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Video "talks back" in a relational research approach

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ABSTRACT

Purpose

The author argues for the use of unedited, fixed-camera-position video footage in relationally responsive research grounded in Bakhtinian dialogic theory. The paper offers an empirical example of such a use, and shows how this contrasts with an ethnomethodological interactionist use of similar types of video footage.

Design/methodology/approach

The empirical material is taken from an ethnographic study of a project group in the UK, in which video is used alongside other data during the fieldwork period.

Findings

The author proposes that the audio-visual detail of social interaction and the sense of experiential immersion upon re-viewing can provide a "talking back" dialogic potential for video recordings, that helps to show multiple narratives in social interaction other than the researcher's original interpretation, and that points to new ways to engage with research participants.

Research limitations/implications

The paper focuses specifically on unedited video footage that is generated through fixed-camera positions. It is also limited to the ethnographic fieldwork period rather than the textual practices of writing up research.

Practical implications

The purpose and positioning of unedited, fixed-camera-position video footage in the empirical study is contrasted with other research approaches to video. Through this contrast, the paper offers methodological support for a way of using such footage which brings out a range of voices and alternative perspectives on social interaction.

Originality/value

The paper contributes to the methodological literature by discussing a research approach in which both interactionist and phenomenological qualities of video footage were combined to develop a radically reflexive (Cunliffe, 2003) purpose for video in relational research.

Keywords

Bakhtin, ethnography, intersubjectivity, silence, video

Article classification

Research paper

In this paper, I seek to promote the potential of using unedited, fixed-camera-position video recordings within intersubjective (Cunliffe, 2011), relationally responsive (Shotter, 2008) ethnographic inquiry in which the researcher is an "embodied insider" (Cunliffe, 2011: 665). I suggest that there are particular qualities to this type of video recording that enable a dialogic potential to "talk back" and to enter into a relationship with other texts that destabilises the researcher's viewpoint and reflexively questions how interpretations are being developed. These qualities are the high level of synchronised and sequential audio-visual detail, which does not require the inscription of the researcher (Dicks et al, 2006), and the phenomenological immersive effects of re-viewing (Erickson, 2007).

The type of recording being discussed here, to be clear, is video footage in which the recording of a situation of social interaction is designed as much as possible to show an unfolding of events from one static perspective, without the camera's gaze being shifted either by the researcher or research participants, and without the footage being edited for analytic purposes. It is therefore distinguished from roaming-camera-produced footage that affiliates with a particular subjective gaze or where the researcher chooses what to record via a pre-defined research focus (e.g. Merchant, 2011). It is also distinguished from video productions like documentaries or ethnographic film, where the recorded images may be cut or otherwise manipulated to produce a final output for others' viewing (e.g. Wood and Brown, 2012).

The contribution made in this paper is to provide a detailed example of the use of unedited, fixed-position footage in an ethnographic study grounded in a Bakhtinian dialogic theoretical perspective (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984), and to compare this approach with an ethnomethodological, interactionist approach to similar footage. The structure of the paper is thus: I firstly discuss the rise of intersubjective and relational forms of organizational research, and the central importance of reflexivity in such research. I show how Bakhtin's theories of dialogic discourse inform relationally responsive research, and introduce Cunliffe's (2003) "radical reflexivity" as a useful vocabulary for considering the reflexive processes involved. Before applying this vocabulary to the empirical examples, I set up why unedited, fixed-camera position video recordings were used in the study by outlining two different approaches to video, which I term interactionist and phenomenological, in which different features of video are utilised to develop contrasting research aims. I then present and discuss how the concept of radical reflexivity might be applied in three empirical examples from ethnographic fieldwork that show how video footage was used, and how its

use influenced the ongoing conversations with research participants and produced new analytic insights. Finally, I discuss some of the issues and unresolved tensions that emerged from the research project.

