

*Excerpt translated from:*

*Asmuß, Birte & Steensig, Jakob (2003): Samtalen på arbejde. Konversationsanalyse og kompetenceudvikling [Conversation at the work place. Conversation Analysis and competence development]. Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur, pp. 341- 343.*

## **Transcription glossary**

The transcription glossary is based on the system developed by Gail Jefferson and it is used in the majority of conversation analytic publications (see Atkinson & Heritage (eds.) 1984: ix-xvi, Steensig 2001: 33-37). Below the transcription symbols are described in details:

### **Who does what?**

In the left margin you can find the line numbers, the speaker and other information:

- 1, 2            All lines are numbered so that they easily can be referred to in the text.  
A:              Name of speaker (anonymised and often abbreviated) + colon show who is the speaker (or who performs the action).  
A?:             If the speaker's identity is unclear, the name of the speaker is followed by a question mark.  
→              Arrows in the left margin indicate the lines which are in focus in the text.

### **Timing**

The transcripts try to cover precisely what happened when in the interaction:

- ( . ) ( 1 . 5 )    Pauses are shown in tenths of a second in brackets. If pauses are shorter than one fourth of a second, a dot enclosed in brackets indicates such a "micropause".  
=                Equal signs indicate that talk is latched onto prior talk without any gap or lapses in between. Most often used in order to indicate close time connection.  
Hel [lo]        Square brackets indicate overlapping talk. The start of the overlap  
    [hi]        is always marked precisely, and if possible the end of the overlap too.  
>text<        Arrow brackets that point towards the text mark talk delivered at fast pace.  
>>text<<     Double arrow brackets mark talk delivered at an especially quick pace.  
<text>        Arrow brackets that point away from the text mark talk delivered at slow pace.  
no:            A colon indicates that the preceding sound (here 'o') is extended.  
no:::         If there are more colons, the sound is prolonged even more.

### **Doubts and comments**

Special symbols indicate doubt about what is said, and there are symbols to mark the transcriber's comments:

- (what)        It cannot be heard whether 'what' is being said or not.  
( )            It cannot be heard what is being said.  
( (nods) )    Comments on what happens or how something is done or said.

*nods* Sometimes description of physical activities is written down in italics.

### **Sounds**

Usually no phonetic transcription is used, but there are signs in order to show some of the sounds that often occur in talk-in-interaction, and which are difficult to cover in ordinary writing.

so- A dash indicates the sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound.  
.hh .hyes A dot prior to a sound or word marks hearable in-breath.  
hh yeahh h marks hearable out-breath.  
.mtl .tk A dot and combinations of t's and other letters indicate a smack like those that appear just before one is about to say something or when one is about to mark disagreement.  
heh heh Laughter is written down more or less the way it sounds.  
\*yeah\* An asterisk indicates that the following (or the words in between) are pronounced in a creaky voice.  
£smile£ Pound signs mark words that are pronounced in smile voice.

### **Intonation, stress, volume**

emphasis Underlining indicates speaker emphasis.  
emphasis The more letters underlined, the more speaker emphasis is there.  
↑high Pointed arrow upwards indicate a marked rising intonational shift.  
↓low Pointed arrow downwards indicate a marked falling intonational shift.  
↓low word↓ In some places arrows are placed around a longer piece of talk that is pronounced with especially low (or high) intonation.  
°quiet° Degree signs are placed around words to mark low volume.  
°°quiet°° More degree signs mark very low volume.  
LOUD Capital letters indicate high volume.

### **Punctuation indicates intonation approximately in the following way:**

. ? ; & , Full stop marks that intonation falls to low, question mark indicates rise to high, semicolon marks fall to mid low, upside down question mark indicates rise to mid high, and comma indicates 'continuing' even intonation (or maybe slightly upward).