
Chapter One: A Conversation Analytic Investigation of the Unique Context of Clinical Psychological Talk-In-Interaction

Overview
As I have outlined in my introduction, in this chapter I will draw upon ethnomethodologically (EM) informed research to examine clinical psychological interactions. However, before proceeding to introduce the conversation analytic (CA) approach to research that I adopt in this chapter, which stems from the EM tradition, I will first address the central problem that my three analytic chapters present. Due to my empiricist approach to research, and my avoidance of theory, in many of the claims that I make in the first part of my thesis there is an unavoidable circularity. For example, in this chapter, I simultaneously assert that the breaking of the conversational maxim to ‘talk for oneself’ by therapists is a recurrent observable occurrence in therapeutic interaction and that this maxim explains the observations that I make about the empirical data. However, the analytic descriptions of clinical psychological data presented in this chapter, and chapters two and three, are crucial for demonstrating the method of conversation analysis (CA), ethnomethodology (EM) and discursive psychology (DP). It is only through engaging with the CA, EM and DP literature and conducting an investigation based upon these three approaches to research that I can illustrate that I have not misunderstood the method. Instead, there is a much deeper problem with the empirical

38 I am using Elliot Sober’s (2008, p. 130) definition of empiricism. The claim that EM, CA and DP are an empirical approach to research is not particularly contentious (Edwards & Potter, 1993; Maynard & Clayman, 2003; Schegloff, 1996; ten Have, 1997). What is contentious is what sort of empirical approach CA, EM and DP can be considered to be. As Michael Lynch and David Bogen (1994) note of CA, ‘conversation analysis is not garden-variety empiricism, nor should its atheoretical posture simply be written-off as naive realism’.

39 This draws upon Gene Lerner’s (1996) notion that there is a conversational maxim to ‘talk for oneself’ in everyday conversation. I will discuss Lerner’s conversational maxim to talk for oneself in detail once I have introduced the CA literature.
methods; which highlights that the natural scientific interpretation of the human world is the Objectified interpretation of the life-world in our current historical period. I will develop this argument in the second part of my thesis on the basis of my three empirical chapters.

**The Asymmetry in Therapists’ and Clients’ Speaking Positions Within Clinical Psychological Interaction**

In this chapter, I will use conversation analysis (CA) as a form of EM research that is suited to the conversational data that I am analysing. Whereas EM does not necessarily use recorded conversational data or focus upon talk-in-interaction alone, conversation analysts exclusively focus upon talk-in-interaction and use video or tape recordings of social interaction for their investigations (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 176). For my analyses of clinical psychological interaction, I start from tape recordings of therapeutic talk-in-interaction. Hence, I am focusing exclusively upon the conversational methods that occur within the setting of clinical psychology. CA and EM are intertwined forms of research and have a shared intellectual history, but there is a lot of debate between and within the two different approaches to research (Maynard & Clayman, 2003). At the end of the chapter, I will address some important differences between CA and EM as they pertain to my research project.

I will argue that the therapists break the conversational maxim to talk for oneself, as their role requires them to talk about the client and not themselves. However, in order to achieve entitlement to talk about a co-present other, therapists largely draw upon the same methods found in mundane conversation. The purpose of this chapter is to reveal that therapists do manage their right to talk on behalf of a client, and to show how therapists and clients collaboratively accomplish this task, in order to demonstrate that breaking the conversational maxim to talk for oneself is an organisational feature of therapeutic conversation.
According to the ethnomethodological conversation analytic (EM/CA) tradition, the social world is best studied by being a member of the social world and social order is understood as being co-produced, through members accountably displaying the order by which their actions can be recognised by other members (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 173). An action’s accountability is not merely produced in isolation from other members’ accountable actions; rather, accountability is also always reflexive\(^40\) to what has come before in the talk and foreshadows some relevant next action (Garfinkel, 1967b; Schegloff, 2007a, pp. 1-3). As such, the formulation of another member’s action – where one member gives a description of what another member has just said or done – is a mundane and prevalent part of how members order the social interaction of which they are a part (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970). In simpler terms, in social interaction we are constantly describing our own and others’ actions, and in the descriptions we give of others’ actions we are also displaying our interpretation of those actions. To state that clinical psychological interaction is a place in which participants\(^41\)

\(^{40}\) ‘Reflexivity’ is one of the defining features of members’ actions according to Garfinkel (1967b). ‘Reflexivity’ refers to the fact that members’ methods are always contingent, as does ‘indexicality’ (Garfinkel, 1967b). More specifically, ‘reflexivity’ refers to the linking of one member’s account with another member’s account, where the second members’ account displays this members’ understanding of the first member’s account. Lynch (2000, p. 33) defines the EM notion of reflexivity as; ‘the reflexivity of accounts implies interpretation – expressing, indicating or recognizing meaning – but, more than that, it alludes to the embodied practices through which persons singly and together, retrospectively and prospectively, produce account-able states of affairs’. The indexical feature of members’ actions refers to the fact that they are always indexed to the context in which they occur and, more specifically, actions cannot be substituted for ‘objective expressions’ and, if members’ ‘indexical expressions’ are substituted for ‘objective expressions’ it ‘is always accomplished only for all practical purposes’ (Garfinkel, 1967a, pp. 4-5; emphasis in original). The ‘accountable’ feature of actions is another central notion in EM (Garfinkel, 1967b). The ‘accountability’ of an action refers to the fact that members’ methods display the order by which an action can be made sense of by other members. Garfinkel (1967a, p. 1) states; ‘when I speak of accountable my interests are directed towards matters as the following. I mean observable-and-reportable, i.e. available to members as situated practices of looking-and-telling’. According to Garfinkel (1967b), the ‘accountability’, ‘reflexivity’ and ‘indexicality’ of members’ actions indicate that members’ methods are observable to all, because the order is displayed in the practices themselves. These three EM concepts are also central to CA and DP. However, often the debates between Garfinkelian EM and other research approaches that adopt EM, centre around the misinterpretation of the concepts of ‘accountability’, ‘reflexivity’ and ‘indexicality’ (for example see Pollner, 1991).

\(^{41}\) Conversation analysts’ usually use the term ‘participants’ to refer to the people who are interacting in talk-in-interaction (Schegloff, 1984, p. 37), whereas ethnomethodologists generally refer to people in social interactions as ‘members’ (Garfinkel, 1967b). ‘Participants’ and ‘members’ both refer to the same notion – that people can be investigated without invoking mental states or theoretical concepts – and, hence, I use the terms interchangeably (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 173). Not all conversation
interpret, or give accounts of, each other’s descriptions is not a contentious claim within the EM/CA tradition, because this is a prevalent feature of all talk-in-interaction (Sacks, 1995b, pp. 72-80; Schegloff, 1995, p. xlix, 2007a, pp. 1-3). Hence, to claim that there is something specific about how interpretations are made in clinical psychological therapy, I first need to show that there is something unique about the social interaction that occurs in a clinical psychological setting; and that it is oriented to as relevant by the participants themselves.

In the CA literature – similar to the EM understandings of social order that I have outlined in my introduction – in order to investigate the precise details of talk-in-interaction, analysts\textsuperscript{42} must not draw upon their own unexamined theoretical concepts (Schegloff, 1995, pp. xlix-l). Theoretical concepts are seen by conversation analysts to gloss over the actual details that are available in the talk itself (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970). For my investigations into clinical psychological interaction, the CA notion of putting aside one’s own theoretical orientations applies equally to my own understandings of the clinical psychological setting, the literature on therapeutic models and the critical literature on clinical psychology. For example, I could not draw upon my theoretical understandings of cognitive behavioural therapy, any more than I could draw upon the notion of psychological expertise, to make sense of the interaction prior to my empirical investigations. It is not that cognitive behavioural techniques or psychological expertise are not relevant to the interaction, but rather that the relevance of either of these theoretical concepts to ‘members’ in the interaction needs to be demonstrated in the data itself (Schegloff, 1984, p. 37, 2006, pp. 70-71; ten Have, 1997).\textsuperscript{43} Hence, the purpose of this

\textsuperscript{42} Analysts would agree that the terms are interchangeable: for example see Celia Kitzinger’s (2008, pp. 198-203) article ‘Developing feminist conversation analysis: A response to Wowk’.

\textsuperscript{43} ‘Analyst’ is frequently used within the clinical psychological literature to refer to the psychoanalyst, i.e. the therapist. To avoid confusion, when I am referring to the analyst I am always referring to the social researcher and not the therapist who I am analysing.

My understandings of CA as presented here are, in a certain respect, at odds with the CA and psychotherapeutic literature. For example, Anssi Peräkylä and Sanna Vehviläinen (2003, 2007), a key figures in the CA and psychotherapy literature, states that psychoanalytic talk-in-interaction cannot be understood without understanding the psychoanalytic approach to therapy. However, even in the CA and psychotherapeutic literature, the onus is on the conversation analyst to demonstrate the relevance
chapter is to investigate whether there are certain structures of clinical psychological talk-in-interaction observable in the talk itself that mark this institutional setting as different from ordinary conversation.

According to the CA literature, in the case of examining clinical psychological talk-in-interaction there are special difficulties that I face in attempting to avoid theoretical constructions of the clinical psychological interaction prior to investigation. Namely, by choosing a particular setting of talk-in-interaction to investigate, I have already defined my interest prior to proceeding with my investigations. The choice to investigate clinical psychological interaction means, according to CA, that the empirical data is already affected by my analytic interests (ten Have, 1999, p. 133). My analytic influence upon the choice of empirical data does not necessarily result in the consequence that my theoretical understandings of clinical psychology affect the empirical data I am analysing (ten Have, 1999, pp. 131-135). However, it does mean that I need to be especially attentive to choosing and describing the data according to what is relevant to the participants in the interaction and not my own interests (Schegloff, 1997, p. 167; ten Have, 1999, pp. 131-135). In this chapter, I will address the concern that I have chosen and described the interaction on the basis of my own interests in two ways.

Firstly, I will draw upon the broad CA literature, rather than the more specific applied CA literature. In applied CA, an analyst, like myself, wants to investigate how a particular site of institutional talk-in-interaction works (ten Have, 1999, pp. 131-135). There is also an applied CA field that specifically investigates psychotherapeutic interactions (Peräkylä, Antaki, of certain therapeutic techniques for the participants in the therapeutic interaction (Peräkylä, Antaki, Vehviläinen, & Leudar, 2008a).

44 The claim here refers to the CA concept of ‘unmotivated looking’ (Sacks, 1995a, p. 175) which ten Have (1999, p. 120) notes is generally regarded with some suspicion in CA because of the contradiction inherent in the term. However, “unmotivated” examination of naturally occurring interactional materials’, as Schegloff calls it (1996, p. 172), is important to CA investigations. As Schegloff (1996, p. 172) notes, a CA investigation should ‘not [be] prompted by prespecified analytic goals (not even that it be the characterization of an action), but by “noticings” of initially unremarkable features of the talk or of other conduct’.

45 For an anthology of applied CA investigations see Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings (Paul Drew & Heritage, 1992b).
Vehviläinen, & Leudar, 2008b; Peräkylä & Vehviläinen, 2007). Hence, my analyses in this chapter fall within the field of applied CA and, more specifically, within the CA and psychotherapeutic literature. However, I will not draw upon the applied CA or the CA and psychotherapeutic literature, because to choose the specific site of clinical psychological interactions and the literature that attends solely to this site of interaction does not allow me to attend to context as a participant’s concern. To choose the site of clinical psychological interaction and then the matching literature for this institutional setting assumes, prior to investigating, that this is a unique site of talk-in-interaction. Yet, what I wish to show in this chapter is that the context of the clinical psychological setting can be shown in the interaction itself to be of concern to the participants themselves. Hence, I will investigate clinical psychological interaction by drawing upon the wider CA literature, or what has also been called by Paul ten Have (1999, p. 133) the ‘pure’ CA literature, which investigates structures in talk-in-interaction wherever they occur.

Secondly, I will provide an analysis of deviant case in order to demonstrate that I am not attending to my own analytic concerns, but rather to the participants’ concerns and how they co-produce the setting of clinical psychological interaction. Deviant case analysis is central to CA (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 179; Schegloff, 1968, 1984, p. 172). It stems from Garfinkel’s (1967a, pp. 36-38) early breaching experiments, in which he set out to disrupt mundane practices within local settings to make visible the taken for granted, common sense backdrop to everyday affairs (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, pp. 177-182). Deviant case analysis

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46 According to Maynard and Clayman (2003, pp. 180-181), deviant cases are generally attended to in three different ways: they are either explained through the same general pattern originally proposed by the researcher; the general pattern is expanded to fit both the normal and the deviant case; or the deviant case is explained as a break from the general structure of conversation. However, the important aspect of deviant case analysis is that the analyst should aim to account for the deviant case in their analysis and, in doing so should illustrate that they are accounting for the structures in conversation in the participants’ own terms and not through their own analytic framework (Schegloff, 1996, p. 172). For a detailed description of deviant case analysis and its similarities to Garfinkel’s breach experiments see Maynard and Clayman’s (2003, pp. 177-182) article ‘Ethnomethodology and conversation analysis’.
is the analysis of naturally occurring breaches\textsuperscript{47} in the conversation to see how they can be understood through the same general structure of conversation that the researcher is proposing (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 179). Analysing deviant cases in the interactional data demonstrates that the analyst is not accounting for the structures of conversation in their own terms, but is attentive to the participants’ own orientations to structures of talk-in-interaction (Schegloff, 1996, p. 172; ten Have, 1999, pp. 130-131). Ten Have (1999, pp. 130-134) advocates deviant case analysis as one way to overcome the criticism that applied CA analysts only attend to their own interests and not the interests of participants in the interaction.

Conversation analysts understand context in the same way as theoretical models, unless they are observable in the talk-interaction itself, context and theoretical models cannot be used to make sense of the data. CA does not assume that the institutional setting is always relevant to the interaction that takes place within that setting (Schegloff, 1995, pp. xlvii-li, 1997). According to CA, both institutional and non-institutional talk can take place within an institutional setting. Hence, the institutional context is occasioned and accomplished within the interaction (Schegloff, 1991, p. 51). As such, the relevance of the institutional setting to talk-in-interaction within that setting cannot simply be assumed by the analyst. The institutional setting must be oriented to as pertinent by the participants in the interaction in order for the analyst to demonstrate the relevance of the institutional setting to the talk.

\textsuperscript{47} Naturally occurring talk, or naturalistic talk, as it has more recently been called by Potter and Alexa Hepburn (2007, pp. 277-278), is the preferred form of empirical data from CA and DP investigations. Naturally occurring talk, according to CA, is talk that would happen whether the social researcher was present or not (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984, pp. 2-4). Hence, my recordings of clinical psychological interaction are naturally occurring talk because I was not a participant in the interactions that the therapists recorded for me. The preference for naturally occurring talk for CA investigations stems from the requirement that the conversation analyst must not let their own theoretical understandings affect their analytic descriptions of the empirical data (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984, pp. 2-4). If I were apart of the talk-in-interaction that I was analysing, my analytic orientations would be understood to be embedded within the interaction I am analysing. A naturally occurring breach in a conversation is a section of talk-in-interaction that does not seem to follow the general structures found in conversation (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 179). I will come back to the problems with the concept of deviant case analysis in the conclusion of this chapter.
In this chapter, I will demonstrate that the institutional context of clinical psychology can be seen in the talk-in-interaction, and is relevant and consequential for the participants in this setting, because there is an asymmetry between the therapist’s and client’s speaking positions that is observable in the therapeutic talk-in-interaction.

In demonstrating that there is an asymmetry between the therapist’s and the client’s speaking positions in clinical psychological interaction, I will argue that the therapist has the role of formulating the client’s problems, whereas the client is not in a position to formulate either the therapist’s or their own problems. The CA notion of formulation is that when a person gives an account, their interlocutor can provide their own summary, explanation or description of what they are doing as one possible response to the first speaker’s action (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 183; Schegloff, 1995, p. xlix, 1996, p. 172). Hence, I will put forward that the clinical psychological setting is a unique setting because the therapist is allowed to interpret the client’s problems, whereas the client is not allowed to interpret the therapist’s accounts. 48

48 In this sentence I am conflating the CA notion of ‘formulation’ with the concept of interpretation. In CA and EM, ‘formulations’ are understood as a member providing an explicit description of what another member is doing (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970, pp. 353-355). Interpretation is not generally used in CA because it is understood as a psychological explanation of social order (Wowk, 2007, pp. 136-137). I am using interpretation and formulation interchangeably in the sense that a summary or description of what another person is doing in conversation could be seen as an interpretation of another’s actions. There are other EM authors who understand formulation and interpretation as interchangeable (for example see Lynch, 2000; McHoul, 1998; McHoul & Rapley, 2001). However, to understand formulation as interpretation is a problem because it is a very narrow sense of the concept of interpretation. The only interpretation that is seen as relevant, in the sense that I am using interpretation here, is the interpretation made by one member of another member’s action in the social interaction I am analysing. My description of clinical psychological practices is not understood as an interpretation because it is analytic description of the actual accounting practices of the members. To understand my analytic description of members’ practices as an interpretation of clinical psychological interactions was understood by me, at this point in my empirical investigations, as letting my analytic understandings obscure what was actually happening in the talk-in-interaction itself.
understood as relating to the practices of managing a speaking position as Objective. I will extend my argument to claim that, by demonstrating that the therapist manages their accounts as Objective, at least in this respect, the appropriation of the Objective standpoint from the natural sciences by psychologists does play a role in the actual practices of clinical psychology.

I will discuss my contentious claim that I am examining the actual practices through which formulations are managed as Objective in light of the difficulties I have encountered in enacting a CA investigation of clinical psychological interaction. One main concern with the analytic approach taken in this chapter is that conversation analysts, like myself, seem to assume the same Objective standpoint that I am attempting to critique and illustrate in my analysis of the empirical data. As discussed in my introduction, the assumption of the Objective standpoint, in scientific psychological methodology and clinical psychological practice, leads psychologists to understand their judgements as unquestionable, because their assessments of empirical data and client’s difficulties, respectively, are understood to be conducted Objectively. Hence, in assuming an Objective perspective through which to examine clinical psychological interaction, I am putting my own analysis beyond question because I assume that I have no impact upon the observations and descriptions that I make. I will address this concern by drawing upon Lynch and Bogen’s (1994) argument as presented in ‘Harvey Sack’s primitive natural science’.

**Conversation Analysis: A Relevant Review**

Conversation analysis (CA) is a systematic way of investigating talk-in-interaction, and originates in the work of Harvey Sacks. Sacks, much like Garfinkel, was interested in the problem of social order, or more precisely, in Sacks’s (1995b, p. 113) own terms, ‘to construct a machinery that would produce ... occurrences’ found in conversation, in such a way that

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49 Refer to footnote 1, page 1 for an explanation of why I have capitalised the ‘O’ in Objective.
social analysts could describe how utterances in conversation are heard and listened to by participants. Importantly for Sacks (1995b, pp. 113-125), explication of the ‘inference making machine’ used by people to hear and understand utterances needs to be derived from the interactional data. Sacks (1995b, p. 622) states, when describing his approach to research: ‘I have a bunch of stuff and I want to try to see whether an order for it exists. Not that I want to order it, but I want to try to see whether there’s an order to it.’ Hence, CA is the resultant method by which to investigate the order found in everyday talk-in-interaction.

**Turn Taking Allocation**

Emanuel Schegloff (2007a, p. 1) states, when introducing CA, that turn-taking is one of the fundamental organisational features of talk-in-interaction. Sacks, Schegloff and Gail Jefferson (1974) wrote a paper outlining the orderly structure of turn-taking in everyday talk-in-interaction. They demonstrated that there are three normative rules for turn allocation. At the end of a turn-transition relevance place (TRP), the current speaker can select the next speaker, the next speaker can self-select or the current speaker can self-select. If the current speaker opts to continue their turn at talk, at the next TRP the three options for turn allocation are made available again. According to Sacks and colleagues (Sacks et al., 1974), the turn taking allocation system demonstrates that a small number of normative rules can explain the complex phenomenon of how people organise turns at talk. The sequence of turn taking is seen as central in understanding how utterances are heard and understood by members participating in the conversation.

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50 A turn constructional unit (TCU) is simply a unit of language that makes up a turn at talk. TCUs do not have a particular structure and their length can vary from a word to a sentence. A turn can be made up of one or more TCUs. A TRP occurs at the hearable end of a TCU and is the place at which another speaker may opt to take a turn at talk (Sacks et al., 1974). The rules for turn taking are a good example of the circularity that results from the empiricist assumption of CA, which I have pointed to at the beginning of this chapter.
**Adjacency Pairs**

Another aspect of the order found in everyday conversation is adjacency pairs. Adjacency pairs are two turns at talk, where the first turn is completed by one speaker and produces a relevant next turn for the following speaker (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). The pairing of utterances does not happen in a mechanical fashion, such that the first turn causes the second turn to happen; rather the first turn at talk establishes an expected or relevant next turn at talk (Schegloff, 1968). Hence, the sequence of two turns at talk is ordered in such a way that one turn at talk can only be understood in relation to the previous and subsequent turns in a conversation.

One example of an adjacency pair is the summons-answer (S-A) pair. Schegloff (1968) explicates the S-A adjacency pair in his paper on telephone conversation openings. Schegloff demonstrates that the first turn in a telephone conversation is the ringing phone, because it acts as a summons and establishes the relevant next action, which is to answer the phone call. We can see from this example that the first part of an adjacency pair, the summons, makes answering the summons the relevant next action in a conversation.

Although the S-A adjacency pair establishes a normative pattern in conversation, an answer to a summons cannot be predicted from the occurrence of a summons in conversation. Schegloff (1968) explicates in detail why the S-A adjacency pair does not work in a mechanical fashion, such that we can predict the next action from the first action. Usually when the summons is not answered, in the case of telephone conversations, we take the non-response as the non-presence of the call taker. However, if we cannot explain the missing answer to our summons through the call taker not being home, we can then draw upon other resources to make sense of the non-response. For example, we may explain the call taker’s missing answer as a result of them ignoring us or as evidence that they are busy. Consequently, although we can expect a certain next action – an answer to our summons – we cannot predict that an answer will follow in each case of a summons.
Even though adjacency pairs cannot lead to prediction, they are a useful resource for making sense of conversational actions, both for members in the conversation and for the analyst of conversation. The reason that adjacency pairs are useful for making sense of conversational actions is that the missing or unexpected next action can be understood through the normative adjacency pair structure (Schegloff, 1968). In the case of face to face conversations, the S-A adjacency pair has the same normative structure. For example, a child’s not answering the summons of the parent can be accounted for either by the non-presence of the child or, when the child is known to be present, by the child ignoring the parent’s summons. Both the lack of answer from the call taker and by the child to a summons, when they are present, can be understood as ways of avoiding the indication of their presence which, would implicate them in a next action. For example, in the case of the child, the child may deliberately ignore the parent as they are not ready to stop playing and come in for dinner (Schegloff, 1968). In any case, the lack of response to the summons is understood as deficient precisely because the summons establishes the relevant next action as an answer. Therefore, the first part of adjacency pairs creates a normatively expected next action which can be used to make sense of both the expected next action and the unexpected or missing next action.

**Preference Structures**

The preference structure in conversation is another orderly feature of talk-in-interaction that is of importance to CA researchers. There are three important preference structures that have been established in the CA literature. Firstly, and most importantly, Sacks and colleagues (1974) have shown, from investigations into turn taking in conversation, that there is a preference for the minimisation of gaps and overlaps between speakers in conversation. Secondly, Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977) have argued, from investigations into correction in conversation, that there is a preference for self-correction over other correction in talk. Thirdly, Anita Pomerantz (1984) has argued, from investigations into adjacency pairs,
that agreement is preferred over disagreement in conversation. Taken together, for
conversation analysts, these findings show the importance of preference structures in
describing the order found in everyday conversation.

In Sacks and colleagues’ (1974) paper on the allocation of turns in conversation it has been
demonstrated that there is a preference for the minimisation of gaps and overlaps between
speakers’ turns at talk. Sacks and colleagues (1974) noticed that, overwhelmingly, one speaker
talks at a time, such that long pauses and long overlapping utterances are rare in mundane
conversations. They propose that the three normative rules for turn allocation in conversation,
previously described, enable speakers to maintain the minimisation of pauses and overlaps
between speakers’ turns at talk. In addition, they claim that there is also an observable
preferred order to the three normative rules for turn allocation in conversation. The ‘current
speaker selects next speaker’ rule is the most common form of turn allocation, followed by the
next speaker self-selecting to talk next and, finally, the current speaker self-selecting to talk
next (Sacks et al., 1974). Hence, the available methods for turn allocation, and the preferred
order of each of the methods, allow speakers in conversation to maintain the preference for
minimisation of gaps and overlaps, such that only one speaker talks at time (2007a, p. 1;
Schegloff et al., 1977).

Schegloff and colleagues (1977) have demonstrated that there is a preference for a speaker
correcting their own utterance over another speaker correcting their utterance for them.
When a speaker makes a mistake in a turn at talk – for example, they use the wrong name to
refer to someone – more often than not, the speaker who made the error corrects the error in
the same turn at talk. If the speaker does not correct the utterance, the next speaker often
offers the first speaker a chance to correct their own utterance. If the speaker who made the
error does not take up the other initiated correction then the other speaker may correct the
first speaker’s mistake. Schegloff and colleagues (1977) show that there is a preference for self-correcting your own mistakes in conversation over others correcting your mistakes.

Pomerantz (1984) has shown that there is a preference for agreement over disagreement in conversation. According to Pomerantz, the preference for agreement can be seen through looking at the structure of the assessment/second assessment adjacency pair.\footnote{Pomerantz (1984) uses the term ‘assessment’ to refer to participants assessing the event that they are participating in. Pomerantz (1984, p. 57) gives the example of the assessment/second assessment adjacency pair; a participant noting that ‘let’s feel the water. Oh, it...’ is referred to by Pomerantz as the first assessment, and their interlocutor noting in reply ‘it’s wonderful. It’s just right. It’s like a bathtub’, which Pomerantz calls the second assessment.} Pomerantz (1984) shows that assessments are generally followed by agreeing second assessments rather than disagreeing second assessments. She substantiates her claim by showing that a second assessment, that is in agreement with the first assessment generally happens immediately and without pause; whereas a disagreeing second assessment, generally occurs after a pause, uses a formulation marker\footnote{Formulation markers are when an utterance is prefaced with words such as ‘well’, ‘um’, etc. (for example see Bercelli, Rossano, & Viaro, 2008).} and includes an account for the disagreeing assessment given. Pomerantz (1984), from her observations on assessment, puts forward the claim that there is a general preference for agreement over disagreement in talk-in-interaction.

The immediate answer in response to an utterance in a conversation is now generally referred to as a ‘preferred turn shape’ and a delayed or hesitant response to an utterance in a conversation is now generally referred to as a ‘dispreferred turn shape’. The dispreferred and preferred turn shapes have been further established by others, for example in Judy Davidson’s (1984) and Paul Drew’s (1984) work on the invitation/refusal adjacency pair. Like the assessment/second assessment adjacency pair, an acceptance of an invitation has been shown by both Davidson (1984) and Drew (1984) to occur immediately without pause, and a refusal of an invitation has been shown to be delayed and hesitant. From these observations, according to conversation analysts, we can see that there are preferred and dispreferred next
actions to the first part of the adjacency pair, which lends further support to the preference for agreement over disagreement because the preferred next action is generally an agreeing second part of an adjacency pair.

On the basis of the established findings of the general preference for agreement in conversation, and the corresponding finding of preferred and dispreferred turn shapes, other conversation analysts have extended these findings to make broader claims. For example, on the strength of the findings that there is a preference for agreement over disagreement, Celia Kitzinger and Hannah Frith (1999) have claimed that people generally understand a ‘non-verbal no’ as part of their common sense knowledge. Kitzinger and Frith (1999) have demonstrated that participants’ knowledge of preferred and dispreferred turn shapes indicates that people can understand a no, when a no is not said, because they orient to the delay in their interlocutors’ response as a no. From their analytic descriptions, Kitzinger and Frith (1999) have argued that the notion that men do not know when sex is being refused, and that therefore women need to state a clear ‘no’ in order to avoid unwanted sex, is a myth. Once the preference structures have been demonstrated and generally accepted, claims are made on the basis of these findings, rather than seeking to demonstrate the relevance of these preference structures to the talk-in-interaction. However, in keeping with the ‘pure’ CA approach to investigating talk-in-interaction, I will avoid building upon other’s findings in CA and, instead, show how the ‘context-free’ findings of CA are ‘context-sensitive’ and relevant to the specific clinical psychological interactions I am describing (Lerner, 2003).

Turn allocation, adjacency pairs and preference structures found in everyday conversation indicate the importance of sequence in analysing and understanding talk-in-interaction. The allocation of turns at talk and the normative next actions made relevant by adjacency pairs indicate that any conversational action can only be understood in terms of the sequence in which it happens. Furthermore, the preference structures indicate that turn allocation
methods and adjacency pairs have a preferred order to them. One utterance cannot be removed from a conversation and still be understood in the same way as the participants in the conversation understand that utterance, as the context of the utterance has been lost. Each turn in a conversation can only be made sense of in terms of the previous and next turns at talk (H. H. Clark & Wilkes-Gibbs, 1986; Schegloff, 2007a). The conversational context must be intact for an analyst to be able to rigorously examine the methods used by participants in interaction in order to make sense of that interaction.

**Talking for Oneself**

Gene Lerner (1996) draws upon work done in the area of CA to argue that talking for oneself is a conversational maxim. Several papers within the CA literature have demonstrated that participants have epistemic rights and obligations to know their own ‘thoughts’, ‘opinions’, ‘feelings’ and ‘experiences’ (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Lerner, 1996; Sacks, 1984b). Sacks (1984b) suggested in his paper ‘On doing “being ordinary”’ that speakers have asymmetrical rights in terms of describing their experiences versus others’ experiences in conversations. According to Sacks (1984b), speakers have more rights to talk about their own experiences than they have rights to talk about others’ experiences. Pomerantz (1980) discusses the notion that ‘subject-actors’ have rights and obligations to know what they are discussing. Lerner’s (1992) study on collaboratively told stories between two or more co-participants showed that not currently talking co-tellers have rights in conversation to intervene and add detail to the presently speaking co-teller in order to animate what they did and said. Accordingly, Pomerantz’s (1980), Sacks’s (1984b) and Lerner’s (1992) investigations of conversation have demonstrated that speakers have rights to talk about their own experiences and obligations to know about their experiences in talk-in-interaction. Hence, Lerner (1996) has extended these investigations to argue that talking for oneself is generally preferred over talking about a co-present other in conversation.
The rights and obligations for knowledge within conversation are consequential to the structure of conversation. Pomerantz (1980) has shown that participants who have a limited base of knowledge about a topic being discussed will generally present this knowledge hesitantly in the form of a ‘fishing device’ that encourages confirmation by the more knowledgeable other. Schegloff (1988) has shown that topic ownership and authoritativeness is a phenomenon that often requires careful management within a sequence of talk. Lerner (1996) draws on studies of epistemic rights and obligations to argue that ‘talking for oneself’ is a conversational maxim, as overwhelmingly people talk about themselves rather than co-present others.

Talking for Oneself and Talking for Another

Extending Lerner’s (1996) work on the conversational maxim to talk for oneself, I will demonstrate that the therapist’s role in therapy entails that the therapist break the conversational maxim to talk for themself, as they are required to talk about a co-present other. As I will demonstrate in the analytic section of this chapter, the therapist needs to carefully manage their right to speak on behalf of the client. Although the therapist rarely talks about themself within a therapy session, they still orient to the conversational maxim to talk for oneself. Throughout the therapy session the therapist uses a variety of methods to package their formulations of the client, so that their claims about the client come across as relevant and legitimate. When the therapist fails to establish their right to talk about the client, this becomes a trouble source, as the client is able to directly disagree with the therapist. Hence, from the careful management of their formulations about their clients, we can see that therapists have a unique role in therapy because they are in an interaction that requires them to talk about another, while clients talk about themselves.
Analytic Materials

The extracts presented in this chapter are taken from a corpus of data that contains eighteen therapy sessions, as described in my introduction. I draw upon my transcription of all the therapy sessions to choose the data extracts that I present and the analytic observations I make. However, due to limited space I will only present three examples of each of the methods clinical psychologists use to manage their break from the conversational maxim. All extracts have been transcribed according to the Jeffersonian system for transcription (Jefferson, 1984, 2004).

Analysis

Method One: Drawing Upon the Institutional Role and Expert Knowledge

The most obvious way that the psychologist can manage their rights to speak on a client’s behalf is through explicitly referring to their role as a psychologist or to the psychological literature. Referring to their role as a psychologist, or to the psychological literature, is one way that the therapist can explicitly invoke the relevance of the institutional setting to the interaction that is taking place. However, therapists rarely explicitly reference the institutional context in therapeutic interactions. Therapists mainly make explicit the institutional context in the interaction that is occurring when their formulations of the client are controversial or confronting; suggesting that explicitly referencing the institutional context is a last resort. In the first section of my analysis, I will examine three extracts in which the therapist does explicitly reference the institutional context of talk-in-interaction, in order to demonstrate that such a method is generally used when the therapist is providing a controversial formulation of the client.

In the first extract, John, the therapist, and Judy, the client, are discussing Judy’s difficulty with losing weight:
Extract 1: John and Judy Session 1: 15:30-16:00

1. → John: so: in ↑fact your WEIGHT. (1.0) .h psychologically
2. >one psychological explanation< for your weight.=
3. Judy: =mm:
4. (0.6)
5. John: is that ↑it’s actually safe.
6. (0.4)
7. Judy: ↑'yeah''
8. John: that it ↑actually protects you from, (0.6) ↑well:
9. (1.0) almost ↑wanted advances. (0.6) .h >↑but you
10. can’t have< the wanted ↑advances. >because< ↑there
11. were ↑such things in your< ↑environment the
12. ↑temptation would ↑be the*re.
13. (0.2)
14. Judy: ↑m;m:
15. John: ↑to meet a< an e↑motional need that’s not being
16. met. .h >↑but then< ↑that would destabilise the
17. ↑family which you cannot do. .h so you’re: caught.
18. (1.0)
19. Judy: ↑m;m:=
20. → John: =psychologically, (0.4) how ↑trapped do you feel?
21. (1.8)
22. Judy: ↑<ve;ry ↑trapped.>''

John’s explicit invocation of the institutional context in the interaction that is taking place is interesting, as it allows John to legitimately produce a formulation of Judy’s difficulties with her weight (line 1). Although Judy has suggested in her account that being slimmer leads her to more ‘temptations’ earlier in the interaction, the formulation that John provides – that she is trapped because of a dilemma between ‘well almost wanted advances’ and ‘[destabilising] the family’ – could still be seen as controversial (lines 8-17). Introducing the formulation as ‘one psychological explanation’ wards off an uptake of the formulation as controversial as it places the description within an institutional frame of reference and thereby presents the formulation as reasonable and justifiable rather than controversial or illegitimate. Hence,
invoking the institutional context of therapeutic conversation can be useful to therapists in framing a controversial formulation of the client.

In the following extract, John and Judy are discussing her problems in communicating with her partner Adam:

**Extract 2: John and Judy Session 2: 39:30-40:15**

1. John: ↑why do you go.< ((hand clap))
2.  
3. John: ↑tell me >what you want me to do.<
4.  
5. Judy: ↑well I think you should know:. (1.0) I think you be:, >if your< partner’s done something. he should ↓know.
6.  
7.  
8.  
9. John: ↑okay’
10. Judy: ‘hh. ha ha’
11. → John: me (0.4) me the psychologist. >wants to say,<=
12. Judy: ='↑yeah’=
13. John: ‘↑oh where’s that rule written.’=
14. Judy: =heh ha ha ha ha

In the beginning of this extract, Judy is reluctant to answer John’s question (posed earlier in the therapy session) about why she does not like her partner’s question about what he can do to fix the relationship. When Judy does reply she provides an account that John does not want to take up (lines 1-9). Judy proffers her reason for disliking her partner’s question about what he should do to fix the relationship, as a general statement that ‘partners’ should ‘know’ what they have ‘done’ (lines 5-7). John responds to Judy by introducing a “fake” disagreement.

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53 Double quotes, throughout all three analytic chapters, indicate that I am providing an analysts’ gloss of what the participants are doing. For EM/CA, glossing over what a participant is saying is acceptable, as long as you acknowledge that this is what you are doing, because you cannot capture all the details available in the talk in a description. See Garfinkel and Sacks’s (1970) paper ‘On formal structures of practical actions’ for a discussion on glossing practices. The notion that the analyst can indicate when they are glossing, as opposed to carefully describing the actual practices, assumes that it is possible for the analyst to provide descriptions of the empirical data that do not rely upon theoretical concepts. I will
through framing his response in terms of how he would like to respond as a ‘psychologist’ (line 11), which is ‘oh where’s that rule written’ (line 13). Judy responds with laughter (line 14). Hence, we see John manage a delicate disagreement with Judy’s hesitant reply, through invoking his institutional identity.

In the following extract, John and Di are discussing a pattern in Di’s romantic relationships:

*Extract 3: John and Di Session 1: 43:30-44:30*

1. John: =an’ that’s what I think clinging is about. (0.6)
2. .h if you CLING on tightly enough the person can’t
3. turn round to see you’re unloveable.
4. (1.4)
5. → John: I think it’s a psychological position (1.0)
6. → >;and<;it’s=actually in the attachment
7. → <literature.>
8. (0.4)
9. Di: ‘;ye:a(h.)h’

Immediately prior to this extract, John is pursuing an answer from Di as to why she is a ‘clinger’ in relationships. Up until this point in the interaction, Di has resisted John’s formulation of her as a ‘clinger’. Due to the lack of agreement, in this extract John adds to his formulation that he thinks ‘clinging’ is a ‘psychological position’ (line 5) and that his thoughts are supported by the ‘attachment literature’ (line 6). Following John’s explicit reference to his institutional role and knowledge, we see Di move towards agreement (line 9). Here we see the usefulness of drawing explicit reference to an institutional role, as for the first time John starts to acquire Di’s agreement with his controversial formulation of her as a ‘clinger’.

Drawing upon the institutional role of ‘psychologist’, ‘psychological positions’ or ‘psychological literature’ is a method of managing the psychologist’s knowledge that is used infrequently. The infrequency with which this method is employed may be due to the delicate manner with

discuss the assumption, by ethnomethodologically informed researchers, of an atheoretical standpoint through which to describe the social world in the second part of my thesis.

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which authority needs to be managed interactionally (Schegloff, 1988). John, the therapist, generally draws upon ‘psychological’ knowledge directly in presenting a reasonably provocative formulation of the client’s actions. The way in which ‘psychological’ is used within the data reveals that this is a powerful method by which to talk about the client’s experiences because it positions the therapist as a representative spokesperson for psychological knowledge. Drawing on institutional identity and knowledge enables a therapist to produce a controversial formulation of the client’s action in a way that is hard to disagree with directly because, by rights, the therapist is more knowledgeable about psychological topics than the client. However, the explicit use of institutional expertise to manage their right to talk about a co-present other is rare in the therapy sessions I have analysed. More delicate means of managing their right to talk about a client are much more frequently used. One of the most common ways for therapists to manage their institutional identity is through claiming their formulation of clients’ difficulties as merely their own opinion.

**Method Two: Presenting Formulations in Terms of ‘My View’**

The most common method that therapists use to manage their claims about a co-present other is through hedging their formulation with something along the lines of ‘in my view’ or ‘from my perspective’. While prefacing formulations of clients’ troubles by invoking their

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54 This is only one explanation; another explanation could be that the role of therapist is ‘omnirelevant’ to the interaction (Sacks, 1995b, pp. 515-522). Invocations of the other methods I investigate, such as ‘my perspective’, ‘we’, ‘story-telling’, etc., could be understood as more subtle or implicit means by which the therapist invokes their institutional identity. The infrequency of the therapist’s explicitly referring to their institutional role may be because it is unnecessary in most cases, but this does not change the claim I am making here. The notion of omnirelevance of the institutional context is one that is controversial within the CA literature, because it can be used to gloss over the detail in the talk-in-interaction, rather than provide a description of the institutional character of talk-in-interaction (Schegloff, 1995, pp. xlvi-xlviii). In this chapter, I am attempting to demonstrate that the roles of the therapist and client are omnirelevant to the talk-in-interaction, through careful description of the detail found in therapeutic interaction. Hence, to jump ahead and suggest that all the methods implicitly invoke institutional context would disallow the careful description of the therapeutic talk-in-interaction. I will avoid suggesting that the therapist is subtly invoking the institutional role in the extracts, in favour of carefully describing how the roles of the therapist and client can be demonstrated as relevant to talk-in-interaction, through the methods by which therapists manage their rights and obligations to formulate clients’ difficulties.
institutional role or knowledge helps to present controversial formulations of clients’
difficulties, hedging their account as merely their own ‘opinion’ or ‘view’ helps to accomplish
agreement in delicate interactions where the client displays previous disagreement, or obvious
distress, or where a new formulation of the client is being made by the therapist. Hedging their
formulations with something like ‘in my view’ works to soften the therapist’s formulation of
the problem as it presents the account of the problem as one view among many. As such, the
therapist is not claiming to ‘know’ the client’s problem, but only to have an ‘opinion’ on the
matter (Lerner, 1996).

In the following extract, John and Anna are discussing the possibility of Anna leaving her
partner:

Extract 4: John and Anna Session 1: 52:00-52:30

1. → John: ↑ my view=of (0.6) ↑ making (1.0) ↑ a statement like
2. ↑ that >is< (1.2) > if you’re gonna ↑ say it. you’re
3. gonna have to be prepared to do it.<
4. Anna: ↑ yeah I know:. hh
5. John: > it its< ↑ not one you can do as a, ”> you know” in
6. poker you bluff:. hh .hh to ↑ see what > their gonna<
7. (.) do. > and then you can always< FOLD.
8. Anna: ↑ ye:a*h: hhh
9. John: > but you can’t< FOLD on this one.
10. Anna: ↑ no:” hhh

At the beginning of this extract, John hedges his account in order to present his delicate
suggestion about what it means for Anna to say to her partner that if he wants to leave he can
(lines 1-3). In addition, ‘a statement like that’ (lines 1-2) packages his view as not directly
relevant to Anna’s statement, but to statements of the type that Anna has presented.
Prefacing his account with ‘my view’ and generalising to refer to a type of statement enables
John to delicately package his advice that Anna should not state that she is happy for her
partner to leave, if she does not feel that way. In doing so, John softens his advice to Anna, and is successful in garnering her agreement (line 8).

In the next extract, the therapist, Bell, presents her formulation of Sue’s problem in her relationship with Carl:

Extract 5: Bell and Sue Session 1: 26:30-27:30

1. → Bell: ↑u::m >but< what I: see as be:ing, (0.6) the
2. biggest: (0.2) ’>er< u::m:’ (0.6) .pst (0.4) the
3. biggest hur:dle ’>an’ an’< you: ↑just said it. is’
4. h you ↑are (0.4) S:O: ↑awa*re:, (0.6)
5. Sue: ’↑ye:[ah:’
6. Bell: [’>you know<’ you are SO: responsible. ↑so e*r
7. ↑u:*m:, <↑involved.> (0.4) h an’ ↑Carls: no:t
8. ↑anywhere< ↑near: that. (0.2) h ↑u::m, ’>you
9. know<’ he’s very ’<laid back.’ very relaxed, very
10. ↑u:m, (1.4) ‘me*r’ i*nto himSELF.
11. (0.2)
12. Sue: ’↑ye[ah (cos)
13. Bell: ’(I guess)’
14. Sue: ↑ye:ah:=
15. Bell: .hhh (0.4) UM: hhh ↑you know< if we can get him to
16. come ↑up a bit. ↑you al:so need to,=
17. Sue: =’I know:’=
18. Bell: =to to step ↓down a bit.

Bell, Sue and Carl have attended at least three therapy sessions\(^{55}\) together prior to this session, where only Bell and Sue are present. Sue has persistently disagreed with Bell’s formulation of the problems in her relationship with Carl. Here Bell prefaces her formulation of the problem with ‘what I see’ (line 1). By doing so, Bell delicately hedges her formulation as only one way of viewing the problem. In addition, Bell is careful to frame the account in terms that are

\(^{55}\) I have recordings of the three previous sessions with Bell, Sue and Carl. However, it is evident that there have been previous sessions before Bell started recording the sessions for me.
amenable to Sue: Sue is ‘so aware’ (line 4) and ‘so responsible’ (line 7), whereas Carl is ‘very laid back’, ‘very relaxed’ (line 10) ‘very ... into himself’ (lines 11-12). Bell goes on to state that Carl needs to ‘come up a bit’ (line 17) before formulating what Sue needs to do, which is to ‘step down a bit’ (line 19). Bell’s careful packaging of her formulation of Sue’s difficulties with Carl and her advice to Sue is successful in accomplishing shared agreement, as can be seen from Sue’s indication of agreement in lines 13, 15, and 18.

The subsequent extract occurs at the beginning of a session in which the therapist, John, and Ali are discussing how Ali has been attempting to attend to what underlies her feeling of anger:

Extract 6: John and Ali Session 1: 1:30-2:00

1. Ali: ‘>well it’s it’s<’ tryna think of well: ›what am I› angry about.
2. John: ›yes. >so so< ›what has, triggered the .hh sense of anger. and ›what is it us:ually‹
3. (1.4)
5. → John: ›yes: ›good. (0.2) ›good. (0.4) cos ›that’s my take. (0.2) .hh ›is that when you< ›get ›h:ur:t‹.

In the extract above, John uses ‘my take’ to preface his agreement with Ali’s account of her anger. Ali explains that she is trying to think through what her ‘anger’ is ‘about’ (lines 1-2), which she thinks is a feeling of being ‘hurt’ (line 6). John agrees with Ali stating ‘yes good good’ (line 7). John follows up his agreement with Ali by extending her explanation with his own formulation of her anger (lines 7-8). John uses ‘my take’ to introduce his formulation in order to demonstrate that it is merely a continuation of Ali’s own account of her anger.

The previous three extracts show that therapists often preface their comments about clients’ accounts with words such as ‘view’, ‘take’ or ‘see’, which makes explicit that their comments are from their own perspective. Therapists are able to manage their rights to speak about clients in this way, as people are entitled to their ‘opinions’ about others (Lerner, 1996).
Importantly, presenting formulations and assessments in this way enables the therapist to garner agreement from the client on delicate matters.

**When Therapists Do Not Preface Their Account with ‘In My View’**

The following extract demonstrates what happens when therapists do not hedge their formulations of the client with something like ‘in my view’, nor in any way attend to managing their break from the conversational maxim to talk for oneself. When therapists do not hedge their formulations in delicate interactions, this provides a place where clients can legitimately disagree with the therapist, because they have rights to know their own experience better than the therapist. The following extract presents a deviant case where the therapist does not hedge their formulation of the client, and demonstrates the need for therapists to carefully manage their rights to speak about clients.

In extract seven, the therapist is attempting to formulate Sue and Carl’s relationship troubles in terms of difference, through asking them about their different personalities:

*Extract 7: Bell, Sue and Carl Session 1: 23:00-23:45*

1. Bell: so::, (.). <i:n: one sentence> (1.8) >some up< ↑your <personality>.  
2.  
3. Sue: u::m: .pt hhh. ’one sentence’ (0.8) u::m: (0.6) ↓↑like t’ be around lots- I re- I: like to be around a lot of people. an::d:, (0.6) ↓↑enjoy↓ (1.3) ↓↑enjoy↓ (.h) having >a lot of< (.h) communication with lots-=, lots of people. ’like I’ (.h) is that ↓↑enjoy↓ (.h) what you mean?=  
4.  
5. → Bell: =yep, .hhh an::d you’re a planner. you fit in as many tas::ks: (0.2) or as many en::gements (0.2) as possible.  
6.  
7. → Sue: >yeah but< I: don’t ↑like↓ I don’t really think I do that ↑but< it’s funny that Carl’s picking that out ‘cause I: I really (.h) DON’T plan ↓any::more::
In this extract, Bell does not preface her extension of Sue’s description of her ‘personality’ with any type of hedge. Bell asks a question about ‘personality’ (lines 1-2) and Sue answers the question (lines 3-8). Bell responds to Sue by adding directly to Sue’s list of her own attributes. Bell adds that Sue is ‘a planner’ (line 9). Sue immediately and directly disagrees with Bell’s additional attributes, stating that she does not ‘plan anymore’ (line 14). Additionally, Sue brings Carl into the dispute stating ‘it’s funny that Carl’s picking that out’ (lines 13-14). In this extract, we see that when therapists do not carefully manage their rights to speak about a client it can lead to a direct disagreement between the therapist and the client. A lack of careful management of rights to speak on behalf of the client by the therapist works against accomplishing agreement.