Intersubjectivity, ethnographic reflexivity and Bakhtin's dialogic discourse

In the last few decades, postmodernist and post-structuralist (Alvesson, 2002) approaches to qualitative research have critiqued the idea that social science can be objectively grounded on unproblematic truth claims, given the researcher's inherent involvement in the processes of data generation and analysis (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2000; Gergen, 1994; Linstead, 1993). Reflexivity has been widely discussed as one response to this critique, conceptualised in a variety of ways (see Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2000; Cunliffe, 2003; Hardy and Clegg, 1997; Hibbert et al, 2010). In ethnographic research, reflexivity has become something of a core concern as a methodology characterised traditionally by the importance of the researcher's participant-observer status (Pink, 2009; Van Maanen, 2006). While some research approaches have conceptualised reflexivity as a correction for, and hence a solution to, researcher bias that facilitates an objectivist stance, intersubjective relational approaches to reflexivity embrace the idea of the embedded and embodied researcher (Cunliffe, 2011). That is, rather than being an inherent problem, the specific relationships which the researcher develops with research participants, and the process by which data and meaning emerge within these relationships, become part of the study (Chia, 1996; Gergen, 1994).

It is here that Bakhtin's ideas of dialogic discourse become relevant as he shows the ontological and methodological importance of relational responsiveness (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984; Shotter, 2008). Bakhtinian dialogism moves ethnographic research towards a relational approach which recognises the researcher's influence not only on the way in which participants become textually depicted, but also on the fundamental shaping of participants' responses (Belova, King and Sliwa, 2008). Reflexive attention is drawn to the living, evolving relationship between people, on noticing the choices made by the researcher in working out the best way to proceed as research unfolds, and how both self and other are being shaped and differentiated through the emergent research process (Shotter, 2008, 2010). In such relational research, the researcher is no longer positioned as the monologic and authoritative hero-narrator (Bakhtin, 1984). Instead, a polyphonic (Bakhtin, 1984) array of different viewpoints and voices is sought for exploration, by a researcher who is her/himself

also embedded, as one of the voices, in the social reality being studied (Asch and Connor, 1994).

The relational, and reflexive, implications of Bakhtin's work also extend to the way in which meaning is developed from data texts. What his dialogic theory points to is the shifting meaning of a text given the changing conditions in which it may be read (Bakhtin, 1981). Meanings change over time, are unfinalisable, and situated always within an emergent context of intertextual interpretation, as new local, historically contingent comparisons and associations are made to other texts (Allen, 2000). Who is interpreting, when, and how, become reflexively implicated in the process by which meaning emerges (Hardy and Clegg, 1997).

I suggest that Cunliffe's (2003) paper on "radical reflexivity" provides a useful vocabulary for the reflexive processes involved in research that draws on these ideas of dialogism and intertextuality. Cunliffe suggests that radical reflexivity "turns the reflexive act upon ourselves to deconstruct our own constructions of realities, identities and knowledge, and highlight the intersubjective and indexical nature of meaning" (p.989) as a second-order, ontological issue rather than a first-order issue of analysing how others construct their social realities. Radical reflexivity, she proposes, draws on the root metaphors of *otherness* and *betweenness*. Otherness involves a deconstructionist approach that highlights inconsistencies, contradictions and absences in the data from a distanced observational reading of text. Meanwhile, *betweenness* involves a constructionist approach that notes the emergence of tentative, intersubjectively constructed meanings generated between researcher and research participant. I use these metaphors of deconstructionist *otherness* and constructionist *betweenness* in the discussion below.

Before turning to the empirical examples and applying this Bakhtinian perspective and radically reflexive vocabulary, I first provide a short outline of video as a medium for recording and analysing data. Others have provided useful commentaries on the history of video across a range of social science research disciplines (e.g. Erickson, 2011; Hawe and Hadfield, 2011, Jewitt, 2011; Lemke, 2007) and I do not repeat such comprehensive coverage here. Instead, my aim is to highlight briefly how two contrasting research interests have used different forms of video in different ways, one which focuses primarily on relational interactions within the video's frame, and one which develops the relational dimension

beyond the frame. The two types of research interest are based on different methodological assumptions about what video recordings offer as a form of data.

Qualities of video footage, and two contrasting approaches to its use

Lemke's (2007) notion of "attentional spaces" highlights the flexible nature of video footage: how the degree of analytical distance from, or experiential immersion within, what is shown in video images changes depending on how we view them. As we manipulate and denaturalize the recording, through rewinding, fast forwarding, slowing down or speeding up the images, the sense of analytic distance is increased. As we replay the images in real-time speed across lengthier strips of footage, our experiential immersion is increased. It is the basic distinction between these two ways of viewing that I want to highlight here. For the sake of brevity, as shorthand to differentiate between the two ways of viewing, I use the terms "interactionist" and "phenomenological" approaches. (Such shorthand of course masks many theoretical and methodological nuances between different studies, but in order to develop the argument in the space available here, I hope this will be forgiven. See also Dicks (2013) on this point.)

The first of the two options identified above - the interactionist approach, where priority is given to analytical distance - is illustrated by studies which emerge from the tradition of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (Lemke, 2007), such as workplace studies (Heath, Hindmarsh and Luff, 2010), multi-modal studies (Kress, 2011), and focused, or micro, ethnography (Knoblauch and Schnettler, 2012; Snell, 2011). Such studies explore, in short fragments of footage, what Knoblauch and Schnettler (2012: 335) term the "paradigmatic case" of video use, Goffman's interaction order (Goffman, 1983), in order to explore how social order is produced (Llewellyn, 2011) or semiotic meaning negotiated (Kress, 2011), through processes that are demonstrated and made relevant by members within the video recording itself (Heath, Hindmarsh and Luff, 2010). The key features of video being utilised are the intricate level of recorded audio-visual detail, the synchronicity and sequentiality between verbal and non-verbal action, and the ability to slow down and replay the detail for a very precise analysis of the interaction (Jewitt, 2011; Lemke, 2007; Mondada, 2006). This intricate detail could never be fully captured by participant-observation alone (Knoblauch and Schnettler, 2012). Since the camera's gaze does not discriminate in the detail that it records, the highly naturalistic quality of the data lends itself to the idea that a voice featured in the recording has a sense of "standing for itself" (Dicks et al, 2006: 92) without

researcher mediation. This idea of naturally occurring data, free from researcher interference, is important, since the force of the final research claim comes from being able to point to the interaction in the video recording as empirical evidence that is separate and independent from the researcher's viewpoint (Dicks et al, 2006). Reflexivity is applied primarily to reduce subjectivity, by for instance using multiple cameras in fixed positions without privileging any particular gaze, for sufficient and consistent observational detail (Heath, Hindmarsh and Luff, 2010; Luff and Heath, 2012), and by applying systematic analytic procedures (e.g. Snell, 2011). Ethnographic field data may be generated to help interpret more precisely the action unfolding in the images (Pomerantz, 2005; Knoblauch and Schnettler, 2012), but essentially the video recording - what happens in the frame - is given top billing, and other data texts play the part of supporting cast.

Meanwhile, using Lemke's second option of experiential immersion, other studies have used video to convey embodied, sensory qualities (Merchant, 2011; Pink, 2009), phenomenological experience (Erickson, 2007; Hopper and Quiñones, 2012) and/or to reconnect to the original ethnographic research encounter (Pink, 2007). The video recording's evocative and imaginative connection between the viewer and those appearing in the video becomes the key feature within the research design. Lemke (2007) notes that such use comes from the lineage of phenomenology developed from Merleau-Ponty's theories of embodied perception rather than Garfinkel's ethnomethodology. To draw on Dicks' (2013) discussion of various forms of closeness, the closeness between the researcher and the action in the video in interactionist studies comes from an analytical detachment from the images, whereas in phenomenological studies the closeness comes from theorising a sharing of the embodied experience shown in the images. Dicks notes, for instance, the very different research aims associated with ethnomethodology's emphasis on "looking, touching, listening" compared to the "seeing, feeling, hearing" emphasis in sensory ethnography (Dicks, 2013: 667).

While the objective observational stance of fixed-position, unedited footage is important in interactionist studies, this type of footage is not necessary when video is used for its immersive, phenomenological qualities. Indeed, it can be unhelpful and lead to confusion about what the viewer should be noticing when watching more than the shortest of video clips (Erickson, 2007): Dicks et al (2006) suggest that unedited video footage is more open to interpretation than other media, and lacks the "hierarchical tying down of meaning" (p.91) that is present, by comparison, in a researcher's fieldnotes. One methodological response

which tries to reduce the complexity of viewing unedited, fixed-position video footage, has been to produce a different type of video recording with an explicitly subjective and mobile gaze, such as participant-produced video diaries, that directs the viewer more closely to what to notice (Hawe and Hadfield, 2011).