Method Three: Presenting Comments About Clients in The Form of a ‘Fishing Device’

I shall now attend to other regularly used methods that therapists use to manage their rights and obligations to speak about a client. Therapists can frame their claims about the client as suggestions in order to manage their conversational rights to talk about the client. Pomerantz (1980) demonstrated that in situations where one co-participant has a lesser claim to knowledge about a topic than another co-participant, they often present their knowledge in the form of a question or a suggestion that can be confirmed by the more knowledgeable co-conversationalist. Pomerantz (1980) named these questions/suggestions of knowledge ‘fishing devices’. Presenting new formulations in terms of tentative fishing devices allows the therapist to accomplish a pre-formulation in order to check whether a formulation along the lines they are suggesting would be amenable to the client. Therapists make use of fishing devices in presenting their claims about a client in a way that enables the client to affirm or deny what the therapist is saying about them.
In the following extract, John, the therapist, and Judy are discussing a common basis to Judy’s dual problems of not feeling good about herself and not being able to lose weight:

*Extract 8: John and Judy Session 1: 9:10-9:30*

1. → John: >↑how’d you know? you’re good.<
2. (1.6)
3. Judy: ”cos I get ↑positive feedback.”
4. John: ”↑yes:”
5. (1.0)
6. → John: .h >and< one ↑the issues, ↑about your weight is what.
7. (4.6)
8. Judy: ”I ↑don’t get< any positive feedback.”
9. (0.6)
10. John: >well ↑I’m sure you< do. ..but >you you<
11. [(not as positive)]
12. Judy: [well I DO. ] but not as posi[tive=as]
13. John: [er it ] (0.2)
14. Judy: ↑yeah:
15. John: ↑yeah:
16. Judy: ↑yeah:

John, in this extract, uses a fishing device in order to highlight a connection between two of Judy’s troubles (lines 1 and 6). John asks Judy, ‘how do you know you’re good’ (line 1), to which Judy answers, ‘cos I get positive feedback’ (lines 3). John follows up with a second question, ‘and one the issues with your weight is what’ (lines 6-7), to which Judy answers, ‘I don’t get any positive feedback’ (line 9). In packaging his “insight”, that there is a common link between Judy not feeling good about herself and her weight issues, with two fishing devices, John is able to collaboratively build the account of the link which establishes an agreed upon common ground for two of Judy’s voiced troubles. Here, John uses a fishing device in order to encourage Judy to establish for herself the link between her two difficulties, before John presents his formulation that Judy’s two problems are connected to the same problem of needing positive feedback.
In the following extract, Bell, the therapist, employs a fishing device to put forward her first formulation of Sue’s voiced difficulties in her relationship with Carl, in a tentative way:

**Extract 9: Bell, Sue and Carl Session 1: 16:00-16:30**

1. Sue: >there was just this< one moment >where I just
2. went< “oh no” >this just reminds me< o(h)h
3. la(h)tel(h)y .h ↑what happens with us.
4. → Bell: >↑okay< .h so ↑what I’m <hearing> (0.4) .h ↑is
5. >that it’s< ↑very ea:sy: <for you> t’ (0.2) .pt
6. (0.2)pass: ↑off: (0.6) ↑some↑thing< that you: ↑want
7. to do:. (0.4) >because< er er ↑Carl might, (0.6)
8. say something ↑that you take as being, (1.2)
9. ↑”u(hh)hm: e*r: we’ll” either ↑critical or::, (0.6)
10. ↑that ↑he’s not <interested.> (0.4) ↑so you’ll BLOW
11. off what you want to do. an’ (0.9) ↑make ALLOWANCES
12. for that. ↑↑but< (. ) ↑a ↑bit ↑of ↑resentment ↑in
13. ↑↑the ↑background? ↑am ↑↑I right? am I ↑hearing that
14. ↑↑right?
15. Sue: ↑yeah ↑↑that’s yea:h
16. >probably< ↑yes: cos ↑TEND to do: ↑what I thinks
17. ↑better for ↑everyone fir:st:=
18. Bell: ↑m::↑m::↑m:

In this extract, Bell packages her formulation of Sue between ‘what I’m hearing is’ (line 4) and a fishing device (lines 13-14), in order to delicately proffer her first formulation of the trouble that Sue has just voiced. In line 4 of this extract, Bell begins her formulation with ‘okay so what

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56 Bell’s turn at talk that starts with ‘okay so what I’m hearing’ and ends with ‘am I hearing that right’ can be seen to clearly reference what is discussed in the clinical literature as ‘reflective listening skills’. However, knowing that these utterances are part of the utterances taught to counsellors under the banner of reflective listening skills does not help me describe what is happening in the interaction. As such, I have provided a description of how the utterances are used in this section of the extract. For a CA of active listening skills, which reflective listening skills are part of, and how they are used by therapists to manage their formulations as delicate, see Ian Hutchby’s (2005) article “Active listening”: Formulations and elicitation of feelings-talk in child counselling. For a discussion of reflective listening in the clinical psychological literature see Christine Fuller and Phil Taylor’s (2008) ‘Summarising and reflective listening’. 
I’m hearing is’, which works to pre-emptively package her utterance as merely her ‘hearing’ of what Sue has said. After presenting her delicately produced formulation (lines 4-14), Bell finishes her turn by stating ‘am I right? Am I hearing you right?’ (lines 13-14). By finishing her formulation in this way, Bell allows Sue to confirm or deny whether Bell’s summary is correct. As such, Bell successfully manages her claim to know Sue’s troubles, as can be seen by Sue’s agreement with Bell’s formulation (lines 15-19).

In extract 10, the therapist, John, and Anna, the client, are discussing the similarities between her own romantic relationships and her parents’ romantic relationship:

Extract 10: John and Anna Session 1: 18:00-18:15
1. John: >see=I’m< ↑in<trigued by the fact that °it-° (0.2)
2. → >it- in< some ways. ▶how ▶how much have< you:
3. → replicated your parents’ relationship?
4. Anna: well ↑I know, ↑I know all about that. (.)
5. [pat]terns
6. John: [I- ]
7. Anna: .h FOLLOWING [of ]
8. John: [yep]=
9. Anna: =patterns=
10. John: =>o;kay<=
11. Anna: =BLAH blah BLAH blah BLAH

In the above extract, John uses a fishing device to frame a suggestion that Anna has ‘replicated’ (line 3) her parents’ relationship. In lines 1 to 3, John corrects ‘I’m intrigued by the fact that’ (line 1) to ‘in some ways’ (lines 2) and, finally, to ‘how much have you replicated you parents’ relationship?’ (lines 2-3). In the corrections John downgrades his utterance from asserting that Anna has replicated her parents’ relationship, to asking Anna a question as to whether this is the case or not. We can observe – from Anna’s response to John – that she does not like the suggestion that she is like her parents. Framing a suggestion about Anna in the form of a question does not succeed in warding off a disagreement in this case. We can
see that in cases where the client is likely to disagree with the therapist’s claim about them, putting the claim in the form of a question allows a turn for disagreement.

In the three extracts presented above, I have shown that the therapist can manage their rights to talk about the client through packaging the utterance in the form of a question which awaits confirmation from the client. The use of fishing devices, as demonstrated above, can be used in situations where the therapist is building a new formulation of the problem or where disagreement is likely to occur; as it is a delicate and tentative method that therapists can use to manage epistemic rights to talk about the client.

**Method Four: Employing Relational and General Uses of the Pronoun ’We’**

Another means for therapists to accomplish entitlement to talk about clients is through the use of ‘we’ in formulating clients’ troubles. Lerner and Kitzinger (2007) outline three uses of ‘we’ in conversation. Firstly, ‘we’ can be used to invoke a particular institution or group. Secondly, ‘we’ can be used in a relational sense to invoke the relevance of a relationship between two people and produce them as in agreement. Thirdly, ‘we’ can be used in the general sense to present an account as commonsensical or widely agreed upon. Within the therapeutic setting, therapists often draw upon the second and third uses of ‘we’ to manage their epistemic rights to talk on behalf of their clients, just prior to formulating clients’ problems.

**Relational Uses of ’We’**

In therapy, the relational use of ‘we’ is often used to present formulations as agreed upon by all parties present in the session. In extract eleven, John and Judy are discussing Judy’s relationship with her father:
Extract 11: John and Judy Session 1:19:00-19:30

1. John: >and your< ↑father was?
2. (3.2)
4. (4.0)
5. John: >↑don’t censor yourself ↑just let it come to mind.<
7. John: >↑yeah<
8. (0.8)
9. Judy: ↑u:m:: (2.8) >he< ↑was fun me dad.(0.2) he was
10. ↑controlling, and he was ↑funny, (1.2) ↑but >he
11. was< "oppressive."
13. (1.0)
14. John: >so he was a bit< dangerous.
15. (0.4)
16. Judy: ↑yea:h
17. John: >is that fair?<
18. Judy: ↑yea:h. (.) °probably yeah°
20. Judy: difficult. [↑more than]=
21. John: [difficult ]
22. Judy: =dangerous. [*yeah*]
23. → John: ↑okay ] difficult. (.) so ↑we’ve got
24. → for dad we’ve got, ((note taking)) difficult
25. (1.2) controlling (1.2) and __________.

At the beginning of this extract, John initiates an interactional course of action to choose three words to describe Judy’s father (lines 1-3). From lines 4 to 22, John and Judy collaboratively work up a description of Judy’s father as being ‘controlling’, ‘difficult’ and ‘funny’. In lines 23 to 25, John presents the formulation of Judy’s father that they have co-produced. In this formulation John uses a relational ‘we’ to emphasise the co-produced nature of the list of descriptors, because ‘we’ works to produce John and Judy as aligned.
The next extract occurs towards the end of a session where Bell, the therapist, is formulating the main topics of the current therapy session with Sue and Carl:

*Extract 12: Bell, Sue and Carl Session 3: 39:30-40:30*

1. Bell: "okay" .h so, ↑I think >it it’s< effort >that
2. → 
   that< (0.8) "that we’re talking" about an’ n=no
3. sometimes there’s not going to be ↓anything on that
4. you both wanna go and ↓see: or:, [.h ]
5. Sue: ↓*[m:°]*
6. → Bell: ↓it’s ↓just not going to work. .h >but< what we’re
7. try:ing: to do ↓here: is ↓increase (0.4)
8. Carl: ↓*hm*
9. Bell: ↓↓*communication*. .h >at er< at er< ↓um focused
10. level >and then< HOPEfully increase the incidental.
11. ↓(.) ↓communication> >that can out of< good
12. will. (1.2) "okay" >but it’s< a case of ↓building
13. >up that <good will>. (0.6) ↓and to do↓ that you
14. need some °time°.
15. Sue: °yep () yep°
16. (1.0)
17. → Bell: °okay° .hh so ↓we’re: ↓actually >we’re we’ve<
18. talked ↓about a couple of things here. >one- ↓one<
19. ↓is >the- the< taking it in turns.
20. (2.8)

In the above extract, Bell uses the relational ‘we’ to start to close the therapy session. Bell uses a relational ‘we’ (line 2) to frame ‘effort’ (line 1) as the topic of the therapy session. Bell uses a second relational ‘we’, in line 6, to produce all co-participants as aligned in understanding that they are attempting to ‘increase communication’ (lines 7-9). Bell then uses a third relational ‘we’ (line 17) to present the agreed upon action to be taken as a result of the therapy session, which is to ‘take turns’ in organising time together (line 19). Carl and Sue demonstrate that they are onboard with the course of action that Bell is producing (lines 5, 8, and 15). In this extract, we see Bell make use of the relational ‘we’ to present a closing formulation of the
therapy session which presents the topic, the aim and the suggested course of action as agreed upon by all three co-participants.

In the two extracts just presented, we see that the use of a relational ‘we’ works to present the therapist and client as aligned in the course of action that is being pursued within the therapy session. John uses the relational ‘we’ to co-produce an account of Judy’s father. Bell uses a relational ‘we’ to close the therapy session in a way that presents the aims of the therapy session as clear and agreed upon by all members present. As such, the use of a relational ‘we’ is a useful device for making explicit the shared agreement between therapists and clients, that enables the therapist to talk about a client, because it presents all parties as in agreement on the topic being discussed.

**The Use of ‘We’ as in Everyone**

In extracts thirteen and fourteen the therapist uses a general ‘we’, meaning all people, to produce a formulation of why the clients do what they do. The use of the general ‘we’ produces the formulation of the client’s problem as a common predicament and explicitly invokes common sense knowledge as the warrant for the therapist’s right to talk about the client.

In the following extract, John and Judy are discussing why Judy does not feel valuable unless other people value her:

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57 I am specifically using the EM notion of common sense knowledge as a backdrop to everyday affairs. In this case, I am suggesting that therapists can explicitly invoke common sense reasoning to produce their claims as legitimate. I am not putting forward that therapists’ claims would be generally agreed upon by all people; but in instances where therapists use the general sense of ‘we’ they are making explicit the taken for granted assumption upon which their claim rests as a way of positioning their claim as widely agreed upon. In a way, what the therapist can be understood to be doing, following from EM understandings of the documentary method (Garfinkel, 1967a, pp. 77-79), is making explicit the general underlying pattern that they are using to make sense of the client’s claims. EM is not committed to the claim that these general patterns are ‘real’, only that members orient to them as if they exist. I will address the problems with Garfinkel’s notion of common sense, and my own adoption of this notion, in chapter six.
John, in this extract, uses the general ‘we’ in order to present a formulation of why Judy seeks value from other people, rather than herself. Judy confirms that she seeks ‘value from others’ (line 3). Once Judy and John have agreed upon the problem, Judy then asks a question about why she seeks value from others (line 6), in the form of a question to herself and, incidentally, to the therapist who is listening. Before John can answer, Judy rephrases the question to emphasise that she does know ‘where it’s coming from’ (lines 8-9), but that she is unsure why she still seeks value from others (line 9). In line 10, John successfully gains the floor to answer Judy’s “vexations” about herself. John carefully manages his epistemic rights – to answer a question about why Judy does what she does on her behalf – by using the general sense of ‘we’ (lines 11 and 12). John frames his answer to Judy as something that could possibly be missed by her as it is a position which is ‘ingrained’ (line 10) in her and is ‘automatic’ (line 11). John’s use of ‘we do do’ (line 12) things that ‘kept us safe as children’ (lines 13-14) offers an account that defuses Judy’s obligation to know why she seeks value from others, as not noticing ‘automatic’ behaviours is produced as a general pattern within people. In addition,
John’s explanation that ‘we do do those behaviours and tactics that kept us safe as children and also got us valued’ (lines 12-14) is sufficiently vague to feasibly be relevant to all people. Hence, John successfully manages his right to speak about Judy through drawing upon his common sense knowledge.\textsuperscript{58}

In extract fourteen, the therapist, Bell, and Carl are discussing the difference between him and his partner:

\textit{Extract 14: Bell and Carl Session 1: 43:45-44:15}

\begin{enumerate}
\item Carl: so, \textit{we probably, >you know< she doesn’t °>sort of<°} \textit{think that way.}
\item Bell: \textit{but then she also hasn’t had< (.>) >you know< perhaps hasn’t had any experience of see:ing people operate that way. (0.6) >you know< \textit{so much of how we:: are:: in a relation[ship.]} }
\item Carl: \textit{=\textup{m::m::}=}
\item Bell: \textit{=\textup{comes from our family of origin. >an’ [and<]}}
\item Carl: \textit{[yeah]=}
\item Bell: \textit{=\textup{what we had role modelled an’},}
\item Carl: \textit{yeah}
\end{enumerate}

Bell uses the general sense of ‘we’ to produce an account of why Sue, Carl’s partner, might think differently to him. Carl states that Sue does not think the same way that he does (lines 1-2). In Bell’s turn at talk, she wards off an undermining account of Sue, on Sue’s behalf, as she is not present in the session, by presenting an account of why Sue ‘thinks’ differently. Bell manages her epistemic rights to present Sue’s view by building an explanation of Sue’s thinking as a result of her different experiences with people. Bell states that ‘so much of how we are in relationships’ (lines 6-7) is a result of ‘our family of origin’ (line 9) and what ‘we had

\textsuperscript{58} I will return to the use of common sense knowledge in clinical psychological therapy and discuss how this notion applies to therapists’ practices of formulation in detail in chapter two. Invoking childhood explanations of people’s actions could also be understood as subtly invoking expert psychological understandings. Refer to footnote 54, page 49 for a discussion on expertise, and refer to footnote 57, page 61 for a discussion of common sense knowledge.
role modelled’ (line 11). Hence, Bell manages her right to speak on behalf of Carl’s partner by using the general sense of ‘we’ to position her account as shared members’ knowledge.

In the above two extracts, the therapists use ‘we’ to warrant their rights to talk about the client by invoking common sense knowledge: knowledge that “we all know”. Both Bell and John draw upon the general idea that the way people think or act is a result of their (family) experiences, which is vague enough to be made relevant to any person and, as such, to be successfully produced as shared members’ knowledge. The general sense of ‘we’ is a useful device for therapists to frame their right to talk about an individual client in terms of shared common sense knowledge of general patterns in the way people act.

Method Five: Using Stories to Package an Assessment of the Client

Stories are another nuanced way in which therapists can manage their conversational rights to talk about the client. Sacks (Sacks, 1972, 1995b, pp. 764-772) first talked about stories in his lectures, suggesting a story told in a conversation is generally followed by a second story. According to Sacks (Sacks, 1995a, pp. 3-16, 1995b, pp. 764-772), the second story told relates back to the co-conversationalist’s first story.59 Investigations of using stories in therapeutic interaction have also been undertaken within the field of CA, which have shown how therapists design their utterances as ‘self-disclosure’ (Antaki, Barnes, & Leudar, 2005). In drawing on stories of their own experiences, which shadow clients’ stories, therapists can manage their right to talk about the client.

In extract fifteen, John is suggests to Judy that she needs to put herself first by using a story:

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Extract 15a: John and Judy Session 3: 11:30-15:00

1. John: =↑I: think >the< ↑I: **matter** most. .hh is an
2. important logo. >and I think< ↑I matter most:
3. plus: .hh DO I really: want to do this. (0.2) do
4. I:: really want to do this.=
5. Judy: =↑yeah:
6. John: .h >is ↑a< really important question.
7. (0.6)
8. Judy: ↑ye:ah:. (0.4) I guess ↑I mean< by:, (0.2) °what
9. am I getting out of
10. [this." >is it< for me. or:, ]
11. John: [>yeah yeah< >is it for me. or,<]=
12. Judy: =↑is it<
13. → John: >↑- I< - I had an< interesting, (0.2) be↑cause my
14. Mother-in-law's been here. >an' it's been< ↑fairly
15. full on::, and also my, (0.2) >one of my<
16. ↓daughters is quite ↑ill at the moment. so, ↑it's
17. been quite ↑tricky.
18. Judy: ↑mhm"=
19. John: =.hh °and on ↑Saturday afternoon::," >well Saturday
20. lunchtime.< (0.2) my ↑partner and her ↑mum drove
21. down t’ (.). ↑Dover. and they said >"look go on go
22. on yeah yeah"< and I said °nup I don’t want to do
23. it."

John, in the above extract, introduces a story about his weekend (line 13) in order to illustrate the importance of the question ‘do I really want to do this?’ (line 3). In lines 1 to 6, John formulates his advice directly. Judy indicates agreement with ‘yeah’ (lines 5 and 8) and then demonstrates her agreement through formulating an account of John’s advice in her own terms (lines 8-10). As Judy has clearly understood the advice, yet is still struggling with putting herself first, John introduces a story to illustrate the difficulty of putting oneself first and the benefit of doing so (lines 13-23).
Extract 15b:

24. → John: “↑do ↑I ↑want to ↑do this? (0.6) or do ↑I rather ↑sit at home an’, (0.4) watch sports on on tv.”
25. .hh in ↑the END I went. (0.2) [>and I was<]
26. Judy: ↑m:m =
27. John: =really pleased I did >because we had a great ↑time.< .hh >but it was< (. ) >but the< (. ) the ↑re:↑cep:tion:’ I got was ↑very different. because ↑I had gone,
28. (0.4)
29. Judy: YE:AH:: >yeah.< (0.6) ‘yeah’
30. (2.2)
31. → John: ↑SO >s- [s- s-<
32. Judy: [>it’s<
33. (0.2)
34. John: >↑go on.<
35. Judy: .hh it’s ↑just DOING that for you. isn’t it?
36. John: ↑mm:

At the end of John’s story he draws out the positive consequences of putting yourself first. John explains that once the decision was his to make, he decided to go and join his partner for the weekend but, importantly, this was only after careful consideration of what he really wanted to do (lines 24-31). In John’s account of the benefits of deciding what you ‘really’ want to do we see a kind of “moral to the story”. In line 91, John starts to present his “moral” directly. However, Judy overlaps John’s speech and is given the floor by John with ‘go on’ (lines 38-39). It is in this turn that Judy formulates the “moral” for herself, which, interestingly, she puts in the form of a fishing device for John to confirm (line 39). In formulating the “moral of the story” for herself, Judy demonstrates strong agreement with John’s therapeutic advice. John gains his epistemic rights through illustrating that he has had direct experience with both the difficulty of putting oneself first and the benefits of doing so.
During the therapy session from which the next extract was taken, Carl has been describing his difficulties with supporting Sue in looking after their children when he gets home from work; in particular, helping Sue discipline the children. Bell, the therapist, uses a story from her own life to suggest an alternative account of the difficulty Carl is having, and to reveal what Carl’s partner’s perception might be:60

**Extract 16a: Bell and Carl Session 1: 26:15-27:30**

1. Carl: so: ↑you know< ↑I don’t want to coming in ↑being
2. the big (0.8) bad ↑dad ↑tell ’em off every time
3. ↑I- (...) come home. (1.6) every ↑night. >but maybe<
4. I need to. ↑for a while.
5. (1.6)
6. Bell: ↑well:, (0.4) her er (0.4) YEAH ↑I- ↑I- ↑I- < ↑I
7. ↑I fully understand where you’re coming from. ↑you<
8. ↑don’t want to set ↑that (. ) ↑that (0.2) <role
9. modeling> either. [where]
10. Carl: [mm:]=
11. Bell: where you know: (. ) “oh ↑god here comes dad. ↑lets
12. behave ourselves.
13. Carl: ↑ye:ah:
14. Bell: ↑uh: (0.4) >BUT< I THINK (1.3) > y- you know<
15. ↑more than, setting THAT in mind maybe it’s about,
16. (1.0) ↑being present and ↑being available. ↑which
17. is: HARD ↑I mean you’ve just come from a day
18. [at the]
19. Carl: [yes: ]=
20. Bell: =office, an’ you ↑just want, (0.2) a >little bit
21. of< ↑wind down time.
22. Carl: ↑ye:ah:
23. (0.6)

In the beginning lines of this extract, Carl presents his account of the problem he has helping Sue with the disciplining of their children when he gets home from work, which is that he

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60 Sue is not present at the therapy session from which this extract is taken.
comes home each night to be ‘big bad guy dad’ (lines 1-4). In lines 6 to 12, Bell formulates Carl’s problem in terms of ‘modelling’, demonstrating that she agrees with Carl and that she ‘fully understands’ where he is ‘coming from’, aligning herself strongly with Carl. In lines 14 to 16, Bell produces an alternative way of ‘supporting’ Sue which is to be ‘present and available’. Bell encompasses a concession in her account as she acknowledges that ‘being present and available’ is ‘hard’ after coming home from a day at the ‘office’ when ‘you just want a bit of wind down time’ (lines 17-21). Bell’s formulation of the difficulties in ‘being present’ is met with agreement from Carl (line 22).

Extract 16b:

24. → Bell: >BUT< I can ONLY tell you ↑what (.) ↑what (.) ↑I::
25. Carl: was like as a, as a ↑mother of young kids. and ↑I’d
26. Bell: be seeing my husband, come in the door and ↑I’d be
27. Carl: saying ↑here beauty ↑I can have [m:y::]
28. Bell: [yeah ]=
30. Bell: =ye::ah.
31. Bell: ↑you know< so ↑there’s (.) ↑there’s two: <people>
33. Bell: >BUT< there’s (0.4) four people. >that that<
34. Carl: (0.4) [↑that are<]
35. Bell: ↑↑\ ye:ah: \= needing attention. \h who are needing you know?
36. Bell: they’ve have ↑got, <requirements.>
37. Carl: ↑ye:ah:

In line 24, Bell introduces a story about her being ‘a mother of young kids’ in order to shed light on what it might be like for Sue after a day with the kids. Bell mirrors Carl’s need for ‘wind down time’ with her own need for ‘wind down time’ when her husband came home from work (lines 24-29). Bell then presents the “moral of the story” which is that ‘there are two people with the same need’ but that there are ‘four people’ who have ‘requirements’ (lines 31-38).
That is, the “moral” in this case is to illustrate the similarities between Carl’s and Sue’s end to the day. Producing an account of her own experiences as ‘a mother of young kids’ allows Bell to represent Carl’s partner’s view legitimately by pointing to what Sue and Bell have in common, which Carl is not privy to.

In the two extracts presented in this section, we can observe that a therapist’s story about their own experience can be used to legitimately assert knowledge about a situation that is similar to the client’s own experiences. Through drawing upon their own experience, and extracting a “moral” that is relevant to the client, the therapist can legitimately talk on the client’s behalf.

**Discussion**

**Analytic Summary**

In the analysis presented in this chapter, I have attempted to illustrate that therapists break the conversational maxim to talk for oneself. However, they orient to the maxim to ‘talk for oneself’ because therapists carefully manage their right to talk about the client. The therapists in these recorded therapy sessions use several methods for managing their rights to speak on behalf of a client. The methods that therapists use to manage their break from the preference for talking for oneself in conversation are largely the same methods other CA researchers have found occur within mundane talk-in-interaction. As such, a unique aspect of therapy is that the therapist does break the conversational maxim to talk for oneself, but they manage this break through the use of everyday conversational methods.

I have presented five main methods by which therapists manage their rights to talk about a client in clinical psychological interaction. The five methods presented are not necessarily an exhaustive list of all the methods by which therapists manage their rights to talk about clients, but they are the most common methods used in the therapy sessions I have on tape. The first
method – the explicit noting of their role as a psychologist or the psychological literature by therapists – is used to preface controversial therapeutic formulations of the client’s troubles. The second method – the therapists prefacing their formulation with an indication that it is only their opinion or point of view – is used to introduce formulations in a delicate way. The third method – using fishing devices to suggest ways of understanding the client’s problems before an actual formulation is given – is used by therapists in interactions where the client is likely to disagree with the therapist, or prior to therapeutic formulations being made for the first time. The fourth method – using the relational or the general sense of ‘we’ – is used to emphasise that the formulation of the client’s problems has been agreed upon by the participants in the therapy session, or to produce a formulation of why clients do certain things in terms of what people generally do respectively. The fifth method – therapists’ telling their own stories that mirror the client’s stories - is often used by therapists to manage their right to talk about a client through talking about their own experience and relating their story back to the client’s story through a “moral” that is used to formulate the client’s own account. The uses of these five methods indicate that therapists carefully attend to their right and obligation to talk about clients, which in turn demonstrates that therapists orient to the conversational maxim to talk for oneself.

In this chapter, I am proposing that a unique feature of clinical psychological interaction is an asymmetry in therapists’ and clients’ speaking positions: therapists are required to talk about the client and clients are required to talk about themselves in the clinical psychological setting. The implication of my claims about the clinical psychological setting is that there is a disparity between who speaks for whom in the clinical psychological interaction. The therapist can legitimately speak about the client and ask the client questions about their experiences, whereas the client cannot legitimately speak about the therapist or ask the therapist questions about the therapist’s experience. The setting of clinical psychological therapy, although not
necessarily different from other institutional settings, is different from ordinary conversation, in which each speaker has a right and obligation to talk about themselves (Lerner, 1996).

**Implications of My Analytic Descriptions**

In light of my interest in understanding how the Objective position appropriated by psychologists from natural science plays a role in clinical psychological interaction, I will now draw out the larger implications of analytic descriptions. The therapist is in a position to interpret the client’s descriptions of their experiences, while the client is not in a position to interpret the therapist’s descriptions of their experiences. I could argue, from my analytic descriptions, that the client is confined to speaking about their own Subjective experience, while the therapist is required to talk Objectively about the clients’ experience in this setting. I have, arguably, demonstrated empirically that the Objective position, appropriated from natural science by psychologists, is relevant to the actual practices of clinical psychological interactions.

In addition, through showing that the Objective standpoint of the therapist is a managed speaking position in clinical psychological talk-in-interaction, I have demonstrated empirically that the Objective standpoint cannot hold in an interactional setting. The therapist is in a position of managing their right to talk Objectively about the client; it is not simply that they are legitimately speaking from an Objective standpoint. The therapist’s careful management of their speaking position as Objective is evidence that they orient to the necessity to talk for

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63 As Douglas Maynard (1991b, p. 448) notes, ‘studies of doctor-patient relationships uniformly describe an asymmetry of knowledge and authority’.

62 Refer to footnote 1, page 1 for an explanation of why I have capitalised the ‘S’ in Subjective.

64 Similar claims have been made by conversation analysts about the management of neutrality within institutional settings (for example see Antaki, Young, & Finlay, 2002; Atkinson, 1992; Clayman, 1992; Heisterkamp, 2006). For a similar claim made by discursive psychologists, that ‘orthodox’ psychologists assume neutral descriptions are possible, see Potter, Edwards and Margaret Wetherell’s (1993) paper ‘A model of discourse in action’. I wish to indicate in this and the previous footnote that it is not uncommon to draw out the wider implications of CA descriptions in the way that I have here. However, the claims I am making here remain contentious with regard to the CA literature.
oneself in interactional settings. Hence, in analytically describing the structures of therapy I have demonstrated both that the Objective standpoint of the scientific observer is relevant to the practices of therapy and shown that the Objective standpoint cannot hold in an interactional setting because it is a speaking position that is managed as Objective. However, such a claim highlights a major problem in my own approach to research.

I am effectively claiming from an assumed Objective position that it can be Objectively seen that the clinical psychologist is managing their speaking position as Objective; in which case I am either assuming that I have a specialised view of the clinical psychological interaction, which is unavailable to the participants in the interaction, or I am highlighting that my own descriptions are managed as Objective. To assume that I have a specialised analytic standpoint through which to view the clinical psychological interaction contradicts the central claim of an EM approach to research that I have adopted, because I am required to avoid specialist analytic understandings of social order (Garfinkel, 1967a, pp. vii-viii; Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 173; Sacks, 1995b, p. 622; Schegloff, 1997). To assume that my descriptions of therapeutic interaction are managed as Objective is to leave myself with no way of substantiating the adequacy of my descriptions. My claim to have empirically demonstrated that the Objective position adopted by psychologists from the natural sciences can be seen in the practices of clinical psychology is extending past what can be empirically substantiated by my data and the CA literature that I am drawing upon. However, to make the more banal claim that there is an observable asymmetry between therapists’ and clients’ speaking positions in clinical psychological interaction does not solve the predicament that I have pointed out here, because I am still assuming that I am describing the clinical psychological interaction from an Objective standpoint.
Natural Scientific Psychology and Conversation Analysis

As I have argued in my introduction, my main difficulty with the adoption of the natural scientific Objective standpoint by psychologists is that the theoretical position from which judgements and claims are made about people is overlooked. In assuming there is an Objective standpoint outside of the social world, from which to make judgements and claims about people that are supposedly unaffected by the psychologist’s theoretical framework, places the psychologist’s observations, interpretations and descriptions of people beyond question. In so doing, the detrimental effects that a psychologist’s actions, descriptions, interpretations and judgements can have upon people cannot be seen because their actions are justified by Objective research outside of the lived situation. However, it is now apparent that my own critique of psychological research applies equally to the CA approach that I have adopted in this chapter.

In my analyses as presented in this chapter, I am making judgements about the normality or abnormality of social practices from the specialised theoretical framework of CA. Deviant case analysis highlights the point I am making here. For CA, deviant case analysis is an important part of analysing social interaction. If a case does not fit within the CA analyst’s understanding of the social interaction they are analysing, then a CA analyst must account for the deviant case. For CA, deviant case analysis is part of ensuring that the analyst is describing the order to be found in social interaction rather than fitting social interaction to their predefined model of social interaction (Schegloff, 1996, p. 172; ten Have, 1999, pp. 131-135). However, the analysis of a deviant case requires an understanding of the specialised theoretical framework of CA prior to identifying naturally occurring deviant cases. I will take my own deviant case analysis as an example; extract seven. In order to understand this extract as a deviant case I needed to

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65 The claims that I am making here are derived from the critical literature on abnormal psychology (for example see Healy, 2004; Moynihan & Cassels, 2005; Newnes et al., 1999, 2001; Szasz, 1960). However, I realise they are similar to claims made by feminist psychologists (for example see M. Gergen, 2001; Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988) as well as scholars in other critical fields within psychology (for example see Prilleltensky, 1994).
understand that there is a preference for minimisation of gaps and overlaps and the preference for agreement, in order see that immediate and direct disagreement with the therapist was a break in the normative conversational structure. Hence, my analysis of a deviant case is informed by judgements about normality and abnormality of social interaction made on the basis of my specialised CA framework.

Furthermore, I am not attending to the judgements I am making about the normality and abnormality of social interaction while analysing my recorded therapy sessions. I am making the judgements about deviant and non-deviant cases as if they are made on the basis of what is observable in the talk-in-interaction itself. My claim is not that this is one way of looking at how therapeutic interaction works; I am claiming that my analytic descriptions are substantiated by direct observations of the clinical psychological sessions that form my data corpus. Hence, I am overlooking that the judgements and claims I make about clinical psychological interactions are made from a specialised theoretical framework and substantiated by reference to the CA literature and not the members’ own orientations to the social situation they are involved in.

I have removed the members’ orientations to the social situation and replaced their orientation with my own orientation. I have not differentiated my orientations from the orientations of participants in the clinical psychological interaction and, hence, I understand myself to be describing their orientations when I am in fact describing my own analytic conceptions of the clinical psychological interaction (Sharrock & Button, 1991, pp. 148-149). In understanding that I have an analytic orientation through which to describe and judge the practices of therapy, I also understand that I have displaced the participants’ orientation, as I have read their orientation for my own.
Sacks, Garfinkel and Natural Science

In an article called ‘Harvey Sacks’s primitive natural science, Lynch and Bogen (1994) point to very similar problems with CA that I have found in my own adoption of the CA approach to research. Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 90) argue that the conversation analysts have lost sight of their ground in the practices of the social world because they no longer rely upon the intelligible order observable in the social world for the adequacy of their research claims. Instead, according to Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 83), conversation analysts tend to rely upon other researchers in the CA field to substantiate their specialised intuitions. Lynch and Bogen (1994) are arguing that CA, like other social science disciplines that no longer attend to the actual practices of the social world, has become a scientific discipline, because it has become a technique through which to find order rather than an investigation of the order to be found in the social world. One of Lynch and Bogen’s (1994, p. 90) central claims is that the structures of conversation cannot be investigated as if they are context-free findings, because these context-free findings of conversational structures then obscure the actual social situation that is being observed.

According to Lynch and Bogen (1994), through investigating any and every social situation as if the same rules for turn taking apply in every case, conversation analysts miss the inherent context dependence of people’s practices. In Lynch and Bogen’s (1994, p. 92) own words:

What we find problematic is that the findings of conversation analysis tend to be presented as formal accounts of conversationalists’ naively adequate methods for making ordinary interactional phenomena observable, reportable and reproducible. In our view, the naïve adequacy of ordinary practices is not grounded in context-free descriptions of ordinary methods, any more than the stable reproducibility of scientific activities is grounded in context-free descriptions of scientific methods.

Following from Lynch and Bogen’s understanding of the CA tradition, my observation that there are certain similarities between CA and natural scientific methods may be largely a result of encountering CA as an already formed discipline of investigation. Hence, CA may be in need
of the same ethnomethodological clarification that I am suggesting is necessary for psychological practitioners.

Lynch and Bogen (1994, pp. 83-84) suggest that it is important for conversation analysts to pay attention to Garfinkel’s EM writings in order to understand the problems with formalised accounts of social order. Lynch and Bogen (1994, pp. 66-69) suggest that although Sacks had some stated aspirations to build a natural science of the social, the basis for social scientific research for Sacks was understood very differently to the usual adoption of natural scientific methods and findings by social (and psychological) researchers. Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 67) argue that Sacks wanted to establish a research approach that did not rely upon the ultimate possibility of physio-chemical explanations of the human actor; rather Sacks sought to examine the social world as an already orderly phenomenon. Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 75) state that Sacks’s aspirations to establish a natural science of the social were at odds with Garfinkel’s EM program, because Garfinkel specifically wanted to avoid establishing a natural science and, instead, sought to clarify the actual practices by which natural scientists collaboratively achieve their results as well as the way members co-produce order within everyday settings. However, according to Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 83), because of Garfinkel’s strong influence upon Sacks’s conception of social order, Sacks’s work can be read through an ethnomethodological lens which avoids the scientistic tendencies in Sacks’s own work. Following Lynch and Bogen’s lead, in the next chapter I shall draw upon Garfinkel’s original work, to show that Garfinkel proposed EM as an alternative to natural scientific research methods used within the field of sociology. In addition, I will draw upon Sacks’s work and read through the Garfinkelian understanding of social order, in order to find a way of applying EM research to my conversational data.
Chapter Two: Making Use of ‘Doing Being Ordinary’ in Clinical Psychological Interaction

The Adequacy of Descriptions

As I have argued in the previous chapter, conversation analysts, like myself, overlook that they are making judgements about people and their actions from a particular specialised theoretical framework. Conversation analysts, like scientific psychologists, obscure the social world by replacing what actually happens in social situations with inaccurate theoretical constructions. According to Lynch and Bogen (1994), the problems I have noted with conversation analysis (CA), result from the fact that CA has developed into a formal discipline. CA has become a specialised procedure through which to substantiate the claims conversation analysts make about the social world; rather than investigating the practices by which members and social researchers alike produce orderly accounts of things in and through their actual practices.

Lynch and Bogen (1994, pp. 90-93) suggest that the central problem in CA is the formality with which conversation analysts describe the informal practical activities of everyday members. In order to understand the difference between CA as a discipline of investigation and Garfinkel’s EM program, in this chapter, I will draw upon Garfinkel’s work specifically to examine the practices of clinical psychological therapy. In addition, I will draw upon Sacks’s original work in order to demonstrate that his work does not need to be interpreted as indicating a formalised method of social inquiry, but rather can be read as being in line with

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66 I am drawing heavily upon Lynch and Bogen’s (1994) article ‘Harvey Sacks’s primitive natural science’ because it is a seminal paper that coherently expresses the argument that there is an important difference between CA and EM. There are other articles that argue CA is another formal method of investigation which misses the radical insight of Garfinkel’s EM program, which is that the social world cannot be formalised and, hence, cannot be studied by using a formal method of investigation (refer to the introduction for my own interpretation of this argument). For similar criticisms of CA see D. Lawrence Wieder (1988), Eric Livingston (1987) and Melvin Pollner (1991).
Garfinkel’s EM program. In doing so, I aim to show that Garfinkel’s and Sacks’s original work can offer an alternative to natural scientific methods of investigation found in psychology, because it does not presuppose an Objective\textsuperscript{67} specialised standpoint.

By drawing upon Garfinkel’s and Sacks’s approach to researching social situations I endeavour to further my investigations into clinical psychological research by looking at how clinical psychological interactions actually unfold. By doing so, my aim is to provide adequate descriptions of clinical psychology on the basis of the lived situation of clinical psychological interactions rather than on the basis of the technical CA literature.

**Sacks and Garfinkel on Social Order**

According to Lynch and Bogen (1994, pp. 66-69, 84), there is some evidence in Sacks’s own writing that Sacks wished to propose a formal natural scientific method for investigating the social world and, hence, the problem associated with systematic CA does not entirely stem from the disciplinary development of CA inquiries. Lynch and Bogen (1994) suggest that the difference between Sacks and Garfinkel, who worked closely together, is their understanding of social order. Sacks and Garfinkel shared a similar understanding that investigations into the social world were possible on the basis of the stability of human action or the order already apparent in the social world, rather than on the basis of biology or physiology (1994, p. 68). However, Sacks and Garfinkel differ in the way they understand the basis of social order (1994, p. 89). Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 66) state that Sacks understands the ‘very fact of the existence of science’ to be evidence that human action is orderly. For Sacks, the way scientists describe how they discover their results so that others can repeat their findings indicates that it is possible to describe human action in such a way that it can be repeated by others (Lynch & Bogen, 1994, pp. 66-69). As Sacks (1995b, p. 27) writes:

\textsuperscript{67} Refer to footnote 1, page 1 for an explanation of why I have capitalised the ‘O’ in Objective.
The difference between that work [older ethnographic work in sociology] and what I’m trying to do is, I’m trying to develop a sociology where the reader has as much information as the author, and can reproduce the analysis. If you read a biological paper it will say, for example, ‘I used such-and-such which I bought at Joe’s drugstore.’ And they tell you just what they do, and you can pick it up and see whether it holds. You can re-do the observations.

For Sacks (1995b, p. 28) the very possibility that scientists can describe their methods for finding results such that another person could reproduce the findings means that human action is done in ways that are observable, reportable and repeatable, and this can be observed in any and every human action, which makes possible an observational natural study of social activities. For Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 85), the problem with Sacks’s notion of social order is that it lends itself to formalist accounts, because it suggests that a social activity can be described in a way that “anyone” can re-do them’. Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 85) suggest that the notion that scientific reports of how to do experiments can be written in a way that “anyone” can re-do them was more of a mythology of science than an account of what early scientists did’. Garfinkel’s understanding of social order, according to Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 90), does not rely upon a notion that social activities can be described in ways that could be re-done by anybody.

Instead, Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 90) suggest that Garfinkel understands that scientific reports of how to repeat scientific experiments are good enough for the practical purposes of re-doing the experiments relative to the local context in which they are produced and the community of researchers doing those experiments. Garfinkel (1967a, p. 8) states that:

Members take for granted that a member must at the outset “know” the settings in which he [sic] is to operate if his [sic] practices are to serve as measures to bring particular, located features of these settings to recognizable account. ... Members know, require, count on, and make use of this reflexivity to produce, accomplish, recognize, or demonstrate rational-adequacy-for-all-practical-purposes of their procedures and findings.

Hence, for Garfinkel, to be a member means to have members’ knowledge of the setting in which one is acting and, to analyse and describe members’ methods, one must have members’
knowledge of that setting. For Garfinkel (1967b), members’ methods are observable because they are produced in such a way that they can be recognised by other members, and it is on this basis that ethnomethodologists can provide adequate descriptions of members’ methods. However, the most important feature of Garfinkel’s (1967b, pp. 4-6) EM program is that members’ methods are produced in local settings in ways that are good enough for ‘all-practical-purposes’ and, hence, members’ methods can only be described in ways that are adequate for ‘all-practical-purposes’. According to Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 90), Garfinkel’s notion of social order implies that descriptions of social action cannot be generalised from the local situation in which they are produced.

For Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 90) the difference between Sacks’s and Garfinkel’s account of social order is that Sacks’s notion lends itself to formalisation of practical actions, while Garfinkel’s notion does not allow members’ practices to be formalised in anyway. While for Sacks (1984b, p. 413, 1995b, pp. 115-116) context-free findings—findings that can be generalised from one situational context to another—are considered possible, for Garfinkel (1967b, pp. 4-9) EM descriptions are always contingent upon the context. However, for Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 94), nothing crucial in Sacks’s writings hangs on his descriptions of conversational structures as being ‘context-free’. While for conversation analysts, the turn taking system is understood as the basis of understanding talk-in-interaction (Schegloff, 2007a,

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68 I am referring to Garfinkel and D. Lawrence Wieder’s (1992) notion of ‘unique adequacy’. The notion of ‘unique adequacy’ is that ethnomethodologists are required to have members’ knowledge of the setting they are investigating. For example, I am uniquely adequate to investigate clinical psychology because I have knowledge of psychology and some training in clinical psychology.

69 For a specific reference to ‘context-free’ findings refer to Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson’s (1974, p. 699) article ‘A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking in conversation’.

70 Lynch and Bogen are drawing upon Eric Livingston’s work here. Livingston (1987, p. 76) writes, ‘nothing critical depended on his [Sacks’s] analysis being absolutely correct in this one instance. The phenomenon that he had begun to elucidate is that the analyzability, or story-ability, or hear-ability, or objectivity of the sequence is part of the sequence itself. The “mommy” is the mommy of the “baby,” and she picked her baby up. That analyzability, is part of the way the story was told and heard.’ The baby cried. The mommy picked it up’ is a famous analysis of two lines of talk from a children’s story by Sacks. Sacks wanted to point out how most people heard the mommy as the mommy of the baby even though this was not explicitly said in the two lines of talk. Sacks (1972, 1995b, pp. 135, 223-265) devotes several lectures to analysing these two lines and then writes a paper on it.
pp. 1-3), Lynch and Bogen (1994, pp. 90-93) suggest that Sacks’s work can be read through an EM lens that preferences the local production of social order. Lynch and Bogen (1994, p. 83) suggest that Garfinkel’s notion of the accountability of social action – that action is performed in such a way that it is recognisable to other members – had an important influence upon Sacks. Hence, according to Lynch and Bogen (1994, pp. 90-93), both Sacks’s and Garfinkel’s findings can be read as suggesting a notion that social order is produced completely internally to the sites in which actions are performed accountably.

However, for both Sacks (1995b, pp. 483-488) and Garfinkel (1967a, pp. 104-115) the contingency of members’ methods does not imply members’ methods are solely and particularly used within only one setting, because order is evident in all sites and in all sites members depend upon assuming shared members’ knowledge (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970). For Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, pp. 355-358), members produce their actions in ways that other members recognise those actions and, hence, in each and every social situation the order by which members make sense of the situation is made available by the members in that social situation. Hence, for Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, pp. 345-347), shared common sense knowledge of members’ methods for producing social order is part of each and every social situation. According to Garfinkel and Sacks’s (1970), the important aspect of social activities is that, while they may happen in more than one social setting, the activities cannot be removed from the ongoing social interaction in which they happen and posited as an overarching feature of all social action.

71 I am referring to Sacks’s (1995b, p. 484) notion of ‘order at all points’. See Alec McHoul (2001) for a detailed discussion of ‘order at all points’.
72 Garfinkel (2002, p. 92) later comes to refer to this notion of members’ methods being evident in more than one site as the ‘immortal’ ongoing society. To explain his term ‘immortal’, Garfinkel (2002) writes, ‘think of freeway traffic flow in Los Angeles. For the cohort of drivers there, just this gang of them, driving, making traffic together, are somehow, smoothly and unremarkably, concerting the driving to be at the lived production of the flow’s just thisness: familiar, ordinary, uninterestingly, observably-in-an-as-of-observances, doable and done again, and always, only, entirely in detail for everything that detail could be.’
In this chapter, I will draw upon Sacks’s (1984b) notion of ‘doing being ordinary’ in order to describe the way in which therapists and clients collaboratively produce interpretations of problems that clients raise in therapy sessions.73 Garfinkel’s (1967b) notion of common sense knowledge can be understood as important to what Sacks (1984b) is claiming in his suggestion that people do being ordinary, because both common sense knowledge and doing being ordinary refer to the notion that actions are accountable. However, for my investigations of clinical psychological interactions, Sacks’s notion of doing being ordinary is particularly suitable because his notion is specifically linked to the way people tell stories about their experiences.

Sacks (1984b) argues that we tell stories in ordinary ways. He links his claims about doing being ordinary with epistemic rights and obligations to talk for oneself, as he states that we gain entitlement to experience through being involved in an event in some way. For example, stopping on the side of the freeway to help people in a car accident entitles us to an experience of this event which qualifies us to tell a story about it, with more rights than if we had merely driven past the accident. The experience of stopping at the side of the road also means that we are obligated to know the event in more detail in subsequent retellings of the event to other people (Sacks, 1984b). Sacks (1984b, p. 417) argues that we monitor experiences for ‘storyable possibilities’ and then tell our stories in a way that is recognisable as a story about that event to other people. According to Sacks (1984b, p. 418), this is not to say that we do not have extraordinary experiences, rather it is that we tell extraordinary stories in an ‘utterly unexceptional’ way. Sacks (1984b) points out that if we came home and described

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the shades of green on the trees by the side of the freeway on a regular basis, we would be considered odd. From this Sacks (1984b) argues that our ‘daily business’ is to ‘do being ordinary’ and part of doing being ordinary is telling stories in ordinary ways.

As such, in this chapter I will show that therapists use the ordinary way in which people tell stories to draw out ‘insights’ about what clients should know; to ask relevant questions; and to formulate clients’ troubles. I will show that clients tell stories about their experiences in ordinary ways and therapists use their common sense knowledge of how stories are told in ordinary ways to interpret and add detail to clients’ descriptions of themselves and their problems. I will show that therapists ask relevant questions by suggesting things that might have feasibly been missed from clients’ stories; and pursue lines of questioning on the basis of what clients are obligated to know about their own experiences.

Proceeding from my analysis in the previous chapter, I will continue to consider the methods I have put forward in chapter one as ways that therapists manage their rights to talk about client, but will examine these methods in terms of one extended course of action in which a therapist and client produce a collaborative account of the problem that the client has raised. In light of the problems I encountered in my investigations in the previous chapter, I will demonstrate two points in this analytic chapter. Firstly, I will demonstrate that the conversational methods I have highlighted in the previous chapter are context dependent and cannot be understood outside of an ongoing course of action. Secondly, I will demonstrate that therapists’ formulate clients’ problems by drawing upon their common sense knowledge of how people tell stories in ordinary ways.

In concluding the chapter, I will put forward that my descriptions of clinical psychological therapy suggest that there is nothing particularly technical about the interactions that occur within this setting. I will propose that my analytic descriptions suggest that clinical psychologists do not draw upon a specialised position or specialised knowledge, as the
descriptions of clinical psychology in the literature suggest, but instead draw upon their members’ knowledge of shared methods for doing things or ordinary ways of telling stories. The role of clinical psychology is defined in the literature by its being in a position to offer research based assessments and therapeutic techniques to address an individual’s difficulties (T. Baker et al., in press; Raimy, 1950; Shakow, 1939; D. Shapiro, 2002; M. Shapiro, 1967; Zeldow, 2009).74 The descriptions of clinical psychological therapy in this chapter suggest a lack of such specialised, researched, techniques in the actual practices of therapy. However, I will discuss my findings in light of the consequence of understanding therapists’ and members’ practices as ordinary; which is that it does not leave an opportunity to critique clinical psychological therapy or the current prevalence of psychologistic interpretations of human experience.