Another issue, however, for phenomenological research is that unedited video recordings are acknowledged as not simply equivalent to the phenomenologically experienced flow of social life (Dicks et al, 2006; Knoblauch and Schnettler, 2012; Smets et al, 2014). Pink (2007), for instance, comments that the recording of the *visible* and *audible* should not be confused with the *real*. There are many aspects that are not captured in video: material aspects that are out of frame; non-audio-visual phenomena such as emotions, temperature or odour (Knoblauch and Schnettler, 2012); the moments before or after the recording (Muntanyola-Saura, 2012). Therefore, while unedited, fixed-position video recordings may produce evocative effects, they may not suffice for phenomenological exploration of others' perspectives and experiences. A response to this has been to alter the way in which video is positioned in the research design, to embed the production and viewing of the video into the research process alongside other forms of data inscription which record non-audio-visual aspects, for instance, to use video images alongside viewers' responses to the images (e.g. Erickson, 2007; Merchant, 2011). Video in such cases is used not to represent experience, as a frame in which social life is depicted and made available for analysis, but to research experience (Pink, 2009), as an elicitation device to generate other rich data about inner life worlds (Meyer et al, 2013) that the recordings are not able to capture directly. The process of social interaction that takes place with research participants outside of the video's frame becomes central to the attempt to understand the other's experience, through the data generated by viewing the strip of recording.

In the ethnographic study which is described in this paper, both interactionist and phenomenological features of the video recordings were used. That is, the study relied upon the replaying of small details of social interaction and the immersive re-imagining of what is going on in the video for the participants. The camera recorded a set of project group meetings over the course of fieldwork in which the images show myself and research participants. Each video recording shows a representation of that situation, but the significance and meaning of what is shown is developed through the ongoing interactions between me and research participants over time. The research setting and methodology are described below. In the next section, some clarification of the substantive research focus on

silence is included because it illustrates why an intersubjective theoretical framework was developed. However, it should be noted that the research focus is not itself the main topic of this paper, and hence the discussion about silence is simply to explicate the choice of methodology and to set the scene for the subsequent discussion of the empirical examples.

Background to the empirical examples - studying silence

The core research interest was in an inherently personal and secret phenomenon - of silence, not speaking up - and in exploring how project group participants made sense of their own experiences of staying silent from within the ongoing flow of organizing over the course of a project lifecycle. To clarify, silence here is conceptualised as consciously *withholding*, as not speaking up (Morrison and Milliken, 2003), rather than as an acoustic phenomenon (an audible gap in the conversation) or a discursive absence (a topic which does not become talked about, e.g. Mazzei, 2004).

The research site was an inter-organizational project group in the UK. The group comprised representatives of a university team and two local authorities: a county council and a city council. The purpose of the group was to deliver a first phase of community consultation about the future development of a site owned by the city council. The university was involved as part of an academic funded research project to test out innovative ideas about how to deliver community consultation. A longer-term joint project between the city and county councils was to be pursued subsequently in order to deliver the next stages of development. The group met every few weeks to plan and evaluate the consultation events. My participant status as a volunteer helper, and my attendance at the meetings, had been negotiated with the explicit aim of being involved in the project, and making the recordings, for my PhD research. I helped at the consultation events and with the marketing of them beforehand. However, my identity as a researcher was foremost.

An intersubjective theoretical stance was essential in that I recognised that my own unfolding relationships with participants would influence what they talked about. If one treats seriously the phenomenon of silence as a withholding of communication, then what occurs in a project meeting (participants withholding) may also occur in the subsequent interview with me as the researcher (participants not telling me what they withheld). The ontological conceptualisation of participants (and myself) was as agentic social actors and providers of only partial (the socially acceptable parts of) stories, and as dialogically responsive to the changing social situation (Bakhtin, 1981).

My research data consists of three forms of inscription: my participant observer fieldnotes, regular interviews with project group participants, and video recordings of project group meetings. The methodological premise was to develop a dialogue across the three forms of data. I return to this point, below, after a short description of each of the different forms.