**Analysis**

In this chapter, I will analyse one extended extract in which a therapist and a client are engaged in an ongoing course of action to provide an adequate formulation of the client’s difficulty. Instead of looking for overarching features of clinical psychological interaction that lose the specificity of the context in which they happen, as I did in the previous chapter, I will focus on the detail present in one extract from a therapy session. In my analysis, I will not draw upon any specialised theoretical literature, because I am focusing on what is happening in the actual situation. My aim in this chapter is to provide an adequate account of therapeutic interaction on the basis of the lived situation of clinical psychological interaction, rather than

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74 Although the role of the clinical psychologist was originally proposed for the purpose of assisting people diagnosed with ‘mental illness’ (Shakow, 1939), it has now extended its practices to everyday problems. In the literature it is proposed that every problem can be identified using Objective assessment measures and treated using ‘empirically supported treatments’ (ESTs) or ‘evidence-based treatments’ (EBTs) (Chambless & Ollendick, 2001; Doss, Simpson, & Christensen, 2004; Kazdin, 2008). However, the notion that clinical psychologists can address every problem using Objective methods of assessment and treatment is not without controversy (Kazdin, 2008, 2009; Newnes, 2004; Raps, 2009; Silverstein & Auerbach, 2009; Tryon, 2009). For a further discussion of the scientist-practitioner model of clinical psychology, refer to footnote 14, page 9 and footnote 26, page 16.
covering over the actual practices by relying upon theoretical accounts of therapy (Garfinkel, 1967a, pp. vi-vii; Livingston, 2006, p. 41; Lynch & Bogen, 1994, pp. 90-93; Sacks, 1995b, pp. 81-94).

In the extract I am analysing, John, the therapist, and Judy, the client, are recognisably trying to produce an agreed upon account of Judy’s weight issues. The extract is drawn from the second recorded therapy session between John and Judy. John and Judy are discussing the emotions that lead Judy to ‘emotionally eat’. The suggestion that Judy emotionally eats starts earlier in the session when Judy states what she has learned from the weight control program she has been attending: ‘so I’m just going to identify when I’m emotionally hungry and when I’m physically hungry’. In this extract we see John start to pursue a more detailed account of Judy’s emotional eating:

*Extract 1a: John and Judy Session 2: 21:45-26:30*

1. John: mhmm and what’s the feeling that’s the response but
2. what’s the feeling
3. Judy: (let me think about it) um it’s hard I’m not very
4. good at ‹feelings. ‹am I?‰ hh heh
5. [heh .hh 
6. John: [(that’s how it)]=
7. Judy: =and you ›keep< (.). ›bringing th(h)is u(h)p ›every
8. w(h)ee(h)k hh heh heh [ha ha]
9. John: [†m:†m]=
10. Judy: .hhh a(h)nd I k(h)now th(h)is i(h)s i(h)s i(h)s .h I
11. never ‹think about me.
12. John: you ›see (.). ›but if< you DON’T know
13. [the feeling ›you can<]
14. Judy: [I don’t (.). no:: ]=
15. John: =>YOU CAN< ›very likely say THAT is emotional
16. eating. ›but if< you DON’T know what the feeling
17. is:. (.). ›you’re not going to be able to do
18. anything about it.<
19. (1.2)
The beginning section of this extract establishes the problem with Judy’s ‘emotional eating’. Judy starts by stating that she is ‘not very good at feelings’ (line 3-4). John generalises the problem in terms of Judy’s need to be able to identify what the feeling is, rather than just identifying when she ‘emotionally eats’, because unless she can identify what the ‘feeling is’ she will not ‘be able to do anything about’ her ‘emotional eating’ (lines 15-18). Hence, John pulls out what is missed from Judy’s account of how she is attempting to overcome her ‘emotional eating’, which is what she is feeling when she ‘eats emotionally’.

**Extract 1b:**

20. John: cos you’ve gotta deal, with EMOTIONS, EMOTIONally.
21. (0.2) you ↑can’t deal with emotions LOGICally.
22. because ah [they’re]
23. Judy: [↑no:: ]=
24. John: =different SYSTEMS.
25. (2.0)
26. John: ↑that’s like SAYing that’s like saying ↑in order t’
27. (. ) in order t’ brake this car ↑I’ll take my foot
28. off the accelerator. >but< (0.4) sorry ↑that
29. doesn’t work.
30. (0.6)
31. Judy: ↑m::m:
32. (0.8)
33. John: BRAKES and accelerators are different systems.
34. (0.4)
35. Judy: ↑ye:ah:

In this section of the extract, John establishes the problem of dealing with ‘emotional’ eating ‘logically’ (lines 20-22). John draws upon the mechanical metaphor of a car to establish the difference between ‘logical’ and ‘emotional’ systems (lines 26-33). Establishing the problem as Judy trying to deal with her ‘emotional eating’ with ‘logic’, allows John to formulate why Judy may have feasibly missed considering the actual feelings that underlie her ‘emotional eating’.
Extract 1c:

36. John: one does not control the other. (0.6) so when
37. you get. >into that< I’m gonna stuff myself, full
38. of food. because I’m feeling, (1.6) feeling
39. what?
40. (2.5)
41. Judy: >I just< (0.2) ‘I don’t’
42. (0.4)
43. John:hm:. h
44. (1.0)
45. Judy:FED UP.
46. (1.0)

John starts to pursue a line of questioning in the above section of the extract (lines 36-39). The common sense analogy between the “mind” and “machines”, works to position the logic/emotion dichotomy as an obvious state of affairs that is often missed by people, which accounts for John pursuing a line of questioning about how Judy feels when she wants to eat. Although Judy is hesitant to answer John’s questions, John continues his course of action (lines 40-44). Judy eventually gives the answer ‘fed up’ (line 45). Judy’s own feelings are something that Judy is obliged to know about in conversation, which establishes the legitimacy of John’s pursuit of an answer from Judy about how she feels when she ‘emotionally eats’.

Extract 1d:

47. John: >give me a bit more<
48. (2.4)
49. → John: is it [↑fed up ]
50. Judy: [‘(I don’t know)’]=
51. → John: =SA:D. (.) is it ↑fed up an:gr?y?
52. (1.4)
53. Judy: probably ↑angry. [↑angry]
54. John: [‘okay’]=
56. (0.6)

The double quotes indicate that I am providing an analytic gloss of the extract. Refer to 50, page 45 for a discussion about the EM/CA notion of ‘glossing’.

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Once John has received an answer from Judy, he pursues her for more details about the feeling of being ‘fed up’. John draws out the feelings that are most likely to be associated with feeling ‘fed up’, which are ‘sadness’ and ‘anger’ (lines 49-51). As John is tentatively associating feelings on the basis of common sense knowledge, he packages his question in a ‘fishing device’\textsuperscript{76} that can be affirmed or denied by Judy, in order to check that his common understanding applies to Judy also (line 49-51). Judy responds by stating that she ‘usually’ feels ‘angry and frustrated’ (lines 53-55). Now that John has established some more detail about the feelings associated with Judy’s ‘emotional eating’, he can pursue a course of action to establish the “cause” of those emotions, which we see in the next extract.

\textit{Extract 1e:}

57. John: frustrated with?
58. (2.0)
59. Judy: ‘depends what the situation’=with AH .hh (1.8)
60. >probably< ↑frustrated AT (0.2) my:self:
61. (0.8)
63. (0.4)
64. Judy: ↑but I’ve just got this particular situation.< if
65. >just thinking if the,< hh (0.8) ↑u:mm the kid’s=are (0.6) not doing, (1.0) ↑what I wanting
66. them to do. [·or: ]
67. John: [·m:hm.]=
68. Judy: =they’re AVOIDING ↑what I’m wanting them to do.
70. Judy: I ↑get <frustrated> with myself for not being consistent. (.) >in< (. ) ↑asking them.
71. (0.6)

John asks ‘frustrated with?’ (line 57), in order to open a discussion on the reason for Judy’s frustration. Judy states, ‘depends what the situation’ (line 59). Although John and Judy are

\textsuperscript{76} For a discussion of Pomerantz’s (1980) notion of ‘fishing device’ refer to pages 62 to 66 in chapter one.
pursuing a general explanation of Judy’s ‘emotional eating’, it is easier to produce a general ‘feeling’ than it is to produce a general account for the “cause” of that feeling. Judy manages this difficulty by offering a tentative explanation, ‘probably frustrated at myself’ (line 60), and then provides a description of a particular situation. Judy produces an account of her ‘frustration at herself’ as resulting from when the ‘kids’ do not do what she wants them to, and her frustration because of her lack of consistency in ‘asking them’ to help her (lines 69-72). The description of a particular situation is produced as an event that recurs, which generalises the particular situation to a type of situation and, thereby, generalises Judy’s account of why she feels frustrated. The generalisation of the account enables John to continue pursuing an ‘emotional’ explanation for Judy’s ‘emotional eating’.

Extract 1f:

74. John: ↑so how do you feel?
75.   (1.0)
76. Judy: ↑mad with ‘mese(h)lf heh’ ↑usually.
77. John: ↑o↓kay ↑so you’re feeling?< (0.2) [an-
78. Judy: ↑angry with myself:, an:d:
79.   (0.4)
80. John: ↑o{kay:
81. Judy: [↓critical> of myself [really.
82. John: [↓ye*ah:. ↑ye*ah:. (0.6)
83.   (0.4)
84. John: ↑and what do you need?< (0.6) when you’re angry and critical with yourself.
85.   (0.4)
86. Judy: ↑what do I< nee:d.
87. John: m:m.
88.   (3.6)
89. John: ↑I don’t know.’ (2.0) ‘I don’t know.’=
90. Judy: =>well< one ↑answer is food.
91. John: ↑oh YEAH. heh heh hhh ↑solves the problem.
John attempts to prompt Judy to provide more detail about how she feels in situations when her children are not doing what she has asked them to, with two questions in lines 74 and 77. Judy responds to both questions with her original feeling; ‘mad with myself’ and ‘angry with myself’ (lines 76 and 78–79). Just as John is about to re-formulate the question again (line 81), Judy supplies a new ‘feeling’; ‘critical with myself’ (line 82). John makes use of the new ‘feeling’ to pursue a question about what Judy ‘needs’ when she feels ‘angry and critical’ (lines 85–86). Judy reports that she ‘doesn’t know’ (line 91). John is able to justifiably pursue this line of questioning further, because Judy is obligated to know what she needs ‘emotionally’. Before re-formulating the question about what Judy needs when she feels ‘angry and critical’, John supplies one answer: ‘food’ (line 92). Neatly, John’s answer both provides an “example answer” that orients Judy to the type of utterance that would count as an answer; and ties the sequence back to the started course of action, which is to find an alternative to food as a way of dealing with emotions. Judy takes up John’s answer, which enables John to re-formulate his question, as we see in the next extract.

*Extract 1g*

94. Judy: [ha ha ha]
95. John: [>yeah yeah yeah<] [.hhh
96. Judy: [it gives=
97. John: =BUT >another answer is< ↑what DO you need. (0.2)
98. ↑e: motionally.
99. (4.4)
100. Judy: ↑probably some support::: and I don’t ↑get that.
101. John: ↑mm:: SUPPORT as in?
102. (3.0)
103. Judy: ↑think it comes down to the (0.6) ↑crunch:=of
104. ↑I feel it’s:, (0.2) ↑my <responsibility> ↑it’
105. do ↑it all:, (0.4) an:d: ↑Adam:, ↑just lets me.
106. cos he’s ‘passive.’
107. (0.6)
108. John: m: m: (1.0).h >so< IS (0.8) ↑you’re doing ↑it
John re-formulates the question in lines 97 to 98. Judy answers by stating that she needs ‘some support’, which ‘I don’t get’ (line 100). Judy then expands her account of needing support – in response to John’s prompt (line 101) – by saying that she feels ‘responsibility’ to ‘do it all’ and Adam ‘lets [her] cos he’s passive’ (lines 103-106). John uses a fishing device to suggest a feeling that is commonly associated with ‘doing it all’ in order to check whether this common understanding holds in Judy’s case; ‘now is that begrudging it?’ (lines 109-110). Judy answers ‘sometimes’ (line 112). John follows up with a second fishing device to suggest another alternative that is commonly associated with ‘doing it all’ to see whether this is a more appropriate understanding in Judy’s case: ‘so how much of this feeling is being taken for granted?’ (lines 113-114). Judy answers ‘oh big style’ (line 115), which demonstrates strong agreement and illustrates that John has hit the mark with his second suggestion. John, in the next turn at talk, orients to this agreement with the remark, ‘now we’re getting there’ (line 117), making use of the relational ‘we’ to highlight that they are building an agreed upon account of the problem.

Extract 1h:

119. John: =.h >so ah< ↑you’re feeling TAKEN for granted.
120. (0.4) .h you’re BEGRUDGING <doing it.> (1.6) so
121. ↑what’s=the:=feeling:.
122. (2.2)
123. Judy: ↑the feeling¿’= 
124. John: =’mm’ ↑you’re being taken for granted.
125. (2.5)
126. Judy: ↑u::m:, (7.3) ↑’I don’t really know.’’ (1.2) ↑the
127. ↑feel::ings:: are pissed. off. (.) [but
128. John: ↑(well)]=
129. Judy: =I don’t know ↑what the feeling is:=
130. → John: =.hh well I ↑think the feeling is pissed off. cos
131. you ARE being ↑taken for granted. [an::d
132. Judy: ↑yep
133. (2.6)

In this section of the extract, John reiterates the feelings that he and Judy have agreed upon, and uses the agreement to pursue more detail about Judy’s feelings (lines 119-21). After a prompt by John (line 124), Judy responds that she feels ‘pissed off’ (line 124), but is unsure ‘what the feeling is’ (line 129). John takes up Judy’s stated feeling, ‘pissed off’, as a feeling, by producing ‘pissed off’ as an obvious outcome of being taken for granted (lines 130-131). He prefaces his account with ‘I think’ (line 130), so as to not to overstep his knowledge of Judy’s own feelings, which she has both a right and an obligation to know. Judy accepts this assessment with ‘yep’ (line 132).

Extract 1I

134. John: ↑are you being? hear::d::.
135. (3.6)
136. Judy: ↑think I’m hear- (.) ↑being er ↑no: (.) ↑no: I
137. ↑think I am. to ↑some degree ↑I am. but am I ↑being
138. ignored.
139. (0.6)
140. John: .h ↑well are you being silent.
141. (3.3)
142. Judy: so ↑am I not ↑asking. ↑’you mean?’ (. or am I?
143. John: well- uh uh uh er ↑sorry that’s the question.
144. (0.6)
145. → John: >I mean< er er er ye- ye- ye- ↑you might not=you
146. → might be ↑being ignored, ↑because: (0.7) ↑you’re
In order to pursue the explanation of Judy’s emotional eating further, in the beginning lines of this section of extract, John asks ‘are you being heard’ (line 134), orienting the interaction towards establishing why Judy is feeling taken for granted. Judy answers this question by making a distinction between ‘being heard’ and ‘being ignored’; stating that she is heard ‘to some degree’ but that she is ‘ignored’ (lines 136-138). John deduces from this that if one is being heard, but ignored, that this may feasibly be because she is ‘being silent’, and asks Judy ‘are you being silent’ (line 140). Judy responds with a request for clarification (line 142). John then explicitly draws together the relation between ‘being ignored’ and ‘being silent’ through using a fishing device, so that Judy can affirm or deny this explanation of why feels she is taken for granted (line 145-147). Judy responds to John’s turn with a further request for clarification (line 149-150).

Extract 1f

152. → John: >well< (. I of†en: h (0.6) ha— (.†wives:
153. particularly †spouses or partners say: (. female
154. partners say:, (0.4) †he doesn’t hear me. (1.2) and
155. I hear the bloke going >“I’m listening as hard as I
156. fucking can<”
157. (1.6)
158. Judy: †m::m:
159. (0.4)
160. John: BU::T:, (0.6) the †woman often feels as though
161. she’s not being heard, e::MOTIONally.
162. (2.5)
163. Judy: †probab— (. er †ye:ah: I’d probably †a:gree: with
164. that. >but< I †thin—=†I don’t >know whether
165. because< I’ve, (0.5) de†ached meself.
It is in this section of the extract that John provides the grounds for the connection he is making between ‘being ignored’ and ‘being silent’. In order to do so, John draws on the categories of ‘female partners’ and ‘blokes’ as a way of accounting for a “general pattern” in heterosexual relationships (line 152-156). After many corrections about how to refer to women correctly, John states that in his experience women often say they are not ‘being heard’ and their male partners state that they are ‘listening as hard as’ they can (lines 155-156). Here, John makes use of his own experience and subtly invokes his institutional identity through drawing attention to his experience with other couples (lines 152-156). Using his own experience as a therapist provides the justification for asking whether Judy is ‘being silent’ as well as providing a clarification of the question. Judy takes up John’s account tentatively, but in a way that illustrates that she takes the general account of “gender interactions” as directly relevant to her (lines 163-165). Judy then adds her own explanation – that she might not be heard because she ‘detaches’ herself (lines 164-165) – which John takes up (line 167).

Extract 1k

169. John: >so ARE [you not.<]
170. Judy: [it is ] †it is because I’ve:, I’ve
171. †just (0.2) OH::: (0.2) †I’ll get on with it and
172. do my own thing. an’ when †it’s not <happening.>
173. .hh and it’s going. wrong. .h (0.8) then †I’m
174. blaming Adam cos he’s never †there for me. >but
175. then< (. ) ’some” (.) †I don’t always let †him be
176. there.
177. John: ’no::’=
178. 0 Judy: =cos †I’ve g-=GOT that used to doing it meself.=

In this section, John attempts to follow on from Judy’s assertion that she may be ‘detaching’ herself (line 169). However, Judy takes the floor to provide her own account that she ‘just ...
[gets] on with it’ (lines 170-171). Judy explains that it is only when something goes wrong that she ‘blames Adam’, yet she admits that she does not ‘always let him be there’ (lines 173-176). Hence, Judy provides an account of her actions that places her in the position of needing to change. It is at this point that John puts forward a formulation of Judy’s emotional eating.

Extract 1

179. John: =‘I †know:’ (0.2) so †you’ve __took this (0.2) __role
180. on:,=
181. Judy: =†yeah:=
182. John: =.hh and then you begrudge it.
183. (1.0)
184. Judy: [†yeah: ]
185. John: [fee:l: ] you’ve been taken for granted. (0.2)
186. get ANGRY and cross. (0.2) and FEED yourself.
187. (0.4)
188. Judy: †yeah. (0.2) cos I †get tired an’=  
189. John: =†mm.=
190. Judy: =can’t do †it.
191. (0.2)
192. John: †mm.=
193. Judy: †a:ll:: of the time.
194. John: †mm.

John demonstrates his understanding with ‘I know’ and adds to Judy’s account by stating ‘so you’ve taken this role on and then you begrudge it, feel you’ve been taken for granted, get angry and cross and feed yourself’ (lines 179-186). John is able to extend Judy’s account on her behalf by drawing on the agreed upon terms, which have resulted from the interactional course of action that has been underway, to formulate an account of her emotional eating. Judy demonstrates agreement with repeated use of agreement tokens (lines 181, 184 and 188) and extends her account from John’s formulation with ‘cos I get tired an’ can’t do it all of the time’ (lines 188-193), to which John demonstrates agreement with repeated agreement tokens (lines 189, 192 and 199). At the end of this extract, we see Judy and John build a collaborative
formulation of Judy’s emotional eating, which demonstrates that both co-conversationalists are aligned in their understanding of this problem.

**Discussion**

**Analytic Summary**

In the analysis just presented, we see that Judy gives a common account of her difficulties with her weight, which is that she ‘emotionally eats’ rather than eats when she is hungry. In the extract, we see that John focuses on what Judy is feeling when she emotionally eats, because it is something that she expressly states that she does not attend to. John pursues a line of questioning to elucidate Judy’s feelings on the basis that it is something that she is obligated to know about her own experience. To follow up Judy’s feelings, and reasons for her feelings, in order to add detail to Judy’s account of herself, John suggests feelings that are likely to be associated with Judy’s description of her situation, on the basis of common sense understandings of how people feel in similar situations. Through common sense understandings of how people ordinarily tell stories, John and Judy are able to co-produce an agreed upon formulation of Judy’s difficulties with her weight. John and Judy end with a formulation of Judy’s emotional eating that adds detail to Judy’s original suggestion that she eats when she is emotional, in a way that provides an account of why she eats emotionally; which, in turn, provides her with a strategy for overcoming her emotional eating.

**Implications**

In one way the analyses in this chapter and the last run along the same lines. The therapists and the clients have asymmetrical speaking positions within the clinical psychological interaction, because therapists are in a position to formulate clients’ problems, whereas clients are not in a position to formulate therapists’ problems. However, the therapists manage their speaking position and formulate clients’ problems using ordinary conversational methods.
Hence, the only difference between clinical psychological interaction and ordinary conversational contexts is the privileged speaking position that the therapist holds within the therapeutic interaction.

Drawing out the larger implications of my findings, my analyses in this and the previous chapter suggest that the EM account that specialised knowledge is actually grounded upon common sense knowledge is correct. My analyses show that the assumption of a specialised speaking position plays a role in therapy, but that, contrary to the literature describing the role of the clinical psychologist, clinical psychologists’ specialised position and specialised knowledge are actually grounded upon common sense knowledge. To draw upon my findings in chapter one to support the claim I am making here does not necessarily mean that I am relying on the established, ‘context free’ findings of the technical CA literature.

Instead, in line with EM, I could suggest that my description of the therapy as an interaction in which therapists use common sense knowledge, even though they are generally understood to use specialised techniques, is adequate, because it is grounded on the practices of members in the actual setting I am analysing, and on my own common sense knowledge. I could suggest that my detailed description of one sequence of therapy, in this chapter, demonstrates the ‘context sensitive’ character of members’ practices and does not remove them from the actual setting in which they occur to posit an overarching feature of all social interaction. This however, would contradict my aim to establish an overarching feature of all therapeutic interaction. Instead, I could draw upon my common sense members’ knowledge to suggest that clinical psychologists are generally considered to be in a specialised position when it comes to understanding people’s problems. I could then extend my claim by suggesting that I ‘know’ that therapists – although they are generally understood as being in a privileged position with respect to clients – are actually using common sense knowledge to interpret

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77 Refer to footnote 14, page 9, footnote 26, page 16 and footnote 74, page 84.
clients’ problems, because I have ‘uniquely adequate members’ knowledge of the setting.’ However, to rely purely on my members’ knowledge to support my claim leaves me with an assertion that is unsubstantiated by my analytic descriptions or the interactions between the members in the actual setting I am analysing.

‘Doing Being Ordinary’ and Common Sense Knowledge: The Ordinariness of Social Interaction

There is another important problem with my EM-informed approach to research and my analytic descriptions in this chapter, which is my focus on ordinariness. In this chapter and, to a certain extent, the previous chapter, I have in effect, reduced the clinical psychological setting to a completely ordinary and mundane site of interaction. I have substantially limited my ability to critique, and am left with little more to say on the matter than to state that clinical psychologists do not have specialised knowledge of peoples’ problems, even though they say they do. Indeed, I can say little more than clinical psychological therapy is an ordinary site in which members use methods that they already know and use prior to my descriptions of them, and leave clinical psychologists and clients to the business that they know far more about than myself. The argument that clinical psychological therapy is a completely ordinary and unexceptional site of social interaction would seem to leave me in a very limited position to question the appropriateness of this accepted solution to all problems in living.

My claim that clinical psychological therapy is an ordinary site of social interaction may be all that I can say, and it is in line with Garfinkel and Sacks’s (1970) work. However, the claim that clinical psychological therapy is completely ordinary also extends to all other sites of social interaction. Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, p. 345) state that:

78 The EM notion of ‘unique adequacy’, in this context, means that I have members’ knowledge of the setting of clinical psychology. For a discussion about the ‘unique adequacy requirement’ and my fulfilment of this EM requirement, refer to footnote 68, page 80.

79 I have adopted Thomas Szasz’s (1960) term ‘problems in living’ because it is a term that implies the normalcy of encountering problems in one’s life.
Ethnomethodological studies of formal structures are directed to the study of such phenomena, seeking to describe members’ accounts of formal structures wherever and by whomever they are done, while abstaining from all judgements of their adequacy, value, importance, necessity, practicality, success, or consequentiality. We refer to this procedural policy as “ethnomethodological indifference”.

In the quote above, it is not just clinical psychologists’ practices that are completely ordinary and unquestionable parts of ongoing social life, but anybody and everybody’s practices. If we understand all social interaction as ordinary and commonplace there seems little space to critique or ask questions about the way we understand things. In fact, there seems little point in analytically describing the practices that clinical psychologists - as everyday members – already know and use.\(^80\)

**In Summary**

I am not willing, however, to accept the position that clinical psychological interaction as well as all everyday practical action cannot be questioned. I started my investigations into clinical psychological interaction in order to clarify and critique the practices of clinical psychology, and not to close down the possibility of critique altogether. Hence, I will suggest that we need to amend the method rather than close down the possibility of critique altogether.

In the next chapter, I will employ a discursive psychological (DP) approach to research, which adopts EM/CA as a critical approach, in a renewed attempt to illustrate the problems with natural science informed psychological understandings of the social world. I will suggest that the concept of personality is largely understood as a way of categorising people into natural types according to Objective criteria, using Objective assessment techniques, both inside and

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\(^{80}\) The argument I am pointing to here is not new; in fact, I am addressing one of the core debates in EM informed research. EM’s relation to all other forms of social research and, in particular, whether EM can be considered as a critical approach or a corrective to other forms of social research, is discussed throughout the literature. The debate about whether EM is a critical account centrally revolves around two of Garfinkel’s (1967a, pp. vi-vii) claims: that there is nothing to ‘quarrel about’ in the academic literature, and that theoretical constructions cover over actual practices. For a comprehensive coverage of this debate see Alex Dennis’s (2003) article *Skepticist Philosophy as Ethnomethodology* and Lynch’s (2000) article *Against Reflexivity as an Academic Virtue and Source of Privileged Knowledge*. For related debate about the relationship between discursive psychology, CA and psychology see the debate between Hammersley (2003a, 2003b, 2003c) and Potter (2003a, 2003b). I will address why EM cannot be a critical approach because of its avoidance of theory, in chapter six.
outside the academic discipline of psychology. I will attempt to show the problems with categorising people according to natural types through showing the practices by which a person is categorised as a particular type of person, in the actual practices of clinical psychology. In showing how people are placed into categories that are understood as Objective in the practices of clinical psychology, I hope to draw out the concrete consequences of such practices for clients in the therapy session, which may be overlooked by therapists. In doing so, I will also endeavour to show that EM can be adapted to allow for critique and, in particular, can be used to bring into question understandings of ourselves that are considered to be factual within clinical psychology.\footnote{I am drawing upon Potter, Edwards and Wetherell’s (1993) article, ‘A model of discourse in action’.
Chapter Three: On the Usefulness of the term ‘Personality’ in Clinical Psychological Interaction

Overview

This chapter presents a substantive change from the last two chapters. In chapters one and two, I have investigated the conversational structures of therapeutic interaction; in this chapter I turn to a particular topic of talk: namely the concept of personality. When conducting the analyses for this chapter, I thought that the chapter would play a central role in showing that we could investigate psychological categories of self differently by adopting an EM-informed discursive psychological (DP) approach to research. I thought that through investigating how categories are actually used in social interaction, following the EM insight that categories are social practices (Edwards, 1991; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Hester & Eglin, 1997), I could show how categories of people that are understood as Objective within mainstream psychological research actually work in particular settings. Through showing how the psychological categories of personality actually work in clinical psychological interaction, I hoped to highlight the concrete problems associated with understanding psychological categories as Objective in more general social interaction. However, in the process of analysing clinical psychological interactions, writing the chapter and reflecting upon my theoretical approach to research, I have come to realise that DP cannot help us understand the problems associated with scientific psychological conception of a human subject who can be categorised into natural types. The reason that DP cannot offer an alternative to scientific psychological conceptions of the human condition is that discursive psychologists, along with

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82 Refer to footnote 1, page 1 for an explanation of why I have capitalised the ‘O’ in Objective.
83 For a similar argument that DP can highlight the impossibility of neutral descriptions that ‘orthodox psychology’ uses and how the neutrality of descriptions is actually managed in interaction see Potter, Edwards and Wetherell’s (1993) article. See Charles Antaki, Susan Condor and Mark Levine (1996) and Edwards (1998) for examples of discursive psychological investigations of social identities.
scientific psychologists, cannot account for a personal human agent who speaks and acts. I will address this particular problem briefly in chapter four and in detail in chapter six. However, I want to briefly point to the problem with my DP informed understanding of personality prior to introducing my DP approach to research in this chapter.

In this chapter, I am explicitly focusing upon the concept of personality which is one of the most contentious concepts within the psychological literature (for example see Mischel, 1968, 2004; Swann Jr. & Seyle, 2005). Exactly what ‘personality’ refers to and what is measured by Objective personality tests is debated throughout the literature on psychological testing and personality psychology (for example see Nezami & Butcher, 2000; Rust & Golombok, 1989, pp. 22-38). The well known ‘personality paradox’ suggests that personality theory struggles with the dilemma that while ‘intuition’ seems to suggest that there are stable patterns in a person’s behaviour across different situations, the ‘empirical evidence’ suggests that there is variability in a person’s behaviour across different situations (for example see Alison, Bennell, Mokros, & Ormerod, 2002; Bem & Allen, 1974; Mischel, 1968, 2004). I assumed DP provided a different way of looking at the concept of personality as a psychological category that is made available for investigation in and through the way people talk about personality. In this chapter, I homogenise the psychological concept of personality as being generally understood as an ‘internal’ mental entity and, using a DP approach, simply respecify personality as an ‘external’ category used in talk, in line with EM and DP understandings of social identities, cognitive activities and psychological topics (Antaki et al., 1996; Edwards & Potter, in press, pp. 1-2; Lynch, 2006).84 My simplification of differing conceptions of personality as either an ‘internal’ entity or an ‘external’ term used in talk leads me to conflate psychological terms and categories of self.

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84 I am referring to the DP notion of respecification, which is central to this chapter (Edwards & Potter, in press, p. 1).
However, my simplification of the differing theories of personality as either proposing that personality is ‘internal’ or that it is ‘external’ leads me to acknowledge that I presuppose a particular theoretical standpoint prior to my investigations. This chapter highlights that it is not just that CA assumes a specialised standpoint through which to view social interaction, or that EM does not allow critique, but that EM-informed approaches proceed from taken for granted presuppositions about the nature of the human world. It was only through trying to show the problems with understanding personality as Objective category within clinical psychological interactions, using a DP approach to researching social interactions, that I understood that I too had a particular theoretical approach that informed my understandings of psychological concepts prior to my investigations. In understanding that I proceed from theoretical definitions of psychological concepts prior to investigating actual practice, I could start to bring into question the presuppositions upon which my research rests.

**A Practical Description of the Term ‘Personality’ in Clinical Psychological Therapy**

In the previous chapter, I have used EM/CA, drawing specifically upon Garfinkel’s and Sacks’s original work. Following from my EM/CA approach to research, I discussed the completely ordinary practices of clinical psychological therapy. My approach to research in the previous chapter led to a focus upon the ordinariness of clinical psychological interaction as well as all social interaction. Such a focus on the ordinariness of social interaction, or on common sense knowledge, leads to a position that does not allow critique. In addition, the focus on common sense knowledge seems to suggest that there is little point in analysing practices that members already know and use if we cannot highlight the problematic aspects of these practices.

In this chapter, I wish to show that EM-informed approaches to research can provide a way of critiquing psychological categories, following on from the adoption of EM by DP (Edwards & Potter, 1992). In particular, EM-informed DP can be used to critique the psychological concept
of personality as it is used within clinical psychological therapy.\textsuperscript{85} I will demonstrate through my DP investigations of clinical psychological therapy that categorisation is a social practice that can only be investigated through paying close attention to how categories are produced and made relevant to the participants in interaction (Antaki et al., 1996; Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998). In doing so, I will attempt to show the consequences of using categories as if they are Objective categories in the practices of clinical psychology.

DP stems from adopting EM/CA to study psychological topics in talk-in-interaction.\textsuperscript{86} DP’s project is to respecify psychological categories from cognitive resources to topics of conversation (Edwards & Potter, in press, p. 1). Edwards and Potter (in press, p. 2), the founders of DP, write, ‘psychological categories are analysed as matters being handled, managed, produced, made relevant (etc.) in the talk, rather than as something sitting outside the talk, for analysts to use in explaining it’. For discursive psychologists, the notion of re-specification is central to their investigations and to their notion of critique (Edwards & Potter, in press, p. 1). As Edwards and Potter (in press, p. 1) state, in DP, ‘standard psychological topics are respecified as discourse practices...which often generates a critical stance on cognitive psychology’. I understand the DP concept of re-specification of psychological categories to terms used in talk-in-interaction as being in line with the EM literature, because both approaches understand cognitive concepts as theoretical concepts which gloss over the actual activities through which members produce ‘thoughts’, ‘feelings’ and ‘memory’ as relevant and purposeful in a social interaction.\textsuperscript{87} Hence in this chapter, I will follow DP’s lead and respecify

\textsuperscript{85} For examples of how DP has been adopted to critique psychological categories see Antaki (1996), Mark Rapley and Antaki (1996) and Potter, Edwards and Wetherell (1993).
\textsuperscript{86} DP has other influences (for example see S. Wiggins & Potter, 2008 discussion). However, I shall focus upon the EM and CA influences upon DP.
personality as a topic of conversation, rather than an analyst resource to draw upon to explain social interaction.

The concept of personality is largely understood as an Objective categorisation of people within both academic literature and the popular media. The concept of personality has been a reasonably contentious concept in the psychological literature, but is regaining popularity in both social and clinical psychology (Swann Jr. & Seyle, 2005). The psychological concept of personality is also widely adopted throughout popular media. In this chapter, I want to show how the category of personality, understood as an Objective categorisation of people by both the public and academic psychologists, works to present a stable conception of clients’ behaviours across different situations within therapy.

Hence, in this chapter I will respecify personality from an Objective category that explains people’s behaviour to a members’ category that is used by participants to perform certain tasks within interaction. The notion of membership categories stems from the work of Harvey Sacks (1995b). Sacks (1995b, p. 238) states:

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88 Personality research, in particular dimensional models of personality which seek to describe and explain people’s actions through Objective dimensions of the underlying construct of personality, has gained popularity through the discussion on moving from a category based approach to diagnosis to a dimensional model of diagnosis in the next Diagnostic and Statistical Model of Mental Disorder – Fifth Edition (DSM-V). For the a discussion on the benefits and pitfalls of moving to a dimensional model of diagnosis in DSM-V see the special section in the Journal of Abnormal Psychology published in 2005 (Brown & Barlow, 2005; L. A. Clark, 2005; Cuthbert, 2005; First, 2005; Krueger, Markon, Patrick, & Iacono, 2005a; Krueger, Watson, & Barlow, 2005b; Kupfer, 2005; D. Watson, 2005; Widiger & Samuel, 2005). For discussions on the benefits of the dimensional model of personality in particular refer to Lee Clark’s (2005) article, Robert Krueger, Kristian Markon, Christopher Patrick and William Iacono’s (2005a) article and Thomas Widiger and Samuel Douglas’s (2005) article in the same issue. Also see Clark’s (2007) paper in the Annual Review of Psychology, Timothy Trull and Christine Durrett’s (2005) article in the Annual Review of Clinical Psychology and Samuel’s and Widiger’s (2008) article in the Clinical Psychology Review.

89 For articles about ‘personality’ in the popular media see the following examples. For examples from the see the web sites associated with The Personality Project (Revelle, 2009), The Big Five Personality Test (John, 2000, 2009) and Signal Patterns: Discover the Real Me (Zilca, Naor, Iyengar, & Markowitz, 2008-2009). For examples from magazines see Nicholas Westerhoff’s (2008) article ‘Set in our ways; Nancy Gibbs’s (2008) article ‘Does temperament matter?’ and Johanna Fernihough’s (2009) article ‘Discover your secret strengths’.
The first term is ‘membership categorization device.’ ... That’s the basic thing I’m interested in ... and those things are collections of categories for referring to persons ... there are rules of application where these devices can be applied to populations and members apply them to populations to say things about them, like that that’s ‘a baby.’

Membership categorisation analysis (MCA) is a method for investigating how categories are invoked by, made sense of and used in talk by participants, through examining the membership categorisation devices (MCDs) used by participants and the category bound activities (CBAs) invoked by and inferred from each of the categories used (Hester & Eglin, 1997). In this chapter I will draw upon Sacks’s work on MCDs and the DP notion of re-specifying psychological categories in order to examine how the categories of personality are used in clinical psychological interaction.

**Personality and the Clinical Psychological Setting**

In the following analysis I am concerned with the way in which participants make sense of the category of personality, in one extended sequence of interaction from one therapy session, which is presented in two parts. Through examining one part of one therapy session closely, I aim to capture the way the term ‘personality’ is understood by the participants in detail; rather than analytically glossing over many interactions that use the term. According to Schegloff (1995, p. xxxviii), Sacks finds that a useful way of dealing with practices is to treat them as specific solutions to particular interactional problems. In the case of each practice that is used in a situation, there may be other solutions, but on this occasion in this situation it is this practice that is used as a solution to this particular situation. As such, in investigating practices

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90 Although MCA and CA were both proposed by Sacks, there is a lot of debate about the relationship between MCA and CA. Schegloff (2007b) posits that Sacks moved on from MCA in his later work because the notion of CBAs or predicates were too vague for analytic purposes. However, Maria Wowk, Andrew Carlin (Carlin, 2009; Wowk & Carlin, 2004) and George Psathas (1999) have stated that Schegloff has focused too much on sequence at the expense of membership categorisation. On both sides of the debate, it is agreed that membership categories, devices and predicates must be oriented to as relevant for the participants in the interaction, in order to have analytic significance. There is a debate between Wowk (2007) and Kitzinger (2000, 2008) that nicely illustrates that the issue is about what counts as a ‘member’s’ or ‘participant’s’ orientation.

91 See Schegloff (1987) for a discussion of single case analysis in CA.
we can examine how practices fit together as a solutions to particular and specific interactional problems (Plunkett, 2005, p. 52).

My focus is on how the term ‘personality’ becomes relevant for the participants in the interaction; how the term is used by the participants in and through the situational detail of social interaction; and what is accomplished by the use of the term ‘personality’ in the interaction. My analysis is broken into four sections. In the first section I analyse the introduction of a problem within the therapy session and how it is generalised from a particular problem to a general problem in the interaction; which makes relevant a solution such as ‘personality differences’, because a general problem requires a general solution. In the second section I analyse how the dispute between the couple is produced in the therapy session in a way that disables an agreed upon account of the problem. In the case of a dispute a formulation of the competing accounts becomes the task of the therapist, and a term like ‘personality differences’ is one way of accomplishing this task. In the third section, I analyse how the term ‘personality’ is introduced and oriented to by all participants in the interaction. In the fourth section, I analyse what the term ‘personality’ works to achieve in the interaction once it has been oriented to as relevant by all participants. Hence, I will propose that one way that ‘personality’ is used by participants in the interaction is as a mediating device.

In concluding the chapter, I draw out the wider implications of my analysis of the therapy session in order to show that the term ‘personality’ works in the therapy session because of the widely agreed upon meaning of the term in public and academic discourse.92 The term ‘personality’ is generally understood as a stable feature of a person that accounts for the way they act in situations; and, hence, it is the very notion of stability that enables the term to be used to explain the ongoing dispute between the couple through enduring individual differences in characteristics between the couple. In addition, an understanding of

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92 See page footnotes 88 and 89, page 105 for evidence of this claim.
‘personality’ is generally seen as something that psychologists have privileged access to and, hence, the therapist can use the term to negotiate the differing accounts that each member of the couple gives, of situations in which they experience conflict. The therapist can draw upon personality characteristics which they have access to, rather than the situation in which the couple experiences difficulty, which they do not have access to, in order to manage the couple’s competing accounts. However, I will also discuss the wider implications of my analytic descriptions in terms of how drawing out the meaning of the term for the participants highlights the fact that I proceed from my own theoretical definition of personality prior to investigating therapy. As such, in concluding this chapter I will suggest that DP, EM and CA proceed from theoretical assumptions about the human world prior to investigating the social world.

**Analysis**

**The Problem**

In this chapter, as previously noted, I will investigate one interactional sequence, presented in two parts. The first part of the first extract is where the problem is introduced and is oriented to as a relevant therapeutic problem by all participants in the therapy session. As such, the extract can be understood as the official start of this therapy session, because prior to the extract the talk has centred around ordinary topics, namely how the couple’s recent holiday was. In introducing a problem, the next course of action made relevant to the therapy session is to find an agreed upon account of the voiced problem. As a useful heuristic for examining therapeutic conversation, I would suggest that finding an agreed upon problem is an essential part of the therapeutic interaction.93 This task becomes more difficult when a couple is

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93 Couples therapy has been noted as a particularly difficult form of therapy precisely because it is hard to identify what the problem is through assessment measures, self-reports and therapist formulations (Doss et al., 2004).
involved as there are three participants, rather than two, that need to achieve agreement about the best account of the problem that the couple is experiencing.

Extract 1a: Bell, Sue and Carl Session 1: 15:00-21:00

1. Sue: and that's the only time I gotta bit angry:

2. when. hh. I wanted to do some thing

3. an' hh Carl then says. oh we gonna

4. fit it' l:tke something t'

5. me the effect of: well, do we have

6. time to do that? I jist (0.3) that (.)

7. jist (0.3) set off my [button.]

8. Carl: [No:] [Yeah:]

9. Sue: that's what happens: a lot (. with

10. us. hh) wanna\n
11. do something. that's more for

12. me: or more orientated: hh um we

13. never have time, get there late (. you

14. know and even when we're agreeing I'd say: you

15. didn't get to: know: hh um THAT

16. upsets me. >and it was like: that when we wen-

17. wanted were gonna to the see Buddha (0.2)

18. 'and you were just like: "well we haven't<

19. got time' (0.2)>come on)< (. it's jist

20. the< one thing I've (.) asked to do all

21. we:ek. (0.8)

22. (0.3)

23. Sue: does that make sense?

24. Carl: [Yeah:]

25. Sue: ['you know] what (we're talking about.)'

26. Carl: (sur-) yeah yeah<

94 The section I am analysing in this chapter starts 15 minutes into the therapy session between Bell (the therapist) and Carl and Sue (the couple) and ends 27 minutes into the therapy session. I use two extracts of therapeutic interaction: extract 1 runs from 15 minutes to 21 minutes and extract 2 runs from 22 minutes to 27 minutes.
At line 1, we see Sue introduce a problem with ‘and that’s the only time I gotta bit angry’. Sue follows her utterance with an account of the particular instance on their holiday where this occurred (lines 2-6). At the end of Sue’s account we see Sue extend the singular occurrence of a problem on holiday into a general problem in the relationship, with the statement ‘and that just...set my off button because that’s what happens a lot with us’ (lines 6-10). Here we see Sue upgrade her anger from ‘a bit angry’ to ‘set off my button’ and produce her anger as a reaction to a general problem in the relationship, rather than a response to the particular situation on their holiday. Sue then gives an account of the general problem, which is that there is never time for her to do what she wants to do including ‘the one thing’ she wanted to do while they were on holiday (lines 10-21). Sue finishes her account with a request for acknowledgement of her account by asking ‘does that make sense?’ (line 23).

In response to Sue’s question, Carl demonstrates that he is familiar with the problem. Early in the extract, Carl’s hearably dismissive ‘no’ (line 8) suggests that he is familiar with Sue’s complaint. However, in Carl’s response to Sue’s request, we are left with no doubt that Carl recognises the problem, with his emphatic agreement tokens in lines 5 and 7. Carl’s resounding agreement, and possibly his ‘no’, are hearable as Carl agreeing that it is a general problem in the relationship, or at least a regular complaint made by Sue.

The important point that we can see in this extract is that the problem is established by Sue and acknowledged by Carl as a general problem in the relationship. It is clear from the interactional sequence that it is a problem that warrants intervention as it is not a momentary concern, but is established as an ongoing problem that has not been resolved by the couple.

In the next extract, immediately following extract 1a we see Bell provide a formulation of the problem which subtly shifts who is accountable for the problem.

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95 See Schegloff’s (2005) article ‘On complainability’ for a detailed discussion of how people raise complaints.
Extract 1b

28. (1.2)
29. Sue: not that I was: ↑you ↓know: >it wasn’t t-< >↑I
30. mean< I ↑was >quite happy to go with the flow< and
31. jist do:::, >whatever< ’an’ >go to the beach< an’
32. (0.8) >so, ↑we pretty ↑much did<(0.2) ↑what ↑we
33. ↑wanted ↑to ↑do.
34. (0.9)
35. Sue: >but it was jis’ this< ↑one ↑moment where I jis’
36. went ↑oh: ↑no: >this jis’< reminds me o(h)f i(h)t
37. lat(h)ely .hh ↑what ↑happens ↑with ↑us.
38. (0.2)
39. Bell: mkay .hh so:, what I:’m: ↑hearing, .hh ↑is ↑that
40. it’s very ea::sy: <for you> t’ .ptf:: ↑pass. ↓off:. (0.4)
41. ↑some↓thing that, you: want, t’ do:. ↓.hh’
42. b’cause, >me*r me*r< Carl ↓might ↓(0.4) ↑say:
43. ↑some↓thing that, you: <take as being> (0.9)
44. u(h):m*:: we’ll ei*ther <critical> or:: (0.5) that
45. he’s ↓not <interested>. ↓so you’ll blow off what
46. you want to do an’ (1.1) make allow:ances for that.
47. >but< ↑>bita< resentment? in the background. ↓am I
48. [right?< am I ↑↑hearing ↑”that right?”]
49. Sue: ↓yeah ↑that- ↑yeah: >probably< ↓yes: cos
50. I ↑tend to ↑do: what ↑I thinks better for everybody
51. f:ir:s:[t
52. Bell: ↓↑mm↓↓m::
53. Sue: ↑”yeah” he hhh.

At the beginning of this extract, we see Sue contextualise her account to suggest that she was ‘happy to go with the flow’ (line 30) most of the time (lines 29-37). Bell’s account demonstrates noticeable delicacy as it is marked by hesitations and a careful phrasing of the problem (lines 39-48). Drew and Heritage (1992a) have noted the doing of delicacy in therapy is used to promote agreement from the participants in the therapy session. In addition, packaging the utterance between two repetitive reflective listening devices ‘what I’m hearing’
(line 39) and ‘am I right, am I hearing you right?’ (lines 47-48) locates the production of the account with Sue and thereby neutralises Bell’s stake in the account given.

Of most interest in Bell’s reformulation is the way in which she subtly shifts who is accountably responsible for the problem. In the terms of Sue’s account of the problem, it is Carl who is hearable as the person who needs to “fix” the problem as he is the one who is not allowing time for what Sue wants to do (lines 1-21). Bell shifts who is accountably responsible for “fixing” the problem to include Sue through the repetitive use of ‘you’ in lines 41, 43 and 45. Bell’s use of ‘you’ works to produce Sue as having an active role in allowing Carl to ‘pass off’ what she wants to do. In addition, it is in this extract that we first see the subtle shift from actions to ‘perceptions’ of actions that Bell continues to pursue throughout the analysed section. The problem becomes how Sue ‘takes’ the situation rather than what Carl actually does in the situation (line 43). The use of ‘you’ and the subtle shift to ‘perception’ allows Bell to present the problem as needing a solution that requires both members of the couple to change: one feasible solution would be for Sue not to ‘pass off’ what she wants to do and for Carl to not allow Sue to ‘pass off’ what she wants to do.

Sue takes up Bell’s formulation with a strong agreement which can be seen both by the overlap at line 49 and by the repetition of agreement tokens that Sue uses to begin her turn; ‘yeah that yeah probably yes’ (line 49). In addition, Sue demonstrates her agreement by providing an account in terms of the formulation Bell has just provided (lines 49-51). Sue’s agreement, in turn, elicits agreement from Bell with ‘mhmm’ (line 52). Hence, at the end of Bell’s formulation of the problem we see a typical agreement sequence which demonstrates that Bell and Sue have established an agreed upon account of the problem.

96 Double quotes indicate that I am providing and analytic gloss of the extract. Refer to 50, page 45.
At the beginning of this extract we see a continuation of Sue’s account of the problem in Bell’s terms: Sue repetitively admits that she ‘should have just gone’ (lines 56-62). Sue ends her new account of the problem with laughter. Bell responds to Sue’s laughter by posing the “light-
hearted” question ‘are you driving yourself mad?’ (line 63). Sue takes up the question as “light-hearted” through agreement and continued laughter, laughter that is accepted by Bell’s laughter (lines 63-65).97

In lines 66 to 68, Sue concludes the laughing sequence with ‘it doesn’t matter’. Possibly due to the “light-hearted” response from Bell, Sue downgrades the importance of the problem she has voiced. Bell responds quickly with ‘it does matter’ (line 69), which Sue answers with an agreement token (line 70). It is at this point in the interaction that Carl joins the conversation with ‘it does matter yeah’ (line 71) and, hence, we have agreement between all three participants.

Bell takes the opportunity of the shared agreement to suggest that the problem being described ‘probably happens quite a lot’ (lines 72-74). Here again we see an extended agreement sequence between all three participants. At this point in the therapeutic interaction the participants have established a general and agreed upon account of the couple’s relationship trouble.

As we might expect from the heuristic that therapy is a process of finding the problem and then presenting the solution, after the problem has been established as agreed upon, Bell takes the conversational floor to present a question that orientates the therapeutic interaction to finding a solution.

*Extract 1d*

84. Carl: kerHHH. (0.2) [hh.]
85. Bell: how [are] you:: going to make Carl
86. rea:lise: (0.3) that it does <matter>. .hh you:r
87. piggy ↓bank: (0.6) is: as <important> as ↑Carls,
88. Sue: ’>yep<’

97 Laughter is both the invitation for another to laugh and the acceptance of the invitation to laugh according to Jefferson (1979).
In lines 84 to 86, Bell formulates a question that incorporates the agreed upon term ‘it does matter’, which orients the conversation towards a solution. If the problem is that Sue considers what she wants to do as not important, then the solution is for her to ‘make Carl realise that it does matter’ (lines 85-6). Sue offers the acknowledgement token ‘yep’ at line 88, which enables Bell to continue to move towards a solution (lines 89-90). However, Bell is not able to end her question, as Carl interrupts, which we see in the next extract.

The Dispute

In the next extract, we see the introduction of a dispute between the couple about the ground upon which to understand the problem they are experiencing. Carl and Sue disagree about the reasons for the relationship problem, which derails Bell’s efforts to move towards a solution as the solution would look different depending upon whose account of the problem is taken up. Hence, agreement about the problem in couples counselling is consequential for the interaction as it establishes ground for the solution to be found, in terms of who is required to do what to “fix” the relationship.

Extract 1e

91. Carl: ↑that’s ↑right. wel- (. ) th- (0.4) n- ye:ah: >and
92. I< (. ) >bin< (. ) it is a ve:ry:, for us it’s a
93. very important point. because a*n’ the:, (0.3)
94. ↑normally for ↑me, (0.4) >I mean it’s< (0.3) ↑I
95. ↑feel, (2.0) ↑these sorta situations, ↑I get ↑I get
96. frustrated ↑like ↑you: say, you wanna to go to your
97. <grandmothers> an’ you wanna go to a garden show,
98. and you wanna do:, (0.2) ↑three or four ↑things: in
99. a day. (0.4) and then, (0.4) it’s ↑like (. ) ↑three
100. o’clock in the af’:noon: and we’re still ↑at number
101. ↑one (0.3) which is your ↑grandmothers:.  
102. (0.2)
103. Bell: ye::ap
104. Carl: [¡how: we gonna >fit< i:n,
105. Bell: ’mm::’
106. (2.4)
107. Carl: and ge- and get the kids ho:me at a reasonable time
108. >blah blah blah.<
109. (0.2)
110. Carl: that’s when I- that’s why I: get frustrated.
111. (1.8)
113. (0.2)

At the beginning of this extract, we see Carl’s interruption of Sue’s turn. Carl’s turn is hearable as an interruption as he does not orient to Bell’s turn being recipient designed98 for Sue and starts in the middle, rather than the end, of Bell’s turn construction unit (TCU)99. Carl starts his turn with a token agreement (lines 91-93). After a series of formulation markers and hesitations, Carl warrants his interruption through using a prospective indexical phrase, ‘these sorta situations’,100 as the source of his ‘frustration’ (lines 95-96). Carl’s account is given in lines 96 to 110, and could be glossed as ‘these sorta situations’ arise because Sue wants to do too many things in a day; rather than the current shared account of Sue being too easily swayed by Carl’s lack of interest in what she wants to do (or Sue’s original account that Carl does not allow time for things that she wants to do). Carl uses a hypothetical example of a list of things that Sue might want to do in a day, which is hearable as an unreasonable number of activities

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98 The term ‘recipient designed’ is introduced by Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson to denote that a turn can be produced in such a way that it is hearably designed for a particular participant to answer the question. Or in other words, when the first speaker selects the next speaker to talk, this can be done through designing the utterance for a particular speaker rather than referring to them by name (Sacks et al., 1974; Sacks & Schegloff, 1979). For more detail on the structure of turn taking refer to page 47 in chapter two.

99 A TCU is a single unit of talk (Sacks et al., 1974). Refer to footnote 50, page 37 for a full definition.

100 The term ‘prospective indexicals’ comes out of Sacks’s work (Sacks, 1974, 1995b). ‘Prospective indexicals’ are words that do not yet indicate the topic of the talk, but indicate that the topic will be subsequently revealed. ‘Prospective indexicals’ are usually used to introduce a story and give some frame of reference as to how to interpret the story (Goodwin, 1996). In this extract I am calling ‘these sorta situations’ a ‘prospective indexical’ because they work to indicate that something will be brought up by Carl, but the topic has not yet been named. However, in therapy, ‘prospective indexicals’ do not work as a frame of reference so much as they work to cover over what will be said until such time as there is a chance in the conversation to provide an account.
for anyone to accomplish in one day (lines 91-101). Interestingly, Carl ends his account by using the membership categorisation device (MCD) ‘kids’ to position his frustration as resulting from a concern for the ‘family’, rather than merely his personal dislike of too many activities (lines 107-110).

*Extract 1f*

114. Sue: >only when it’s what I wanna< do: (0.2) ‘>if it’s<’
115. what you: wanna do you’ll sit there >and have
116. another< beer: >you know what I mean like,
117. (0.2) Carl seems to forgets time >when it< (0.3)
118. he’s doing something he wants, [>to do<
119. Carl: ye:ah but you: >do
120. that< as well: (0.4) >that’s:<
121. [the ↓point I’m tryna’ make.]
122. Sue: [um:::: hhhhh. ]

In lines 114 to 116, following Carl’s explanation, Sue re-instates her original explanation, as she puts forward that Carl only complains of ‘running out of time’ when avoiding what she wants to do. Carl responds in lines 119 to 120 with ‘yeah, but you do that as well’ and then, after a pause, re-presents his account (lines 119-20), to which Sue responds with an exasperated out breath (line 122). At this point, there are two explanations of the problem back on the table, which halts any move towards a solution at this point in the interaction.

In the next extract, we see Bell drop her explanation of the problem and attempt to reformulate the trouble in terms of difference. This is the first time that Bell attempts to co-formulate the couple’s differing accounts.
At the beginning of this extract, Bell attempts to mediate the preceding disagreement between Sue and Carl through presenting a co-formulation of the couple’s differing accounts (lines 123-128). Bell presents her formulation in terms of a ‘fishing device’,\(^{101}\) to suggest what the difference might be so that it can be confirmed or denied by the couple. Bell delicately prefaces the suggestion with ‘I’m wondering’. Although, through the use of difference, Bell presents the formulation as neutral, Sue’s account of the trouble is noticeably dropped in favour of a formulation more oriented to Carl’s account of Sue wanting to do too much in a day.

**Extract 1h**

129. Sue: [’’>don’t know<’’ ]
130. (1.6)
131. Sue: don’t know [>cos it’s just<,] I _mean [>we’re pretty]=
132. Carl: [.hhh KHH. ] [hhhh. ]
133. Sue: =biz;< ;like, (0.3) >you know< on the weekend we do: do a lot; >like we’re not the sort of people that< stay at _home _an’, >do gardening< (.) >you know< we’re hh. hh hh >sort of< out there from >the minute we can be ¡aren’t ¡we:? (0.2) >and then;<_

Sue overlaps the end of Bell’s turn with ‘don’t know’ (line 129) and then after a substantial pause reiterates ‘I don’t know’ (line 131). Sue’s repeated use of ‘I don’t know’ and the pause

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\(^{101}\) Refer to pages 62 to 66, in chapter two for a discussion of Pomerantz’s notion of ‘fishing devices’. 
indicate that she does not agree with Bell. Sue presents the ground for her disagreement through producing a contrast between the “type of people Sue and Carl are” and the “type of people they are not” (lines 134-139), placing herself and Carl in the same category rather than opposing categories as Bell has done. Sue draws upon the relational ‘we’ to present Carl and herself as aligned in their views. Sue presents Carl and herself as a couple who like to do lots of activities in a day; which shows Bell’s formulation to be incorrect, as ‘doing a lot’ is presented as a similarity rather than a difference. To end her disagreement, Sue attempts to validate her account as shared by asking Carl, ‘aren’t we?’ (line 138). After a pause, that noticeably lacks an agreement token from Carl, Sue attempts to expand her account, in the next extract, but it is halted by overlapping speech from Carl and Bell (lines 138-139).

Extract 1

140. Carl: [>yeah ,but<]
141. Bell: [>but< who:se] choice is that.
142. (0.8)
143. Bell: .hhh
144. Carl: u::h: yeah I’d- well yeah >I feel that< ‘>you
145. know” you ¡try an’ pack too much in:
146. (1.4)
147. Carl: and then (0.2) and then (0.2) >you know< inevitably
148. ¡some:thing ¡goes ¡wrong >you know< the ca:r won’t
149. start ’or the’ (0.7) u::m: (1.2) >you’re jist about
150. t’< lea::ve: and some:body and the an’: uncle (0.5)
151. uncle leo <arrives> >and there’s another< ¡hour (.)
152. ¡oh hello every:body: >hello an’ goodbye< an’ (1.0)
153. hel:lo:? (1.2) ’>you know<’ >and now (we’re st-
154. still) got an hour we’re yeah we’re< down to two
155. fit the next four things in.
156. (1.3)
157. Carl: so that, (1.1) and that’s: s: was the ¡same ¡thing
158. that af:’noon in ¡broo:me. ’>you know<’
159. (0.4)
Carl: I knew, you wanted to go to the tornado at four o'clock and there we are at four o'clock we're still at the café.

Carl: at four but now it did work but we're still at the café.

Carl: >at four=t-< now it did work out but<

Bell: [mm:]

Carl: >it< wouldn't 've taken much:

Bell: [mm:]

Carl utters ‘yeah but’ (line 140), which displays his intent to disagree with Sue, but it is Bell who takes the floor. Bell’s utterance ‘but whose choice is that’ (line 141) is ‘retrospectively-prospectively’ packaged as a rhetorical question because Carl takes the floor next to proffer his agreement with Bell’s formulation of Sue and, in turn, his disagreement with Sue. If, alternatively, Sue had taken the next turn at talk, then it is likely that Bell’s utterance would have been taken up as a question. In its current form, however, Bell’s utterance works to bolster Carl’s account of the situation and to challenge Sue’s account.

In Carl’s agreement with Bell’s formulation of Sue he repeats Bell’s wording by stating ‘yeah I feel that...you try an pack too much in’ (lines 144-145), which works to align himself with Bell. Carl’s utterance, here, is softened through the use of the phrase ‘I feel’. However, in combination with Bell’s rhetorical question, ‘but whose choice is that’, the ‘I feel’ works to present Carl’s utterance as possibly something that he may not have been able to admit before.

102 The term retrospective and prospective was introduced by Garfinkel in his book *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Garfinkel, 1967a, p. 41). The term refers to the sequentially organised nature of talk and the indexicality of language, such that ambiguous words or phrases can be left for the hearer to interpret the meaning is from the next speaker’s utterance and the next speakers’ utterance establishes the meaning of the term. The notion of ‘retrospective-prospective’ relates to Garfinkel’s notion of ‘indexicality’; refer to footnote 40, page 30, for a discussion of this concept. So here the question ‘but whose choice is that’ is a hearably ambiguous phrase because it could be taken up as a rhetorical or answerable question. That is, ‘retrospective-prospective’ refers to the dual character of social order characterised as accountability-reflexivity previously discussed in chapter one. However, the meaning is clear from the next turn at talk. Hence, retrospectively-prospectively indicates that each utterance needs to be examined in terms of the context in order to see what made the utterance relevant (prospectively available) and how the utterance was taken up by the next speaker (retrospectively positioned).
and that definitely has the effect of positioning Sue as the decision maker in terms of how they spend their days. Subtly, this undermines Sue’s account of the trouble as, in this sequence, she is produced as the person who contributes actively, not just passively, to the trouble they are experiencing. Carl gives an extended explanation of the trouble, in the terms of Bell’s formulation, through presenting another typical example of how they run out of time in the day and then brings this example back to his original explanation for the incident that occurred on their holiday (lines 147-168).

**Personality as a Mediating Device**

*The First Introduction of the Term ‘Personality’*

Bell’s first attempt to formulate the couple’s difference does not accomplish any agreement between Carl and Sue about the problem that they are having. In fact, Bell’s formulation of the difference between Sue and Carl leads to further disagreement. This failure may be due to Bell’s formulation being retrospectively-prospectively produced as siding with Carl over Sue. However, it could also be due to the structure of disagreement, which generally leads to further disagreement once it has begun (Garcia, 1991). Either way, Bell takes the floor to move toward another attempt at reformulating the couple’s disagreement in terms of difference.

In the next extract, we see Bell introduce the term ‘personality’ into the interactional sequence. As we have seen from the previously analysed section of the extract, the ground for a term like ‘personality’ has been set up; as the relationship problem has been identified as a general problem, there is a clear difference in accounts between Sue and Carl and Sue has introduced the idea of different ‘types’ of people. In addition, ‘personality’ may be advantageous for Bell to use because it is a term that specifies a difference without naming what the difference is. Bell may opt for such a term because her attempt to name the difference specifically has been unsuccessful. That is, the challenge in this interactional
sequence is to stop the dispute and acknowledge the difference between Sue and Carl in a non-specific way.

Extract 1j

170. Bell: .hhh so, ↓tell >me ‘bout< personality styles here.
171. (0.3)
172. Carl: >woul[dn’t ‘ve<<=
173. Bell: [tell me, ]
174. Carl: ↓taken MUCH and that plan >wouldn’t ‘ve< come off.=
175. Sue: =>o:h >we’re< completely [different ]=
176. Carl: [>that< that’s:]
177. Sue: =in ↓that (. ) ↓you’re right, I mean >in th<
178. >in;the< ↓workplace: (. ) we’re completely
179. different. (0.2) ↓animals >in that< I was >an<
180. e;vent organi:ser: .h >fifty thousand things in my<
181. ;he:ad:, I never .hh >(that’s my de-) < you know
182. >daderderderder<< >hundred and one< things: on >the
183. go< Carl >jis< >wouldn’t be able to< ↓co:pe,
184. [with ]=
185. Bell: [>↓mm<]
186. Sue: =that >sort of< work, ↓and I >wouldn’t be able t<
187. (. ) ↓work, the way he ↓does:.
188. (0.2)
189. Bell: ""mm"
190. (0.2)
191. Sue: ↓we ar:e, very different in that, aren’t we?
192. (0.5)
193. Carl: ↓mm;h[mm.
194. Sue: [=i’ve always got like< .h I(h): >al(h)ways
195. h(h)ave li(h)ke fi(h)fty ↓thou(h)sand< ↓things on
196. the go:.
197. Bell: ""mhm"="
198. Sue: =at once. >that was in< .hh ↓that’s why I was good
199. at that ↓Jo:b.
200. Bell: 'mmm'= 122
201. Carl: =:mm but I always feel, you set yourself up for
202. that ^failure >and th< and then I: cop the
203. blame:

After a lengthy pause in Carl’s account of the problem, Bell re-enters the interaction by asking an open question about ‘personality styles’ (line 170). Bell’s question is not recipient designed for either member of the couple, which enables Bell to avoid orienting to Carl’s account of the problem or negotiating between the two candidate accounts. The term ‘personality styles’, at this point, is empty and therefore provides a way for Bell to re-introduce difference into the interaction without naming the difference specifically. Through the open ended question Bell uses here, Bell demonstrates an understanding that her last question, which did name the difference specifically, misfired, as it did not help to resolve the disagreement.

After a brief pause, Carl and Bell compete for the floor (lines 172-173). Bell utters ‘tell me’ (line 173), which shows an attempt to expand her previous question. However, it is Carl who obtains the floor. Carl opts to continue his previous account with ‘wouldn’t have taken much and that plan wouldn’t have come off’ (lines 172-174) rather than orienting to Bell’s question.

Sue’s next turn, which is latched to the end of Carl’s turn, provides an answer to Bell’s question (line 175). Carl attempts to interrupt Sue’s turn but is unable to regain the floor (line 176). Sue orientes to Bell’s question as pertaining to differences between her and Carl, as shown in her statement, ‘oh we are completely different in that’ (lines 175-176). Attending to Bell’s question, enables Sue to ignore Carl’s continuation of his (disagreeing) account. Sue then states, ‘you’re right’ (line 177), which demonstrates alignment with Bell; and then corrects her previous utterance to ‘in the workplace we’re completely different’ (line 177-179).

Discussing their difference in terms of how they work has distinct advantages for Sue at this point in the conversation. Firstly, talking about their differences in terms of the workplace enables Sue to hold to her previous account of their similarity at home, as it is understandable.
that they may be different at work while still liking to do the same things at home on the weekend. That is, the workplace provides a way in which Sue can safely discuss their differences as it represents a space in which they can be unproblematically different because they are not negotiating shared activities in this setting. Secondly, it enables Sue to present their differences as reasonably equal with the statement, ‘Carl just wouldn’t cope with that sort of work and I wouldn’t be able to work the way he does’ (line 183-187). Presenting Carl and herself as “equal but different” enables Sue to attempt to garner agreement from Carl, which she does with the phrase ‘we are different, in that, aren’t we?’ (line 191) to which Carl proffers a receipt token (line 193) (although this may not demonstrate agreement as he attempts a continuation of his account of the problem shortly afterwards). Thirdly, as we see with the continuation of her turn after Carl’s receipt token, Sue is able, to present her ‘packing lots in’ as a distinct advantage in her working, environment with ‘that’s why I was good at that job’ (lines 198-199); which turns Carl’s accusatory account of her “characteristic” of ‘packing lots in’ into a positive attribute.

Carl re-enters the conversation at this point, stating ‘but I always feel, you set yourself up for failure and…I cop the blame’ (lines 201-203). Carl’s utterance here demonstrates that Carl has not oriented to either Bell’s question or Sue’s answer a strong and direct continuation of his previous account. Carl’s short, direct and accusatory finish to his account suggests that he is orienting to his own account of the problem which is not being attended to by either Bell or Sue. Carl’s refusal to attend to Bell’s question and Sue’s answer illustrates that he is not on board with the interactional project of introducing difference as a way of resolving or moving the dispute forward. Therefore, Bell’s second attempt to mediate the disagreement through difference does not succeed.
In response to the strong accusatory tone of Carl’s last utterance, Bell, as mediator in this setting, responds to Carl by momentarily aligning herself with Sue before introducing the notion of difference again.

_Extract 1k_

204. Bell: pt. okay well- let’s have a er let’s, (0.2) u::m::,
205. (0.4) .pt. h re re think this. .hh because __ (0.2)
206. her own::, on Sue’s (. ) own, she could probably ( .)
207. fit >all those things< in [quite ]=
208. Carl: [aye.
209. Bell: =nicely [and ]=
210. Carl: [yes:]
211. Bell: =has ↓done.
212. Carl: yes:
213. Bell: >but< does that mean, it suits the way <you:: like
214. to do life?>
215. (2.2)
216. Carl: not really I− ‾ ‾ I (0.5) ↓I like to ‘ave a li:ttle
217. >bit< mo:re ↑up my sleeve.
218. Bell: ↑o: kay:
219. (1.6)
220. Bell: ‾ ↑okay" .hhh ↑so this is a really< ↑big
221. ↑diffe:rence >that< e*r a*nd ↓one that caus:es
222. conflict. (0.4) you can fit in fifty thousands
223. things: you like to do a ↑cou:ple.
224. (2.0)
225. Carl: no I like to do a ↑few things, >but< I ↓like t’
226. have a< (. ) ↑li:ttle ↑bita :slack ↑up ↑my ↑sleeve
227. you know? ↓in ca:se: the car doesn’t start. ↓in
228. ca:se: >one of the< ↑kids: throws a ↑tan:trum.
229. (0.7) >it< doesn’t rui:n the who:le da:y.

103 Here I am drawing attention to the similarities between the structure of disagreement in mediation presented in Angela Garcia’s (1991) work and the disagreement structure in this clinical psychological interaction.
In this extract, Bell enters with a positive formulation of Sue’s character, which could be glossed as “she can probably fit a lot in her day when she’s by herself” (lines 204-211). At the end of Bell’s formulation Carl offers three overlapping agreement tokens indicating strong agreement with Bell (lines 208, 210 & 212).

In lines 213 to 214, Bell re-introduces the notion of difference to formulate an account of the conflict between Sue and Carl, by asking Carl, ‘but does that mean it suits the way you like to do life?’ (lines 213-214). In Bell’s question ‘but’ is used as a disclaimer to indicate that, despite Sue’s preferences suiting her, it does not mean it ‘fits’ him. The ‘but’ combined with the emphasised ‘you’ encourages Carl to see himself, and his preferences, as separate from Sue’s in a way that is neither right or wrong.

After a lengthy pause, Carl takes up Bell’s suggestion that it is, indeed, not the way that he ‘likes to do life’. Carl then gives the ground for his preference in terms of the commonsensical practical reason, ‘I like to have a little bit more up my sleeve’ (lines 216-217). At line 216, Bell takes up Carl’s acceptance of the suggestion that they might ‘like to do life’ differently with the acknowledgement token ‘okay’.

After another long pause at line 219, Bell presents an upgraded formulation of the difference. Bell emphasises the difference through using the extreme case formulation104 ‘really big difference’ (lines 220-221) and through contrast pairing two extreme cases: ‘you can fit in fifty thousand things; you like to do a couple’ (lines 222-223). In the contrast pair, Bell makes use of Sue’s previously uttered phrase ‘fifty thousand things’ in order to align herself with Sue. However, this also instates Sue’s carefully managed “work identity” as a “general characteristic” of her.

104 The term ‘extreme case formulation’ is introduced by Pomerantz (1986) to describe turns at talk that use extreme terms in order to legitimate claims in interaction. Here, the extreme case contrast is not so much being used to legitimate Bell’s claim as it is to emphasis the difference in order to make relevant another attempt to formulate the difference between the couple.
After another drawn out pause, Carl directly disagrees with Bell using a forthright ‘no’ (line 225). Carl states the ground for his disagreement as ‘I like to do a few things’ (line 225) and then repeats his practical reason for this, ‘I like to have a little bit of slack up my sleeve’ (lines 225-226), which he extends and bolsters through the use of typical examples of things that can go wrong in a day (lines 227-228). Carl’s response to Bell’s question seems to orient to warding off the accusation that Carl’s preference for a ‘couple of things’ may be taken up as lazy, as it works to reinstate his preference for fewer tasks in a day as “practical”. However, his utterance could also be a disagreement with the size of the difference between himself and Sue that Bell has presented. Either way the most important point in this extract is once again that Bell’s co-formulation of the problem does not accomplish alignment with Carl and leads to an extended account, from him, giving the ground for why he likes ‘a little bit of slack up his sleeve’; which leads to the dispute between Carl and Sue reigniting.

**Second Introduction of the Term ‘Personality’**

At this point, I am going to skip over the disagreement between Sue and Carl and move to the next attempt by Bell to co-formulate Sue and Carl’s difficulties in terms of difference. (There is a minute of the conversational sequence missing from the transcript.) At this point in the interactional sequence Bell has attempted to formulate Sue and Carl’s difficulties in terms of difference three times; all of her attempts have been unsuccessful in halting the ongoing dispute in the therapy session. In the following extract, Sue draws upon the term ‘personality’ to reinstate difference as important in accounting for Sue and Carl’s trouble. Bell picks up on Sue’s use of the term ‘personality’ in order to ignore the specifics of the disagreement and attempt to formulate the clients’ relationship problems in terms of difference once more:
Extract 2a: Bell, Sue and Carl Session 1: 22:00-27:00

1. Sue: =.hh I think I’ve changed a lot, (0.8) t’ suit him. ;like I used to go out with ;lots of people:
2. an’ I used to do ;lots: of things: and I’ve >jist< ;drop;ped all that. I don’t even recognise mys’,
3. >like I said< I don’t .h so, your righ’, I don’t do >a lot of the stuff< that I: need to do for me:, for my: type of personality.
4. Sue: yeah, so >what< >what< (. ) >what< (. ) I’d like ter- to look at here, a- (0.5) >I know we’ve got
5. these questionnaires and I wanted to talk about them which we< ma- (0.6) we may or may not today.
6. >but< .hh ;what we need to look at he::re:. (0.2)
7. .hh is:: (0.2) personality styles. (0.5) with;OUT
8. looking at what the other one’s: (0.4) do;ing or no*t do*ing (0.6) <we need t’ thi:nk about:
9. Carl: ((cough))
10. Bell: your ow::n: perso;nality ;styles. and what that is
11. brid:ing:> (0.8) t’ this: situat:ion:. (0.7)
12. °okay° (0.2) .hh so::; (0.3) <i:n: ;one: sentence:>
13. (1.8) >sum ·up< your social personality.

At the beginning of this extract, we see the end of Sue’s explanation of her disagreement with Carl’s (and Bell’s) account of her liking to ‘pack too much into the day’ (lines 1-7). Here, Sue provides the ground of the disagreement in terms that suggest that she, in the past, preferred to do lots of activities and see lots of people, but that she has changed and, more to the point, that she has changed for Carl; thus presenting herself in a positive and active light with respect to the relationship. By implication, as she has already changed, it is now up to Carl to change this time. At the end of her account, Sue states, ‘so, you’re right, I don’t do a lot of stuff that I need to do for my type of personality’ (lines 5-7). Noticeably, Sue returns to her first formulation of the problem in the relationship, that she does not do; what she wants to do, uses Bell’s introduced ‘type of personality’; and states ‘you’re right’ to strongly align herself with Bell (and away from Carl’s account).
Bell takes the floor after Sue’s formulation of the problem. She ignores to the highly moral way in which Sue has presented the problem and instead draws upon Sue’s re-introduction of the term ‘personality’ to formulate a question. In addition to the introduction of ‘personality styles’, the therapist provides an account of what the introduction of this term is doing (lines 8-20). In lines 13 to 15, Bell states, ‘without looking at what the other one’s doing or not doing’; indexing both the dispute that is up and running and the nature of that dispute, which has been framed in terms of the different actions that each partner has done to “cause” the problem at hand. In so doing, Bell makes explicit the type of action that she is attempting to accomplish; which is, to stop the ongoing dispute.

Bell then states, ‘we need to think about your own personality styles and what that is bringing to this situation’ (lines 15-18). Framing ‘personality’ in these terms specifically attends to the type of response Bell is pursuing. The noticeable emphasis on ‘your own’ by Bell in line 17 strongly suggests that an answer to the question should entail talking about oneself as opposed to what the other is ‘doing or not doing’; which shifts the conversation away from blaming each other for the problem to speaking about oneself. Adding to her explanation of the question about ‘personality styles’ Bell states, ‘and what that is bringing to this situation’ places importance on describing how ‘your own personality’ affects the situation. Bell carefully avoids naming the difference or any specifics of the dispute with the use of the prospective indexical ‘this’ (line 18), which allows her to reference the ‘problem-at-hand’ without negotiating the differing accounts, because ‘this’ does not reference either one specifically.

In Bell’s emphasis on ‘own personality styles’ (line 17) and ‘what that is bringing to this situation’ (lines 17-18) she produces an account of ‘personality styles’ as underlying and preceding interactional troubles. Drawing attention to ‘personality styles’ establishes the basis upon which the negotiation of the solution can happen, i.e. on the ground of different
personality styles as an explanation for interactional troubles, rather than in terms of the actions of each other.

Noticeably, after invoking the term ‘personality styles’, but before a question is directly formulated, the therapist gives the ground upon which the question makes sense. The first introduction of ‘personality styles’ did not provide a clear ground for the term being used and did not work as a way of resolving or moving the dispute forward. Hence, the explanation provided, enables the term ‘personality styles’ to be used in a fresh way to manage the dispute by making explicit the reason for introduction of this term.

In lines 19 to 20, Bell formulates the question about ‘personality styles’ directly. ‘Okay so’, after a brief pause, separates the explanation of ‘personality styles’ from the question about ‘personality styles’; displaying that the actual question is now being asked. ‘In one sentence sum up’ adds to the list of instructions a time specification, which, overall, leaves little leeway for the dispute to re-enter the conversation at this point. The use of the term ‘social personality’ gives additional information as to the sorts of things that would count as an answer, by orienting to the ongoing dispute between Sue and Carl, which has been discussed in terms of social activities.

Extract 2b

21. Sue: ‘jum’ pt (0.6) hh (0.4) ‘one sentence’ (1.0)
22. u:mm:: (0.8) I ↑like >t’ be around lots< (0.2) I:
23. ↑re- like >to be round lot of< ↑people; (. an::d::,
24. (0.7) <↓↓↓↑enjoy↓↓> (1.3) I ↑enjoy↓↓ (0.3) having >a
25. lot of< (. ) communication with lots- (0.3) lots of
26. people. ↑like (0.2) I’ (0.4) >is that< (0.3) ↑what
27. you me:an? ’=
28. Bell: =yep, (0.2) .hh an::d:: you’re a plan;ner. you ↑fit
29. ↓in as many tas:ks: (0.2) >for as< many:
30. e*nga*gements: (0.3) ↑as possible.’
31. Sue: ‘>yep<’ >but< I: ↑don’t (. ) >like< I ↑don’t really
think I do that. >but< it’s funny that Carl’s picking that out. >cos< I: (0.2) really; (0.2)
DON’T plan: ↑any↓more:: >like< what’s gonna happen on the weekend, we jist say >like< we just toss around and say it’d be good to do (0.3) a few of these ↑things:. (0.5) a lot >of its not< (0.2) you know ↓do or die:, >its jist if we< have time: lets ↑do it.

Sue: does that makes sense↓ [↑that< ]

Sue prefaces her answer with ‘um one sentence um’ (lines 21-22), packaging her answer as a considered response to Bell’s question. The answer given by Sue addresses the requirements produced by Bell: it is succinct, talks about herself and does this in terms of social activities (lines 22-26). Sue ends her account by checking that she has produced an appropriate response (lines 26-27). In Sue’s answer we see that Bell’s invocation of ‘personality styles’, with an account that makes explicit the ground for its introduction, is a useful device. Such a device can move the conversation on to a new topic that orients the accounts given by the co-participants towards descriptions of themselves and, therefore, provides a way of halting an ongoing dispute about ‘what each other is doing or not doing’.

Bell takes up Sue’s account with ‘yep’, but adds her own contribution to the list of attributes that Sue has given about herself (lines 28-30). Bell’s response can, in a way, be seen to violate the rules of the question that she has set up, on two counts. Firstly, Bell adds to Sue’s account of herself, which is an account produced in this context as a description of herself by herself; therefore, Bell’s additions do not orient to the specification that she has laid out in her explanation of the question. Secondly, Bell adds to Sue’s list of attributes characteristics that do not specifically reference ‘social activities’. This violation is oriented to in Bell’s repair of ‘tasks’ to ‘engagements’ in lines 29 to 30. Importantly, as Bell has added to Sue’s account, this leads to Sue disagreeing with the therapist’s additions in the next turn at talk.
Sue accomplishes this by stating, ‘yep but I don’t really think I do that’ (lines 31-32), which produces Bell’s additions as not feasibly attributes of her. ‘But it’s funny that Carl’s picking that out’ places the production of the account of her as a ‘planner’ with Carl rather than the therapist; in so doing, she positions her account as not directly in opposition with the therapist, but with Carl and hence, implicitly rather than explicitly, disagrees with the therapist. Sue provides further ground for her disagreement by reinstating Bell’s suggested difference as a similarity, describing Carl and herself as both liking to do things on the weekend; and presenting the weekend activities as not being planned or required by her unilaterally but agreed upon in a casual way (lines 33-39).

Bell’s additions to Sue’s account of herself lead to Sue re-introducing a discussion about situations in which Sue and Carl experiences trouble; and moving the focus back towards the couple talking about each other rather than themselves. Crucially, this threatens to undermine Bell’s dispute management in interaction, in two ways. Firstly, by Sue’s positioning her account as being in opposition to Carl, her turn provides a possibility for the dispute between Sue and Carl to escalate again. Secondly, Sue’s disagreement with Bell’s assessment of her disposition indicates that she does not completely agree with Bell’s interactional work.

In the next extract, Bell moves the conversation away from Sue’s disagreement by directing the question about ‘personality styles’ to Carl.

*Extract 2c*

42. Bell : [yea:h:] (.) hh (0.4)  
43. okay:, >so< [I’ll ]=  
44. Sue: [’yep’]  
45. Bell: =come back to that. **Carl describe your::: (0.5)**  
46. social. (0.6) personality  
47. (0.4)  
48. Carl: ↑uh::m::↓ (6.9) ’er::m::’ (1.4) very SHY (0.6) in  
49. big groups. (1.0) uh::m::: (2.4) ’’uh’’ ‘nah’ don’t
At the beginning of this extract, Bell displays an acknowledgement of Sue’s account while moving on to other business, namely, providing a turn at talk for Carl to answer the question about his social personality (lines 42-46). The allocation of Carl’s turn works to delay the continuation of any dispute (for the moment). The use of ‘um erm’ by Carl (line 48) is enough for him to demonstrate his uptake of the question, allowing him to hold the floor; and packages his response as a considered answer to the question. Like Sue’s answer, Carl’s answer demonstrates all the requirements produced by Bell for answering the question; it is short, describes himself and does this in terms of social activities. Noticeably, Carl’s account of his ‘social personality’ is in direct contrast with Sue’s account of her ‘social personality’. Sue likes to ‘be around a lot of people’ (line 23), whereas Carl prefers ‘small groups of people’ (line 51). Sue likes ‘communication with lots of people’ (lines 25-26); in contrast, Carl likes ‘interacting with a few people’ (line 52).

The Work Done by the Term ‘Personality’

The contrastive account produced by Carl of his ‘social personality’ establishes a definitive difference between the ‘personality styles’ of the two members of Sue and Carl, which can then be brought in as an explanation for the disagreement between Sue and Carl. Although ‘personality’ is not mentioned in the next two extracts, what is evident is that the category bound activities of a person who is characteristically ‘shy’ are drawn out by Bell and Carl.

Extract 2d

54. Bell: .hhh and if ↑you had <several engagements in one day: (1.0) >that (0.5) hadn’t been (0.7) necessarily planned> but (1.2) ‘you’ could see they were <rolling in> to each other> how would
that affect you?

(1.8)

Carl: ((throat clear)) (1.2) u::m: (0.9) >;yeah I’m<

starting to feel a bit anxious.

Bell takes the floor following Carl’s answer to formulate a question in lines 54 to 58. The question presents a therapist’s ‘gloss’ of the type of person Sue is, identifying her through the types of activities that might be associated with a person who ‘likes to be around lots of people’; while orienting to Sue’s disagreement that she is not someone who ‘plans’, without naming her directly. Advantageously, using the activities to identify Sue positions the question as orientated to the category of people who ‘like to be around lots of people’ in general, of which Sue is a member; generalising the particular situation that Sue and Carl find themselves in. Bell’s end to the question, ‘how would that affect you?’ (lines 57-58), encourages a response from Carl in terms of an internal affective state that results from these types of situations. Generalising the situation orients the question presented to Carl towards an account of how he ‘feels’ in a particular type of situation, rather than an account in terms of Sue’s actions; which works to depersonalise the dispute taking place.

Carl’s answer displays responsiveness to the phrasing of Bell’s question, as he obliges with an answer in terms of the internal affective state of feeling ‘a bit anxious’ (line 61) in reaction to the types of situations Bell has outlined. In Carl’s response we see him draw out a feeling that is a predicate of being a ‘shy’ person, which is ‘anxiety’. Carl’s appropriate answer to Bell’s question allows Bell to pursue an account of the situation in terms of the dispositional, as we see in the next extract.
Bell’s next question, ‘what happens when you get anxious’ (line 63), orients Carl’s answer towards what his shy and anxious character ‘brings to the situation’; which could be seen as a gloss of the earlier question about ‘social personality’. That is, it encourages a response from Carl in terms of what he does in situations where he feels anxious. Carl states, ‘I get anxious cos’ (line 66), in situations where ‘time’s slipping back’ (line 67), producing the anxiety as “caused” by the situation; rather than addressing Bell’s question, which is oriented toward
what actions result from his anxiety. Carl then extends his general answer about getting anxious in situations where ‘time’s slipping back’ by providing a specific example of a situation in which he felt anxious (lines 69-77). While he orients his account to ‘feeling anxious’, his specific example re-states his formulation of the problem as he locates the anxiety as resultant from busy situations and again bolsters his account through using the MCD ‘kids’ in order to present his concern as a “family’s concern”. Importantly, his answer opens up the possibility of further dispute, as he locates his anxiety externally, in terms of the relationship, as opposed to internally. Hence, Bell’s question has misfired, as it has failed to elicit a response in terms of internally driven actions. This is confirmed by her re-formulation of the question after Carl’s extended account of the situations in which he ‘gets anxious’.

Extract 2f

90. Bell: .pt .hh so, how:: does your <anxiety> come across?
91. (1.0)
92. Carl: er::m (3.8) ’we’ll’ I start getting more agitated I think. (0.2) an’ I’ll try ta, (1.0) DEAL with it.
93.  but< >;then eventually it-- (1.0) it builds up to a certain enough level (of:) (0.5) snap Sue’s head off. [>or ]=
94.  Bell: [˚mhm˚]
95.  Carl: =something like that<
96.  (0.3)
97.  Bell: mhmm
98.  (0.5)

In line 90, Bell produces a re-formulation of her question to Carl. ‘Your anxiety’ locates the anxiety as a possession of Carl and ‘come across’ locates the anxiety as prior to action. Re-phrasing the question from ‘what happens when you get anxious’ to the current form, ‘how does your anxiety come across, emphasises the direction of anxiety – through action, to situation – in contrast to Carl’s account of situations causing his anxiety.
In response to Bell’s question Carl states, ‘well I start getting more agitated I think and I try to
deal with it’ (lines 92-93). Prefacing his account in this way enables Carl to present himself as
taking responsibility in ‘dealing’ with his anxiety. Carl then states, ‘but then eventually it builds
up to a certain enough level of’ (lines 92-95), and produces his reported action, ‘snap Sue’s
head off’ (lines 95-96), as beyond his control. Carl uses the softener\(^{105}\) ‘or something like that’
(lines 96-98) to end his account.

Carl’s answer to the question demonstrates responsiveness to the re-formulation of Bell’s
question, as it gives an account of the type of action he might take if he is feeling anxious.
When ‘anxiety’ is invoked as a characteristic of a type of person who ‘prefers small groups of
people’, for the first time we see an account produced by Carl of a problematic action that he
has taken in situations where there is conflict. While Carl’s account of his anxiety is carefully
managed, his acknowledgement that he ‘snaps’, reveals the usefulness of the therapist
introducing the term ‘personality styles’ into the therapeutic interaction as a way of managing
a dispute in a couples counselling session. Introducing the term ‘personality styles’, as a
category of individual difference, encourages the clients to talk about their own actions rather
than their partner’s actions.

**Discussion**

**Analytic Summary**

The term ‘personality styles’ in this interaction is used as a method by which disagreement can
be managed within a couples counselling session. In the extract, presented in this chapter, the
members of the couple are unable to agree upon an account of the ongoing problem that they

\(^{105}\) Edwards (2000) uses the term ‘softener’ to indicate how people can manage extreme case
formulations (ECFs) in ways that are less open to refutation. Edwards (2000, p. 359) states that ECFs are
easily refuted by a single case. Hence, for Edwards (2000, p. 359), softeners work as a response to the
challenge and present the participant as reasonable, while maintaining the generality of the ECF. Here,
Carl states an extreme action taken towards Sue, which he softens in order to downgrade the
seriousness of his stated action.
are experiencing. Each member is working up an account of the problem in terms of what their partner is doing to contribute to the problem. Early in the extract, Sue introduces the general problem, Bell, the therapist formulates the problem, and both Sue and Carl agree with the problem. On the basis of the agreement Bell attempts to move toward a solution, and Carl disagrees with the solution and offers an alternative account of the problem. After several unsuccessful attempts to co-formulate the problem by naming the difference that contributes to the couple’s ongoing problem, Bell introduces the term ‘personality’ in the form of a question about the differences between the couple, without specifying what the difference is, in an attempt to solicit the difference from the clients themselves. The question is picked up by Sue as referring to difference, but Carl continues with his own account of the problem in terms of what he thinks Sue does to contribute to it.

Bell then introduces the term ‘personality’ for the second time. This time she includes an account of her reason for using the term ‘personality’, which is to encourage the clients to talk about themselves and what they contribute to the situations where there is conflict between the couple, rather than continuing to talk about what their partner is contributing to the conflict. Following this second invocation of the term ‘personality’ by Bell, which includes an account of what the term is doing, we see Carl, for the first time, mention something he has done to contribute to a situation where the couple have experienced conflict. As such, when the members of a couple are trying to build opposing accounts of what actually happens and why it happens, the invocation of personality styles is a useful mediating device for the therapist. Invoking the term ‘personality’ is useful for the therapist because it provides a way of formulating the couple’s differing accounts as arising from distinct but equally legitimate individual differences rather than from the illegitimate actions of one of the partners.
Personality as a Members’ Category of Stable Individual Difference

The category of ‘personality’ in the extract presented, in line with the generally accepted understanding of the psychological category of personality, is co-produced by the participants in the interaction as a set of general and stable characteristics that a person brings with them to each situation, and that explains the way in which they conduct themselves in the world. It is the very stability of the psychological category of personality used by the participants in the clinical psychological interaction that enables the term ‘personality’ to do the work of mediating the dispute. In the case of this sequence of therapeutic interaction, we see that the category of personality is co-produced by the participants in the interaction as mediating the relationship between the individual self and their conduct in the situation. It is the unseen, but mediating factor in the interactions between Sue and Carl, as their personalities determine the way in which they perceive the actions of each other and the way in which they act towards each other. Bell’s invocation of the term ‘personality’ enables her to manage the dispute.

In line with general understandings of the psychological category of personality, Bell as a psychologist is understood to have access to this ‘unseen’ factor of personality, which mediates the relationship between Sue and Carl. For Bell, as a psychologist, the psychological category of personality is tied to her expertise. As Sacks (1995b, pp. 169-174, 396-403) and Schegloff (2007b, p. 481) state, some categories are administered by different groups of people. Sacks (1995b, p. 172) puts forward that ‘to some extent “hotrodders” is a category that is by and large employed by kids to characterize themselves’, in contrast with the category of ‘teenager’, which ‘is a category adults administer’ (Sacks, 1995b, p. 399). According to Sacks (1995b, p. 399), the ‘big difference between “teenager” and “hotrodder” is that ... What’s known about those things, “teenagers”, is enforced by adults’. Sacks’s discussion of the

\[106\] For the evidence for this claim see footnotes 88 and 89, page 105. I will attend to the problems with my claim shortly.
category ‘hotrodder’ is in the context of a group therapy session for teenagers. Sacks (1995b, p. 398) extends his claim to suggest that therapists use categories like ‘teenager’ that are administered by adults to enforce the ‘adults [sic] own reality’ in the therapy session. Hence, I could draw from Sacks’s work and my own analytic descriptions and suggest that the category of personality is administered by psychologists and, as such, allows Bell the right to both know something about the clients’ personalities that they might not know about themselves or each other and to manage the therapeutic interaction. Bell, lacking experience of the couple’s behaviour in the actual situations where they experience conflict and difficulty, can draw upon what she does know about the psychological category of personality and how it affects the way people perceive and act in situations, to manage the different accounts given by Sue and Carl.

Implications
From my analytic descriptions about how the psychological category of personality is used in clinical psychological therapy I could argue that I have shown that the category of personality is a useful social categorisation practice. The category of personality is co-produced by participants in the interaction as a psychological category for the practical purposes of managing a dispute between the members of a couple in a therapy session. Hence, I could draw the conclusion that the category of personality is not an Objective category that is, in Edwards and Potter’s (in press, p. 2) words, as I have previously noted, ‘sitting outside of talk’ for psychologists to use to explain the social situation but is rather a ‘psychological category’ that is ‘handled, managed, produced, made relevant (etc.) in the talk’.

I could draw out the further implication that the consequence of understanding a psychological category, such as personality as an Objective category that ‘sits outside the social situation’ is that only when it is understood as such can the category be used to administer the

107 See Antaki, Condor and Levine (1996) for a similar comment.
psychologist’s Objective knowledge. Along similar lines to the last two chapters, I could then suggest a larger critique of psychology from my analytic descriptions, and state that psychologists do not have privileged or specialised knowledge because they are drawing upon common sense methods of social categorisation. Psychologists manage their knowledge as specialised through drawing upon categories that are generally understood to be part of their specialised knowledge, rather than legitimate aspects of their expertise and training.

Pointing to the larger implications of my analytic descriptions to put forward a critique of psychological understandings of personality largely leaves me with the same problem that I addressed in the conclusion of the previous chapter. Namely, suggesting that Objective categories of personality are not, in fact, Objective because they are the same as any other social category – i.e. they are produced by participants as relevant to the interaction for practical purposes – seemingly leaves me with little space for critique. I am left with merely specifying that personality categories are employed in talk for practical purposes and this is how clinical psychologists use them. However, my critique seems unconvincing. My description of personality as a social category used in talk, rather than an Objective psychological categorisation of people made outside of social situations, suggests that I have a different definition of personality to the one shared by the members in the therapeutic interaction.

**Limitations**

Extending my analytic descriptions to talk about the meaning of the term ‘personality’ that the therapist and clients are using in the therapy session described, highlights that I have a different definition of personality to the participants I am describing. However, it also highlights that I could not proceed to describe the interaction without first ‘re-specifying’ the psychological category of personality from a ‘standard psychological topic’ to a ‘discourse practice’ (Edwards & Potter, in press). For therapists to use the category of personality in the way that I have described it being used by therapists relies upon the psychological category of
personality being understood as external to the talk happening in the therapeutic interaction. Only if personality is understood as a set of enduring traits that a person brings with them to each situation, by my own description, can the term ‘personality’ work as a mediating device for a dispute between the members of a couple in the therapy session. I cannot adopt the psychological understanding of personality because I am claiming that how the category of personality actually works can be described by looking at the talk itself. My methodological standpoint starts from understanding the concept of personality as a social interactional category that is ‘handled, managed’ and ‘made relevant’ to the talk by participants (Edwards & Potter, in press). I cannot accept the psychological definition of personality, as I have defined it, because I start by re-specifying it from an ‘internal’ mental concept to an ‘external’ category used in talk. Hence, it follows that my analytic description will not convince other psychological researchers if they do not first accept my re-specification of the term ‘personality’.

My discursive psychological (DP) ‘re-specification’ of the term ‘personality’ is a definition of a psychological concept and my analysis does not work without defining the term ‘personality’ as a useful categorical term that is used in social interaction. Contrary to Sally Wiggins and Potter’s (2008) claim that a central tenet of DP is that ‘it avoids imposing the researchers’ own categories or assumptions onto the data’, discursive psychologists, such as myself, start from an avowedly ‘non-psychological’ and useful definition of psychological concepts, which they use to collect and read the empirical data.108 Discursive psychologists would disagree with my claim and state that they are indifferent to the psychological or non-psychological understanding of ‘psychological categories’ and only interested in how they are actually used in talk by participants (Edwards & Potter, in press, p. 3; Potter, 1996, p. 110, 2003a, p. 798). However, this cannot be the case, because unless they define psychological categories as

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108 I will provide a detailed argument for why the empirical data is not simply a collection of instances of naturally occurring talk, despite EM informed DP’s claim to the contrary (Lynch, 2002; Potter, 2002), in chapter five.
useful, indexical and contingent terms used in talk in the first place, discursive psychologists cannot proceed in their investigations in the way that they do, as I could not.

In addition, unless discursive psychologists understand psychological concepts as not ‘internal’ and not ‘mental’, i.e. avowedly not psychological, their approach will not be different from other psychological understandings of psychological terms. Other psychological researchers from different traditions debate whether psychological concepts such as personality are best understood as a part of the individual or influenced by social situations; DP responds by severing the relation between the individual and the social situation by placing everything ‘psychological’ into social interaction (Edwards, 1997; Edwards & Potter, in press; Potter & Edwards, 1999). Studying psychological concepts as discourse practices, and not as standard psychological terms, is the defining feature of discursive psychology.

The critique of psychological categories that I have put forward, following other discursive psychologists, is not convincing because other psychological researchers would need to accept my a priori theoretical assumption that psychological categories are discursive categorisation practices and not ‘internal’ mental states; particularly as I have defined the term ‘personality’ as specifically non-psychological. The empirical evidence that I present in support of my claim can only be understood as valid if and only if there is an acceptance of my definition of the concept of ‘personality’ as a useful term in the first instance. The DP re-specification cannot work as a critique of cognitive psychological understandings of people, despite Edwards and Potter’s claim (in press, p. 1), because the critique of cognitive psychological understandings is not simply ‘generated’ by paying attention to and analytically describing the practices. I cannot

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109 For discussions on the individual and social influences on personality see, for example, Walter Mischel (1968, 2004), Funder (2001), John Johnson (1997), Laurence Alison, Craig Bennell, Andreas Mokros and David Ormerod (2002) and Nick Haslam (2007).

110 Edwards and Potter (in press, p. 3 emphasis in original) state that it is a misunderstanding that discursive psychologists are only concerned with ‘overt talk about mental states’; and claim that ‘exploring uses of the psychological thesaurus is only part of DP. DP also explores how mental states feature as talk’s business, rather in the same way that CA deals with the relevance of institutional settings and social structures’. However, this does not affect the claim that I am making.
simply present the empirical data and my analytic descriptions of that data as if they are self-evident proof of the position I have adopted, because the empirical evidence is only evidence if you accept my theoretical standpoint in the first place.