My fieldnotes record my story of involvement over the six months as a volunteer member in the project group, my thoughts and emergent interpretations of what is going on, as well as my own silences. They ground my original understandings of a situation and provide a way to trace the changes of understanding over time.

Informal and unstructured interviews, conducted in conversational style, were carried out with individual project group members as soon as possible after every meeting for their accounts of their own silences. They were recorded by me in handwritten note form.

The video recordings of the meetings were made from one tripod-mounted camera set up to be as unobtrusive as possible (hence only one camera rather than multiple) and to capture an image of the meeting space and all participants. Although it was not always possible to do so, I sat in a position as much as I could with my back to the camera, so that visual gestures and expressions of other project group members would be recorded. Although I appear in the video recordings, my particular volunteer role meant that my active participation in the meetings was limited. The recordings were of the only shared social interactions in which all project group members participated. Other than these regular meetings, the group members worked mostly in different spaces, with different colleagues, for different organizations, although there was an ongoing relationship between the two local authorities. The people represented in the video recordings are individuals with whom I was involved in an ongoing research relationship at the time of recording. They are not (substitutable) representative human forms engaged in an impartial strip of video interaction, but people whose phenomenological experience I was seeking to understand.

The interaction both in the video and in the interview data was analysed as instances of co-constructed social realities (Gergen, 1994) generated between different configurations of people. I was seeking to use the discursive lens of participants' post-meeting interview accounts (co-constructed with me) to explore how the sensemaking about the private activity of staying silent was positioned against the backdrop of our shared attendance in the meetings. The video recordings offered an opportunity to re-view the meeting, using each

participant's discursive account as a different lens to try and understand how that account might make sense as part of a different narrative of what was happening, and what that narrative implied for the understanding of silence. The phenomenon of staying silent therefore was situated not wholly within the video nor wholly within participants' (or my fieldnote) accounts of the meeting, but emerged from an intertextual relationship between these forms of data. What does the account tell me about the interaction shown in the video? What does the video's detail tell me about the later account of silence that was produced in the interview? How do the different narratives which emerge relate something about people's individual practices of withholding, and how such practices fit into the relationships being demonstrated?

The analysis of the video recordings was conducted by me alone. I created transcripts of the dialogue of the meetings and used these in the field with participants as the means to ask them questions and identify specific moments of interaction for further comment. However, the transcript of each of the most recent meetings, about which I wanted to interview participants, was usually not finalised when those interviews took place during fieldwork. Therefore, there was a time lag in the process, and my progress in transcribing, and participants' comments about my progress and their interpretations about my partial transcription, became part of ongoing conversations.

Video in dialogue - three examples

The three examples below were chosen for this paper because they relate situations where a participant in a post-meeting interview included some explicit reference to a strip of interaction in a meeting. Hence they provide a good demonstration of the interplay between the post-meeting account and the video recording, and how the latter acted as a reflexive challenge within fieldwork, that contributed to the development of relationally responsive research rather than acting as a stable, objective representation of social interaction. Each of the three examples shows a different outcome from the reflexive dialogue between my fieldnotes of the meeting, an individual's interview account of it, and the video footage:

- in the first example, the video data *confirms* a participant's account and the audio-visual detail encourages me to interpret the account and interaction in a more nuanced way;
- in the second, the video *denies* a straightforward reading of the participant's account, and in response I seek more data which leads to a new co-constructing line of inquiry which connects the strips of data;

- in the third, the video initially confirms an interaction that a participant talks about but that I had originally missed from the meeting. However, the meaning of this interaction is subsequently re-narrated (Ramsey, 2005) by another participant's account of the same meeting, which then alters the conditions for viewing the video, and subsequently alters how I engage with these participants.

All names are pseudonyms and some identifying details have been removed to maintain anonymity. In the fieldnote extracts, some details in square brackets have been added to my original text in order to make the sense clear to the reader.

Example 1 - Sean

This example illustrates how the video footage confirmed part of an account provided by one of the participants, Sean, and helped develop it further. The following extract is taken from my fieldnotes written about my interview with Sean after one of the early meetings of the project group when I am asking him what he might have stayed silent about.