The argument that the DP theoretical presupposition that the social world is a set of useful discursive practices, some of which are psychological terms, cannot proceed from the same ground as DP. Discursive psychologists understand reason is only one type of rhetorical practice (Edwards & Potter, 1992, p. 16) and that theoretical concepts are merely terms deployed in talk (Edwards & Potter, in press, p. 3). For discursive psychologists, the assumption that all actions are preformed for practical purposes leads them into a contradiction. If discursive psychologists hold to the claim that all practices – which must include research practices that are held to be a part of the social world – are purely for practical purposes relevant to the situation in which they occur, then we have no reason to believe their claim that this is the case. Martyn Hammersley (2003a, p. 765) points to a similar problem:

The central message of DA is that phenomena could always be constructed differently; and that how they are constructed has consequences, or fulfils certain social functions. But this raises questions about the appeal to data, and to consistency of argument, which discourse analysts make in supporting their own analyses. Why is their analysis itself not to be treated simply as a series of rhetorical moves designed to have particular effects on readers?

Potter (2003a, pp. 791-792) responds by claiming that Hammersley is providing a ‘conceptual approach to DA. It is attempting to identify coherence from a perspective that is itself untroubled by the messy business of doing research’. However, what I am attempting to highlight in concluding this chapter is that DP is not and cannot be indifferent to conceptual analyses or theoretical arguments. Discursive psychologists proceed from a priori theoretical assumptions and a particular theoretical standpoint through which they interpret empirical data as evidence for their approach, yet they cannot account for the basis upon which they make their claims.

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111 DA stands for Discourse Analysis. DA and DP can essentially be read as referring to the same method within the context I am describing it here.
Discursive Psychology and Human Experience

The important reason why discursive psychologists cannot account for the basis upon which they make their claims is that they cannot account for human experience and reason. What discursive psychologists, like myself, lose in the re-specification of psychological concepts, which include thinking (Edwards, 2006), is a personal human agent who speaks, thinks and acts. As Raymond Tallis (2005, p. 27) notes in the context of the anti-psychologism of Frege, but equally relevant here, ‘while psychologism is clearly wrong, an extreme anti-psychologism, which deletes the conscious subject in pursuit of a ‘depsychologised’ account of meaning, truth, knowledge and, indeed, of consciousness, is equally so’. Discursive psychologists, like myself, are pursuing a ‘depsychologised’ account of human action and, in doing so, lose the human experience and reason altogether. Scientific psychological accounts of human behaviour and thoughts lose sight of an aware human agent who thinks, speaks and acts, because, as Tallis (2005, pp. 4-5) notes, ‘what people think they think, what they believe motivates them, is to be discarded as being of little scientific relevance’. However, the DP move to re-specify psychological concepts as useful categorical terms does not recover a personal human agent who thinks, speaks and acts; it simply positions the human actor as a ‘member’ who is a purely competent deployer of members’ methods. Discursive psychologists, despite their (and my own) claims to the contrary (see for example Spears et al., 2005, pp. 546-547), do not recover a human actor who knows what they are doing. Discursive psychologists (Edwards, 1991), following the EM tradition (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; ten Have, 1991), adopt the same understanding of the human actor, with the same problems I am suggesting here. McHoul and Rapley (2001), Wes Sharrock and Graeme Button (1991), Lerner (1996) and Rod Watson (1998). Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, p. 344 emphasis in original) state, “members” are “mastery of natural language,” are “talking reasonably,” are “plain speech,” are “speaking English” (or French, or whatever), are “clear, consistent, cogent, rational speech”. As I shall outline shortly, it is my contention that EM, CA and DP all adopt the same understanding of the human actor, with the same problems I am suggesting here. McHoul and Rapley citation suggest that the notion of the self-interpreting being is compatible with the EM approach, but this is a very contentious claim within the literature and leads to a narrow definition of ‘interpretation’. See footnote 48, page 35 for a discussion of the narrow definition of interpretation.
account for members’ ‘knowledge’ of their own methods by suggesting that one action, in one context, at one time, means the same for everybody and loses the personal meaning that it has for the person speaking.\textsuperscript{114}

Potter (2003a), in response to a criticism made by Hammersley that DA proceeds from a model of the human actor,\textsuperscript{115} states that ‘DA is itself dependent on neither a developed notion of society nor of human beings’. However, here I agree with Hammersley (2003a, p. 763): discursive psychologists’ analytic descriptions could not proceed without assuming the world to be a set of discursive practices, where members are understood as simply deploying discursive actions, in the first place, and discursive psychologists take this position as an exhaustive definition of the social world.

**Summary of Part One**

Ethnomethodologists, conversation analysts and discursive psychologists all proceed from the same assumption: that the social world is a set of orderly methods that can be described from a member’s own perspective outside of theoretical concerns (Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 173). Contrary to Maynard and Clayman’s (2003, p. 175) assertion, the claim that the social world is a set of orderly methods that can be investigated through a members’, and not a theorist’s, perspective is a theoretical presupposition of EM, CA and DP, and is simply not

\textsuperscript{114} Tallis (2005, p. 128 emphasis in original) makes a similar point about language and the human agent, stating, ‘an individual receiving a piece of information does so through the receipt of acoustic or visual tokens. He [sic] has to be placed in such a (physical) position as to be able to experience them. The informational core of communication may be impersonal and centred, or centreless, but the recipient will have his own angle upon, his [sic] own realisation of it. What is more, he [sic] will be in the centre of a field of indexical awareness and will be so located through the preindexical hum of sentience that makes him [sic] explicitly in that field.’

\textsuperscript{115} Hammersley, (2003a, p. 763) critique is that ‘at the same time, the intended product of DA does not seem to be simply explications of what is going on in particular texts. Rather, discourse analysts make claims on the basis of such explications about discursive practices that are available to various categories of actor in particular societies, and about the functions and effects of specific discursive strategies. There are several problems with this rationale. One is that a particular theoretical model of the actor is treated as if it were exhaustive, or sufficient for all purposes. In the case of DA, this is what we might call *Homo rhetoricus* – where the actor is primarily concerned with formulating accounts that are as persuasive as possible, in order to serve his or her interests’. 

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supported by the empirical descriptions they provide. The analytic descriptions of the empirical data I have provided in chapters one, two and three do not provide support for the claim that the social world is orderly and observable by anyone and everyone, because I have to first accept the claim, in order to conduct my investigations. Collecting recordings of clinical psychological interactions, transcribing the recordings into written documents and giving the descriptions as I have only makes sense if one accepts the central claim of EM-informed approaches: that it is possible to describe social practices from a member’s own perspective, outside of theoretical concerns. Furthermore, the central claim of EM that the social world is co-produced as orderly through members’ interactions remains a hypothesis unable to be argued for from the grounds of EM, and unable to be proved by EM investigations.

In my investigations of clinical psychological interaction, following from the central EM claims, I proceeded from four important assumptions, which inform my descriptions. Firstly, the social world is orderly at the level of observation and, hence, investigations of actual practices are possible; this assumption led me to collect the recordings of therapy sessions, in order to understand how clinical psychology actually works. Secondly, the social world can be analysed through a member’s own perspective, outside of theoretical concerns; this led me to empirically describe actual practices of clinical psychological therapy, attempting to do so without drawing upon findings from the literature.116 Thirdly, to describe member’s methods for common sense reasoning one can use common sense methods; this informed my analytic descriptions of clinical psychological therapy and, hence, I described clinical psychological interaction as a set of common sense methods. Fourthly, those who claim to view the social world from a specialised position using technical apparatus are, in fact, only using common sense methods; this informed my analytic descriptions and, hence, I found that the privileged

116 I was clearly drawing upon the EM, CA and DP literature to support my claims that I was making about the clinical psychological literature, but while analysing the data I was attempting to substantiate the claims on the basis of the empirical data and not the theoretical literature, as I have explained, following EM’s requirement (Garfinkel, 1967a, pp. vi-vii; Livingston, 2006, p. 41).
position of the clinical psychologist in therapy, and their expert knowledge, was managed through common sense methods. At the end of my three investigations, what I have described in chapters one, two and three are not the actual practices of clinical psychology but my own theoretical standpoint.

EM, CA and DP all share the same problem. All three methods of investigation assume that it is possible to describe what happens in the social world from an atheoretical perspective and, in doing so, as I have done, only find their own theoretical standpoint. In addition, the assumption of an atheoretical perspective is the assumption of the Objective observer; because both ethnomethodology and psychological investigations assume that there is an aperspectival view, somehow outside of the different perspectives through which we engage with the world (Shand, 2009). In the final analysis it is not enough to go to Garfinkel’s and Sacks’s work to understand the problem of why I am still proceeding from an Objective standpoint or to understand the problems associated with the natural scientific method, as Lynch and Bogen (1994) suggest. Garfinkel’s and Sacks’s (Garfinkel, 1967b; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Sacks, 1995b, p. 622) method to overcome the Objective standpoint is to move further away from theory and, in fact, leads them to overlook their own theoretical presuppositions. Instead, it seems necessary to look at Husserl’s work – the claimed starting point for Garfinkel’s (2007) understanding that the social world is an orderly phenomenon and for his critique of other social researchers – to understand what Husserl’s critique that the natural sciences have lost their life-world foundation means in Husserl’s own writings. Otherwise I seem to be limited by my own ethnomethodological theoretical standpoint, with no way of understanding the problems associated with the natural scientific method as it is applied to study human experience or understand the social world differently. As it turns out, the relation

117 As already mentioned, Garfinkel’s original proposal of EM adopted Schütz’s notion of common sense knowledge (Garfinkel, 1967a, p. 37). However, more recently, Garfinkel (2007) has adopted Husserl specifically. In addition, Lynch (1993) has suggested that Garfinkel’s EM program is more in line with Husserl than Schütz. Most importantly though, I am returning to Husserl’s work in order to understand Schütz, from a non-EM interpretation, as well as Garfinkel. I will discuss Schütz specifically in chapter six.
between natural science and human experience does not seem to be an empirical question; rather, the focus upon empirical data seems to be part of a fundamental problem of the natural scientific attitude.

**Introducing Part Two**

The fundamental problem that I am gesturing towards in this chapter is that, statistical and EM-informed approaches proceed from the presupposition of an Objective human world that is outside of human experience and that operates without human agency. In forgetting that they start from a theoretical standpoint, both statistical and discursive psychologists obscure lived human experience. Human experience and reasoning enable investigations in the first instance and, hence, neither statistical nor discursive psychologists can account for either their own observations or the meaning that actions and speech have for the people they are investigating.

In the second part of my thesis I will examine Husserl’s (1970 (1952), 1999 (1902/03)) critique of natural science with specific reference to the two works that Garfinkel refers to: *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology (The Crisis)* and *The Idea of Phenomenology*. In introducing Husserl, I would, preliminarily, like to suggest that Garfinkel’s EM program – as well as CA and DP which stem from this approach to research – shares two central problems (that Husserl points to) with the natural scientific attitude taken towards the world. Firstly, EM-informed researchers obscure the life-world by replacing lived experience

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118 I am drawing upon Husserl’s (1970 (1952), pp. 44-47) argument here; in particular his discussions on the difference between idealisation and indirect mathematisation (Patočka, 1989 (1971), p. 229). EM researchers would make a similar claim about natural scientific approaches to research, because these approaches do not distinguish between the theoretical and the natural scientific attitude and, hence, seek to avoid theory altogether; which reinstates the problems associated with the natural scientific attitude. I will discuss the difference between Husserl’s understanding of the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude in detail in chapter four and five.

119 I am drawing upon the phenomenological understanding that human reason enables natural science and then is destroyed by it (for example see Heidegger, 2000a, pp. 21-24, 86-90; Husserl, 1973b, p. 41; Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 187-197). For a similar comment see Theodor Adorno (2001 (1965), p. 3).
with their method of describing experience (Husserl, 1970 (1952), p. 51). Secondly, EM assumes the natural scientific understanding of the relation between the objectivity of the known and the subjectivity of the knower because EM-informed researchers assume that the objectivity of what is known is not dependent upon the perspective from which it is viewed. In understanding their descriptions as not dependent upon their perspective, ethnomethodologists, like natural scientists, lose a self-responsible ground for knowledge (Husserl, 1973a, p. 6). Hence, EM-informed approaches to research do not offer an alternative to natural scientific methods used in psychology because they assume the same ground of natural science.

In the following part of my thesis, through three chapters, I will provide a phenomenological critique of ethnomethodology. I will pay particular attention to Husserl’s (1970 (1952)) critique that natural science has lost their life-world foundation as presented in The Crisis and The ‘Vienna lecture: Philosophy and the crisis of European humanity’ (‘The Vienna Lecture’). In chapter four, I will argue that EM-informed approaches to research conflate the theoretical attitude and the natural scientific attitude and, hence, lose the importance of the theoretical

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120 I am drawing upon Husserl’s (1999 (1902/03), pp. 15-21) ‘Lecture I’ in the Idea of Phenomenology. Husserl is specifically referencing the ‘natural attitude’. The relation between the natural attitude and the natural scientific attitude in Husserl’s work is complex and not something that I will address in my thesis. However, there is an important similarity between the natural attitude and the natural scientific attitude, which is that they are both one-sided attitudes that we take for granted and do not recognise as attitudes. As Dermot Moran (2008, p. 403) writes, ‘Husserl’s point is that ‘nature’ itself rather than being a brute given must rather be understood as itself the correlate of a specific attitude – the natural attitude. The natural attitude...despite its indispensability in everyday human life, is essentially ‘one-sided’ and ‘closed’...because it fails to recognise its own nature as an attitude...which is much more than one psychological state among others’. For Husserl, the natural attitude and the natural scientific attitude can only be brought into question through philosophical reflection. Husserl (1999 (1902/03), p. 19) writes, ‘only epistemological reflection yields the distinction between positive science and philosophy. Only through such reflection does it become clear that the positive sciences are not the ultimate sciences of being. What is required is a science of what exists in the absolute sense. This science, which we call metaphysics, grows out of the ‘critique’ of positive knowledge in the particular sciences’. Hence, in the second part of my thesis I will address the difference between philosophy (which I will refer to as the theoretical attitude) and positive science (which I will refer to as the natural scientific attitude).

121 The Crisis is also the work where Husserl introduces the concept of the life-world. However, it is not the only work that can be seen as relevant to Husserl’s understanding of life-world (d’Ippolito).
attitude for understanding the world in which we live.\textsuperscript{122} In chapter five, I will argue for a distinction between generalisation, idealisation and indirect mathematisation in order to put forward that empirical data is not simply generalised from lived experience, but is indirectly mathematised from experience.\textsuperscript{123} In chapter six, I will argue that Garfinkel’s notion of the social world as a set of shared methods empiricises the life-world and obscures its historical character and, therefore does not allow an avenue for critiquing the historically sedimented and Objectified natural scientific attitude. In concluding the second part of my thesis, I will suggest that both EM and natural scientific approaches to researching the human world strip our world of meaning by replacing the life-world with formal structures which supposedly have the same meaning for everybody and anybody.

\textsuperscript{122} I draw heavily upon Husserl’s (1970 (1935), 2001 (1913)) work in the ‘The Vienna lecture’ and the ‘Prolegomena to pure logic’ in Logical Investigations.

\textsuperscript{123} I draw heavily upon Husserl’s (1970 (1952), pp. 21-59, 2008 (1906/07)) analyses of Galileo presented in The Crisis and ‘Part I’ of Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge.
PART TWO: A Phenomenological Critique of Ethnomethodologically Informed Discursive Psychology
Chapter Four: The Theoretical Attitude and the Natural Scientific Attitude

Husserl’s Continued Relevance to the Field of Psychology

What effect did the intoxicating success of this discovery of physical infinity have on the scientific mastery of the spiritual sphere? In the attitude directed toward the surrounding world, the constantly objectivistic attitude, everything spiritual appeared as if it were [simply] spread over [the surface of] physical bodies. Thus the application [to it] of the natural-scientific way of thinking seemed the obvious thing to do (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 293 square brackets in original).

Following on from the previous chapter, in this chapter I will argue that there is an important distinction to be made between the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude in order to regain the importance of the theoretical attitude in investigations of the life-world. In 1935, in his ‘The Vienna lecture’, Husserl (1970 (1935), p. 272) said that Europe was sick, and there was no possibility to find a cure for its sickness, because the only model available for finding a cure was natural science. According to Husserl, due to the success of the sciences in human mastery over nature, the natural scientific method came to be understood as the superior method for any investigation, including investigations of human experience. Yet Husserl asserted that the natural scientific model was not appropriate for investigations of human experience (Husserl, 1970 (1935), 1970 (1952)).

meaningfulness of human experience, as our experience loses its defining qualities when conceived of as a measurable entity. It is this loss of meaning that Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 5-7) refers to when he speaks of the crisis of the European sciences. Despite Husserl’s insight, the use of the natural scientific method of investigation is still commonplace within psychology. Hence, Husserl’s words still ring true today.

Husserl’s critique of the use of natural scientific method to investigate spiritual matters leads to two important insights. Firstly, when we rely upon formal descriptions of human existence we overlook the importance of our own lived experience (Husserl, 1970 (1928), p. 305, 1970 (1935), p. 293, 1970 (1952), p. 9). Rather than investigating human experience, formal description objectifies our lived experience. Formal description does so because it reduces the meaningful quality of our lived experiences to predictable and probabilistic patterns (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 278, 1970 (1952), p. 4). Secondly, theory is important for investigations of our lived experiences, but theory does not make sense in the absence of a concern for the life-world (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 284; Patočka, 1989 (1936), p. 148). According to Husserl (1970 (1928), p. 301), it is important to realise that lived experience is contingent, changing and finite. Hence, Husserl’s (1970 (1935), pp. 278-279) objection to tying our investigations solely to the contingency of human existence is that we end up with merely relative and finite knowledge. For Husserl (1970 (1935), p. 286), the importance of the theoretical attitude is that, through making the life-world thematic and investigating the structures that pertain to all, we can clarify our experience. To reiterate, as Husserl notes, lived experience needs to ground our theoretical investigations in order for our investigations to be able to clarify our experience.

Husserl’s notion of life-world is the claimed starting point for Garfinkel’s ethnomethodology (EM) program (Garfinkel, 2007; Garfinkel & Liberman, 2007; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Lynch, 1993), which in turn informs the proposal of discursive psychology (DP) which draws upon EM
and conversation analysis (CA) (Edwards, 1995; Potter, 2003a; S. Wiggins & Potter, 2008). As I have explained in the previous chapter, EM, CA and DP proceed from the same assumption; as Douglas Maynard and Steven Clayman (2003, p. 173) state ‘we characterize the congruence between EM/CA ... as deriving from the impulse to study social life in situ and from the standpoint of societal members themselves’. Garfinkel’s (2007) insight that the social world can be investigated as an orderly phenomenon from a member’s own perspective is attributed by him to Husserl’s concept of life-world (Garfinkel & Liberman, 2007; Lynch, 1993). DP, through the adoption of EM, is one field in psychology whose practitioners claim to draw upon Husserl’s critique that using the natural scientific method is inappropriate for investigating the social world. In particular, DP critiques quantitative psychology for studying objectively.

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124 Maynard and Clayman (2003) are arguing for congruence between EM, CA and symbolic interactionism. However, their comments on symbolic interactionism are outside the boundaries of my thesis. I am arguing for a congruence between DP, EM and CA, at least in terms of their grounding assumption, which Maynard and Clayman (2003, p. 173) summarise nicely. There is much debate about the relation between EM, CA and DP, some of which I have touched upon, but my claim is that they are similar in what they aim to investigate and in their critique of other approaches to researching the human world, as I have explained in chapter three. In this chapter, I am interested in explicating EM’s relevance to psychology in particular; the main approach that has picked up EM is DP. Hence, when referring to DP I am always referring to the EM influence upon DP, which is the basic assumption and the basic critique of other social science approaches to research that I am highlighting here.

125 As I have explained, Garfinkel (1967a, pp. 36-38, 76-37) originally picks up Alfred Schütz’s notion of common sense knowledge. However, Schütz’s (Schütz, 1953, p. 5, 1970, pp. 55-56) notion of common sense knowledge is attributed, by Schütz, to Husserl’s concept of life-world. Although there are important differences between Schütz’s social phenomenology and Husserl’s phenomenology, I will not discuss them in this thesis because I am interested in what Husserl’s concept of life-world means in his own work. In addition, there is an important similarity between Husserl’s life-world and Schütz’s common sense knowledge, which Schütz (1970, pp. 56, 271-272) himself notes, which is that analyses of the life-world (or common sense knowledge) require the philosophical attitude; what I am referring to as the theoretical attitude. I will discuss this further in chapter six.

126 Discursive Psychologists would specifically reference ‘cognitivism’ as the subject of their critique (Edwards, 1991, 1997, 2006; Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 13-15; McLaughlin, 2009; Potter, 2000, 2006). Also see the special edition of Theory, Culture and Society, Volume 25, Issue 2, published in 2008, for a EM critique of ‘cognitivism’ (Armand, 2008; Button, 2008; Coulter, 2008; Hamilton, 2008; Read, 2008; Sharrock & Dennis, 2008; R. Watson & Coulter, 2008). However, as I have explained in the previous chapter, the most basic concept behind a DP critique of mainstream psychology is to take ‘standard psychological topics’ and re-specify them as ‘discourse practices’: through investigating what people actually do we can bring into question ‘standard’ psychological explications for these ‘standard’ topics (Edwards, 2005, pp. 260-261; Edwards & Potter, in press, pp. 1-2). I will further elaborate upon the DP critique in this chapter. Hence, as I have shown in the last chapter, DP can be used to critique psychological domains that do not specifically call themselves ‘cognitive’ approaches, such as personality psychology. Due to the broad nature of DP’s critique of mainstream psychology I have opted to refer to the broader and more widely used division between quantitative and qualitative
defined social action and, in so doing, misses social action as it is actually enacted within the social world (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Garfinkel & Sacks, p. 339). In order to propose a way of studying social action as it actually unfolds within the lived social world, DP, through adopting EM, draws upon the phenomenological insight that the life-world is meaningfully constituted by us (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 18-19; Garfinkel, 2007, p. 10). However, DP practitioners do not do justice to Husserl’s critique of the use of natural science within psychology because they focus on lived experience without understanding the importance of theory and, as a result, obscure lived experience.

EM-informed DP’s difficulty in understanding the necessary role that the theoretical attitude plays in investigations of the life-world is symptomatic of a fundamental problem in EM-informed approaches to research. EM-informed discursive psychologists misplace the importance of theory stemming from their conflation of the natural scientific attitude with the theoretical attitude. EM-informed DP practitioners, rather than understanding that quantitative psychology misses the life-world because of its adoption of the natural scientific attitude, claim that the problem with quantitative psychology is its theoretical engagement with the lived social world. According to EM-informed DP, quantitative psychology reduces social action to theoretical concepts, instead of studying the actual practices of the social world. Hence, the solution provided by EM-informed discursive psychologists is to eschew theory and study the social world *at theoretically* (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 18-19; Garfinkel & Sacks, pp. 345-347; Hutchison, Read, & Sharrock, 2008, pp. 91-94). In doing so, DP assumes that there is an uncomplicated distinction to be made between theory and practice.

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127 Refer to footnote 1, page 1 for an explanation of why I have capitalised the ‘O’ in ‘Objectively’.

128 Although sometimes EM, CA and DP are referred to as theories by practitioners within these domains of research, this is qualified by suggesting that they are empirically driven theories (Edwards, 2005, pp. 259-260; Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 175; Potter & Wetherell, 1987, pp. 785-786). It is the notion that we can investigate social actions from an atheoretical perspective, and then propose a theory on the basis of our observation, that I am critiquing, because, as I have highlighted in chapter three, studying the social world without a prior theory is not possible.
According to this approach, discursive psychologists can uncover the actual practices by eliminating theory.

However, this assumed simple division between theory and practice is problematic. To show the problematic nature of this division, I will provide an alternative critique of the use of natural scientific method in psychological research. Drawing upon Husserl's critique – that the natural scientific approach to investigating human existence is inappropriate – I will attempt to show that the difference between theory and practice is more complicated than DP assumes. The theoretical attitude cannot be reduced to the natural scientific attitude nor can practice be purely separated from theory (Husserl, 1970 (1935), pp. 282-283).

Understanding the problem with quantitative psychology to be a result of the theoretical attitude rather than the natural scientific attitude leads discursive psychologists to consider the problem of quantitative psychology's missing the life-world as being a product of theory per se. By contrast, if we look at this problem using the model of indirect mathematisation of lived experience, then we can understand that quantitative psychology changes the nature of the life-world through reducing lived experience to mathematical data (Husserl, 1970 (1928)).

\[\text{Indirect mathematisation is a concept introduced by Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 34-37) in his book } \textit{The Crisis}. \text{ For Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 37), indirect mathematisation is the hypothesis that for every qualitative variation there has an exact and determinable quantitative index. According to Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 33-34), the length, breath and height of an object can be measured by using a standard measuring instrument: these aspects of an object can be directly measured. Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 34) argues that, on the other hand, qualitative aspects of an object, such as warmth, cannot be directly measured. Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 34-37) states that, while qualities appear in gradations, for example cooler and warmer weather, qualities do not appear as exact and measurable. In order to 'measure' a quality such as warmth, Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 37) puts forward that we first need to correlate a qualitative aspect with a quantitative aspect of the phenomenon. For example, through correlating warmth with the level of mercury in a tube we indirectly measure warmth. For a further discussion of the example of warmth see footnote 154, page 174. Hence, indirect mathematisation is the concept that we can indirectly measure qualitative phenomenon through directly measuring quantitative correlates. For Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 34), the idea that qualities can be measured exactly comes from the measurement technique rather than the experiencing gradations in qualities. Indirect mathematisation is an essential part of the method of natural science according to Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 23-59). There are different methods of measuring qualities, but they are all similar in that each method is used to measure a qualitative phenomenon by correlating it to a quantitative phenomenon.}\]
consider human beings and the social world to be a complex mathematical distribution. Hence, by understanding the problem of quantitative psychology as indirect mathematisation of experience proceeding from the natural scientific method, I can show the importance of theorising and recover the role that it needs to play in investigations of the life-world (Husserl, 1970 (1935)). The problem is not theory: the problem is the natural scientific method, which abstracts from the life-world and forgets that the method of abstraction has replaced the life-world.

Likewise, EM-informed DP replaces the life-world with its method of investigation by assuming the possibility of an atheoretical approach. EM-informed discursive psychologists attempt to introduce the notion of the social world as a human world in which we constitute meaning through social actions (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 14-29; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970), but by overlooking that their method of investigation abstracts from the life-world, they eliminate the human agent from their understanding of the social world. Discursive psychologists, in asserting that its theoretical assumptions are empirically substantiated claims (Antaki et al., 2003; Maynard & Clayman, 2003, p. 175), replace the differing perspectives through which to view the social world with a singular perspective. If we fail to account for a free human agent in our description of the lived social world, we actually lose sight of the lived social world as an intersubjective achievement. Only through understanding the world as perspectively constituted by free social agents can we grasp the lived social world (Schütz, 1970, pp. 266-271).

By showing that quantitative and discursive psychologists, despite their different approaches, both eliminate the life-world as a result of misunderstanding the relation between the theoretical attitude and lived experience, I will conclude that Husserl’s insight into the crisis in human meaning is still relevant to the discipline of psychology. Lived experience and the

In this chapter, I will discuss one method by which psychological researchers indirectly mathematise qualitative aspects of human experience; the psychometric inventory.
theoretical attitude are distinct but not separable (Husserl, 1970 (1935), pp. 282-285). For Husserl (1970 (1935)), the theoretical attitude is the guiding idea of European culture. The crisis of meaning is, in part, the misunderstanding of the meaning of theory. Theory means nothing other than questioning preconceived notions, accepted interpretations and prejudices by substantiating the claims we make; which allows us to conceptualise our lived experience differently (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 284; Patočka, 1989 (1936), p. 148). Theorising is important in our historical situation because the natural scientific attitude, which is indifferent to the meaningfulness of lived experience, has become the predominant method to describe lived experience. Through the idea of theorising as critique, we can clarify human experience and return the meaningfulness of human experience to its rightful place within our lived situation.

**Discursive Psychology**

**Critique of Quantitative Psychology**

In order to show that discursive psychologists exclude the life-world from their investigations, I will explicate DP’s critique of quantitative psychology. DP is an alternative paradigm of research in psychology which starts from a critique of the quantitative methods that are predominantly used in the discipline of psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 13-29; Potter, 1993).

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130 Here I am talking about the idea of theory or the theoretical attitude which underpins all other particular (normative) theoretical frameworks. What theory is by no means a closed subject, but what I am pointing to is that the idea of theory is the idea of a questioning attitude. For example, Husserl (1970 (1935), p. 283) writes about the theoretical attitude: ‘this occurs in the form of a new sort of praxis, that of the universal critique of all life and all life-goals, all cultural products and systems that have already arisen out of the life of man [sic]; and thus it also becomes a critique of mankind [sic] itself and of the values which guide it explicitly or implicitly. Further, it is a praxis whose aim is to elevate mankind [sic] through universal scientific reason, according to the norms of truth of all forms, to transform it from the bottom up into a new humanity made capable of an absolute self-responsibility on the basis of absolute theoretical insights’. Martin Heidegger (1967, p. 49) writes, ‘philosophy is a questioning that brings itself into question and is therefore always and everywhere moving in a circle’. Hannah Arendt (1978, p. 93) writes, in a quote I shall come back to, ‘the later philosophical term “theory” was derived, and the word “theoretical” until a few hundred years ago meant “contemplating”’. I will come back to the idea of theory as the idea of the questioning spectator later in the chapter.

131 For an explanation of why I am critiquing quantitative methods, rather than ‘cognitivism’, see footnote 126, page 155.
The main thrust of the DP critique of quantitative psychology is that quantitative methods are unable to capture sense making practices as they unfold in the actual social world (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 18-19). As Potter (2000, p. 4) states in his paper ‘Post-cognitive psychology’, it is not that psychology is not interested in practical questions but that quantitative psychology does not allow actual practices to enter into its investigations.

Quantitative psychologists, according to discursive psychologists, start their investigations with a theoretical model that they use to read the social world (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970). By contrast, for discursive psychologists, social practices are co-produced by members in the social world to accomplish particular tasks. DP claims that the co-produced action oriented nature of social practices does not enter into quantitative psychological investigations, because quantitative psychologists fix the meanings of social actions, according to their theoretical model they have adopted, prior to investigating the social world (Potter, 2000). In short, discursive psychologists claim that quantitative psychologists cannot see actual practices because they only see their own, as discursive psychologists calls them, theoretical constructions of the social world (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 13-29; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970).

Following from their critique of quantitative psychology, discursive psychologists understand that it is necessary to study actual practices at theoretically in order to counteract quantitative psychologists’ reduction of actual social practices to theoretical categorisations. Therefore, DP investigators suggest a paradigm that takes seriously the co-produced and action orientated nature of social practices, by presenting a method to investigate actual practices without theory (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter, 2003a, pp. 791-792).

By way of example, I will show how DP’s critique of quantitative psychology relates to personality psychology – which predominantly relies upon quantitative methods – extending

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132 See Garfinkel and Sacks’s (1970) article ‘On the formal structures of practical actions’ for a similar critique of sociology.

133 Refer to footnote 128, page 156 for a discussion on the sense in which EM and DP refer to themselves as a theory.
from my discussion in the previous chapter. In the area of personality psychology there are many different approaches, one of which is trait theory (Funder, 2001; N. Haslam, 2007). I am using trait theory for my example because it suggests that there are internally consistent patterns in the way people feel, act and think, and these patterns are known as traits (Johnson, 1997). There has been substantial critique of the notion that people have enduring traits, as people change across situations and over the course of their lives. However, in response to this critique, trait theorists argue that people react in consistent ways to similar situations and that this observable consistency can be explained by enduring traits within people. In addition, in response to the critique of enduring traits, trait theorists argue that in situations that encourage high conformity, different people vary in their reactions to the situation, which suggests differences between people’s enduring traits (Johnson, 1997, pp. 74-77). Hence, traits are understood as both durable and comparable. The term ‘durable’ is intended to explain why a person acts in similar ways across similar situations over time, and the term ‘comparable’ is intended to explain why different people react in different ways to the same situation.

134 For a review of literature on this critique of personality psychology since World War I see Douglas Kendrick and Funder (1988). For a more recent review see Funder (2001). For an example of this type of critique see Mischel (1968) and Lee Ross and Richard Nisbett (1968; Ross & Nisbett, 1992). For literature on the ‘paradox of personality’, previously referred to in chapter three, see Mischel (1968, 2004), Alison, Bennell, Mokros and Ormerod (2002) and Daryl Bem and Andrea Allen (1974).

135 Also referred to as psychological tests (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2001; Kendall, Jenkinson, Lemos, & Clancy, 1997; Rust & Golombok, 1989; Zeidner & Most, 1992). Psychological assessment is a broader term that includes psychological testing: as Goldstein and Hersen (2000) state, ‘in recent years, there appears to have been a distinction made between testing and assessment, assessment being the broader concept. Psychologists do not just give tests now; they perform assessment ... The term assessment implies that there are many different ways of evaluating individual difference’. I might suggest that the move from psychological testing to psychological assessment is part of the move by psychologists to be very careful with interpretations, because of the controversy surrounding psychometric testing: for example, the ‘Bell Curve controversy’ (Motta & Joseph, 2000, pp. 135-136) and ‘scientific racism’ (Williams, 1974). Being more careful with psychological testing and interpretations of these tests, mainly involves moving towards more Objective assessments (Goldstein & Hersen, 2000) and ensuring that psychologists are the only ones who administer psychological tests (Kendall et al., 1997). However, there is usually some brief reference to the psychologists’ role in interpreting the test in each book on psychological testing. For example, after a long discussion of the different mathematical means of interpretation that can be employed, Bruce Bracken (1992, pp. 145-146) writes, ‘examiners must do more than merely administer tests and look up scores in a test manual if they are to be effective psychologists. A psychologist’s role is to gather information through any medium to make accurate diagnostic and prognostic statements and to suggest meaningful interventions. To interpret tests in the most comprehensive fashion, the psychologist must integrate behavioural observations and clinical judgements into the interpretation process’. In this chapter, I am only talking about psychological testing, rather than the broader concept
Therefore, trait theorists set out to define and measure the enduring traits within people and differences between people.

Trait theorists’ main methodological tool of investigation is psychometric testing (N. Haslam, 2007, pp. 17-38; J. Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997). Psychometric personality tests are questionnaires designed to measure to what degree a person possesses each of a set of defined traits, by creating a list of statements which relate to each of the trait scales, within the questionnaire. The traits presupposed by personality psychologists are defined according to previous research and literature on the theoretical model that has been adopted by the current investigators. The participants are required to rate each statement in the psychometric test according to a numerical scale, the ‘Likert scale’, which reflects the extent of psychological assessment. However, I will suggest that most of the ‘interpretation’ is performed through mathematical analyses and this holds for both psychological testing and psychological assessment.

I am simplifying here. There are two ways of developing a personality test: the ‘rational’ or ‘internally consistent’ method and the ‘empirical’ or ‘criterion keyed’ method (Gough & Bradley, 1992, pp. 215-216). A psychological test constructor using the ‘rational’ method seeks to construct a test where ‘the items correlate positively with each other and...all of the items correlate appreciably with the total score for the scale’ (Gough & Bradley, 1992, p. 215). A psychological test constructor using the ‘empirical’ method seeks to construct a test where ‘each item is scored, or keyed, according to the magnitude and direction of its correlation with an outside or nontest criterion’ (Gough & Bradley, 1992, p. 216 emphasis in original). The ‘empirical’ and the ‘rational’ methods both start by examining the psychological literature that discusses the factor or construct they wish to test, in order to write a list of possible test items that are relevant to the construct; but ‘the empiricist would add quite a few other items on the basis of pure hunches’ (Gough & Bradley, 1992, p. 220 emphasis added). The empirical test constructor then goes out to correlate their test results with a ‘nontest criterion’, which is another numerically assessed criterion, the test items that correlate highly with the ‘nontest criterion’ are kept and the other items are discarded. For an ‘empirical’ test constructor, the process of correlating their test items with the ‘nontest criterion’ and discarding items which do not correlate is often repeated. Hence, Harrison Gough and Pamela Bradley (1992, p. 221) state, ‘the critical and defining difference is that in the rational approach the scoring of each item is predetermined by the researcher, whereas in the empirical approach the scoring is determined entirely by the direction of the correlation between the item and the nontest criterion’. See Gough and Bradley’s (1992) chapter on ‘Comparing two strategies for developing personality scales’ for a detailed description of the differences between the ‘empirical’ and the ‘rational’ methods for constructing a personality test, and the benefits and pitfalls of each approach. Strictly speaking I am talking about the specifics of the ‘rational’ method in this chapter, but both methods work in largely the same way. By ‘presupposed’ I mean that both the ‘rational’ and the ‘empirical’ methods adopt already accepted psychological constructs as the basis for constructing a test of that construct.

There are many different methods that can be used to relate a person’s response to an item, or statement, on a psychological test to a number. In this chapter, and chapter five, I am specifically describing the ‘Likert scale’. Rensis Likert (1932-1933, p. 5) proposed a five-point scale expressly suited to ‘measure the traits of character and personality’, which is now referred to as the ‘Likert scale’. Rather
to which they endorse the statement as descriptive of their own personal experiences (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2001, pp. 158-159). The participants’ answers are categorised by the researchers according to the traits that the investigator has defined and set out to test. The numerical answers are then interpreted through the original theoretical model of personality that has been adopted by the investigators.

According to a DP interpretation of psychometric tests, what is shown by this method of investigation is that the researcher is limited by the theoretical model that is adopted, and the theoretical model adopted leads to the empirical data being formulated in terms of the researcher’s theoretical framework, not in terms of the participant’s situation (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 153-155). When the problem is framed this way, it becomes understandable why Edwards and Potter (1992) propose DP as an alternative method of investigation that aims to study social practices from the participant’s situation rather than from the researcher’s theoretical position.¹³⁸

In summary, discursive psychologists understand quantitative psychology as missing the actual social practices of the social world because quantitative psychologists posit theoretically defined categories based on the researcher’s understanding of social action rather than

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¹³⁸ EM and CA are picked up by Edwards and Potter (1992; in press, p. 2) as an established method for investigating common sense reasoning practices of everyday people from a member’s own perspective. Also see Edwards’s (1995) article ‘Sacks and psychology’ for an in depth discussion on the relevance of Sacks’s work for psychology. I am referring to Edwards and Potter specifically, even though there are many who do discourse analytic research in psychology, because they specifically propose DP by drawing upon EM and CA. As Potter (Edwards & Potter, 1992, 2001; Potter, 2003a, p. 284; Potter & Edwards, 2001) notes, ‘for clarity, and to avoid trying to speak for the DA and CA community as a whole, I will develop my response to Hammersley from the particular variant of DA known as discursive psychology [henceforth DP; see Edwards and Potter, 1992, 2001: Potter and Edwards 2001]. Nevertheless, a number of the points will have a broader relevance.’
members’ understandings. In response, discursive psychologists propose that social action, can be studied without theorising about the nature of social action as the social world is orderly at the level of observation (Edwards & Potter, 1992).

**Discursive Psychology’s Solution**

DP claims that the social world is organised through members’ co-production of social order through discursive actions (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 13-29). Each member’s discursive action is produced in a way such that other members recognise that action, which means that anybody who cares to look can see the order in social interaction. Following from this assumption, the discursive psychologist can investigate social order by providing careful descriptions of the order that is already embedded in talk-in-interaction.

According to this method, DP practitioners understand the stability of the social world to be produced in and through mundane social interactions. Discursive psychologists postulate that the methods they use for providing a description of the order displayed in members’ enacting of social actions are the same methods members use for ordering their social actions (Potter et al., 1993). Social order is understood as the ‘seen but unnoticed’ background in everyday affairs (Garfinkel, 1967a). The analyst can describe the order as it is actually produced through members’ activities, because members conduct their activities in an observably orderly manner (Potter et al., 1993). Hence, the DP analyst can describe practical action as it actually occurs – without theory – because everyday practical action is conducted in an orderly manner, where the order in the practices is evident to anyone who pays close attention to social practices.

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139 Garfinkel and Sack’s (1970) critique of sociology runs along similar lines.

140 The idea that social actions are recognised in the same way as they are produced is the starting point of EM, as first presented by Garfinkel (1967b), and CA, as first presented by Sacks (1995b, pp. 113-125). The founders of DP, Edwards and Potter, draw upon EM and CA in order to present a method for studying psychological topics through talk-in-interaction. See for example: Edwards (1995), Edwards and Potter (1992) and Potter and Alexa Hepburn (2007).

141 Also see Garfinkel (1967b) and Garfinkel and Sacks (1970).
A good description of a particular social situation, for discursive psychologists, aims to describe the methods by which members produce factual versions of affairs (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter et al., 1993). To put it differently, a good description means that when the researcher presents their description to the participants involved in the situation, the participants will acknowledge it as something that is describing their own practice (McHoul, 2004, pp. 428-430). The aim of DP investigations is to describe the way members make sense of the social situation of which they are a part, in members’ own terms (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 153-155). The DP claim is that the analyst can provide descriptions of members’ actions in members’ terms, because they use the same methods that the participants in the social interaction use to make sense of that situation.

Since DP researchers are understood to employ the same methods as members to explicate and describe the order that is observable in everyday affairs, the discursive researcher does not need to proceed from a theoretical framework. The DP investigator claims that an investigation can proceed by describing the practices without first theorising the nature of the social world and, indeed, without interpreting the social practices under investigation. DP researchers aim to simply describe social practices from the perspective of people in the interaction they are investigating, rather than importing their own perspective as analysts (Edwards, 1995; Edwards & Potter, 1992).142 Therefore, discursive psychologists not only understand theorising as unnecessary, but DP analysts are required to bracket out their own orientations as part of their method, so that they can faithfully describe the orientations of the participants in the interaction (Edwards, 1995; McHoul, 2004). According to DP, theory must be eschewed for the order in the practices to be revealed.

As already noted, DP researchers proceed in their investigations by assuming a simple split between theory and practice. Theory is understood as ‘glossing’ over the actual practices of

142 Also see Garfinkel (1967b) and Garfinkel and Sacks (1970).
the social world, whereas empirical description is understood as explicating the actual order in social practices (Edwards & Potter, 1992, pp. 13-29; Potter et al., 1993). Discursive practices display the order by which members and discursive psychologists alike make sense of those practices (Edwards, 1995; McHoul, 2004). Simply put, DP’s critique of quantitative psychological methods is that they distort the discursive production of social order by theorising social action rather than describing the actual practices. DP can then present a method that assumes the observable order of social practices; and proceeds by paying attention to discursive practices as they are enacted within social situations without obscuring those practices by viewing them through a theoretical lens (Edwards, 1995; Potter & Hepburn, 2007). Hence, the DP response to the problems they identify with quantitative methods, is to bracket out theoretical concerns and simply examine the practices as they actually unfold.

**Questioning Discursive Psychology’s Relation to Theory**

**Discursive Psychology’s Understanding of Theory**

Theorising is understood by DP investigators in a purely negative light. For the DP analyst, theory is nothing more than a set of abstract assumptions about social action that prevent us from seeing how actual social practices work (Edwards & Potter, 1992). For the DP analyst, the researcher must proceed by paying attention to particular practices in order to understand how those practices work. According to DP, to hold a particular theoretical stance is to constitute the object of investigation through the theory held. As such, social practices are unavailable to the theoretician, because they see their own theoretical constructions of social practice rather than the actual practice. As a result, for the DP analyst, descriptions of actual social practices are understood to bring into question quantitative psychological assumptions.

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143 Also see Garfinkel (1967b) and Garfinkel and Sacks (1970).
144 Also see Garfinkel and Sacks (1970).
about the nature of people and the social world, by showing that social practices do not work in the way that quantitative psychology assumes they do (Potter et al., 1993).

One assumption that discursive psychologists understand themselves to bring into question is that quantitative psychologists posit their descriptions of people and the social world as neutral. Discursive psychologists postulate that quantitative psychologists assume that they can describe practices in an unbiased manner, regardless of their particular political interests and the purposes of their research. By contrast, for the DP analyst, social practices are ‘rhetorical’ as they are always enacted by members to achieve certain ends (Edwards & Potter, 1992, p. 155). DP analysts claim that there is ‘open-endedness’ to descriptions of the social world because any state of affairs can be described in numerous ways. However, the particular description that is given of a state of affairs in a social interaction is done to accomplish a particular task within that specific interaction. As such, there is no neutral description that can be made of the social world, because such descriptions are always produced for particular purposes within social interactional contexts (Potter et al., 1993, p. 385).

The critique of ‘orthodox psychology’ provided by Potter, Edwards and Margaret Wetherell (1993, p. 386) is that the quantitative psychologist does not question the ‘epistemological status of their version of reality’, because they do not acknowledge that their descriptions are made for particular political purposes. Potter and colleagues (1993, p. 386) go on to assert that, because ‘orthodox psychologists’ do not see their own descriptions as accomplishing particular tasks within the academic literature, they fail to see that social actions work by producing ‘versions of reality’ in order to achieve certain tasks within interaction.

It is important to note that discursive psychologists do not make a distinction between practices of academic writing and lived social actions because they assume that their methods of description are the same methods that members use to order practices. For discursive psychologists, empirical descriptions of members’ discursive actions show that ‘factual
versions’ of reality are produced for practical purposes, whether they occur in social interaction or in writing academic articles (Potter et al., 1993, p. 385).145

However, discursive psychologists’ claim that they provide descriptions of how ‘factual versions of reality’ are co-produced by members for particular purposes within social interaction – from the members’ own orientation and not from their orientation as analysts – reveals a certain contradiction in their method.146 I would suggest that to claim that the production of ‘factual versions of reality’ can be described by the analyst as they actually happen in the social world leads DP analysts, despite their assertions to the contrary, to understand themselves as providing neutral descriptions of how actions unfold in social interaction. Changing the object of investigation from reading ‘facts’ from the social world to describing how ‘factual versions’ are produced in social situations does not resolve the impossibility of providing neutral descriptions.147

Discursive psychologists, by understanding themselves as describing how ‘factual versions of reality’ are produced by members from the orientation of members, still remove themselves from their descriptions of social action. In doing so, they continue to assume that they can provide descriptions of social action that are unaffected by the perspective of the analyst. Hence, the DP analyst, in asserting reciprocity between doing and understanding, unwittingly understands their descriptions as being neutral. The neutral descriptions that discursive psychologists claim are impossible are at the same time considered to be produced by the discursive psychologist. Discursive psychologists substitute reading ‘facts’ from the social world

145 The statement here stems from Garfinkel and Sacks’s (1970) claim that specialist social researchers are actually only using common sense methods, as I have explained in the first part of my thesis.
146 For a similar claim see Hammersley (2003a, pp. 764–765).
147 The same could be said of Garfinkel’s (1967a, p. 79) claim to capture ‘fact production in flight’.
from a neutral position, with describing how ‘factual versions of reality’ are produced in interaction from a neutral position.\(^{148}\)

With the assertion of their descriptions as capturing the practices as they actually unfold, discursive psychologists are led into a dilemma. On the one hand, taken to the extreme, a DP approach would lead the researcher to conclude that there is only one way to describe the social world, which would reinstate the same problem that DP names in quantitative psychology. DP analysts would miss that they are making assertions about the ‘reality’ of the social world without questioning the ‘epistemological stance’ of that reality (Potter et al., 1993); in other words are framing the social world through an unquestioned theoretical perspective. On the other hand, if discursive psychologists were to make the weaker claim that their descriptions are also only produced to perform particular actions within certain situations (Edwards, Ashmore, & Potter, 1995),\(^{149}\) then the DP analyst would be faced with an alternative problem. Were the DP analyst to claim that their descriptions are also for practical purposes (Edwards et al., 1995),\(^{150}\) then their descriptions would be amenable to the same type of investigation by another DP analyst, and we would be led into an infinite regress to produce further and further descriptions of social action. Hence, DP investigators are trapped in precisely the dilemma that Husserl is describing in his critique of natural science.\(^{151}\) Either they are forced to claim their method is, in fact, the reality of the social world – not merely a method for describing social action – or admit that their investigations are merely providing relative descriptions that cannot be used as empirical evidence because the descriptions could always be otherwise.

\(^{148}\) Refer to above footnote.

\(^{149}\) For a similar claim see Garfinkel and Livingston’s (2003) article ‘Phenomenal field properties of order in formatted queues and their neglected standing in the current situation of inquiry’.

\(^{150}\) For a similar claim see Garfinkel (1967a, p. 7) and Garfinkel and Livingston (2003, p. 25).

\(^{151}\) See also Husserl’s (1999 (1902/03), p. 16) ‘Lecture I’ in The Idea of Phenomenology, where he talks about being caught between objectivism and scepticism, which opens up a question about the basic problem of knowledge: the relation between the objectivity of the known and the subjectivity of the knower. I will discuss this point further in chapter six.
The empirical orientation of DP investigations leads them to reinstate the problem of neutral description, which stems from using natural science to investigate human experience. When the problem with quantitative psychology is understood to be one of theorising and the solution is to stop theorising, DP understands theory and natural scientific attitude as being the same. DP analysts overlook the distinction to be made between pure, normative and practical theorising (Husserl, 2001 (1913), pp. 15-39). Pure theory is the mode of engagement that allows us to question the assumptions of normative theories, from which practical investigations proceed. Practical investigations proceed from normative assumptions about the appropriate way to investigate the phenomena of interest as well as normative assumptions about the nature of the phenomena intended to be investigated (Husserl, 2001 (1913), pp. 13-39).