'[Sean] said he 'tempered his language, saying things like "a bit of a problem" when actually it was a huge problem'. He said that at the previous meeting he recalled doing this when people were talking about the process [of the community consultation event] but he really wanted to talk about the substantive content. I said I remembered this, and referred to the transcript [of the meeting] which I explained I had not completed so it may not be totally accurate yet, and wasn't sure if I'd be able to find the place in the text. I did, and showed it to him, and he said yes that was it.'

Sean was the research project lead for the university team, and the only member of the project group with extensive academic research experience. Below is the extract from the transcript which we identified in the conversation above. At this point in the transcribed meeting, Sean is speaking after the group has spent about ten minutes discussing a comment made at the last consultation event by a member of the public. (NB - Kerry and Alison are members of the project group who appear in the next examples).

EXTRACT 1	
1	Sean: Yeah .. the feedback we've had is about the kind of experience, which I think is
2	important. The, for me the real proof is whether there is creative stuff in those
3	feedback sheets
4	Alison: mm
5	Sean: or in the stuff that we've captured
6	Kerry: mm hmm
7	Sean: and if there isn't creative stuff then ... it was nice but it's failed
8	Alison: yeah
9	Sean: .. so I think that is important um yeah ... im- important... in terms of thinking about
10	whether this was a good <i>research</i> event rather than a good um.. engagement consciousness raising kind of event

This had not been a remarkable moment in the meeting in my fieldnotes. When I later re-viewed the strip in the video recording, Sean's story of tempering his language can be clearly interpreted in relation to the conversational sequencing and the position of this strip of interaction in the wider text of the meeting. Even though he does not exhibit in the images any visible signs of frustration, his account of withholding offered in our post-meeting interview suggests now the effort of trying to step back from being a managerial lead into a less directive role in the group. I interpret him in the video images as trying to give the group space to develop the research ideas by themselves, yet feeling frustrated about the time spent discussing aspects which he feels are peripheral to the university's research project, and wanting to find a polite way to move the conversation on without being too overbearing.

The video allows me to analyse the detail of his engagement with other members of the group, now that he had raised this issue of tempering his language. His post-meeting interview account shows a narrative that I may not otherwise have considered, given his (well-controlled) demeanour in the video's images. The two forms of data work easily together to create a *betweenness* story, around the theme of withholding in relation to managerial control in this project, that Sean and I talk about on future occasions.

Example 2 - Kerry and Paul

The second example concerns a narrative provided by Kerry, one of the university team members of the group. The narrative she provides in the post-meeting interview, however, did not seem to correspond either to my own direct experience of the meeting or to

my later reading of the video images. This analytic otherness provoked me to seek further data, based on an alternative reading which the video recording offered.

In an interview after a meeting about two-thirds of the way through the project, in response to my question about what she had stayed silent about, Kerry stated that she had not asked Paul, one of the local authority officers and the only local authority representative at that particular meeting, whether he approved of the project planning for the next event, even though she had felt he looked really uncomfortable during the conversation about it. My fieldnotes of that meeting do not include any perception of Paul looking uncomfortable. Nor is it something which Paul related himself to me. When I watched the video again after the conversation with Kerry, I did not detect any indication, either through Paul's speech or body language, of any discomfort on his part during that agenda item or indeed at any other point in the footage. I did not want to deny Kerry's post-meeting account, to subjugate her view to my own, but I was finding it difficult to read Kerry's account of her actions as being directly responsive to Paul and was wondering how to interpret her account of discomfort.

As I continued to develop the transcript of the meeting from the video footage, I noticed right at the beginning of the recording: as the meeting is just starting, Kerry talks about recently meeting other research groups who are doing similar research work and how she found their work incomprehensible. The fact that Sean, who was Kerry's line manager, is absent from this meeting caught my attention. Kerry had been newly appointed to this project role, without an academic background, and in the video is having to describe and account all by herself for the consultation events they are planning: she is using the university's research language without Sean to guide her, possibly for the first time. Her talk to me about discomfort now takes on a possible new relevance. The more I review the full video footage of the meeting, the greater the sense I get that it is not really Paul who is the subject of Kerry's account: her talk seems to be reflecting other conversations and concerns, and other sources of discomfort. The following is taken from my fieldnote of a phone conversation with Kerry about four weeks after the meeting in question. At this point in the conversation, we had just started talking about what I was noticing from the transcription from the video:

I said, "I've been really interested [while doing the transcript] because there were a couple of times [in the video interaction] when you referred to something which wasn't really in reply to what Paul had said, but referred to what you thought he was

thinking, and that was interesting given what you had said afterwards to me about the conversation. For instance, [in the video] you were saying "don't worry about it [the consultation event] being too complicated". I had been wondering if you had already been worrying about that yourself and if the university team had been talking about it." "Yes definitely," she said immediately, "Yes, was that the meeting when we had just come back from [European trip]? We'd had one meeting and there was only a week to go [before the consultation event], and it was a nightmare."