The natural scientific method is the normative framework from which quantitative psychological investigations proceed (Husserl, 1970 (1935)). Through conflating the natural scientific attitude with the theoretical attitude, DP loses the space to critique the assumptions of psychology based on the natural scientific model and, in addition, their own assumptions. Discursive psychologists do not properly engage with the grounding assumptions of quantitative psychology and, hence, miss that they also proceed from the same assumption: that our knowledge of the world is garnered from experience alone and can be described neutrally.\textsuperscript{152} In order to address the problem inherent within discursive psychology, we need to rethink the critique of quantitative psychology as well as the proper place for theory in our investigations of the life-world.

**Rethinking Theory through its Relation to Discursive Psychology**

EM-informed discursive psychologists conflate normative theoretical frameworks, which provide the basis for practical investigations, and the idea of theory (Husserl, 2001 (1913), pp.

\textsuperscript{152} I will further elaborate on this claim in chapter five.
Theory is understood by DP researchers as a formal dogmatic system (Hutchison et al., 2008; Potter, 2003a, p. 789). Although normative theory does present a set of agreed upon axioms about the nature of the phenomena that are to be investigated and the appropriate way to proceed in investigating, any normative theoretical framework must be underpinned by the idea of theory (Husserl, 2001 (1913), pp. 13-39). Properly distinguishing between normative theory and the idea of theory is important in understanding the appropriate place of theory in investigations of the life-world.

The idea of theorising stems from the idea of contemplating the world in which we live from a non-participating position. As Hannah Arendt (1978, p. 93) states:

> From the Greek word for spectators, theatai, the later philosophical term ‘theory’ was derived, and the word ‘theoretical’ until a few hundred years ago meant ‘contemplating’, looking upon something from the outside, from a position implying a view that is hidden from those who take part in the spectacle and actualize it.

According to this definition of theory – as deriving from the position of the spectator – it is hard to deny that DP is a theoretical orientation, despite discursive psychology’s own denial, because discursive psychologists are contemplating a social situation that they are not a part of, and their view of the social situation is opaque to the people who are acting within that social situation.  

In addition, DP is a normative theoretical framework. DP’s method is based on assumptions about the appropriate way to investigate the social world, which is to describe social practices through the lens of the participants in the interaction. DP assumes that the social world is a set of discursive actions which co-construct the order of that social world; where the order is observable to all, including the DP analyst. DP analysts assume that, due to the observable order of discursive actions, interactions can be described atheoretically (Edwards & Potter, 1992). These assumptions about the nature of the social world, as well as the appropriate way

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153 Refer to footnote 128, page 156 for a discussion on EM and DP practitioners’ own claim that DP is a theory.
to investigate it, underpin the way each practical DP investigation must proceed in order to be named a discursive psychological project. Through understanding the difference between pure and normative theoretical frameworks, it is possible to question the grounding assumptions of DP through the idea of theory.

Theory, when understood as a set of dogmatic assumptions that a person brings with them in order to understand every new situation that they encounter, destroys the proper place of theorising in our engagement with the life-world. In addition, theory understood as dogmatism destroys the possibility of critique. Understanding investigations as purely empirically driven projects does not allow room for thinking a social situation anew, as it only provides us with the ability to reiterate what has already passed as if the past will always return in the same manner (Patočka, 1989 (1953)). In addition, so-called empirical projects do not question their assumptions as they do not allow for the rightful place of the idea of theory in investigations of the life-world. It is through theoretical engagement with the life-world that we can question the assumptions from which practical investigations proceed (Husserl, 2001 (1913), pp. 13-39).

However, theorising in the absence of the life-world is also a problem.

Theorising cannot be separated from the lived situation. Here again, the metaphor of the theatre is helpful to unpack the notion of non-participation that does not imply separation from the life-world. As we watch a theatrical spectacle, there is something before us to consider. As we sit and watch the unfolding play, we can actively engage with the meaning of the performance (Arendt, 1978, pp. 92-98; Wilshire, 1982). We can consider the play in terms of our own experiences with others and in terms of the history of plays, playwrights and technical apparatus. Through watching the contingent, changing and finite play of experience we can consider different standpoints from which to view the play and different people’s perspectives. In addition, we can consider the relevance of each method and perspective to the experience that unfolds before us. Theorising or questioning accepted models of
understanding lived experience only makes sense if we do so with an eye to clarifying lived experience.

Theorising is an activity in which we contemplate a situation from a non-participating position in order to better comprehend the meaning of that situation within the complex network of historical human relations (Wilshire, 1982). It is a space through which we can question our everyday understandings and accepted interpretations of situations we are ordinarily engaged in. We question ideas and assumptions, and adopt different ideas and interpretations, in order to gain a better understanding of the meaning of what we consider. Through paying the price of non-participation we are able to view the situation from a distance, precisely for the purpose of questioning and understanding the meaning of our situation; which parallels with how we try to understand the meaning of the performance as we are watching that performance (Arendt, 1978, pp. 92-98).

**Rethinking the Critique of Quantitative Psychology**

Having attempted to explicate the meaning of the *idea* of theory, I can now provide an alternative critique of quantitative psychology to elucidate why the problem inherent within quantitative psychology is a result of the natural scientific attitude, rather than the theoretical attitude. Quantitative psychology does not consider the life-world in its investigations because it proceeds from indirectly mathematised phenomena, by taking numbers as capturing ‘real elements of real human beings’ (Husserl, 1970 (1930), p. 318). In addition, through the use of statistics, quantitative psychologists overlook their role in interpreting the results of their investigations because they understand themselves as providing neutral descriptions through numerical indices; in other words, mathematics. Therefore, quantitative psychologists unwittingly replace the life-world with formal theoretical understandings of the social world;
because they elide the fact that numerical values from which they proceed are co-relations\textsuperscript{154} of lived experience with numerical values, and are not reflective of real components of a person’s psychological makeup (Husserl, 1970 (1928), 2001 (1913), pp. 23-24). In short, I will suggest that the reason quantitative psychologists obscure the life-world is not because they theorise about the life-world, but because they indirectly mathematise or formalise human experience as part of their investigations.

The description of psychological testing that I provide is necessarily simplified and I provide it in order to show the problems with the basic assumption that underpins psychological testing. There are two important limitations to my analysis of psychological testing. Firstly, I am taking up psychological testing as a ready-made set of methodological principles. As Alexandre Koyré (1968, p. 1) notes, ‘modern science did not spring perfect and complete, as Athena from the head of Zeus’, and neither did psychological testing, which is part of the history of modern psychology.

\textsuperscript{154} The Husserlian term for the relation between qualitative and quantitative phenomena is correlation, and correlation is the concept used to indicate that qualitative phenomena are impossible to measure; in other words, to mathematise (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 34-37). By contrast, for quantitative psychology, correlation means graphing the relationship between two variables and using statistical equations to describe the relationship between these two variables (Davison, 1992, p. 258). For example, ‘personality’ and ‘intelligence’ are turned into mathematical scales, and each person’s numerical score on the two scales is plotted on a graph. A mathematical formula, called the ‘correlation coefficient’, is then used to work out the strength of the relationship between the ‘personality’ and ‘intelligence’. A person’s score on the ‘personality’ test can then be used to predict the numerical score that they are likely to receive on their intelligence test (for example see Davison, 1992, pp. 258-271). For Husserl, the number – which quantitative psychologists use to work out their mathematical correlations – is already a quantitative phenomenon correlated with a qualitative phenomenon. Hence, as Husserl would say, quantitative psychologists wrongly assume that qualitative phenomena can be straightforwardly quantified. However, using the same term to designate two different concepts, from two different approaches, is confusing. So, to indicate that I am talking about the Husserlian notion of correlation I will use the term ‘co-relate’ and ‘co-relation’ and to indicate the psychological notion of mathematical correlation I will use ‘correlate’ and ‘correlation’. The reason for using ‘co-relation’ is that Husserl’s notion of ‘correlation’ is that we relate a qualitative phenomenon to a quantitative phenomenon as a method of measuring a qualitative phenomenon. For example, the phenomenon of warmth is a qualitative phenomenon, that cannot be measured. To measure the quality of warmth we relate warmth to mercury rising in a tube, which can be quantified. We can then read the phenomenon of warmth through the numerical values on the tube of mercury, thereby indirectly mathematising the qualitative phenomenon of warmth. Once the relation between warmth and mercury rising in a tube has been sedimented, we simply assume that the numerical value on the tube of mercury is warmth. I will elaborate on the historical sedimentation of indirect mathematisation in chapter five.
In my thesis, I am not attending to the historical development of psychological testing. Instead, what I am attempting to argue is that in order to take the importance of history seriously, we must first understand that human experience cannot be distilled into invariant and ahistorical structures. A part of my argument for the importance of the theoretical attitude is to point out that we can think about the historical character of the life-world in order to understand and bring into question the natural scientific attitude adopted by personality psychologists. Coming to my second point, psychological testing is far more complicated than I am presenting here. Each part of the process – from writing items, to deciding upon the scale to use, to how to obtain an appropriate and representative normative sample, through to the best way to interpret the test – is discussed and debated throughout the literature on psychological testing. For the sake of clarity, I have simplified and made a linear progression of steps, based on the psychological testing literature, in order to put forward my thesis that it is indirect mathematisation, and not theoretical engagement, that leads personality theorists to lose sight of the life-world. The main purpose of my exposition of psychological testing is to reveal the problems with the concept that we can, somehow, measure general features of human experience, and to regain the importance of theory in our engagement with the life-world.

Returning to personality psychology as an example of quantitative psychology, I will attempt to reveal the problem of indirect mathematisation. One popular model of personality is the five-factor model, which understands personality to be composed of five dimensions: (I) Extraversion, (II) Agreeableness, (III) Conscientiousness, (IV) Neuroticism and (V) Openness (J. Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997, p. 737). Each factor or trait is seen as a continuum and a person’s

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155 I will return to discussing the relation between modern science, psychological personality testing and DP in chapter five.

156 See Gough and Bradley (1992) and Rust and Golombok (1989, pp. 22-38) for a full description of the claim that psychological ‘constructs’ and ‘traits’ are empirically driven.

personality is seen to be an interaction of the five different traits. The five-factor model was first proposed by Thurstone in the 1930s and became popular in the 1990s (J. Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997, pp. 737-738). Costa and McCrae’s Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness Personality Inventory (NEO-PI), which now includes Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, is one of the most common inventories used to, supposedly, measure the construct of personality based on the five-factor model (J. Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997, p. 746). I will use the five-factor model as an example to demonstrate how quantitative psychologists proceed in their investigations.

The first step in constructing a personality test such as the NEO-PI is to decide upon the theoretical model of personality, which informs the choice of traits one wishes to measure.\footnote{Refer to footnote 136, page 162 for a description of how items for a personality test are chosen. For a comprehensive summary of different methods for item selection see Gough and Bradley (1992).}

A psychometric personality test is composed of a list of statements that the person taking the test is required to rate on a numerical scale placed next to each of the statements. Once the theoretical model and the traits to be measured have been chosen, individual statements are chosen on the basis of previous research; and the current investigators can add items to the list provided by the previous literature, which they deem relevant to the traits they intend to measure (Gough & Bradley, 1992). Each statement is chosen to measure one trait (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2001, pp. 407-409). In order to establish whether the statements measure the traits that they are understood to measure, a pilot study is conducted. A pilot study involves administering the test to a small group of people. The results from the pilot study are run through statistical analyses to assess whether the statements correlate with each other and the traits that they intended to measure.\footnote{What a psychological test actually measures is highly contentious. As Rust and Golombok (1989, p. 26) write, ‘psychological and educational tests carry out a form of measurement but, unlike physical measurements such as length or weight, there is considerable confusion over what they measure and how they are able to do so. One particular problem is that what is measured is not a physical object but is an intervening construct or a hypothetical entity’. Rust and Golombok (1989, p. 25) also note that there are generally two schools of thought about what the constructs actually are: ‘trait
of the factors and should correlate highly with that factor. If it does not correlate highly with the factor it is intended to measure, it is discarded (Gough & Bradley, 1992; N. Haslam, 2007, pp. 17-38). Although this is a basic description of Factor Analysis (FA) and how items are chosen, my main point is to highlight that even the final choice of statements is seen to be accomplished through the formal method of psychological testing.\(^{160}\) Once the traits and the statements have been established, the psychometric test is ready to be given to a large group of people, which will form the normative sample (Bracken, 1992, pp. 119-125; Davison, 1992, pp. 250-258).

Psychometricians argue that the psychological traits their tests measure are very real, and are subjects of interest in their own right, while functional psychometricians argue that psychometrics can only be judged in terms of the success or failure of its application. Both approaches have had their success and failures. However, as with many such apparently clear-cut dichotomies in science, neither the theory nor the practice of psychometrics is this simple. Constructs correspond to the notion of factors in factor analysis; I will draw upon Stephen Gould’s explanation because it is one of the most cogent explanations I have found. Gould (1981, p. 275) writes that the goal of factor analysis is ‘a mathematical technique for reducing a complex system of correlations into fewer dimensions’. Gould (1981, pp. 275-276) goes on to explain ‘factoring’ or principal component analysis: if, for example, the hyperfootball were squashed flat like a flounder, the first principal component would run through the middle, from head to tail, and the second also through the middle, but from side to side. Subsequent lines would be perpendicular to all previous variation. We might find five principal components [factors] resolve almost all the variation in our hyperfootball – that is, the hyperfootball drawn in 5 dimensions looks sufficiently like the original to satisfy us, just as a pizza or a flounder drawn in two dimensions may express all the information we need, even though the original objects contain three dimensions.’ Within the personality literature, and in particular the five factor model of personality (J. Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997), each of the five factors that are said to explain the variance in the correlations between items, for example between the items on Costa and McCrae’s (1985) NEO-PI, are given a name and come to be known as the traits extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and agreeableness. Gould (1981, p. 280 emphasis in original) points out that ‘the first principal component is a mathematical abstraction that can be calculated for any matrix of correlation coefficients; it is not a ‘thing’ with physical reality. Factorists have often fallen prey to a temptation for reification – awarding physical meaning to all strong principal components ... Sometimes this is justified ... But such a claim can never arise from the mathematics alone ... For nonsensical systems of correlation have principal components as well.’ As Gould (1981, pp. 280-282) notes, psychological testers have often fallen prey to the reification of factors. However, whether the factors are understood as ‘hypothesized constructs’ or reified as ‘traits’, they are still mathematical abstractions that are removed from lived experience and then used to explain or predict people’s behaviour. Although there is a distinction made between constructs, factors and traits in the literature, because personality theorists set out to measure the ‘constructs’ of personality traits and then come to name the mathematical ‘factors’ as ‘traits’, I will use the terms ‘factor’ and ‘trait’ reasonably interchangeably.

\(^{160}\) The description that I am providing here is not entirely accurate. The items are not actually correlated to the factor in the beginning, rather the items are correlated with one another and the factors are posited on the basis that they explain the most variance in the data (see above footnote). However, each item, once the mathematical factors have been posited, is assessed as relevant to the trait it is, supposedly, measuring by the strength of the correlation between the item and the proposed factor. FA, and the related approaches of principal component analysis (PCA) and item analysis (IA), is a far more complicated area of statistics which requires a separate treatment to do justice to this topic. For an in depth discussion see Gould (1981, pp. 269-286).

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In order to interpret an individual result for a psychometric test, it is necessary to establish a normative sample. Each sample should be randomly chosen from a population with characteristics that match the target population that the test is intended to be used on (Davison, 1992, pp. 250-251; Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2001, pp. 27-61). For example, if the test is intended to be used to assess the personalities of Australian adults, then the normative sample should be drawn randomly from the adult Australian population. The normative sample is used to establish the mean – the average score for each of the traits measured – and standard deviations from the mean – the average of how far each score varies from the mean – that will allow the personality test results to be standardised and, thereby, interpreted (Bracken, 1992; Davison, 1992). Once a normative sample has been established for a psychometric test, the test is ready to be used in research and applied psychological settings.

The first step in the process of measuring an individual’s personality, after the psychometric test has been established, requires the person to co-relate their experience to each statement that makes up the psychometric personality test. An example of a statement from the Extraversion part of the NEO-PI is ‘I feel comfortable around people’ (Costa & McCrae, 1985). In order to answer whether they ‘feel comfortable around other people’, the person has to generalise from their experience of social situations and then co-relate the abstracted understanding of themselves in social situations to the statement provided on the personality test. Although the individual statement is never considered by itself (Bracken, 1992), the point is that each statement requires the participant to generalise from their lived experience of many different social situations and then co-relate their generalised idea of experience to each

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161 Other forms of mathematically interpreting tests are ‘ipsative profile interpretation’ and ‘criterion referenced interpretation’; see Bracken (1992) for a full description of the different methods of interpretation. The point I am making here is that for a psychological test to be a psychological test, and not merely a survey or list of questions, it is required to have ‘norms or other standardised (empirically-based) reference points’ (Kendall et al., 1997, pp. 2-3).

162 The sample should also be representative of the population in important respects: for example age, sex, ethnicity, etc. (Davison, 1992, pp. 250-251).

163 Refer to footnote 154, page 174.
of the statements on the personality questionnaire. Therefore, the person’s answer to the statement on the psychometric test does not take into account how people actually live in social situations, it is a generalised answer that is co-related to a predetermined question.

After co-relating their abstracted considerations of their lived experience to the statements presented in the personality test, the person is required to apply a number to their already abstracted answer. Whether the number is given arbitrarily or is well considered, the answer to the question is formalised through numerically representing the generalised co-related answer. In subsequent interpretations of the psychometric test results, once the answers have been turned into numerical scores, the reasons for the person’s answer are not considered. It is only the number that is of importance.

Through this threefold process of a person generalising from their actions in lived social situations, co-relating their answer to a prescribed statement, and then assigning a number from a predetermined scale, the person’s lived experience is indirectly mathematised. Although we may experience particular situations in which we ‘feel comfortable around people’, and may even consider whether we generally ‘feel comfortable around people’, we do not encounter such experiences with the mathematical exactitude of a numerical scale. We live with others in a social world that we can think about in general terms, but we do not encounter ourselves or others as ‘possessing’ qualities that can be defined with the exactitude required for a mathematical scale. We may experience gradations of human qualities (Husserl, 1970 (1952), p. 34) – for example Steve is more caring than me or Jack is less humble than Steve – but these similarities between ourselves and others are neither fixed nor universally applicable; these judgements are always made from a personal standpoint in reference to a lived situation. Indeed, it is hard to imagine, in a single situation, of asking a lover, for example, to give a numerical score to ‘prove’ that you have exactly the same amount of love for one another and for this to be convincing to either partner. Human qualities are not exact.
Therefore, the empirical data that forms the basis of consideration in quantitative personality research is removed from the lived social world and, as such, the lived social world is excluded from consideration by this method of investigation.

Once a person’s numerical answers to the personality test have been collected, the person is ‘read’ through the theoretical model that the test was established to measure. The numerical values given for each of the statements, intended to measure each of the five traits within the NEO-PI, are then added together and related to the mean of the normative sample (J. Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997). The raw score – the first addition of numbers – is not considered meaningful because the numbers people give are not necessarily comparable to one another. The numbers assigned to each of the statements may be arrived at for different reasons by different people and, hence, the number may mean something different for different people. However, it is generally accepted that once the scores for each trait are added together and standardised, through comparing the raw score to the mean of the normative sample, the scores become ‘meaningful’ within the schema: someone who has a lower score on the scale of extraversion, within the psychometric test, is considered less extraverted than someone who receives a high score for this trait (Bracken, 1992). To restate it, the numerical answers to each of the personality questions are not considered in terms of the person’s lived experience; rather the numbers are read through a generalised anonymous sample. Whether the person is more or less extroverted is not established through how they conduct themselves in the lived social world, nor is the relevance of extraversion to the person’s understanding of themself considered. The only thing that is considered is where the score lies in relation to the mean of the normative sample.

The standardised answers to the personality test – numerical answers that have been related to the mean of the normative sample – are then used to read the person’s lived experience. Once the person’s scores are standardised, each trait is ready to be interpreted. Generally, the
score on all of the factors are used, in combination, to interpret the person’s personality. However, the scores for each of the traits that lie within one standard deviation of either side of the mean are considered less descriptive in explaining the person’s personality. A standardised score that is between one and two standard deviations above or below the mean is considered to be reasonably salient to the person and descriptive of their actions. For example, a person whose score is one standard deviation above the mean for the extraversion scale is considered to be an extraverted person. Likewise, a score on the factor of extraversion that falls between one and two standard deviations below the mean is considered to indicate an introverted person. A score on a factor that falls between two and three standard deviations above or below the mean indicates that this trait is highly salient to the person and is, therefore, most relevant in explaining the person’s personality (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2001, pp. 404-441; Nezami & Butcher, 2000). The person’s actions within the lived social world are then read in terms of these formal categories, whether these categories were previously relevant to the person or not. The way in which we make sense of our lived situation is replaced by formal theoretical explanations of personality.

To return to the critique of quantitative psychology by DP: as I have argued, DP overlooks the problem that quantitative psychology co-relates lived experiences to formal categories and then to numerical values, because discursive psychologists conflate generalisation and indirect mathematisation. Quantitative personality psychology proceeds from the numerical answers provided by the results of psychometric tests. The person’s lived experience is lost as a result of indirectly mathematising experience, yet the numbers are understood to capture the general properties of a person’s experience. Quantitative psychologists miss that they change contingent, finite and constantly shifting lived experience into an unchanging Object that is defined with mathematical exactitude. Through this process, the lived social world is lost for a second time, as quantitative psychology replaces our experience of the world with formal
descriptions of the lived social world. The effect of the formalisation of the life-world by way of indirect mathematisation is that the researcher loses sight of the concrete social world within which we live.\textsuperscript{164} What the DP critique overlooks is that it is quantitative psychologists’ adoption of the natural scientific method to investigate human experience that leads quantitative psychologists to proceed in the absence of lived experience, replacing lived experience with their formal method of description. The problem is not the theoretical attitude, but indirect mathematisation.

**Discursive Psychology’s Simplification of the Distinction Between the Theoretical Attitude and Lived Experience**

In highlighting that it is the natural scientific attitude that leads quantitative psychology to lose sight of the life-world in its investigations, I have come to the main point of my argument: DP’s conflation of the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude is problematic. In overlooking the distinction to be made between the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude, discursive psychologists do not make the important distinction between theoretical considerations about experience and the lived experience, which leads DP analysts to replace the life-world with their method of describing it.

DP misunderstands the relation between theory and lived experience. There is a distinction to be made between the theoretical attitude and lived experience. In theorising about social situations we inevitably objectify the social situation we are considering. We consider a changeable social situation as if it were an unchanging Object with different aspects and parts. What needs to be considered is that we can never think about ourselves in the ‘present’ because our experience is unfolding. As soon as we pause to consider our actions, we change the phenomenon we are thinking about, because we think about our actions from the perspective of something that has already passed (Patočka, 1998, p. 95). However, from the

\textsuperscript{164} I am drawing heavily upon Husserl’s (1970 (1952), pp. 23-59) discussion of Galileo in *The Crisis*. I will elaborate on the point I am making here in chapter five.
observation that theorising objectifies the changeable situation that we are considering, it does not follow that theorising has no access to lived experience.

What we must remember when we are considering the life-world from the theoretical attitude is the unity of experience. We always need to consider the whole when we are theorising about aspects of the life-world, so that we do not fragment our experience into parts that cannot be put together again (Heidegger, 2000a, p. 170). When we keep in mind that the life-world cannot be fragmented, we can consider aspects of the life-world in relation to the whole, and prevent our theorising from fragmenting our experience.

It is when we forget the difference between theorising and lived experience that we theorise in the absence of the life-world (Husserl, 1969, pp. 15-16). Through discursive psychologists’ understanding themselves as free of theoretical assumptions, they fail to question the assumptions upon which their approach rests. To set out a means by which to investigate social phenomena is to present a set of normative assumptions about how to understand the phenomena being investigated and the best way to study those phenomena (Husserl, 2001 (1913), p. 39). To posit these normative assumptions as empirical, or to overlook the role of normative assumptions within a methodological orientation, effectively means that the assumptions are placed beyond question. It is only through the theoretical attitude that we can question the assumptions that we make as part of the methodological approach that we adopt (Husserl, 2001 (1913), pp. 13-39).

In understanding themselves as not theorising, discursive psychologists repeat the mistakes of quantitative psychologists. They formalise the social situation and replace the diverse perspectives from which to view the social world with a neutral description. Through misunderstanding the idea of theory, discursive psychologists assume that empirical description outside of theoretical perspectives is possible. In doing so, discursive psychologists commit the same mistake as quantitative psychologists, as they remove themselves from their
descriptions of the social world and leave their theoretical presuppositions unquestioned. In both quantitative and DP approaches we lose the importance of the theoretical attitude and replace the lived social world with a method of describing the social world.

**The Importance of Theorising**

Theory is important in our investigations of human experience, as it allows us the possibility to critique sedimented interpretations of lived experience. Understanding the theoretical attitude as the natural scientific attitude conflates normative theoretical projects with the idea of theory, which effectively leads to losing the significance of theorising as a mode of critique. Theoretical engagement with experience, and lived experience, are different. However, theorising about social situations plays a crucial part in our understanding of the life-world. Theorising enables us to stop and think about the way we live in the world and the accepted interpretations of experience. It is through theoretical engagement with the life-world that we can question the taken for granted interpretation of human experience in our current historical period (Husserl, 1970 (1935)).

When we understand ourselves as describing the social world from an *atheoretical* perspective, we miss the perspectival nature of the social world in which we live. In forgetting we are theorising as social researchers, we mistake our own point of view for the point of view of everyone. In so doing, we lose sight of the life-world as we replace the concrete social world with our formal theoretical description of it, and disregard differing perspectives and interpretations. We understand that the world is *Objective* *in spite* of differing perspectives and interpretations. In so doing, we lose the lived social world whose *objectivity* is constituted through varied perspectives (Schütz, 1970, pp. 267-271). The idea of the life-world as meaningfully constituted by us implies that it is constituted through our actions, but does not imply that each action is meaningful in the same way to all. In disregarding the perspectival
nature of the life-world, we lose sight of ourselves, our freedom and the world in which we live.

The theoretical attitude is a crucial part of what makes us human. Through being able to stop and think about ourselves in the world with others, we are able to distance ourselves from the situations in which we are involved (Arendt, 1978, p. 78). Through the distance we create between ourselves and the lived social world, we can interpret our lived situation differently. In reinterpreting our situation we are able to consider different possibilities for the future. That is, it is through theorising that we can reinterpret the past in order to think our situation anew; theorising and human freedom go hand in hand.

In clarifying the difference between the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude, I have highlighted the importance of Husserl’s (1970 (1935)) argument that the theoretical attitude needs to be understood as the guiding principle of European culture. The importance of the theoretical attitude is that it is only through this mode of engagement – which questions assumptions, accepted interpretations and prejudices – that we can clarify lived experience. Husserl (1970 (1935)) calls us to question the accepted natural scientific interpretation of experience, and clarify lived experience, because of the crisis of meaning that this accepted interpretation has led to. The natural scientific interpretation of lived experience directs us to read the human condition through a method that is indifferent to the meaningfulness of the world for us. It is only by questioning the natural scientific interpretation of experience that we can return meaningful human experience to its rightful place within our lived situation.\footnote{Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 5-6) writes when introducing his book \textit{The Crisis} that ‘we make our beginning with a change which set in at the turn of the past century in the general evaluation of the sciences. It concerns not the scientific character of the sciences but rather what they, or what science in general, had meant and could mean for human existence. The exclusiveness with which the total world-view of modern man [sic], in the second half of the nineteenth century, let itself be determined by the positive sciences and be blinded by the “prosperity” they produced, meant an indifferent turning-away from the questions which are decisive for a genuine humanity ... In our vital need – so we are told this science has nothing to say to us. It excludes in principle precisely the questions which man [sic], given}
In the next chapter, I will briefly outline Husserl’s historical analyses of the historical development of the theoretical and the natural scientific attitude in order to argue, from a different angle, that discursive and personality psychology adopts the natural scientific attitude. I will argue that the forgetful theoriser loses sight of the meaningful lived experience because they replace lived experience with empirical data, yet understand empirical data to capture lived experience. ‘Empirical data’ is already a set of abstracted categories of lived experience, collected according to the normative framework that informs the researcher’s investigations into the life-world. The idea that knowledge can be derived from and substantiated on the basis of empirical evidence is an idea that was instantiated with the birth of modern science, according to Husserl (1970 (1935), 1970 (1952), pp. 23-59).
Chapter Five: Lived Experience and Empirical Data

The Empiricist Assumption of Both Personality Psychology and Discursive Psychology

Every observation of fact is possible only within a particular context of judgements, which for its part is based on certain logical conditions ... It is the scientific empirical method itself that in this respect contains the most decisive refutation of certain theses of dogmatic empiricism. In the sphere of exact science, too, it has turned out that "empirical method" and "theory," factual knowledge and the knowledge of principles, are united to each other (Cassirer, 2000 (1945), p. 17 emphasis in original).

In the previous chapter I have discussed concepts related to the problem of empiricism. Empiricism is the tradition that is linked to the natural scientific method and states that knowledge comes from experience alone or that experience is the final arbiter of knowledge (Sober, 2008, p. 129). To state that the theoretical framework is built from the empirical evidence (ten Have, 1997) or that investigations should avoid theoretical concerns (Garfinkel, 1967a, p. viii), is to assume that knowledge can be gained from experience alone. The idea that knowledge is only gained from experience misses that empiricism itself is a normative theoretical discipline, instantiated with the birth of modern science (Chalmers, 1982b; Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 23-59).

Discursive psychologists and conversation analysts do claim an empirical approach to research (Edwards, 2006; Maynard & Clayman, 2003; Schegloff, 1996; ten Have, 1997), but would not claim that their form of empiricism is the same as natural scientific empiricism because of the focus on how ‘facts’ are produced, rather than an acceptance of ‘facts’ as given straightforwardly to us (Lynch & Bogen, 1994; Potter et al., 1993). However, as I have argued

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166 The sort of empiricism I am referring to here is sometimes referred to as naive empiricism (Chalmers, 1982b). Empiricism is a more complex subject than I am presenting here, but I will further expand on what I mean by empiricism throughout the chapter.

167 Ethnomethodologists would not necessarily claim an empiricist approach and do not use the method of transcription that I will discuss later in this chapter. However, I will come back to address ethnomethodology specifically in the next chapter.
in the previous chapter, the move from observing facts to observing ‘fact production in flight’ or how ‘factual versions of affairs’ are built up in talk does not solve the problem associated with empirical approaches to research in the human sciences.\(^{168}\) The DP, EM and CA claim investigating how descriptions are put together as factual versions either leads to an infinite regress or to a position where DP, EM and CA descriptions are given an Objective\(^{169}\) status compared to all other descriptions, which are merely contingent.\(^{170}\) Hence, in this chapter I will address the problems with the empirical standpoint to research.

Although personality psychologists openly admit that they are measuring hypothetical constructs, the hypothetical constructs are only posited on the basis of being explanatory of the observations (Gough & Bradley, 1992; Rust & Golombok, 1989, pp. 22-38).\(^{171}\) In statistical psychology, theoretical constructs may be posited, but only on the basis of empirical evidence. In statistical personality psychology, empirical evidence is preferred over theoretical argumentation. In this chapter, I will argue that it is the emphasis on empirical data in scientific psychology, rather than its reliance upon theoretical constructs, which points to a deeper problem with the use of natural scientific methods to study human experience.

Hence, in this chapter, I will argue that the empiricist assumption that experience is the only source of knowledge, or the final arbiter of knowledge, is the common problem with both statistical personality psychology and discursive psychology. Statistical personality psychologists and discursive psychologists only differ in terms of what they consider to be

\(^{168}\) Contrary to what I am claiming here, Garfinkel, Potter, Edwards and Wetherell do understand the change from determining facts about the social world to describing how facts are produced as a decisive move away from empirical natural scientific approaches to researching the social world. For Garfinkel’s (1967a, p. 76) use of the phrase ‘fact production in flight’ see *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. For Potter, Edwards and Wetherell’s (Potter et al., 1993) use of ‘factual versions of affairs’ see ‘A Model of Discourse in Action’.

\(^{169}\) Refer to footnote 1, page 1 for an explanation of why I have capitalised the ‘O’ in Objective.

\(^{170}\) For a similar claim see Hammersley (2003a, pp. 764-765).

\(^{171}\) Some personality theorists, in particular trait theorists, would claim that the constructs they are measuring represent real underlying order in a person’s biological or psychological makeup (Rust & Golombok, 1989, pp. 22-38; Winter, 1996). However, even when they are considered only constructs, they are posited on the basis of being empirically supported by the correlations between item scores (Gough & Bradley, 1992).
‘empirical’ and what they consider to count as ‘empirical evidence’. Scientific psychologists consider numbers to capture some general features of experience, whereas discursive psychologists consider spoken words and symbols to capture some general features of experience. The underlying assumption that knowledge is only gained from experience, or is the final arbiter of knowledge, is left unquestioned and, therefore, unseen.

In order to reveal the problem with the empiricist assumption I will first suggest that the simple judgement of a single state of affairs, when considered from the theoretical attitude which brings the possibility of knowledge into question (Husserl, 1999 (1902/03), pp. 15-21), is a much more complex act than the empiricist account of knowledge can account for. In making a simple judgement such as ‘this swan is black’, we are relying upon our experience and concepts (Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 88-89). By pointing out the complexity of the acts of judgement that we make as part of our practical lives, I want to suggest that experience is not simply a set of facts given to us, but that we actively constitute something as meaningful for us (Husserl, 1973b, p. 331; Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 88-93). We cannot simply constitute anything out of anything; instead something appears for us as we turn to make the appearance stand out against the backdrop of the human world we are situated in (Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 92-93).

I wish to momentarily attend to categorial judgement, predication and truth in our practical lives in order to argue for a difference between the generalisations I make from my own experience and the generalisations made in the natural sciences.

While in my practical life I generalise about my experience and reason from past events to future events I am always doing so from my own personal situation. However, natural scientists are not just reasoning from their own personal situation; they wish to predict future

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172 Neither personality nor discursive psychology addresses experience per se. However, I am not using ‘experience’ in a particularly technical manner; I am claiming no more than that both approaches consider only ‘empirical evidence’ to count as knowledge. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989), ‘empirical’ literally means ‘pertaining to, or derived from, experience’. I use a dictionary definition to illustrate that I am using a non-technical definition of experience.
states of affairs that are true for anybody and everybody based on previous states of affairs.

Natural scientists are not simply making generalisations from their own experience; they also have a strict method for doing so, such that, ideally, anyone could arrive at the same result by adopting the same procedure (Chalmers, 1982b; Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 4-5; Swinburne, 1989, pp. 122-125).\(^{173}\)

As Koyré (1968, p. 1) notes, ‘modern science did not spring perfect and complete, as Athena from the head of Zeus, from the minds of Galileo and Descartes. On the contrary, the Galilean and Cartesian revolution – which remains, nevertheless, a revolution – had been prepared by a strenuous effort of thought’. Following from Husserl’s (1970 (1935)) argument about the historical development of the natural scientific attitude, in this chapter I will address two important shifts in the history of thinking: the establishment of the natural scientific attitude in Galileo’s time and the inception of the theoretical attitude in ancient Greece.

Galileo is often thought to be important in founding modern science, a science derived from facts of experience (Chalmers, 1982b).\(^{174}\) Following from Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 23-59), in this chapter I will argue that what changed with Galileo played an important part in bringing about a new attitude taken towards the world. What changed with Galileo, according to

\(^{173}\) There are notable similarities at times between what I am saying about the theory dependence of natural science and Garfinkel’s account of science. For example, Garfinkel and Sacks’s (1970) would agree that natural science is a method of substantiation. Lynch and Bogen (1994), who I have utilised in chapters one and two, would also agree with this statement. However, Garfinkel’s (2007) statement that we need to rid ourselves of the theoretical altogether represents a huge difference from Husserl, which I am trying to point out indirectly in this chapter. In the next chapter, I will explicitly address the similarities and important differences between Garfinkel’s adoption of Husserl and Husserl’s own writings.

\(^{174}\) Francis Bacon and René Descartes are also important to the birth of modern science and others have argued for the central importance of these two thinkers. For example, Genevieve Lloyd (1993) has presented an eloquent argument for the important shift that occurred in Bacon’s account of science and how this came to change our relation to the world in which we live. As is notable in Koyre’s (1968) statement, he is also referring to the importance of Descartes, and so does Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 73-86). My engagement with the history of modern science is necessarily brief and does not take into account all the facets of this important shift. I will only focus upon Galileo, because I am attempting to explicate the difference between the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude and the correlative distinction between indirect mathematisation and idealisation. For Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 23-59), Galileo is incredibly important in this regard because, according to Husserl, Galileo was the first to put forward the hypothesis of indirect mathematisation.
Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 28),\textsuperscript{175} is that he took the relatively advanced field of geometry as a ground in itself. Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 48-49) argues that what Galileo did was to obscure the life-world as the meaning fundament of geometry and, instead, posited the life-world as dependent upon the ideal world of geometry. According to Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 23-59), the inversion of the real and the ideal led Galileo to posit two important concepts: perfect causality and indirect mathematisation (Patočka, 1989 (1971), p. 228). For Husserl (1970 (1935), p. 294), the natural scientific attitude has become sedimented as the Objectivised interpretation of the life-world in our historical situation and, hence, is often overlooked. One important aspect of the sedimentation of the natural scientific attitude, according to Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 26, 2001 (1913), p. 13), and important for my own argument, is that we no longer make a distinction between the real and the ideal.\textsuperscript{176} Instead, we see concepts as part of nature (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 51-52). In order to argue for a difference between the real and the ideal, I will first discuss Husserl’s (1970 (1935)) argument that the theoretical attitude is an important precursor to the natural scientific attitude.

Husserl argues that the theoretical attitude, instantiated for the first time in ancient Greece, radically changed our relation to nature. According to Husserl (1970 (1935), pp. 285-286), the theoretical attitude was a break from the mythical and practical attitudes that came before it, in two important respects. Firstly, the theoretical attitude opened up a new way of life, a life lived in pursuit of universal truth. Secondly, the universality of this new stance, a questioning attitude taken towards tradition, led, for the first time, to people not taking the world for

\textsuperscript{175} A similar claim is made by Alan Chalmers (1982b).

\textsuperscript{176} I am here referring to what Husserl (2001 (1913), p. 13) calls μετάβασις εις αλλο γένος (metabasis eis allo genos), which literally means the transition into a different kind of concepts. Husserl (2001 (1913), p. 13) writes, ‘such an unnoticed μετάβασις εις αλλο γένος can have the most damaging consequences: the setting up of invalid aims, the employment of methods wrong in principle, not commensurate with the discipline’s true objects, the confounding of logical levels so that the genuinely basic propositions and theories are shoved, often in extraordinary disguises, among wholly alien lines of thought, and appear as side-issues or incidental consequences etc. These dangers are considerable in the philosophical sciences. Questions as to range and boundaries have, therefore, much more importance in the fruitful building up of these sciences than in the much favoured sciences of external nature, where the course of our experiences forces territorial separations upon us, within which successful research can at least be provisionally established’.

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It is both the danger of the universalised theoretical attitude, which itself becomes sedimented and unquestioned, and the importance of the theoretical attitude as a questioning attitude, that Husserl (1970 (1935), 1970 (1952)) wishes to highlight in his work, particularly in The Crisis and 'The Vienna lecture'. For Husserl (1970 (1935)), the importance of the theoretical attitude as the ground of the natural scientific attitude needs to be recovered in order for us to bring into question the natural scientific attitude and recover the life-world from the 'well fitting garb of idea' (1970 (1952), p. 51).

For Husserl (2001 (1913), 2008 (1906/07)), when we assume that the ideal laws of logic and mathematics are grounded upon \textit{a posteriori} gathering of observations, we lose the ability to ground the claims we make because we relativise the ideal laws of logic and mathematics. According to Husserl (2008 (1906/07), pp. 1-31), when we assume that ideal laws of logic and mathematics are based upon the real laws of nature or the real laws of or thinking, we make the mistake of overlooking that as part of a coherent research project, our research methodology is a way of substantiating claims and linking statements together into unified wholes. The natural sciences, according to Husserl (2008 (1906/07), pp. 13-14), are not a set of factual statements put alongside one another; they are unified theoretical wholes. Following from Husserl (2008 (1906/07), p. 14), I will argue that the way claims are linked together, the splitting of the life-world into regions of investigation and concepts, are not particular to the discipline of investigation, but instead are grounded upon the \textit{a priori} discipline of pure logic, or what I have referred to in the previous chapter as pure theory.

In the rather broad and sweeping history that I present, which cannot do justice to the complex arguments of Husserl or the complexity of the history of thinking, my aim is to point to the natural scientific method as a historically developed method. Bringing my discussion back to psychology, following from the previous chapter but looking at the same problem from
a different angle, I will argue that both statistical and personality psychology are grounded upon the natural scientific attitude which, in turn, is grounded upon the theoretical attitude.

The important aspect of the sedimentation of the natural scientific attitude that I will address in this chapter is the unseen hypothesis of indirect mathematisation; the concept ‘that everything which manifests itself as real through the specific sense-qualities must have its mathematical index’ (Husserl, 1970 (1952), p. 37). The ‘empirical evidence’ from which natural scientific investigations proceeds, as Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 49) would say, is not ‘experienced or experienceable’ because formal concepts come to surreptitiously replace our real experience of the world in which we live. Hence, natural scientific ‘evidence’ can only be obtained through following a strict methodological procedure, which necessarily abstracts from our ‘unreliable’ and variable experience. Both statistical personality and discursive psychology propose a methodological procedure to follow in order to obtain the findings that are specific to their domain of inquiry. However, by assuming that their theoretical models or findings are derived from ‘empirical evidence’, discursive and statistical personality psychologists continue to substitute their normative theoretical concepts for lived experience. They miss that their normative (a posteriori) theoretical framework informs the observations they make and they reduce all a priori concepts to empirical a posteriori constructs; in doing so, they eliminate the theoretical attitude altogether. As such, personality and discursive psychologists maintain the natural scientific trend to flatten out all experience to a purely formal conception of the world, but understand their formal conception of the world as the ‘real’ world.

Drawing heavily upon Husserl’s arguments, I will argue that, in forgetting that their normative theoretical framework informs the observations made, both discursive and statistical psychologists overlook that their perspective is only one way of understanding what they set
out to investigate.\textsuperscript{177} Statistical personality psychologists following the five factor model of personality obscure the changeability and variety in human qualities by positing five human qualities as the most important aspects of human character. Discursive psychologists conceal the variety of ways in which we can understand conversations and relationships between people by suggesting that all talk-in-interaction can be understood as purely rhetorical practices. Both discursive and statistical personality psychologists posit one aspect of human experience as primary, if not exhaustive, and reduce the variation in human experience. In addition, both discursive and statistical psychologists lose sight of the life-world because they neglect the perspectival nature of the life-world.\textsuperscript{178} Both statistical and discursive psychologists displace the varied perspectives through which to view the life-world with one Objectivised perspective.

In concluding the chapter, I will suggest that rather than focusing on the most appropriate method to use to investigate human experience and the life-world, psychologists like myself need to start questioning the empiricist assumption that is predominant within the discipline of psychology. Understanding one approach as the most appropriate approach for investigating human experience, based upon the empirical evidence, closes down dialogue between different theoretical approaches adopted. Assuming that empirical evidence supports one’s own approach to research leaves little space to dialogue, critique and argue across different theoretical perspectives. As I found in my own research, pointing to the empirical evidence does not resolve the debate between quantitative and qualitative approaches to

\textsuperscript{177} Following from Husserl’s (2001 (1913), 2008 (1906/07)) arguments as presented in ‘The prolegomena to pure logic’ in \textit{Logical Investigations} and \textit{Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge}. In ‘The prolegomena to pure logic’, Husserl (2001 (1913)) sets out a difference between the pure, normative and practical theoretical frameworks. In \textit{Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge}, Husserl (2008 (1906/07)) sets out a difference between the \textit{a posteriori} disciplines and the \textit{a priori} disciplines.

\textsuperscript{178} Here I am pointing to Husserl’s (1970 (1935), p. 294) notion of the ‘one-sidedness’ of the natural scientific attitude and its implications for these two domains within the discipline of psychology. I am also foregrounding Husserl’s (1999 (1902/03), p. 65) argument that meaningful things are intersubjectively constituted by us, which I will pick up again in the next chapter in order to discuss the difference between Garfinkel’s and Husserl’s notion of the life-world. As Husserl (1999 (1902/03), p. 65 emphasis in original) writes, ‘this step provides us with a new objectivity that counts as absolute givenness, the \textit{objectivity of essences’}. 

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research because the empirical evidence is only considered empirical evidence from a particular theoretical perspective. I would like to suggest that it is only by understanding that one’s own approach to research is a particular theoretical standpoint that we can start to question and critique our own and each other’s theoretical presuppositions. Understanding that we are looking from a particular theoretical standpoint allows a space for argument and dialogue through which we can come to understand and clarify our own and other’s theoretical standpoints, presuppositions and concepts. The theoretical attitude brings into question the empiricist assumption of our current historical situation and not just a particular method’s effectiveness for establishing knowledge about experience. The theoretical attitude opens up a space for meaningful dialogue with others about the world in which we live.179

Practical Reasoning

Acts of Judgement and Statements of Fact

Linguistic structures may form wholes of exquisite complexity, and we may at times be so enthralled by them that we think that there is nothing but the play of signifiers and syntax, that they are sufficient in themselves. Both structuralists and deconstructionists believe this, thinking that there is no “center” beyond the play of significations. But phenomenology sees the formal patterns of language as endowed with an even greater dignity and beauty: they not only interact with one another, but serve to disclose the way things are and the way things can be (Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 171-172).

In the first part of this chapter, I want to bring into question the way we make judgements from experience. In our practical life we encounter things, pick up things and talk about things, without need nor want, most of the time, to pay attention to how we are able to do so

179 In this section of the chapter, I am draw heavily upon Husserl’s (2008 (1906/07), pp. 42-45) argument that logic is the ‘science of meaning’; in order to point out that for Husserl, logic is not just an empty formal activity, rather logic is the basis upon which we can speak meaningfully about the world in which we live. In this sense, I am attempting to highlight the larger significance of Husserl’s discussion of pure logic. Husserl’s (1975, pp. 59-60) work is not just an epistemological exercise in pointing out the problems with natural scientific presuppositions; for Husserl (1973a, p. 6) a self-responsible ground of knowledge is of utmost importance. As Husserl (1970 (1935), p. 298 emphasis in original) writes in ‘The Vienna lecture’, ‘the ratio presently under discussion is nothing other than the spirit’s truly universal and truly radical coming to terms with itself in the form of a universal, responsible science, in which a completely new mode of scientific discipline is set in motion where all conceivable questions – questions of being and questions of norm, questions of what is called “existence” [Existenz] – find their place’. I will come back to discuss the notion of a self-responsible knowledge in the next chapter.
(Sokolowski, 2000, p. 42). However, in order to highlight the problem with accepting statements as statements of fact, I wish to reveal the different aspects that make up a simple judgement, from the theoretical attitude. In this section I will draw upon Robert Sokolowski’s (2000, pp. 88-111) description of categorial intentions to give my own simplified account of Husserl’s concept of categorial intuition.\(^{180}\) Sokolowski (2000, p. 89) suggests that:

> We exercise our humanity most fully, we act as rational animals most intensely, when we use words, and our achievement of truth and thinking is implicated in our use of language; the discussion of categorial intentionality is therefore of great importance for phenomenology, in our study of what it is to be human.

Categorial intuition for phenomenology is ‘the act of saying something about something’ (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 88 emphasis added). For Husserl (1973b, p. 41), our categorial intentions are based upon our prepredicative experience of the world: we first live through experience before we can say something about something. Hence, categorial intuition is an important and complex part of phenomenology. However, I will briefly speak about categorial intuition in order to argue that even in our practical life we rely upon concepts and linking things together to speak meaningfully about things and, importantly for this chapter, to generalise from our experience.

In order to put forward a truth claim such as ‘this swan is black’ I am relying upon being placed and the conceptual meaning of ‘swanness’ and ‘blackness’ (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 88).\(^{181}\) Say, for example, I have just arrived at a park with a lake with my two year old niece, Danielle, to go for

\(^{180}\) As Husserl (1973b, p. 44 emphasis and square brackets in original) notes in *Experience and Judgement: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*, ‘if we speak of objects of science, science being that which as such seeks truth valid for everyone, then these objects, which find their adequate expression in predicative propositions considered as [reflecting] the complete structure of categorial actions, are not objects of experience, such as are encountered purely and determined in categorial actions on the basis of pure experience. “Judgments of experience,” or, to speak more clearly, judgments which are obtained only from original operations in categorial acts purely on the basis of experience, i.e., sense experience and the experience founded on it of mental reality [geistigen Seins], are not judgments of definitive validity, are not judgments of science in the precise sense – that is, of science which works under the idea of definitive validity. Thus, by their nature, the logical activities of idealization and of mathematization, the latter presupposing the former – which might generally be called activities of geometrization – are distinguished from other categorial activities’. For a full account of categorial intention by Husserl (2001) see the ‘Sixth Logical Investigation’.

\(^{181}\) Sokolowski (2000, pp. 88-93) uses the example ‘this car is damaged’.
a walk with the dogs. At first, I may look around rather passively, moving my gaze around at the different aspects of the park (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 89). As Sokolowski (2000, p. 44) notes, ‘the world as a whole and the I as the centre are the two singularities between which all other things can be placed’. It is against the backdrop of the park that I pick out a particular swan and I can easily name it as such. As I point out the swan to my niece she can see the thing to which I am pointing, but asks me ‘what is that?’ My niece is old enough to pick out a particular thing as one and the same thing that stands over and against other aspects of the park, but cannot name the swan yet because she does not know the concept of ‘swanness’.

At this point, Danielle can repeat the name back to me, but as she walks around the park she points to each swan and asks me ‘what is that?’. As Danielle grows up and learns to speak, she will know what she means as I will know what she means. According to phenomenology, the word ‘swan’ names the concept of ‘swanness’ as well as each particular swan; both Danielle and I share one and the same ideal meaning when we share the word ‘swan’. For Danielle to understand the concept of ‘swanness’ she needs to experience particular swans; and to know that a particular swan is a swan she requires the concept of ‘swanness’ which is learnt from people around her. Danielle will have learnt to conceptualise, not just to parrot words back to me, when she learns the meaning of the word ‘swan’. Hence, for Danielle to know what I mean when I say ‘this swan is black’, according to phenomenologists, she must first know how to constitute a particular thing as one and the same thing standing over and against other aspects of the park, and know the conceptual meanings of both ‘swanness’ and ‘blackness’. Danielle is not just collecting together instances of similar things; she is learning how to collect instances together.

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182 Here I am attempting to highlight Husserl’s (1973b, p. 41) notion of prepredicative experience.

183 Here I am drawing upon Husserl’s (2008 (1906/07), pp. 36-37) discussion of the meaning of a statement in Introduction of Logic and Theory to Knowledge, as well as Sokolowski’s (2000, pp. 88-111) discussion of categorial intuition.

184 I am drawing here upon Husserl’s (2008 (1906/07), pp. 42-50) discussion of why logic is not a part of psychology in Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge.
simple ideas that make up the statement; there is also the relation between the two ideas (Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 88-89).

To state ‘this swan is black’ I do more than just pick a thing out as a single thing that stands over and against other aspects of the park. I focus on a particular aspect of the swan and pay particular attention to it; I have foregrounded the swan’s colour against the background of the whole swan (Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 89-90). I can then simultaneously pay attention to the swan as a whole and the particular quality of the swan and declare ‘this swan is black’; I have stated a particular relation between a part of the swan and the whole swan (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 90).

Sokolowski (2000, p. 91) writes:

The intentional achievement we have described is the thoughtful basis of human language and speech. Language does not float by itself on top of our sensibility; the reason we can use language is that we are capable of the kind of intending that constitutes categorial objects. The syntax that defines language is grounded on the articulation of wholes and parts that takes place in categorial intending.

For phenomenologists, the logical concept of predication, i.e. ‘S is P’, is grounded upon human experience of the life-world and the relation between parts and wholes (Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 92-93). When Danielle is learning to speak – to say ‘this swan is black’ and to understand the meaning of the statement – she is learning, through her experience of living in the world among others, what the concept of predication is or, in other words, what it means to name a feature of something.\(^{185}\)

When I declare that ‘this swan is black’ I am claiming it is true; on the basis of ‘blackness’ being a feature of the swan I am seeing, in actuality, and on the basis of the concept of truth.\(^{186}\) In declaring ‘this swan is black’ as true, I am not doing so on the basis that anything can be said about the swan I am looking at; I am claiming the truth of the statement on the basis of the appearance of the swan before me. As Sokolowski (2000, p. 93) notes: ‘if we did

\(^{185}\) See above footnote.

\(^{186}\) I might be putting forward the statement as a falsity to deceive Danielle or to play a joke, but I am still relying upon the concept of true and false to do so. I am drawing here upon Sokolowski’s (2000, pp. 158-159) discussion of the difference between ‘truth of correctness’ and ‘truth of disclosure’ as well as Husserl’s discussions that I have indicated in footnote 177, page 194.
not experience something like [the blackness of the swan], we would not be able to constitute [the swan as black']. I could state to you that ‘this swan is black’ and you could reply, ‘no the swan is brown’, and we could both look back at the swan and negotiate what the best description of the colour is. In doing so, we would both rely upon the actual appearance of the swan and a shared understanding of the notion of truth. We may both decide that, ‘the swan is blackish brown’, or continue to disagree, but in changing our statement of truth or disagreeing about the truth of the statement, we have not changed our shared understanding of the concept of truth.

In highlighting some of the different aspects of the statement, ‘this swan is black’, what I am attempting to point out is that, even at a very basic level of simply making judgements from experience, we are relying upon far more than the simple observation of a fact. We are relying upon our experience, the shared meanings of things, the world in which we live and our own perspective, from which we view the world. At a very basic level of practical engagement with the world we are experiencing and reasoning about the world in which we live with others. When I make the simple statement, ‘this swan is black’ I am not necessarily paying attention to the way I intersubjectively constitute the thing before me or the way I am able to declare ‘this swan is black’. We are not passive receptors of facts: we actively engage with constituting the things we encounter through our engagement with them and we pay attention to particular parts against the backdrop of the whole.

**Generalising Judgements from Experience**

Generalisations are based upon gathering together judgements from experience, and we do so as part of practical living. I can generalise on the basis of experiencing and judging that ‘this swan is black’, ‘this swan is also black’, etc., that ‘all swans are black’. I have generalised from particular instances of experiencing and judging many swans as black in order to make a general statement. However, to do so I am still relying upon the concepts of swan, black,
predication and truth and not just upon my ‘pure’ experience of many black swans. Generalising from experience is part of the practical reasoning we engage with in our daily lives and we do so for our own practical purposes.\(^{187}\)

From generalisations based upon our experience and judgements about the world, we can make predictions (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 42-44). When I generalise from past experiences that, most times, I turn the key in the ignition of my car the car has started, it is reasonable for me to assume that, in all likelihood, my car will start next time I turn the key in the ignition. I can then plan to leave the house 20 minutes before I have to attend a meeting at university, because based on previous experience of the car starting when I turn the key in the ignition, I can reason that this is the appropriate amount of time to allow myself for attending a meeting I am going to today. To assume that my car will not start next time I turn the key in the ignition of the car may be impractical,\(^{188}\) because I could allow myself more time to get to university or I could arrange alternative means of travelling to university. Hence, generalising from experience is very important for conducting my practical affairs in the world in which I live, but our judgements and predictions are always fallible and are made from my particular standpoint in a particular situation (Arendt, 1978, p. 78).\(^{189}\)

\(^{187}\) Here I am not attempting to say that we only make generalisations from our own experience; we also take on generalisations from others and correct and change our own and others’ generalisations. However, what I wish to show is that even at a very basic level of engaging with the world we are relying upon concepts and consistency to understand and to speak with others. In addition, when we are making generalisations in natural scientific disciplines we are doing so based upon our human capacity to reason and experience (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 93-94).

\(^{188}\) Here I am drawing upon Husserl’s distinction between the logical absurdity of a contradiction and disregarding highly probable and useful generalisations. As Husserl (2008 (1906/07), p. 49) writes about an \textit{a posteriori} claim: ‘its denial never means an absurdity, a contradiction in terms. If I deny the law of gravity, or the law of parallelogram of forces, or the laws of habit, of the association of ideas, and the like, then in so doing I cast experience to the wind. I violate the evident and extremely valuable probability that experiences and their systematic procession have established for the laws. But, I never in any way incur absurdity’.

\(^{189}\) In this paragraph, I am pointing to the well known problem of induction (Chalmers, 1982a). However, I also want to point out something more, which is that human reason is fallible, because we are finite and we start from concepts and not just ‘pure’ experience. See Stephen Evans’s (1998, pp. 199-123) discussion of Søren Kierkegaard for a similar point.
Reasoning from particular experiences to general statements about experience can only provide us with probable statements about experience. There are two important reasons why reasoning from experience cannot go beyond establishing probable general statements that we can then use to make predictions. Firstly, experience of the world is the experience of the appearance of meaningful things in the world and, as such, ‘the world appears in the mode of it-seems-to-me’ (Arendt, 1978, p. 38). There seems to me to be a policeman standing outside the pharmacy, but as I move closer to the policeman, the policeman turns out to be a mere semblance as I see the appearance of a cardboard poster of a policeman. Secondly, the world of appearances is changing and moving. I can state that it is true that it is currently daytime for me, but this will not remain a true statement as day turns to night this evening, and is not a true statement for a person on the other side of the world. Reasoning from particular experiences to general statements about experience can never lead to certain and unchanging facts about the world. Reasoning from experience can only ever present us with probable and changeable statements about the world in which we live, from a particular place and time (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 42-50).

**Natural Scientific Reasoning**

**Husserl, Galileo and the Natural Scientific Attitude**

Prescientifically, in everyday sense-experience, the world is given in a subjectively relative way. Each of us has his [sic] own appearances; and for each of us they count as ... that which actually is. In dealing with one another, we have long since become aware of this discrepancy between our various ontic validities. But we do not think that, because of this, there are many worlds. Necessarily, we believe in the world, whose things only appear to us differently but are the same (Husserl, 1970 (1952), p. 23).

Generalising from experience, or inductive reasoning, is also a necessary part of natural scientific investigations. However, natural scientific reasoning, along with making generalisations from particulars, also requires a strict method for making generalisations and predictions (Swinburne, 1989, p. 124). Natural scientific investigators are not content with generalisations alone, they also want to find general regularities in nature that are predictive.
of the observed phenomenon, outside of any one person’s experience of the world. Natural scientific method proceeds from generalisations based on experience and laws in order to predict future states of affairs (Swinburne, 1989, pp. 124-125), because natural scientists do not want to make predictions based on the personal experience of me and my car, but rather on general predictions about the factors that lead anybody and everybody’s car to start or not start. Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 51) states, ‘and this [scientific] prediction infinitely surpasses the accomplishment of everyday prediction’.

This is why Alan Chalmers (1982b, pp. 1-3) states that what changed with Galileo was not so much the breakthrough of modern science based on facts of experience, but a change in attitude towards facts of experience and theory. According to Chalmers (1982b, p. 2), the story of Galileo is often framed as the birth of modern science, when the science built on facts of experience overcame the old tradition based on authority. As Chalmers (1982b, p. 2) explains, this is the basis of the often told story of Galileo and the Leaning Tower of Pisa. To demonstrate that it was true that all bodies, no matter what their weight, fall at the same rate, Galileo invited the whole university to come and watch him perform his experiment. Galileo, in front of a crowd of people from the university, climbed to the top of the Leaning Tower of Pisa with two balls of different weights and rolled them off the top simultaneously, and both balls landed on the ground together. In doing so, Galileo demonstrated through observation that traditional understandings were false because the traditional understanding was that different bodies would fall at different rates. However, according to Chalmers (1982b, pp. 1-2 emphasis in Chalmers’s text) quoting Herbert Anthony (1948, p. 148):

[It] was not so much the observations and experiments which Galileo made that caused the break with tradition as his attitude to them. For him, the facts based on them were taken as facts, and not related to some preconceived idea ... The facts of observation might, or might not, fit into an acknowledged scheme of the universe, but the important thing, in Galileo’s opinion, was to accept the facts and build the theory to fit them.
What changed with Galileo was not that his actual observations overcame tradition, but that
the observations alone were understood as evidence in themselves of the falsity of traditional
understandings.

Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 23-59) would agree with Chalmers’s statement that what changed
with Galileo was a new attitude adopted towards experience and knowledge. The description
that I give of Husserl’s work on Galileo is taken from *The Crisis* and is necessarily simplified. My
main purpose is to show that Galileo instantiated a new attitude taken towards the world that
leads to the concept that we can generalise from experience and posit real laws of nature that
are universally applicable.

According to Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 28), what was decisive in Galileo’s new attitude was that
Galileo took geometry as a ground in itself. Husserl is referring to ‘Galileo’s famous dictum that
(1970 (1952), p. 23) argues that prior to Galileo, in the prescientific conception of the world,
geometry was understood as idealised from the life-world. Geometry arose from the practical
art of measurement (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 24-34). For example, from seeing lines in the
world that are varied in respect to their straightness and length, we idealise a perfectly straight
line that extends in both directions without end: we arrive at the idea of infinity. Another
example would be: from observing imperfect lines that meet at inexact points that vaguely
form triangular shapes, we idealise the perfect triangle with perfectly straight sides that meet
at exact points, whose angles can be determined with exactitude. From the practical art of
measuring we idealise to more and more exact measurements. Husserl argues that Galileo
turned this movement toward more and more perfect ideas to understanding that our
measurements were actually moving closer and closer to the real world of Objective nature. As
Don Ihde (1990, p. 36) states, ‘put baldly, the object-in-itself is purely a geometrical entity’.

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For Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 37-41), Galileo’s statement – that the book of nature was written in triangles and circles – gave rise to the concept of precise causality (Patočka, 1989 (1971), p. 228). Galileo’s move to take the formal system of mathematical idealities as a ground in itself gave rise to the idea that we could abstract from personal situated experience to posit generalisations about nature that were true for anybody and everybody. In positing generalisations that were true for anybody and everybody we could predict future states of affairs for anybody and everybody on the basis of these generalisations. According to Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 37-41), one of Galileo’s most influential concepts was to posit an Objective world of nature that operated according to perfect causality (Patočka, 1989 (1971), p. 228). In addition, Galileo’s conception of nature gave rise to another important concept in Galileo’s work; indirect mathematisation (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 34-37; Patočka, 1989 (1971), p. 228).

Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 37) claims that Galileo posited that the sensible qualities of human experience have a ‘mathematical index’. In asserting that the spatial shapes experienced and experienceable as part of the life-world were underpinned by ideal and perfect geometrical shapes that are not experienced so much as ideated from experience, Galileo went on to posit that all sensible qualities of the things we encounter were underpinned by an index of regularity (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 34-37). As Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 38 emphasis in original) writes:
There must be measuring methods for everything encompassed by geometry, the mathematics of shapes with its a priori ideality. And the whole concrete world must turn out to be a mathematizable and objective world if we pursue those individual experiences and actually measure everything about them which, according to the presuppositions, comes under applied geometry – that is, if we work out the appropriate method of measuring. If we do that, the sphere of the specifically qualitative occurrences must also be mathematized indirectly.

For Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 34-35), the concept that every sensible quality is underpinned by a determinable and exact regularity that can be accessed with the right method of measurement remains related to the life-world, because sensible qualities appear in gradations. However, the concept that each sensible quality has an exact correlate is a hypothesis, because sensible qualities are not presented to us as exact; rather the concept that they are exact comes from the notion of more and more exact measurements and not from the experience of sense qualities. Indirect mathematisation of sense qualities to further and further exact measurements of them is a result of the method and is not available for verification from experience.

For Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 41-43), indirect mathematisation is essentially different from idealisation (Patočka, 1989 (1971), p. 229). Idealisation retains its meaning fundament in the life-world (Husserl, 1970 (1952), p. 23; Patočka, 1989 (1971), p. 229). For example, the meaning of the ideal triangle is arrived at from our experience of vague triangular shapes, uneven lines and inexact meeting points, and idealised into a perfect idea. Once arrived at, the idea of ‘triangleness’ has one and the same meaning for anybody and everybody: to know what a triangle means is to know that it is a three sided shape. The meaning of an ideal triangle is a priori self-evident because it is true on the basis of its meaning (2008 (1906/07), p. 48). Indirect mathematisation, on the other hand, lacks both verification by experience and a priori self-evidence (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 41-43; Patočka, 1989 (1971), p. 229). Sense qualities are not experienced as exact and neither is the concept that each sense quality has a mathematical index true, because of the meaning of the term. Indirect mathematisation can
be verified neither by experience nor self-evidence, because it is a hypothesis that is constantly being verified and constantly in need of further verification (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 41-43).

Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 46) argues that the true meaning of mathematical natural science is further emptied out through the ‘technization’ of the scientific method. For Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 46), the scientific method becomes a technique for achieving correct results. According to Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 49), the natural scientific conception of Objective nature is not directly experienceable because it is a formal structure of mathematical idealities. Hence, in order to reach the truth about Objective nature, we must proceed by applying the technical method for achieving such results (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 46-48). The natural scientific method becomes an ideal method (Gurwitsch, 1957, p. 378). Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 46) notes that the most extreme example of the technisation of method is algebraic arithmetic. However, his idea extends to the notion of method per se or the concept that we can attain Objective knowledge through the strict application of a methodological procedure.

For Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 23-59), the decisive change in attitude taken towards the world of experience, highlighted in the work of Galileo, was that the formal system of mathematics came to be understood as the real world of nature. According to Husserl (1970 (1952), pp. 48-49), Galileo’s conception of natural science and nature leads to ‘the surreptitious substitution of the mathematically substructured world of idealities for the only real world’. Galileo’s work leads to a new attitude adopted toward the life-world – the natural scientific attitude – and leads to a radical change in our relation to the world in which we live.

The natural scientific attitude leads to a bifurcation of the Objective world of nature constructed by the scientific observer and the pre-scientific world of our living (Ihde, 1990, p. 35). The objectivity of what is known can be achieved by abstracting from all Subjective experience by following a strict methodological procedure; the objectivity of the known is

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191 Refer to footnote 1, page 1 for an explanation of why I have capitalised the ‘S’ in Subjective.
understood to be possible through stripping all Subjective remnants from the subjectivity of the knower.

The natural scientific attitude is related to the natural attitude – where we take the world, things and the possibility of knowledge for granted – but universalises and Objectivises the natural attitude. Through the adoption of the natural scientific attitude we are no longer attending to, for example, me situated in a park pointing out swans to my two year old niece, we are attending to formal concepts that have been abstracted from everything experienced and experienceable, and positing knowledge on the basis of these formal abstractions. As Husserl (1970 (1952) emphasis in original) writes:

Mathematics and mathematical science, as a garb of ideas, or the garb of symbols of the symbolic mathematical theories, encompasses everything which, for scientists and the educated generally, represents the life-world, dresses it up as ‘objectively actual and true’ nature. It is through the garb of ideas that we take for true being what is actually a method – a method which is designed for the purpose of progressively improving, in infinitum, through ‘scientific’ predictions, those rough predictions which are the only ones originally possible within the sphere of what is actually experienced and experienceable in the life-world. It is because of the disguise of ideas that the true meaning of the method, the formulae, the ‘theories,’ remained unintelligible and, in the naïve formation of the method, was never understood.

In other words, the natural scientific attitude supplants the real, vague, imprecise and meaningful world of our living with a perfect and exact formal world conceived of as Objective nature.

The natural scientific attitude, with its hypothesis of indirect mathematisation, which posits that through the right formal method we can access the formal regularity behind qualitative experience, is sedimented within our historical situation to such an extent that it now makes perfect sense for people to say, for example, that the table is not really a table but a bunch of atoms with spaces in between. As Patočka (2004 (1966), p. 306) writes:

This radical objectification of reality – becomes absolutely dominating in our culture. [This understanding of nature] permeates schooling from primary school onwards; and through a technique penetrates everywhere and it is impossible for scientific methods and procedures not to influence everything.\textsuperscript{192}

\textsuperscript{192} Translated for me by Dr Lubica Učník.
Along similar lines Ihde (1990, p. 37) notes, ‘so much of this is taken for granted that undergraduate students say that they ‘see’ wave lengths’. For my purposes in this chapter, there is an important consequence of the sedimentation of the natural scientific attitude as the Objectivised attitude towards the life-world.

The natural scientific attitude places concepts in the life-world, such that we lose the important difference between the concepts of experience and concrete experience; we mistake the real for the ideal (Husserl, 2001 (1913), p. 13). According to Husserl (2001 (1913), 2008 (1906/07)), the enduring and unseen category mistake between the real and the ideal, which is one aspect of the sedimentation of the natural scientific attitude, leads to pure logic being understood as grounded upon generalisations made from particulars. We understand mathematical laws as the real laws of nature and logical laws as the real laws of our thinking. In doing so, we relativise logic and lose the basis for knowledge. We need to recover the theoretical attitude as the questioning attitude and a self-responsible ground for knowledge, so that we can recover the life-world as the meaningful world in which we live (Husserl, 1970 (1935)).

**Theoretical Reasoning**

**Husserl, the Greeks and the Theoretical Attitude**

According to Husserl (1970 (1935)), the theoretical attitude is the precursor to the natural scientific attitude and was instantiated by the Ancient Greeks. For Husserl (1970 (1935), p. 285), the theoretical attitude is sharply distinguished from the mythical and practical attitudes that came before it. Husserl (1970 (1935), p. 286) states that the theoretical attitude opens up a new attitude that pursues universal life and truth-in-itself. The theoretical attitude is also, for Husserl (1970 (1935), p. 286), a critical attitude that resolves not to ‘accept unquestioningly any pregiven opinion or tradition’. As Patočka (1996b, p. 2) writes: ‘the Greeks, though, were
not only the first to discover the format of systematic deductive inquiry. They were also the first who did not take the world for granted.’ Hence, the theoretical attitude precedes the natural scientific attitude, both logically and historically. It is both the hazard of such a universalised attitude, which becomes sedimented and itself taken for granted, and the importance of the theoretical attitude as a questioning attitude, that Husserl (1970 (1935), 1970 (1952)) seeks to highlight, particularly in ‘The Vienna lecture’ and The Crisis. Part of highlighting both the problems and the importance of the theoretical attitude is understanding the difference between ideal laws of logic and the real laws of nature.¹⁹³

Ideal laws of logic and mathematics are true because of their meaning, not because they are based on particular collections of experience (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 46-50). The statement that \(2 + 2 = 4\) is not arrived at from gathering together instances of people counting \(2 + 2 = 4\) to predict that each time someone new counts \(2 + 2 = 4\) it will probably be the case that they will also find that \(2 + 2 = 4\). The equation \(2 + 2 = 4\) is true because of the meaning of cardinal numbers, to think that \(2 + 2 = 5\) is equivalent to not understanding the meaning of cardinal numbers: it is to not understand what one is talking about. Likewise, the ideal logical law of non-contradiction is not arrived at from gathering instances of people not contradicting themselves to predict that the next time a person speaks they will not contradict themselves. The law of non-contradiction is true because of the meaning of contradiction, to say something is both the case and not the case is to say nothing at all; to say it is true that something is both the case and not the case is absurd, because it is to misunderstand the meaning of both contradiction and truth. The objectivity of ideal laws of logic and mathematics comes from their meaning alone and not from gathering particular instances. The law of non-contradiction and the equation \(2 + 2 = 4\) are true because they have identical meaning for everyone and

¹⁹³ I will come back to discussing the importance of the theoretical attitude as a self-responsible ground of knowledge for Husserl in chapter six.
anyone, no matter how they are stated or who is stating them (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 46-50).

The ideal laws of logic and mathematics are instantiate at a particular point in time, based upon idealisations from the life-world, but once arrived at they are no longer dependent upon experience (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 35-39). To take the example of the law of non-contradiction; the law of non-contradiction is based upon the experience of consistency in our life-world. I do not encounter a world of chaos where things randomly slip in and out of existence, nor do I encounter a perfectly coherent and orderly world where all things happen according to plan. I go to university at the same time each week to meet my students in the same room I met them last week. I may not meet exactly the same group of students as I did last week, but the consistency of the life-world allows those students who wish to attend the tutorial I run to consistently find me in the same room, at approximately the same time, on the same day each week for the duration of the semester. The law of non-contradiction is idealised – that is, perfected into an ideal law – from the experience of consistency in the life-world (Gurwitsch, 1957, pp. 375-378).194

As soon as we fill in the ideal law of non-contradiction with content we are no longer dealing with the ideal law itself; we are dealing with a judgement from experience. If I say that it is true that people are both hurtful and not hurtful, I am not necessarily contradicting myself because I am talking about a generalisation from particular instances of encountering different people. However, if I state that the same person is being both hurtful and not hurtful toward me at a particular place in a particular time and in a particular action, then I am contradicting myself and not saying anything meaningful at all. If I simply say to someone that they are being hurtful, because it is based on my experience, then my interlocutor can disagree with me and

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194 The law of non-contradiction is a very important logical law. Heidegger (1972) has called the law of non-contradiction the ‘principle of principles’. Hannah Arendt (1989, p. 37) argues that the law of non-contradiction is not only a logical law but an ethical one as well. I will come back to the importance of the law of non-contradiction as an ethical law in chapter six.
make the claim that they are not being hurtful. Ideal laws of logic and mathematics only remain ideal laws that are true for everybody and anybody as long as they do not state anything particular about the lived experience.

A posteriori generalisations are not true in themselves, because they depend on lived experience and state particular things about lived experience (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 46-50). It was once true, based on experience of moving about in the life-world, that the world was flat. It is now considered true, based on viewing the earth from space, that the world is round. The objectivity of the statement comes from our intersubjectively constituted understanding of the world. If I were to claim that the world is flat, I would be considered unreasonable, in that I would be seen to be ignoring established knowledge about the world. If I were to explain that in this historical period it is understood that it is true that the world is round, whereas in the past it was considered true that the world was flat, I would be making a different statement. If I were to explain that from my point of view as an earthbound creature the world is flat, and that from the perspective of space the earth appears to be round, I would also be making a different claim. In showing that the world appears differently from different perspectives and is understood differently in different periods of time, I am merely pointing to the fact that empirical truths reference a particular time and place.\(^{195}\) Therefore, it is not absurd to contradict a posteriori truths, although it may be disregarding established, probable and valuable knowledge (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), p. 49).

However, the idea of truth is not changed by changing empirical truths. In fact, my ability to claim something particular as true or false at a given time and place depends on the concept of

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\(^{195}\) The example provided here is drawn from the work of Hannah Arendt. Arendt (1978, p. 38) states that 'the world appears in the mode of it-seems-to-me, depending on particular perspectives determined by location in the world as well as by particular organs of perception. This mode not only produces error, which I can correct by changing my location, drawing closer to what appears, or by improving my organs of perception with the help of tools and implements, or by using my imagination to take other perspectives into account; it also gives birth to true semblances, that is, to deceptive appearance, which I cannot correct like an error since they are caused by my permanent location on the earth and remain bound up with my own existence as one of the earth’s appearances.'
truth, and my ability to link claims together in a consistent way depends on the ideal logical laws (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 42-50; Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 158-159). As such, to claim a posteriori truths and say something meaningful about the world of appearances, I need both the concrete appearance and the idea of truth. However, particular truths about experience only ever present me with something that seems to me to be the case, because empirical truths are dependent on a particular state of affairs and a particular perspective upon those states of affairs (Arendt, 1978, p. 38).

The Ideal and the Real

The A Priori Ground of A Posteriori Disciplines

Matters of fact only produce matters of fact over and over, and universalities only prove to be factual universalities presumably reaching beyond previous experience. There is, therefore, no psychological proposition that can be substantiated with absolute certainty, anymore than there is any such thing in the most exact physics (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), p. 47 emphasis in original).

Now that I have argued for a difference between the a priori disciplines of logic and mathematics and the a posteriori disciplines of natural scientific investigations, I can highlight why, for Husserl (2008 (1906/07)), the a posteriori disciplines of natural scientific investigation cannot ground the a priori disciplines of logic and mathematics. Ideal laws of mathematics cannot be grounded in studies of nature any more than logical laws can be grounded in studies of thinking. It is, rather, the other way around; the pure theory of logic or meaning must instead ground empirical natural scientific investigations (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), p. 42).

Although natural scientific investigations have split into many different particular sciences (for example, biology, physics, psychology and sociology among others) with particular sets of normative ideals and theoretical frameworks, they are the same in that they are grounded in the purely theoretical realm (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), pp. 3-5). The purely theoretical realm grounds the way in which each particular normative theoretical framework links its statements together. Without the idea of theory in the first instance, particular normative theoretical
frameworks would not be possible. Without the idea of theory we could not split disciplines into sensible wholes that investigate particular regions of the life-world. Without the idea of theory we would also not be able to question particular normative theoretical frameworks or ways of splitting regions of the life-world into separate disciplines of investigation.

Empirical investigations are not developed out of ‘pure’ experience alone, because all theoretical inquiry requires both ideas and experience (Husserl, 2001 (1913), pp. 15-59, 2008 (1906/07)). To forget the difference between a posteriori disciplines and a priori disciplines is to overlook that the theoretical framework informs our understanding of experience. It is to make a category mistake between the real and the ideal (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 48-53).

Empiricism is a normative theoretical framework because empiricists posit that knowledge is arrived at from experience alone; this is the normative ideal of all forms of empiricism. The different forms of empirical inquiry only differ in the method they use for justifying what is considered ‘empirical’ and what is considered to count as ‘empirical evidence’. Empirical inquiry is never purely and simply based on our experience of the world.

**Empirical Data and Lived Experience**

Understanding knowledge as ‘purely’ empirically grounded leads to an understanding that what is designated as ‘empirical’ by the normative theoretical framework is equivocated with concrete experience (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 48-53). Each particular theoretical framework of investigation understands what counts as ‘empirical evidence’ differently. Hence, if we do not distinguish between abstract concepts about experience and concrete experience, we understand our notion of experience as the proper notion of experience. It is for this reason that I claim that statistical psychology and discursive psychology are both dealing with abstract formal categories of experience rather than concrete experience. Empirical data, in both DP and personality psychology, are experience reduced to abstract theoretical categories which are then used to read the life-world.
Indirect Mathematisation and Psychology

Statistical Personality Psychology and Empirical Data

Statistical personality psychologists do not simply make generalisations from experience; they make generalisations from already abstracted empirical data. Human qualities cannot be simply measured from our experience of love, hate, warmth, cold, feeling comfortable around people or holding particular attitudes about things. Unlike quantitative phenomena, such as length, height, weight and the passing of time, which can be seemingly measured with instruments that can be read the same way in each instance of their use, qualitative phenomena are not amenable to measurement through instruments that are understood in the same way each time they are used (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 34-37). Applying the natural scientific method to studying human behaviours, feelings, attitudes and thoughts requires an extra step, because the investigator first has to co-relate the qualitative phenomena to quantitative phenomena, as I have explained in chapter four. In this chapter, there are two further points that I want to draw attention to, that relate specifically to how statistical personality psychologists understand experience as a result of their adoption of the natural scientific hypothesis of indirect mathematisation.

Firstly, qualitative phenomena, although they cannot be measured like quantitative phenomena, are being understood in scientific psychology as underpinned by exact and determinable quantitative phenomena (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 271). The different qualities of human existence, as they appear to us in our concrete experience of the world, are vague and changing similarities and differences between ourselves and others in the life-world. Personality psychology, in particular trait theory, understands the mere appearance of similarities and differences between ourselves and others as pointing to quantifiable and exact
differences in underlying traits, factors or constructs. The qualities of our experience of the world are understood as really only Subjective elements of experience that overlay the Objective quantifiable structures of our existence (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 293). For example, my ‘feeling comfortable around people’ or my preference for being ‘quiet around strangers’ are understood as indicating an underlying Objective dimension of extraversion-introversion, which each person possesses to differing degrees (Costa & McCrae, 1985; J. Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997). As such, my experience of the life-world as it appears to me is made an Objective domain of inquiry in which my personal experience is understood to merely point to the actual Objective determinants of my subjective experience (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 293).

Secondly, qualities of my experience of the world are formalised into Objectively determinable mathematical structures that explain my individual Subjective feeling of being ‘comfortable around people’ or being ‘quiet around strangers’. Formalising qualities of experience into formal structures of existence reduces the variability of my experience in the life-world to invariant structures of existence (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 30-31). Sometimes I may feel comfortable around people, and at other times I may prefer to be quiet; my choice depends on my particular situation at the time. However, trait theorists would state that although there is variability to this extent, I must on average prefer introverted activities to extraverted activities (Johnson, 1997; J. Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997). In addition, the formal categories of extraversion-introversion may be completely irrelevant to my understanding of myself; I may not understand my preference for being alone or being around people as important characteristics of myself. However, trait theorists would argue that it is not that I do not fit on the scale of extraversion-introversion; rather it is just a structure of my personality that I was not previously aware of and, now that I am, it makes sense of my comfort or ease with people.

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196 I am not claiming that personality psychologists would understand what they are doing in the same way that I am stating here. From my argument presented in chapter four, I am claiming that personality psychologists, through attempting to indirectly measure human qualities, understand traits as invariant structures of experience.
Finally, my preference for being alone, if and only if I have one, may be meaningful for me because I enjoy reading, or because I enjoy intellectual pursuits of reading and writing or simply because I do not like other people. My preference for being with other people, if and only if I have one, may be meaningful for me because I enjoy intellectual pursuits which require dialogue with others, or because I like to go to parties or simply because I enjoy others’ company. However, trait theorists would read my answer in terms of their scale and in terms of their meaning of the concept of extraversion-introversion. My experience of the world is taken out of my particular situation and read through the formal categories or structures of personality, which supposedly have the same meaning for anybody and everybody.

Trait theorists understand their measures of ‘personality’ as capturing generalised features of people’s experience of the world, the way they perceive others and the way they behave in the world. What trait theorists forget is that the formal number 5 does have the same meaning for anybody and everybody – to count five apples is to count the same number of apples each time – but the number 5 on the ‘Likert scale’\(^\text{197}\) does not have the same meaning for anybody and everyone. The number 5 co-related to an answer ‘strongly agree’ to the item ‘I feel comfortable around people’ may mean; for me, that I like to be around people because I like to talk to people or because I am confident in myself; or any manner of different generalisations of different people’s understandings of themselves and the question being asked. Trait theorists understand that individual answers may mean different things to different people, but once the individual answers are totalled and compared to the population mean, the assumption is that they do mean the same thing to all people, because they indicate that someone is more extroverted or introverted than another in general (Johnson, 1997; Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2001). However, to perform mathematical calculations using the numbers given on the scale to provide the population mean requires that, from the outset, trait

\(^{197}\) Refer to footnote 137, page 162 for a discussion of the ‘Likert scale’.
theorists have to assume that the number 5 on a Likert scale means the same thing for everybody and anybody, because to use an ideal mathematical equation is to use formal numbers. Trait theorists are not generalising from experience to make general statements about experience; they are generalising and then indirectly mathematising, or formalising, human experience and then dealing with the abstract categories of personality as if they are real aspects of a person’s character.

Trait theorists understand themselves to have a particular theory of personality, but they understand this theory of personality to be substantiated from the empirical evidence of using their scales to predict people’s actions in the world (Gough & Bradley, 1992; Samuel & Widiger, 2008). Trait theorists have not been particularly successful in predicting behaviour based on their scales, and the critique of personality psychology largely hinges on the lack of predictive validity of personality tests of all kinds (Alison et al., 2002; Bem & Allen, 1974; Johnson, 1997; Mischel, 1968, 2004; Swann Jr. & Seyle, 2005). However, the idea that personality is the underlying factor that explains variability of human character remains. In addition, the concept of personality as an underlying factor or construct is understood to be verified by empirical evidence and not from theoretical argumentation (Gough & Bradley, 1992; Samuel & Widiger, 2008).

**Discursive Psychology and Empirical Data**

Speech and writing are considered as the origin of measure; for they are characterized above all by the ability to fix the fleeting and variable and to remove it from the accidental and arbitrary (Cassirer, 2000 (1945), p. 3).

Although CA informed discursive psychologists steers clear of using psychometric scales, except to show that people do make sense of the statements on psychometric tests differently (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter & Hepburn, 2007), CA informed discursive psychologists still proceed by making generalised statements about social interaction on the basis of already
abstracted empirical data. The difference between DP researchers and trait theorists is that DP researchers use a different method to collect and formalise empirical data.

The main claim that CA informed researchers make to substantiate that they are investigating actual practices, and not abstract theoretical categories of experience, is that they do not collect and select data on the basis of pre-formulated ideas about social interaction or their interest in a particular topic (Psathas, 1995, p. 45). The concept of ‘naturally occurring data’ is essential to CA informed investigators because it guarantees, according to CA informed researchers, that the ‘data’ is not picked on the basis of their own research interests (ten Have, 1997). In addition, EM-informed investigators do not select aspects of the ‘data’ on the basis of particular research topics or interests because they use ‘unmotivated looking’ to examine how the ‘data speaks for itself’ (Psathas, 1995; Wowk, 2007). The transcription and tape recording that EM-informed researchers use to present their data is understood to be done for the practical purposes of analysis and to show their findings to other investigators. The process of transcription, for EM-informed researchers, is synonymous with analysis, because the first stage of analysis is to repeatedly play and replay the recording (Potter & Hepburn, 2007, p. 280; S. Wiggins & Potter, 2008, pp. 83-84). According to ten Have (1997, p. 3), ‘it is in and by this process of repeated listening, looking and transcribing that the phenomena of interest can

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198 I am using the strong CA notion of naturally occurring data, because in my own analyses I was following this strong requirement of EM and CA research. Discursive psychologists often make the lesser claim that naturally occurring data is important, because as Wiggins and Potter (2008, p. 78) note, ‘it avoids imposing the researchers’ own categories or assumptions onto the data’; but this does not change the claim I am making here because researchers’ ‘categories’ and ‘assumptions’ inform discursive psychological investigations from the outset. The issue of naturally occurring data is a contentious issue within the literature and other people have critiqued the notion of naturally occurring data. See for example the debate in Volume 9, Issue 2 of Discourse Studies published in 2007 (Griffin, 2007a, 2007b; Henwood, 2007; Potter & Hepburn, 2007). Also see the debate in Volume 4, Issue 4 of Discourse Studies published in 2002 (Lynch, 2002; Potter, 2002; Speer, 2002a, 2002b; ten Have, 2002b). However, despite the debate surrounding naturally occurring data and the criticisms that have been made of this concept, working with naturally occurring data is one of the central notions of CA and DP (Edwards & Potter, 2001, p. 258; Potter & Hepburn, 2007, pp. 277-278; Schegloff, 1996; S. Wiggins & Potter, 2008, pp. 78-79). The concept of naturally occurring data, or as it is sometimes called, naturalistic records (Potter & Hepburn, 2007, p. 277), goes hand in hand with discursive psychologists’ claim to be studying everyday life as it actually happens (Edwards & Potter, 2001, p. 258; S. Wiggins & Potter, 2008, p. 79).
be noticed’. However, when they are dealing with the tape recording and transcribing they are transforming the social situation into a piece of ‘data’ that can be read in the same way by anybody and everybody acquainted with the method of transcription. They are removing the social situation from a particular situation that is meaningful for those who are participating in it and placing the recorded social situation into the researcher’s frame of reference for understanding social interaction in general.

The first abstractive move made in an EM/CA informed DP investigation is to record ‘naturalistically occurring’ talk (Potter & Hepburn, 2007). For example, in my own research, I recorded therapy sessions, which I did not take part in. Tape recording of the therapy session reduces the meaningful social situation that the therapist and client are involved in to a copy of that therapy session and, in doing so, freezes a temporary social situation into an Object of inquiry that can be listened to again and again. What is removed from a lived social situation, from consideration in an EM-informed investigation of social interaction, is both that it happens within a concrete social situation such as a psychologist’s office, and the fact that particular people are talking. The actual situation of sitting in a psychologist’s office is not relevant to my inquiry, because the ‘context’ of social interaction is understood to be displayed in the talk-in-interaction itself. The particular people in the social situation are not considered, because what matters is the way people in general organise social affairs. The term ‘member’ indicates exactly this, they are not persons in the full sense of the word, they are ‘members’ of society displaying competencies (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970, pp. 333-334) or ‘participants’ order in their talk (Schegloff, 2007a, p. 1). The real and particular social situation in which people are talking to one another, and the real and particular people who are talking together, are removed from EM-informed investigations because both are reduced to talk-in-interaction itself. The recording of the session is the first abstractive move in EM-informed DP, because freezing the situation in order to come back to it time and time again allows the
analyst to pay attention only to the talk-in-interaction and not to the real and particular social situation in which real and particular people are engaged.

The second abstractive move in EM-informed DP is the turning of the tape recording into the written transcript. In transcribing the recorded session of therapy, I am turning spoken words into written words and qualities of people’s expressions into written symbols. In order to do so, I use the Jeffersonian transcription system (Jefferson, 1984, 2004). 199 I use a formal transcription system that has been established so that anybody and everybody who is acquainted with the Jeffersonian transcription system can read my data in an identical manner. There may be some discrepancy for me as to whether a word I am listening to is said loud, and thus indicated with capitals (e.g. WORD), or is only said with emphasis, and thus indicated with underlining (e.g. word); but once I have decided upon underlining to indicate the quality of the sound I am hearing, each person reading my transcript will read the word as emphasised. In the process of transcribing the tape recording according to the Jeffersonian system I have formalised the social situation into a set of fixed symbols that can be understood by everybody and anybody who is acquainted with the Jeffersonian transcription system. The lived social situation is indirectly mathematised by freezing it into an Object of investigation and then co-relating the quality of people’s expressions to the symbols of a formal transcription system.

Although discursive psychologists would claim that the tape recording and the transcribing of the recording are incidental to their investigations because the ‘real’ source of ‘data’ is the social situation or the tape recording (ten Have, 2003; S. Wiggins & Potter, 2008, p. 83), the process of abstracting ‘data’ from the concrete social situation is important for the investigations. 200 Sacks (1984a, p. 26) states, ‘I started to work with tape-recording

199 Refer to Appendix for a list of the transcription symbols.
200 What the source of data actually is, according to conversation analysts and discursive psychologists, is more complicated than I am claiming here. As Hammersley (2003a, p. 759 emphasis in original) notes,
conversations. Such materials had a single virtue, I could replay them’. I suggest that Sacks would not have developed CA without the tape recorder because it was the tape recorder was able to freeze the social situation into an Object of investigation. In addition, the transcription system is not incidental to either CA or DP, as it is removing extracts from the tape recording and presenting the extracts from the recorded data as symbols with fixed meanings; allowing researchers to ‘empirically’ evidence their claims in written reports to other researchers. Like statistical psychologists state that the actual placing of numbers on particular statements is of limited meaning when it is an essential part of constructing and interpreting test results (Davison, 1992, p. 249); the tape recording and transcribing of the social situation are essential to CA and DP researchers because their investigations could not proceed without them.

Conversation analysts and discursive psychologists indirectly mathematise social situations as part and parcel of their methodological procedure. Conversation analysts and discursive psychologists, as I did in my investigations, present the social situation through a series of symbolic signifiers that are meaningful for the investigators and not for the people in the situation. Firstly, they record the session and remove it from the ebb and flow of everyday life. Secondly, they represent intonations with arrows, emphasis with underlining, slower speech

‘one problem concerns the nature of the data CA employs ... It is less clear, however, what the phenomena or data are in the case of CA. There are four possibilities: the features of the particular conversational interactions under study; audio- or video-recordings of those interactions; transcripts of those recordings; or the analyst-as-member’s interpretations of the transcripts and/or recordings’. Hammersley (2003a, pp. 759-760) points out problems with each approach taken. However, all I am pointing to here is that the tape recording and the transcript are centrally important to CA and DP. Gail Jefferson (1984, 2004), the inventor of the Jeffersonian transcription system, recently died, and part of her legacy is this transcription system, which she started putting together while working with Sacks (Stuulen Jefferson Co., 2008). Jefferson nicely sums up the role of transcription in CA with two comments in her paper. In introducing the article Jefferson (2004, p. 13 emphasis in original) writes, ‘the one thing I’d rather not do is talk about transcribing. It’s not a topic. Transcribing is just something one does to prepare materials for analysis, theorizing, etc. Do the best you can, but what is there to talk about’. In concluding the article, Jefferson (2004, p. 23) writes, ‘but they’re [the order of the practices are] ‘there’ in the talk recorded on the tapes, and many of them are captured in the transcripts that use the system explicated in the ensuing glossary of transcript symbols. Some of them have led to the discovery of ranges of orderliness; most of them are yet to be explored’. The transcription system and the tape recording are both a mundane and a crucial part of CA studies, including DP. Transcribing the tape recording into transcript was one of the most exciting parts of my research because it gave me the feeling of moving closer and closer to what was actually happening in the interaction and this is echoed nicely by Jefferson (2004, p. 13): ‘I’d probably rather transcribe than do any other part of my work’.
with greater than and less than signs, etc; that is, represent the quality of a person’s expression through agreed upon symbols that fix the meaning of the qualities of sound heard. Thirdly, it is on the basis of these symbols, words as they are transcribed and measured pauses in the speech, that EM/CA informed DP researchers make claims about social interaction. For example, I can present a ‘no’ in speech when a ‘no’ is not stated, by showing the measured pause (e.g. (0.2)), the word ‘well’ and in breath (.hh), that is used before the person starts speaking. Once the transcript is represented in this way, any EM/CA informed researcher understands the utterance as a ‘non-verbal no’ or in CA terms a ‘dispreferred turn shape’ (Kitzinger & Frith, 1999; Pomerantz, 1984). EM/CA informed DP investigators proceed from already abstracted formal presentations of data as if they are capturing the concrete practices of the lived social situation.

**Discursive Psychology and Statistical Psychology as Competing Forms of Empiricism**

Empirical natural science is the normative framework from which discursive psychologists and scientific psychologists proceed. Both approaches to research assume that knowledge can be gained from experience *alone*. In doing so, they both overlook the theoretical framework that informs their research and replace lived experience with abstract theoretical concepts. Both approaches indirectly mathematise their object of inquiry, but proceed *as if* their formalised categories of experience are real parts of concrete experience (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 34-37). Both discursive psychologists and scientific psychologists make a category mistake between the real and the ideal.

Discursive psychology and personality psychology differ in the normative ideal of inquiry and the method of investigation. Personality psychologists aim to understand the structures of personality that underlie patterns of similarity and difference between people, so they choose

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201 For example: ‘(0.2) well (0.6) er (0.4) .hh actually I think I already have plans this evening’.
a statistical procedure that enables them to relate each person to a population mean in order to Objectively assess the similarities and differences between people (Johnson, 1997; Nezami & Butcher, 2000; Samuel & Widiger, 2008). Discursive psychologists wish to investigate the sequential structures of talk-in-interaction that explain how people order the social world using psychological topics and categories, so they choose to tape record a social interaction and use transcription to standardise the interaction. Tape recording and transcription allow the ‘data’ to be read in the same way as any other social interaction; enabling claims about how the social world is ordered in general. Personality psychologists investigate structures of personality through statistical methods and discursive psychologists investigate structures of social interaction through transcription methods. However, both proceed by choosing a method to fix the meaning of their ‘empirical data’ from the contingent and changing lived experience.

Personality psychologists understand themselves as working toward a definitive description of what ‘personality’ is; but that can be reached because they have agreed upon the direction in which they will find the answer. The normative theoretical framework, which relies upon the empirical natural scientific method, is no longer questioned because they proceed along one direction of investigation and build upon others’ work in the area. Personality psychologists may disagree on the exact method to use, the exact psychometric inventory and even the best theoretical formulation of personality; but what is not questioned is whether personality is best understood as a structure of anybody and everybody that can be described through mathematics.

Similarly, discursive psychologists understand themselves as working toward a definitive description of what social interaction is; but that can be reached because they have agreed upon the direction that they will find the answer. Like personality psychologists, discursive psychologists’ normative theoretical framework, which relies upon empirical natural scientific
method, is no longer questioned because they proceed along one direction of investigation and build upon others’ work in the area. Parallel to personality psychologists, discursive psychologists may disagree on whether video recording is better than audio recording, how best to transcribe a section of recorded ‘data’, whether members’ methods are only conversational methods or whether a particular description of members’ methods is actually describing the methods of members or includes analytic notions. However, like personality psychologists, discursive psychologists do not question whether common sense knowledge is the appropriate and only way of understanding people’s practical activities.

Both discursive psychology and statistical personality psychology are grounded upon the natural scientific hypothesis of indirect mathematization. Both discursive psychology and statistical psychology are based upon a hypothesis that is constantly being verified but constantly in need of verification. For personality psychologists this is easier to see because the hypothesis is, straightforwardly, that human character is possible to measure indirectly. For discursive psychologists the hypothesis is that the world is produced and reproduced through the actions of members. Both discursive psychologists and personality psychologists assume that their hypothesis is the correct hypothesis; yet to those outside of their methodological domain it is not the correct hypothesis. The resolution between methodological approaches does not come from pointing to the empirical evidence, because this evidence is only valid if you accept the hypothesis. The empirical natural scientific attitude closes down dialogue rather than opening up dialogue.

The theoretical attitude as the questioning attitude opens up dialogue, because it is through engaging with each other’s approaches to research and questioning each other’s presuppositions that we can start to have a meaningful dialogue. Logic is not just an empty formal activity: it grounds our ability to speak meaningfully about things. Logos in its original
sense, in the sense that the Ancient Greeks proposed, is meaningful talk about things. As Patočka (1996a, p. 9) writes:

Such is *logos*, language, meaningful discourse. With the art of discourse about things, *dia-logos*, the Greek thinkers transformed language into a tool for working out constant, unchanging meanings on which we can depend, to which we can return so that they are always available, perennially present.

The theoretical standpoint is an ideal standpoint through which we can question, through which we can attempt to disclose the meaning of things, and through which we can ground our claims to know (Husserl, 2001 (1913), p. 131).

In the next chapter, I seek to do two things. Firstly, I want to return, where I started and reveal the similarities and the differences between ethnomethodology and phenomenology. Garfinkel’s (2007) elimination of the theoretical attitude is a significant difference between the two disciplines. Garfinkel’s abandonment of the theoretical standpoint altogether leads him to once again empiricise the life-world and, in so doing, return to a purely formalised conception of the social world that obscures the life-world once again. More importantly, I want to argue in the next chapter that Garfinkel’s conception of the life-world eliminates the historical aspect of the life-world. However, I want to retain Garfinkel’s insight that we do share a world and that we can understand each other.