This is an intersubjectively produced line that I constructed and proposed, and that Kerry accepted and elaborated. What started to emerge in our discussions about silence from this point in the research, triggered by my response to the full video recording, were themes of competence and stress: how feeling incompetent and unknowledgeable was stressful and inclined Kerry to stay silent, how her stress changed as she started to settle into her job and understand more about the research ethos, and could better explain and justify what the university team was doing.

In this example, the video recording challenged a straightforward reading of Kerry's interview data through its visual depiction of Paul which did not match Kerry's depiction. An alternative (otherness) reading emerged, based on my reading of her account against the interaction in the meeting. Other moments in the unedited footage, which had been hitherto unremarkable, now became significant and gave a new potential meaning to the account. A new (betweenness) account was co-constructed in subsequent conversations between us. My deconstructionist analysis leads to a new construction in which my own involvement is clearly outlined.

Example 3 - Alison and Nina

The third example comes from a dialogue with different individual accounts about an incident in one of the project meetings. An interaction between two project group members, which I had missed in the meeting at the time, is referred to afterwards by Alison, the city council representative. However, the significance of the interaction, which is shown in the video, is re-narrated when it is placed alongside other data and reviewed within the wider footage of the meeting.

In a meeting about half way through the project, a tense argument erupted between two members of the group - Nina, one of the county council representatives, and Sean, the

same protagonist from the university team as in Example 1. Gradually the whole group became embroiled in the argument about the design of a poster which Nina had produced to advertise a forthcoming community event. What was remarkable to me was not the behaviour of Sean or Nina; rather it was that of Alison, the city council officer, and how she seemed to back Sean rather than the county council officers, who I had been perceiving as her natural allies in a local authority sub-group. Sean complained about the way the university's work was depicted. Alison complained that the poster did not explain clearly enough the city council's role. Nina tried to defend the poster by appealing to the difficulty of working without a clear corporate identity in this inter-organizational project. In my fieldnotes, I noted the embarrassment I had felt on Nina's behalf during the argument, the furious tone that Sean had taken, the immediacy of Alison's support for Sean, and the persistence of her attack on Nina.

In my interview with Alison after the meeting, our conversation was diverted into talking about, and justifying, what she had voiced, rather than what she had stayed silent about, and led into talk about the purpose of her being at these project meetings. From my fieldnotes:

'She explained that her instructions were to maintain positive relations with the university, that the council wanted to develop these relations and unfortunately Nina's situation [not getting on well with Sean] may well affect that.'

She also downplayed the significance of the argument:

'She said, "It [the argument] was awkward but it wasn't a big deal [...] You probably saw when Nina had to leave, I said to her on the way out, 'Are you alright?' and she said yes."

This last exchange that Alison mentions, between herself and Nina as Nina was leaving, was not something that I had noticed during the meeting. However, when I watched the video recording again, after this conversation with Alison, I saw: as Nina moves around the table to the door on her way out of the meeting, Alison, who is sitting at the corner of the table nearest to the door, looks up at Nina as she approaches. Alison says something to her (which is not audible in the video footage nor in the secondary audio-recorder) to which Nina nods and responds - again not audible - before she exits the room. The video recording in effect confirmed Alison's story about her actions, that she was making sure that Nina was

alright, and that in fact the argument was indeed, in Alison's words, no "big deal". It diminished the shock I felt initially about Alison's behaviour in the meeting. Her interview provided a new way of understanding the interaction of the argument replayed in the video footage. Extract 2 is taken from the transcript of the argument where I had noted in the meeting my embarrassment for Nina, where she seemed to be struggling to defend herself. Alison's criticism of Nina might now be seen as facework (Goffman, 1983) for Sean's benefit, to develop the relationship with the university, with her comments about protecting her "interests, the councillors interest" (line 15-16) becoming more pertinent.