Secondly, I want to argue that the theoretical attitude, and in particular the axiom of non-contradiction, allows for a self-responsible ground of knowledge, because through understanding the importance of consistency we can reunite the ethical with the epistemological. I will argue that we need to reconstruct what our unquestioning adoption of the natural scientific attitude has destroyed: reason and conscience as a single unity (Adorno, 2001 (1965), p. 3; Arendt, 1989, p. 37; Cassirer, 2000 (1945), p. 4; Gurwitsch, 1945; Husserl, 1970 (1935), pp. 294-295; Kosík, 1995 (1967); Patočka, 1996b, pp. 9-11).
Chapter Six: Context, Common Sense and Historical Situatedness

The World and Reasoning

In the last two chapters, I have argued for an important difference between indirect mathematisation, or the universal formalisation of the world, and idealisation, which retains its meaning fundament in the life-world. The natural scientific attitude loses its life-world foundation and, hence, only discloses the nature of formal systems. The theoretical attitude retains its foundation in the life-world and, hence, can disclose the meaningful things that we encounter in our everyday lives. I have also attempted to reveal the historical character of the life-world and the importance of history in understanding our current situation. In this chapter, I will discuss the world as a shared world and our equal capacity for reason.

I started my thesis with three similarities and one difference between Garfinkel’s ethnmethodological (EM) program and Husserl’s phenomenological philosophy. I would like to name the concepts that Garfinkel introduced me to; and I still respect his work for the road he paved for me. Firstly, Garfinkel and Sacks (1970) pointed out to me the problems with the formalisation that is prevalent throughout the variety of psychological research methods. Secondly, Garfinkel (1967a, pp. 36-37) directed my attention to the world as a shared world which we could understand. Thirdly, Garfinkel (1967b) revealed that the world was intersubjectively constituted by us. However, Garfinkel’s (1967a, pp. vii-viii, 2007) acknowledged rejection of the role of theoretical attitude is an important difference between Husserl’s phenomenology and Garfinkel’s EM program. Garfinkel becomes the forgetful

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I have mainly drawn upon five of Husserl’s (1970 (1935), 1970 (1952), 1999 (1902/03), 2001 (1913), 2008 (1906/07)) texts: The Crisis, ‘The Vienna lecture’, The Idea of Phenomenology, ‘Prolegomena to pure reason’ in Logical Investigations and ‘Part I. The idea of pure logic as a formal theory of science’ in Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge. In addition I have only paid attention to one aspect of Husserl’s work: the difference between the theoretical attitude and the natural scientific attitude that we can adopt towards the life-world.
theoriser\textsuperscript{203} and, in doing so, obscures the very phenomena he wishes to reveal: the intersubjectively constituted life-world. In the beginning, I respected Garfinkel’s (1967a, 2007) as well as Lynch’s (1993) work because both were consistent in their avoidance of theory and both consistently rejected concepts as part of their investigations. Nevertheless, I have now come to realise the problem with Garfinkel’s (2007) and Lynch’s (1993) consistent rejection of theory and their acknowledged reluctance to engage with Husserl’s account of the historical development of the natural scientific attitude.

In adopting the EM attitude to research and attempting to follow Garfinkel’s (1967a, 2007) and Lynch’s (1993) lead to consistently reject the theoretical attitude, I did not realise that I was relying on the very ground I was seeking to reject. Throughout my thesis I am theorising and engaging with formal argumentation. However, in the first part of my thesis I did not realise that I was theorising and, hence, I was the forgetful theoriser. I was attempting to reveal the world as a shared world and the problems with the natural scientific interpretation of human experience, but by reinstating the formalisation of the life-world lost sight of both. In the second part of my thesis, I have purposefully theorised in an attempt to reveal the difference between the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude; in order to recover the importance of the theoretical attitude and the life-world, by drawing upon Husserl’s work.

In the previous two chapters, although I was not attending to the relation between EM and phenomenology specifically, which makes EM to a certain extent unique among the three methodological approaches I have addressed (Garfinkel, 2007; Lynch, 1993; Lynch & Bogen, 1994), I have spoken to the important difference between Husserl’s and Garfinkel’s critique of the natural sciences. Husserl’s (1970 (1935), 1970 (1952)) critique that natural science has lost its life-world foundation and Garfinkel’s (2007) interpretation of Husserl’s critique are significantly different. The difference between Husserl’s critique of natural science and

\textsuperscript{203} To use Husserl’s phase (1969, p. 15), I will use this phrase throughout the chapter.
Garfinkel’s interpretation is that, for Husserl (1970 (1952), p. 270), natural science is a historical and cultural accomplishment (Gurwitsch, 1957); whereas, for Garfinkel (2007; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970), scientific findings are the collective accomplishments of a particular group of scientists in the particular setting of a laboratory. The important difference between Husserl’s (1970 (1935), 1970 (1952)) phenomenology and Garfinkel’s (1967a) EM program is that, while EM tries to close down the theoretical and hence loses the historical aspect of the life-world, phenomenology opens up the theoretical attitude and attends to the historical aspect of the life-world.

In this chapter, I will first attend to the relation between Garfinkel’s EM (1967a) program and Schütz’s (1953, 1970) social phenomenology. I will read Schütz through Husserl’s phenomenological standpoint, rather than Garfinkel’s EM standpoint. In so doing, I will reveal three important differences between Garfinkel’s (1967a, pp. 36-38) and Schütz’s (1953) notions of common sense knowledge. The differences hinge upon the assumption of shared meaning between three important concepts for both Garfinkel’s and Schütz’s work. Firstly, both Garfinkel (1967a, pp. vi-vii, 36-38) and Schütz (1953, 1970, pp. 152-153) agree that there is an important difference between common sense and scientific knowledge. Secondly, they both agree that common sense knowledge is shared knowledge. Thirdly, they both agree that doubt is important for making visible our taken for granted assumptions. However, because Garfinkel does not make a distinction between the natural scientific and the theoretical attitude he reads Schütz’s notion of social science, common sense and the method of doubt from the standpoint of natural science. Hence, Garfinkel unwittingly reinstates the empirical natural scientific method that drains our lives of meaning. Following on from the discussion of the different understandings of Schütz and Garfinkel, I will then attend to how we might rethink common sense as shared sense rather than shared method.

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204 For Garfinkel’s interpretation of Husserl’s phenomenology see Garfinkel (2007) and Garfinkel and Liberman (2007). For a discussion on the relationship between Garfinkel’s and Husserl’s work see Lynch (1993).
There are two important notions that I want to discuss in regards to rethinking common sense: the world as whole and our equal capacity for reason. Drawing upon the previous chapter, I want to explicate Robert Sokolowski’s (2000, p. 44) statement that ‘the world as a whole and the I as the center are the two singularities between which all other things can be placed’. I will argue that in order to engage with the differences between ourselves and others we require a concept that we live in one and the same world and that we all have an equal capacity to reason (Husserl, 2001 (1913), p. 79). I will propose that there are some commonalities that appear to us as regularities in the life-world, which indicate that we share one and the same world (Gurwitsch, 1957). The commonalities are not empirical. Rather, they are imprecise consistencies that can and have been interpreted differently in different historical situations. This leads to very different understandings of the relationship between the two aspects of the life-world: the ‘ethical’ and ‘astronomical’ order, to use Ernst Cassirer’s (2000 (1945), pp. 1-2) terminology. I will suggest that our current historical situation, in which we adopt the universalised natural scientific attitude, radically splits the ‘ethical’ order from the ‘astronomical’ order (Cassirer, 2000 (1945), p. 7). In doing so, I will advocate a position, in line with Husserl (1999 (1902/03), p. 18), that we need to rethink the relationship between the objectivity of the known and the subjectivity of the knower in order to reinstate the unity between conscience and reason; so that we can follow Husserl’s (1970 (1952), p. 298, 1973a, p. 6) proposal of a self-responsible ground of knowledge.

In this chapter, I will highlight the ethical aspect of Husserl’s (1970 (1952), pp. 293-294) work in order to reveal that Husserl’s questioning of the problem of knowledge is not only relevant for epistemological concerns but also for ethical concerns. The splitting of the Objective world

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206 I will continue to use Cassirer’s terms throughout the chapter.
207 I am adopting Karel Kosík’s (1995 (1967)) terminology here.
208 Refer to footnote 1, page 1 for an explanation of why I have capitalised the ‘O’ in Objective.
of nature from the Subjective\textsuperscript{209} human world separates our claims to know from the person who makes those claims: the objectivity of known is understood as independent from the subjectivity of the knower.\textsuperscript{210} As such, we do not understand ourselves as responsible for our claims to know. I will suggest that the splitting of the known from the knower has particular relevance for psychology because we are making knowledge claims about ourselves. I will then put forward that we need to reinstate the interdependence of the objectivity of the known and the subjectivity of the knower; to open up the possibility of a self-responsible ground to our knowledge so that we can be responsible researchers in the discipline of psychology.

Rather than rid ourselves of the either the Objective or the Subjective altogether, Husserl (1999 (1902/03), pp. 15-21) argues that we need to rethink the relation between the objectivity of the known and the subjectivity of the knower. In order to bring into question the natural scientific interpretation of the life-world, we need to understand the historical character of the life-world. What I am proposing, in line with Husserl (1970 (1935), 1970 (1952)), is to reconstruct the reasoning human being as the centre of our life-world, because it is our world; we must recover the theoretical from our shared history in order to understand the natural scientific attitude and bring this one-sided attitude into question. We must return to the life-world as the shared world of meaning.

In concluding the chapter, I will propose the reason that Garfinkel’s EM program, and the interconnected methods of CA and DP, cannot present a genuine alternative to quantitative

\textsuperscript{209} Refer to footnote 1, page 1 for an explanation of why I have capitalised the ‘S’ in Subjective.

\textsuperscript{210} I am adopting Husserl’s terminology here and I will continue to use his terminology throughout the chapter. Husserl (2001 (1900), p. 2) writes in the ‘Foreword’ to the first edition of \textit{Logical Investigations}, ‘in this manner my whole method, which I had taken over from the convictions of the reigning logic, that sought to illuminate the given science through psychological analyses, became shaken, and I felt myself more and more pushed towards general critical reflections on the essence of logic, and on the relationship, in particular, between the subjectivity of knowing and the objectivity of the content know’. In ‘Lecture I’ of the \textit{Idea of Phenomenology} Husserl (1999 (1902/03), p. 19) proposes, ‘what is required is a science of what exists in the absolute sense. This science, which we call metaphysics, grows out of a ‘critique’ of positive knowledge in the particular sciences. It is based upon the insight acquired by a general critique of knowledge into the essence of knowledge and known objectivity according to its various basic types, that is, according to the various basic correlations between knowledge and known objectivity’.
psychological methods is that they cannot account for the human actor who can engage in meaningful dialogue about things. In our practical life, we live amongst meaningful things, the meaning of which we take for granted in the course of our everyday activities. What ethnomethodologists, as well as discursive psychologists and conversation analysts, take for granted is the meaningfulness of our life-world and our human capacity to reason. When analysing my extracts I am not attending to neutral data: I am attending to the meaning of words. However, by not paying attention to what I am doing I am attempting to remove the variability in the meaningfulness of words, and in turn reduce words to empty signifiers. In emptying out the meaningfulness of words I am removing the disclosing aspects of the words. In the second part of my thesis I am attempting to reveal the disclosing aspect of meaningful dialogue.

Words and actions are not merely means through which we achieve some end or another, they are essential to the meaningfulness of our lives as we are both speaking and acting beings. Speaking and acting are the way we appear in the world; they are essential aspects to being human. Speaking and acting always occur in a personal situation and, as such, cannot be studied from an impersonal standpoint. To study my thoughts and actions as separate from my personal situation is to turn my own words and actions into the words and actions of anybody and everybody; it is to empty out the meaningfulness that they have for me and for others I meet in my everyday encounters with them.

\footnote{For a similar claim see Husserl (2008 (1906/07), p. 36) and Sokolowski (2000, pp. 171-172).}

\footnote{For a similar claim see Sokolowski (2000, pp. 171-172).}
Common Sense Knowledge and Questioning: Garfinkel and Schütz

As I have attended to the Garfinkel’s interpretation of Husserl’s phenomenology which occurs in his later work, I will now turn my attention to Garfinkel’s appropriation of Schütz in his early work. In his early work, Garfinkel (1967a, pp. 8, 30, 36-44) describes ethnomethodology as the study of people’s commonsense knowledge. Garfinkel (1967a, pp. 36-38) attributes the term commonsense knowledge to Schütz’s work on social phenomenology. There are important similarities between Schütz and Garfinkel’s approaches to studying the social world. Both Schütz (1953, p. 25, 1970, p. 319) and Garfinkel (1967a, pp. 50, 55) suggest that common sense is the common stock of knowledge that we share. According to both Garfinkel (1967a, p. 7) and Schütz (1953, pp. 1-4, 1970, p. 319), there is a difference between common sense and scientific knowledge because common sense is partial, incoherent and good enough for practical purposes, while scientific knowledge is formal and adheres to strict controls. In addition, both Garfinkel (1967a, p. 50) and Schütz (1970, pp. 152-153) agree that doubting is an important part of revealing the invisibility of our taken for granted assumptions. However, an important difference between Schütz and Garfinkel’s approaches to studying the social world becomes apparent when we take into account Schütz and Garfinkel’s different accounts of the ‘subjective point of view’ and the theoretical attitude.

Schütz’s (1970, p. 271) states that the ‘subjective point of view’ is what guarantees ‘that the world of social reality will not be replaced by a fictional non-existing world constructed by the scientific observer’. For Schütz, it is our ability as people in the world to question taken for granted understandings of the life-world that guarantees that we do not lose sight of the world in which we live through complying to one interpretation: the natural scientific

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213 In this section, I am drawing specifically upon Schütz’s philosophical work where he discusses phenomenology (for example see Schütz, 1953, 1970). I am not discussing Schütz’s own investigations of the social world.

214 For Garfinkel’s adoption of Husserl see Garfinkel (2007) and Garfinkel and Liberman (2007). In addition, refer to Lynch’s (1993) discussion of the influence of Husserl on Garfinkel. For Garfinkel’s (1967a) appropriation of Schütz see Studies in Ethnomethodology.
interpretation. Garfinkel rejects Schütz’s reliance on the subjective point of view because he interprets it as a psychologised interpretation of the social world, i.e. as a reduction of social world to the workings of individual’s private mental states.\(^{215}\) However, Garfinkel misses that Schütz is using the term ‘subjective’ in a different sense. Schütz (1970, p. 152) states the relation between subjectivity and objectivity as follows:

The subjectively determined selection of elements relevant to the purpose at hand out of the objectively given totality of the world taken for granted gives rise to a decisive new experience: the experience of doubt, of questioning, of choosing and deciding, in short deliberation.

Hence, Schütz is using subjective in the sense of a perspective from which to view the world and arguing that through the experience of viewing the world from a particular perspective, in reference to the objectively given world, we can doubt and question our understanding of the world in which we live. Phenomenological investigations, according to Schütz (1970, p. 271 emphasis added), ‘agree that the common-sense knowledge of everyday life is the unuestioned but always questionable background within which inquiry starts and within which alone it can be carried out’.

On the contrary, for Garfinkel (1967a, pp. vii-viii), common sense knowledge is the way in which members conduct their everyday affairs and the only way of investigating those affairs. For Garfinkel (1967a, p. viii), reflexivity is an attribute of the phenomenon being investigated and not an attribute of social actors or investigators. Garfinkel (1967a, p. vii emphasis added) in his ‘Preface’ to *Studies in Ethnomethodology* writes, ‘by permitting us to locate and examine [everyday activities] occurrence the reflexivity of that phenomenon establishes their study’. We can see from Garfinkel’s work that common sense knowledge is only an unquestioned background to everyday affairs and is not available for questioning by either members of society or social researchers. In short, the social actor, the ‘subjective point of view’, is removed from Garfinkel’s EM program altogether.

\(^{215}\) See Garfinkel’s (1967a, pp. 36-38) *Studies in Ethnomethodology* for support of this claim. Also see Sharrock and Buttons (1991) discussion of the social actor in ethnomethodology.
A second important difference between Schütz’s and Garfinkel’s approach to studying the social world is their understanding of theory. For Schütz (1970, pp. 55-56), the theoretical attitude is necessary to adopt in order to bring into question common sense knowledge. Garfinkel rejects Schütz’s reliance on the theoretical attitude because he argues that any theoretical framework is a formal system that limits what can be observed to the theoretical categories that the researcher has set up in the first place. However, Garfinkel misses that Schütz is using a different sense of the word theoretical. Schütz separates out the natural scientific attitude, which is a particular theoretical framework, from the theoretical attitude, which he denotes as the questioning attitude. Schütz (1970, pp. 72-73) wishes to question the natural scientific attitude, which he understands to be embedded within the ‘world of our everyday living’, and understands the only way of bringing into question the natural scientific attitude as through the theoretical attitude. For Garfinkel, this is not the case because he does not make a distinction between the natural scientific attitude, as a particular theoretical framework, and the theoretical attitude as a mode of questioning and, hence, seeks to eliminate both from his investigations of the social world.

Garfinkel (1967b) puts forward that we can understand the way people do things because they enact what they do so that it can be understood. The way that people enact what they do in a way that can be understood within a particular situation at a particular time Garfinkel (1967a, p. 30) calls a method. The ethnomethodologist can observe what other people do within a

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216 I am drawing upon Garfinkel’s discussion of Schütz in *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Garfinkel (1967a, p. 37) writes that Schütz ‘pointed out, a “special motive” is required to make [everyday scenes] problematic’. However, Garfinkel (1967a, p. 37) goes on to claim that, rather than a ‘special motive’, he prefers a procedure through which to make ‘familiar scenes’ problematic. Given my research into Garfinkel, Schütz and Husserl, I am interpreting the ‘special motive’ as the theoretical attitude and ‘procedure’ as what has been called Garfinkel’s breach experiments which I shall go on to explain. Hence, my claim that Garfinkel rejects the importance that Schütz places upon the theoretical attitude is an extrapolation from Garfinkel’s work, but one I think is justified.

217 Garfinkel would agree that he seeks to avoid the theoretical attitude (see for example Garfinkel, 1967b, 2007; Garfinkel & Liberman, 2007). Also see Rawls (2002) for a discussion of Garfinkel’s understanding of theory. However, the claim that Garfinkel misses the difference between the theoretical attitude and the natural scientific attitude is my assertion based upon the arguments presented in chapters four and five.
particular situation, and describe their actions in a way that the person would accept as
describing their own practice, because there is a one to one relationship between acting and
interpreting. The ethnomethodologist can also do an action that is counter to the common
sense way in which an action is preformed in order to observe what happens in non-normative
situations, which are known as Garfinkel’s breaching experiments. The purpose of breaching
experiments is to reveal the unnoticed background of sense making practices in everyday
interaction. According to Garfinkel (1967a, pp. 36-38), breaching experiments are a procedural
way of entering doubt into an everyday situation such that this action can reveal the
background normative methods by revealing how people attend to a situation where normal
methods breakdown. Hence, Garfinkel’s ethnomethodological program posits that the world is
methodical and he seeks to describe the shared methods that we use to order social situations
by procedurally introducing doubt into everyday situations.

Garfinkel’s ethnomethodological project shares many characteristics with the natural scientific
approach to research, such that it is unsurprising that Garfinkel reveals the shared world as a
set of shared methods. First and foremost, by positing that the world can be described
atheoretically because there is a one to one match between acting and interpreting, Garfinkel’s project is inherently circular. Garfinkel posits that they world is methodical and, hence, finds it to be the case. Through disregarding the theoretical, all Garfinkel establishes is his original hypothesis. In addition, and much more tellingly, Garfinkel’s original hypothesis points to the widespread sedimentation of the natural scientific method. The natural scientific standpoint replaces the world in which we live with our method of describing the world, yet we forget that the natural scientific method is only one way to describe the world in which we

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218 The claim I am making here is my own. Refer to chapter four for a full discussion of why ethnomethodologically informed approaches assume a one to one relationship between action and interpretation.

219 See Garfinkel’s (1967a, pp. 35-75) Studies in Ethnomethodology for an example of his breaching experiments.
Hence, Garfinkel’s claim, from the theoretical standpoint, can be seen to reinstate our current focus on method within the everyday world in which we live as if the social world is in fact methodical. The most important problem with Garfinkel’s wish to avoid theoretical frameworks is, not only that he misses his own theoretical framework, but also that there is no possibility of critique offered by Garfinkel. Through reducing the social world to moment to moment methodical interactions, Garfinkel loses sight of history and reinstates our current historical understanding the world in which we live as the only way of understanding the world. In Garfinkel’s collapsing of the distinction that can be made between the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical, ethnomethodologists once again reduce the world to the natural scientific method.

For Schütz, common sense knowledge is historical. Schütz’s separation of the natural scientific method from the theoretical attitude allows Schütz to open a space for questioning, which can be seen by Schütz’s (1970, pp. 146-159) emphasis on the human actor as being able to question and deliberate. In addition, through opening up the theoretical attitude as a mode through which we can doubt and question commonsense knowledge, Schütz opens up the historical aspect of the world in which we live. Schütz (1970, p. 72) states, the ‘world of daily life’ is ‘the intersubjective world which existed long before our birth, experienced and interpreted by others, our predecessors, as an organized world’. Through understanding the life-world as historical we can come to understand that, although the natural scientific attitude is the characteristic interpretation in our current situation, it is not the only way of interpreting the life-world because it has been interpreted differently by our predecessors.

The difference between Schütz and Garfinkel is that for Schütz commonsense knowledge is shared meaning that can be brought into question by the social actor, whereas for Garfinkel commonsense knowledge is shared methods for doing things. Garfinkel reduces the world to a

set of particular methods that constitute social order, where doubt becomes just another method among other methods for ordering the social world. Understanding the social world as built through shared methods does not allow a place to question the world in which we live because the notion that the social world is methodical only reveals the sedimentation of the natural scientific attitude. The natural scientific attitude replaces the world in which we live with our method of description; hence, Garfinkel’s claim that the social world is methodical only reveals the world in which we live as we have come to know it in our current historical situation. For Schütz, the world we share in common is a world of shared meaning that has been based down to us from our predecessors. Recognising the common world as a historically shared meaningful world, and understanding the social actor as able to both think and act, enables us to question our current understanding of the world we live in. Emphasising our ability to think and question positions us as being able to view the world from more than one perspective and understanding the world as historical means that we can see that the world has been understood differently. Schütz’s account of commonsense knowledge, in contrast to Garfinkel’s account, allows us to bring into question the natural scientific attitude because Schütz reveals the world as more than just a set of methods. For Schütz, the world of everyday living is the shared world that can be described using different methods, the world in which we live must precede our descriptions of it.

**Understanding Common Sense Differently**

We must take *sensus communis* to mean the idea of a sense *shared* [by all of us], i.e., a power to judge that in reflecting takes account (a priori), in our thought, of everyone else’s way of presenting [something], in order as it were to compare our own judgement with human reason in general and thus escape the illusion that arises from the ease of mistaking subjective and private conditions for objective ones, an illusion that would have a prejudicial influence on judgement (Kant, 1987, p. 40).

In introducing the concept of common sense as shared sense, I want to first introduce a caveat. There are important cultural differences, but what I want to suggest is that those differences only appear against the backdrop of a shared world. I do not want to suggest that
differences between cultures or people are not important, but I do want to say that unless we consider ourselves as equals and able to understand each other in a common world we cannot hope to engage in meaningful dialogue where we can come to understand each other’s differences. I realise that my claim is an idealistic notion, but I think it is important to have ideals such as the hope that we can understand each other and work together to rethink our past through the present; to open up the possibilities for our future. To lose hope is to live in a desolate world with a bleak future (Arendt, 2005, p. 201). Hence, I will tentatively argue that we do share one and the same world and we are equal in our capacity to reason from the theoretical standpoint; how it is instantiated in the life-world is a different matter because there are inequalities between people.

The common world of shared sense includes within it a notion of the world as a whole as well as the notion that we can question the shared meanings of things (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 44). Turning my attention first to the ideal that we live in one and the same world, I will suggest that there are some rough commonalities between us. The commonalities are not empirical commonalities, because, as I have pointed to in the previous chapter, as empirical truths they are constantly in need of proof because the real laws of nature are different from the idealisations from the life-world (Husserl, 2008 (1906/07), p. 47). The commonalities between us are also understood and interpreted in different ways. I would like to suggest that we share three main commonalities: near and far, day and night and above and below. These three aspects of the world as whole, as a horizon against which meaningful things appear, are both simultaneously trivial and important. The aspects of day and night, above and below and near and far present to us the experience of consistency in the life-world; not a perfect consistency, but an imprecise consistency (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 167-170). These commonalities can and have been interpreted differently in different historical periods.
To take one example: in our current historical period we understand day and night as perfectly determinable in the measuring: we have mathematised and perfected time to equate day and night with the ticking of the clock. However, in past historical situations, day and night have been interpreted differently; for example as evidence of God’s existence. Cassirer (2000 (1945)) notes, ‘in the trajectory of the stars, in the exchange of day and night, in the regular return of the seasons man [sic] found the first great example of a uniform event’. Cassirer also notes (2000 (1945), p. 2) that it is not only in the ‘astronomical order’ that we find consistency but also in the ‘ethical order’:

Here, too, it is by no means mere arbitrariness that rules. From his [sic] first movements, the individual sees himself [sic] determined and limited by something over which he [sic] has no power. It is the power of custom the binds him [sic]. We experience imprecise consistency in the ‘astronomical’ and the ‘ethical’ order. However, in our time, we have come to idealise and, then, mathematise the imprecise consistency that we experience in the changing of day and night to being understood as perfectly operating exact time. The consistency of the life-world seems vague, imprecise and unreliable when placed alongside the perfection of mathematical time. Our experience of the turning of day into night is no longer considered a reliable guide for our actions or our knowledge, yet it is our experience of the shifting of day to night and the changing of the seasons that underpins our ability to perfect time into the ticking of the clock. The ‘astronomical’ order comes to supplant our experience of the life-world and, with it, the consistency of the ‘ethical’ order. We pull in the ‘astronomical’ order as knowable and familiar to us and push back to a distant the ‘ethical’ order as unknowable and unfamiliar (Patočka, 1996a, pp. 97-98). There is consistency in the life-world and an accepted interpretation of this consistency in our current historical situation.

What I am suggesting is that what we take most for granted is that we live in one and the same world; sharing our belief in perfectly operating ‘astronomical’ order, where day and night

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221 For example see Richard Swinburne’s (1989) book Arguments for the Existence of God, which discusses the relationship between the experience of the changing of the seasons and its relationship to the teleological argument, also known as the argument from design, for God’s existence.
appear to us as mathematised time. If there was not consistency in the life-world we could not
mathematise and perfect time and use it to make predictions (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 48-
53). In addition, if we did not take for granted the consistency of the life-world in the discipline
of psychology we would not search for the order and predictability of human behaviour. Even
though we have obscured the world as whole, we take for granted the world as one and the
same world. However, we have overlaid the real world of our living a ‘well fitting garb of ideas’
that we take to be the real world (Husserl, 1970 (1952), p. 51). In our current historical
situation we rely upon the ‘astronomical’ order, conceived of as mathematised nature that is
perfect and precise, and conceive of the ‘ethical’ order as imprecise and unreliable. As Patočka
(1996a, p. 115) notes, in modern times ‘for all the vast production of the wherewithal of living,
human life remains homeless’.

I would like to propose that we attempt to recover the life-world, the world of shared sense, as
the ground for the mathematised view of nature, by bringing into question the one sided
natural scientific attitude, which we no longer recognise as an attitude (Husserl, 1970 (1952),
p. 294). However, in order to do so, we also need to recover human reason, not as a
mathematised ‘logic machine’ \(^{222}\), but as meaningful dialogue so that we can come to
understand ourselves, each other and the world in which we live. Human beings do not live as
individuals in a world that we cannot understand, we live in communion with others in a
shared world that we can understand (1996a, pp. 97-98). We cannot understand the human
world in totality because we are finite human beings and our ability to reason in fallible; it is
important to recognise what we cannot know as well as what we can know. As Arendt (1989,
p. 33) proposes, we ‘are quite able to inquire into such human faculties as they have been
given—we do not know by whom or how, but we have to live with them’. In order to recover
our home in the meaningful world in which we live we need to return the life-world as
something that is familiar and understandable, and push back the ‘astronomical order’ as

\(^{222}\) I am using Raymond Tallis’s (1999, p. 105) terminology here.
something that we cannot know in totality because it is grounded upon our fallible human experience and reasoning.

I am now going to turn to the final point of this chapter: in order to re-establish human reason and experience as the ground of the natural scientific attitude we must rethink the relationship between the objectivity of the known and the subjectivity of the knower. The natural scientific attitude splits the subjectivity of the knower and the objectivity of the known and this leads to a split between conscience and reason. For Husserl, the problem of knowledge – the relation between the subjectivity of the knower and the objectivity of the known – is not only an epistemological crisis but also an ethical one. In adopting the one sided natural scientific attitude as the only interpretation of the life-world, we understand our ability to know Objective nature to be accessible through our adherence to a strict methodological procedure and lose sight of our responsibility for the knowledge claims we make. We place our ability to know and our responsibility for our knowledge claims in the method and forget that it is our reason and experience that is the basis for our claims.

In the discipline of psychology, this is particularly important because we are making knowledge claims about ourselves. As psychologists adopting the impersonal natural scientific attitude towards ourselves we conceal human reason and experience further and misplace human agency and freedom altogether. Human reason and experience are the unseen and unnoticed ground to our investigations, yet without revealing human experience and reason we lose the phenomena that we are seeking to explain. In psychology, by overlooking human experience and reason, we lose sight of both our ability to account for our own claims to know and the phenomena of interest.

In order to return the self-responsible ground of knowledge we need to rethink human reason and experience, because we are more than merely functioning beings displaying actions and behaviours. In psychology, we need to reunite reason and conscience as a single unity through
recognising the importance of *logos*, meaningful dialogue, and reinstating the importance of life-world.

**Seeking a Self-Responsible Ground for Knowledge**

Who is man [sic] without roots, without foundation? He [sic] who loses reason and conscience, replies the fifteenth-century Czech intellectual. Let’s take a good look: reason and conscience exist together, they are a unit, and only as such do they constitute the basis for human existence. Later periods, including our own, know reason and conscience only as two mutually independent variables, indifferently or antagonistically disposed to one another. In modern times, any kind of fundamental link between reason and conscience is even viewed with suspicion. But dubiousness and suspicion are poor counsel when one is dealing with truth and its problems. On the contrary, we must ask what the consequences for mankind [sic] have been and continue to be of the division of reason and conscience that seems so natural and ever-present today (Kosík, 1995 (1967)).

In the splitting of one and the same world into two worlds, the Objective world of nature and the Subjective world of experience, we lose the unity of reason and conscience (Kosík, 1995 (1967)). If the knowledge claims that are made about the world are Objectively true based upon adhering to a strict and formal technical method of inquiry, we consider ourselves as not responsible for the knowledge claims we make, because the objectivity of what is discovered in the course of our investigations is understood as independent from the researcher’s subjectivity. How the Objective facts are taken up and understood by people may be discussed, but this is considered a separate question from discovering the Objective facts of nature in the first instance. We discuss the findings of our research after we have discovered them, but do not consider what we are doing and saying while we are researching. Conscience is considered to obscure the Objective facts and hinder the researchers’ inquiry; through the pure formality of natural scientific method the empirical facts about human beings are found (Kosík, 1995 (1967)). However, as I have tried to disclose in the second part of my thesis, there are no Objective empirical facts about human experience because Objective, in the scientific sense, seeks to find truths that are, by definition, not dependent upon our experience.

Statistical personality and discursive psychologists applies the natural scientific method to the domain of human inquiry, which brings with it the standard interpretations of Objective and
Subjective. The question is how do we employ a methodology that abstracts from everything that we experience in order to investigate our experience? The solution supplied by statistical personality and discursive psychologists who adopt the taken for granted natural scientific attitude is that we examine experience as underpinned by the Objective formal properties of people’s thoughts and actions. In adopting the natural scientific method to study Subjective human experience as an unreliable guide to knowledge, we turn the Subjective human experience into a mere cloak over the Objective structures of human experience (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 293). As Aron Gurwitsch (1945, p. 170) writes:

The ‘belief in reason’ is now replaced by all sorts of psychological and sociological sciences: the psychology of the unconscious, of behaviour, of suppressed desires and conditioned reflexes. The variety of sociologies is no less disconcerting – nor should we forget the sociological psychologies and the psychological sociologies. Formerly man [sic] was considered to be animal rationale, a rational being; now he [sic] has become simply a vital being, not further qualified.

As a result of the sedimentation of the natural scientific attitude as the Objectivised interpretation of the life-world, we overlook that we cannot turn a method that abstracts from our experience back towards ourselves. Statistical personality and discursive psychologists attempt to study the experiencing and reasoning human being without considering human experience and reason as important to their investigations. In overlooking the absurdity of a natural scientific investigation of reasoning beings we reduce the human being to human nature (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 272).

Phenomenological philosophers attempt to point out the problem with the separation of responsibility and epistemology and this is why phenomenological philosophers seek a self-responsible ground of knowledge. Husserl writes (1970 (1935), p. 298):

The ratio presently under discussion is nothing other than the spirit’s truly universal and truly radical coming to terms with itself in the form of universal, responsible science, in which a completely new mode of scientific discipline is set in motion where all conceivable questions – questions of being and questions of norm, questions of what is called ‘existence’ [Existenz] – find their place.

Knowledge removed from a self-responsible ground is part of the crisis of meaning that we are currently experiencing. Husserl’s (1970 (1935), 1970 (1952)) critique of the ‘European sciences’
is not merely pointing to the limitations of natural sciences; it is pointing to a crisis in our historical situation. We have lost sight of the meaningfulness of the world in which we live; we seek meaning in a method that cannot provide us with meaning because it strips out the meaningfulness of our experience. A self-responsible ground to knowledge reinstates the meaningfulness of our experience and means that we can open up a space to ask questions about our meaningful human experience (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 298).

A self-responsible ground of knowledge requires that we can speak meaningfully and truthfully about human experience, while understanding that ‘the world appears in the mode of it-seems-to-me’ (Arendt, 1978, p. 38). Our knowledge claims are always open to questioning because they are only ever probable claims made from our personal situation and from a particular theoretical standpoint. However, to recognise that our claims are only ever probable does not mean that we should not aim for the concept of truth that is applicable to anybody and everybody; because to do so is to try to overcome our prejudice and attempt to look at the world from another’s perspective. The theoretical attitude is important because it is the critical attitude that brings taken for granted truths, passed down to us through tradition, into question (Husserl, 1970 (1935), pp. 286-287). Speaking meaningfully and truthfully requires both the life-world and the pure theoretical attitude, so that we can understand what we can know and what we cannot. The theoretical standpoint brings into question the natural scientific attitude and attempts to close the gap between the human world and the natural world, because there is only one world and that is the life-world. The theoretical attitude brings into question the natural scientific attitude so that we can feel at home in our world again.

Speaking meaningfully and truthfully requires that we understand the concepts of truth and consistency, which are identical for anybody and everybody. Speaking meaningfully and truthfully requires that we understand that we live in a common world of shared sense and we
have the capability to think and reason about the world in which we live. As Husserl (1970 (1935), pp. 276-277) writes:

Precisely in this way there arises a new type of communalization and a new form of enduring community whose spiritual life, communalized through the love of ideas, the production of ideas, and through ideal life-norms, bears within itself the future-horizon of infinity: that of an infinity of generations being renewed in the spirit of ideas.

To open up the life-world and the theoretical attitude is to rely upon one’s own ability to disclose the meaningfulness of things and judge particular truths from falsehoods. To pay attention to the life-world from the theoretical standpoint is to open up a new praxis in which reasoning is returned to being decisive for life. The problem with losing sight of the life-world is that thinking becomes understood as a pointless activity, because without attending to the life-world our thinking currently is understood to lead us, as Patčoka (1976, p. 233) puts it, to ‘the draining of all tangible meaningfulness in a bottomless abstraction’. The trouble with losing sight of the theoretical attitude is that we lose sight of the meaningful world we share with others and the historical aspect of the life-world (Husserl, 1970 (1935), p. 280). We require both the life-world and the theoretical attitude to sustain our lives as meaningful and to engage in meaningful dialogue with others. When we understand the importance of meaningful dialogue, we no longer understand ourselves as free floating isolated individuals in a world that we cannot understand; we are grounded within a common world of shared sense with other people whom we can understand and be understood by.

**In Conclusion**

To return to where my thesis started, the reason that ethnomethodology, with its interconnected methods of discursive psychology and conversation analysis, is not an alternative, is that it cannot account for the disclosing aspect of language and, in turn, our ability to reason and speak meaningfully and truthfully with each other. Ethnomethodologists, conversation analysts and discursive psychologists continue to be founded upon the unseen

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223 For a similar claim see Arendt (1978, p. 33).
hypothesis of indirect mathematisation and, as such, maintain a method that strips our lives of meaning. Ethnomethodologists, conversation analysts and discursive psychologists reduce language to a purely formal system and, hence, obscure both the truth of correctness and the truth of disclosure. Discursive psychologists, in particular, happily accept the contradiction that their method leads them to (Edwards et al., 1995; Potter, 2003a, pp. 791-792, 2003b). Like statistical personality psychology, discursive psychology suffers from a fundamental contradiction in turning a method that abstracts from all human experience back towards human life. Rather than a method that is grounded upon the unseen hypothesis of indirect mathematisation, but with a different normative ideal, I suggest that what we require in the discipline of psychology is to reinstate the theoretical attitude and the life-world; so that we can question the presuppositions upon which our *a posteriori* discipline rests as well as bring into question the normative ideals of our discipline. As psychologists studying human experience we need to return reason to being ‘decisive for life’, rather than accepting mathematised reasoning as the only attitude which is ‘decisive for life’ (Husserl, 1970 (1952), p. 43). The importance of returning reason to a truthful human *praxis* is that we can then start to ask the ‘questions which are decisive for a genuine humanity’ (Husserl, 1970 (1952), pp. 5-6). We can reunite conscience and reason and seek a self-responsible ground for our claims to know.

Only by understanding ourselves as free human agents who are able to be responsible for our understanding, thinking and acting in the world can we rethink the natural scientific attitude turned back towards human experience and open up new possibilities for the future. We are the only ones who can change the situation, but it is only by recognising that we can meaningfully dialogue with others that we can re-interpret our current understanding of the world in order to create different possibilities for the future.
Truth and meaning go hand in hand, just as knowledge and responsibility go hand in hand, because the objectivity of the known and the subjectivity of the knower are interdependent. The objectivity of the common world of shared sense is intersubjectively constituted by free thinking and acting beings. We are responsible for what we say and what we do. In recognising our responsibility to know and realise the limitations of our knowledge, we can start to reveal the shared meaningful world. Reinstating the life-world that is in principle knowable, the possibility of understanding the world differently opens up for us. As Raymond Tallis (1999, p. 15) writes, ‘it is not the effort at unification that is at fault but the choice of framework within which the unification is attempted’. In closing the final chapter of my thesis I would like to suggest that we need to start thinking about the direction in which the universalised natural scientific attitude is taking us. We need to start theorising actively and explicitly rather than passively and implicitly; let us replace the forgetful theoriser with the responsible theoriser.
The modern growth of wordlessness, the withering away of everything *between* us, can also be described as the spread of the desert. Modern psychology is desert psychology: when we lose the faculty to judge – to suffer and condemn – we begin to think that there is something wrong with us if we cannot live under the condition of desert life. Insofar as psychology tries to ‘help’ us, it helps us ‘adjust’ to those conditions, taking away our only hope, namely that we, who are not of the desert though we live in it, are able to transform it into a human world. Psychology turns everything topsy-turvy: precisely because we suffer under desert conditions we are still human and still intact; the danger lies in becoming true inhabitants of the desert and feeling at home in it (Arendt, 2005, p. 201 emphasis in original).

In closing my thesis I would like to make some concluding remarks. Firstly, I want to attend to the nature of my thesis as a critical and reflective approach which brings into question tradition. Secondly, I want to say a few words about how Husserl inspires critique and the enjoyment of thinking. Thirdly, I would like to discuss the way my thesis starts and ends with a call to bring into question the use of natural scientific methods in the discipline of psychology. Fourthly, I will directly attend to the relevance of my thesis to the discipline of psychology. In summary, I would like to reveal the importance of the art of thinking and human experience to our investigations in the discipline of psychology as well as our own lives.

My thesis is focused upon bringing the tradition of psychology into question and, in doing so, my argument may appear at times naive and, at other times, contentious. In some parts of my thesis I attend to very simple examples in order to reveal commonly accepted assumptions. In presenting straightforward examples my argument may appear naively simplistic. The reason I have chosen basic examples is to endeavour to reveal a concept with clarity. In addition, my thesis is questioning the presuppositions of certain approaches to research adopted in the discipline of psychology. Hence, some of my claims are likely to be understood as contentious. Finally, my argument may appear contradictory at times, because it is my first venture into the murky waters of revealing presuppositions upon which the historically sedimented natural scientific attitude, adopted by statistical personality and discursive psychologists, rests. The aim of my thesis is neither to be naïve, contentious nor contradictory; rather it is an attempt to
think about the ground upon which our claims to know rests in the discipline of psychology.

My thesis is written with the aim not to be misunderstood, but in any attempt to understand there is always misunderstanding. It is always necessary to rethink the grounding assumptions of both our own and others’ theoretical perspective, because, as Heidegger (2000b, p. 152) has succinctly stated, ‘no one can leap over his [sic] own shadow’.

Husserl was well aware of the problems associated with the critique of the natural scientific attitude, and the problem of knowledge. Many of Husserl’s works are titled as an introduction to phenomenology and, as Patočka has noted (1937), this is an admirable characteristic of his writings, because it reveals a commitment to thinking and rethinking the grounding assumptions of both natural scientific thinking and his own phenomenological philosophy. Husserl is quoted by Lee Hardy (1999, p. 1), in the ‘Translator’s introduction’ to The Idea of Phenomenology, as saying:

> From time to time I am born [sic] up by conviction that I have made more progress in the critique of knowledge than any of my predecessors, that I have seen with substantial and, in some respects, complete clarity what my predecessors scarcely suspected or else left in a state of confusion. And yet: what a mass of unclarity in these pages, how much half-done work, how much anguishing uncertainty in the details. How much is still just preliminary work, mere struggle on the way to the goal and not the full goal itself, actually achieved and seen from every side? Will it not be given to me, with powerful effort redoubled and with the application of all my vital energies, actually to arrive at the goal? Is this half clarity, this tortuous restlessness, which is a sign of unresolved problems, bearable? Thus I am, after many years, still a beginner and the student. But I want to become the master! Carpe diem.

Husserl is an inspiring thinker because he dedicated his life to questioning the presuppositions upon which our claims to know rest in our current historical situation.

As Husserl (2001 (1900), p. 2) writes, in the ‘Foreword’ of Logical Investigations, ‘in view of the grave, factually based motives have inspired me’. Husserl is a thought provoking scholar because he did devote his life to the pursuit of pure theoria, he truly lived by his philosophy. Husserl’s lectures and writings motivated many people to see the art of thinking in a new, 224 Translated for me by Dr Učník.
lively and exciting way. As Dermot Moran (2000, p. 26) writes in his *Introduction to Phenomenology*:

In particular, the programme of phenomenology sought to reinvigorate philosophy by returning it to the life of the living human subject. Thus, the readers of Husserl’s *Logical Investigations* reported that it approached traditional logical and epistemological problems in a new, fresh, and exciting manner … This call to renew philosophy went hand in hand with an appeal to return to concrete, lived human experience in all its richness.

Moran’s quote summarises my experience of reading Husserl’s writings. Husserl has an astonishing ability to stir a passion for the art of thinking and this is evident in his books. In my thesis, I hope that I have passed on Husserl’s passion for thinking as well as my own.

Through reading phenomenology I understand thinking and theory in a new way. Thinking does lead to further rethinking, doubt and confusion, but it does not lead into an endless quagmire of abstractions and indecision. Part of what I have wished to reveal in my thesis is the importance and meaningfulness of the art of thinking as well as the way critical thinking can open up the meaningfulness of our personal situation. Our lives are not arbitrary in ‘the big scheme of things’ and we are not determined by forces outside of ourselves. Our lives are meaningful for us and we are free and equal reasoning beings from the ideal standpoint. It is only by understanding ourselves as reasoning beings who share the world that we can return the human world to a being a familiar place where we can understand and be understood by each other, rather than understanding of ourselves as isolated, alienated and trapped vital beings for whom the meaning of life is elusive or absent. It is only against the backdrop of a shared world that difference appears; disagreement, critical thinking and meaningful dialogue are important and practical aspects of our lives. Through reading phenomenology I have come to understand the theoretical attitude as a practical attitude. A life in pursuit of ideal praxis, directed towards the good, the beautiful and the mystery of existence, is a meaningful life worth living.
To come back to where I started from, I continue to think that we cannot turn the natural scientific method through which we divide up nature back towards ourselves and investigate people as if they are natural Objects. I understand the problems associated with interpreting people from the natural scientific standpoint with greater clarity. In part one of my thesis, I tried to investigate the problems associated with the natural scientific interpretation of human experience as an empirical question; and I became the forgetful theoriser, reinstating the problems I was seeking to avoid. I became trapped within my own theoretical conception of the human world. Through conducting empirical investigations I learnt that there was a more fundamental problem, than just the natural scientific methods adopted in the discipline of psychology: the empirical natural scientific basis of our thinking within our current historical situation. In the second part of my thesis, I adopted the theoretical attitude knowingly and purposefully in search of understanding the natural scientific attitude and the theoretical attitude as two attitudes that can be taken towards the life-world. It is through both applying an empirical approach to critique natural scientific psychologists and through adopting the theoretical standpoint that I have gained a clearer understanding of why the natural scientific interpretation of human experience is problematic.

The natural scientific interpretation of human experience in our current historical situation is a problem because it strips our lives of meaning. The adoption of the natural scientific attitude by both statistical personality and discursive psychologists, with the taken for granted hypothesis of indirect mathematisation, means that psychology obscures the human reason and experience that grounds its approach. Statistical personality and discursive psychologists, by adopting the natural scientific attitude, seek to study human experience while understanding human experience and reason as irrelevant to their investigations. Psychologists from both these fields of investigation reduce experiencing, acting and thinking human beings to being understood as purely functional beings. We need to think about what
we do as psychologists, so that we can return human reasoning and experience to being relevant and important to our investigations, and in order to rethink the flattening out of everything to a purely formal conception of the world, which drains our life of meaning. To move towards the inclusion of human reason and experience as important in our investigations we require the recovery of the theoretical attitude and the life-world, which is the taken for granted ground of natural scientific investigations. The theoretical attitude and the life-world return to us the meaningfulness of human life as well as the meaningfulness of dialogue.

The theoretical attitude, as Husserl (1970 (1935), p. 298) suggests, is a self-responsible ground of knowledge that opens up the possibility to ask all conceivable questions about the meaningfulness of human life. In short, let us reconstruct the theoretical attitude and recover the life-world within the discipline of psychology, so that we can disclose the meaningfulness of human experience and reason. The natural scientist seeks technical mastery over nature and, in the case of psychology, over human nature; while the theorist seeks to open up the wonder and the mystery of human existence. Academic psychologists seek to understand the motivations, behaviour and actions of people and clinical psychologists seek to help those in need. However, to understand and care for ourselves we need a self-responsible ground of knowledge that can open up the space for understanding the significance of the human world; and a conception of ourselves as free reasoning beings who can live meaningful and worthwhile lives. Reasoning, and not arithmetic, is decisive for life.
## Appendix: Transcription Notation


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(.)</td>
<td>Micropause (pause less than 0.2 seconds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.6)</td>
<td>Pause in tenths of seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPITALS</td>
<td>Capitals denote louder speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◊ quieter ◊</td>
<td>Degree signs bracket quieter speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◊ ◊ whisper ◊ ◊</td>
<td>Double degree signs bracket whispered speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underlines</td>
<td>Underlines denote emphatic delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das- dash</td>
<td>Dash – marks cut-off speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full stop.</td>
<td>A period marks final, falling intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comma,</td>
<td>A comma marks slight fall-rise intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>question?</td>
<td>Question mark denotes ‘questioning’ intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the [ bracket [ marks</td>
<td>Brackets mark speech overlaps between interlocutors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(guess)</td>
<td>Text in single brackets is transcriber ‘guess’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Single bracket with no text for unhearable word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>((comment))</td>
<td>Text in double brackets is transcriber comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exclamation!</td>
<td>Exclamation marks denote dramatic emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑ up arrow</td>
<td>Upwards arrow marks rising pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓ down arrow</td>
<td>Downwards arrow marks falling pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latch=</td>
<td>Latches link speech across lines of transcript,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
=speech and within single lines

>faster< Carets pointing ‘inwards’ mark faster delivery

<slower> Carets pointing ‘outwards’ mark slower delivery

.pt Lip smack sound

t.ch ‘tch tch’ type sound

.h Inbreath (each h denotes duration in tenths of seconds)

h Outbreath (each h denotes duration in tenths of seconds)

.shih Various ‘crying’ aspirations

colon::: Colons denote run-on of preceding sound (in tenths of seconds)

aster*** Asterisks denote ‘croaky’ delivery of preceding sound (also used in same manner as colons for extension)

tilde~ Tilde used to denote ‘waver ing’ delivery

??: In left margin for speech/sound unattributed to specific speaker

HAH heh HOH Various forms of laughter

he he aHAHA

tha(h)t’s Bracketed h’s denote laughter particles in words

fu(h)nn(h)y

“quotation” Quotation denotes reported speech which is markedly different from speakers usual prosodic speech
Brown, T., & Barlow, D. (2005). Dimensional versus categorical classification of mental disorders in the fifth of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders and