EXTRACT 2	
1	Alison: I presume you put [the poster] through your communications officer
2	Nina: Yeah. Well we'll just, <i>yeah</i> we we talked to Steven
3	[but he
4	Alison: [Does he not see it before it goes out?
5	Nina: He he he does, he didn't see this one because ... um ... because it's not it's not cor- I
6	think we'll just have to, you know if there are issues we'll just have to deal with it
7	Paul: Yes
8	Nina: Because it's not corporate we we would have had:
9	Alison: :No, I'm just saying, we
10	Nina: the same issues as you would have had
11	Alison: we have as a council agreed that
12	Nina: Yeah
13	Alison: that County council deals with the communication:
14	Nina: :Yeah
15	Alison: angle of it. If you're not getting the backup, I have to protect .. my interests, the
16	councillors interest
17	Nina: Yeah

When I subsequently interviewed Nina to ask about her withholding in that meeting, what was noticeable in her talk was the frustration and anger she expressed towards Sean and the complete lack of unprompted reference to Alison. With Alison's account in mind, that the argument was no big deal, I asked Nina about her thoughts on Alison's position:

'Nina replied that Alison was in a difficult position, she had approved the poster, she had been on the email circulation list, but maybe she just hadn't had time to look. She said Alison had said to just carry on with the stuff, which was fine but a bit difficult [because City] councillors are attacking what we are doing.'

This was the first time I had heard that Alison had had an opportunity to approve the poster prior to the meeting. I was surprised since, based on my previous reading of the video and Alison's account, I had been expecting a different sense of what had been going on for her. Two absences thus emerged from the intertextual reading between the data. Firstly, Alison had not mentioned this prior approval to me. Secondly, I wondered to myself why Nina had not referred to this point in order to defend herself from Alison's criticism in the meeting. As I re-viewed the video footage, new questions emerged about how to understand the ambiguous interplay between the two of them, during the argument, as Nina hesitates before offering a response in line 5 (Extract 2, above), and at the moment when Nina leaves the meeting, now with Alison's gesture possibly one more of apology and reconciliation than care and concern. In my study on silence, what I was now noticing were the slightly different issues that were being raised, and *not* raised, in the project group meeting and in the post-meeting interviews with me, and how these suggested something about the perhaps slightly difficult, but loyal, working relationship between the two local authority officers, but also possibly what was not appropriate to raise with me as a temporary member of this project group. My own silences became part of my data, as I sensed that previous questions had touched on sensitive topics, and that certain new questions could potentially impact upon Alison and Nina's working relationship with each other. I became more conscious of the wording of the questions that I asked, and of the questions I chose *not* to ask in conversation with each of them.

The video recording in this example initially provided visual evidence of an interaction that I had missed in the meeting. It showed my status as an unreliable narrator and afforded an opportunity to experience the meeting "again, for the first time" (Shotter, 2010) using a new narrative of what was going on. This new narrative was disrupted by a second conflicting narrative which highlighted new potential responses that had been absent, and now multiple potential ways of interpreting the video's interaction. My growing awareness of these different perspectives influenced the consequent conversations, and intersubjective construction of data, with Alison and Nina. Reflexive processes of otherness

and betweenness became entwined with each other and difficult to separate out, as a more polyphonic narrative developed.

In the next section, I summarise how the reflexive benefits were generated, and why these required an unedited and fixed-position form of footage. I clarify where this relationally responsive approach to video differs from an interactionist approach to similar forms of raw video footage, in terms of the relationship between the video and other texts, and the relationship between researcher and research participants. Finally, I discuss some of the unresolved difficulties and tensions in using video in this way.

Discussion: video talking back in the dialogue

The benefit of video recordings, rather than audio recordings, comes partly from being able to replay the type of rich detail that is used in interactionist studies to understand how local semiotic meaning is generated. Such detail would have been impossible to record by other means. What the video recordings enabled was an intricate analysis of the utterances, gestures and so on, that I had interpreted in my first experience of the meeting to come to an initial understanding of what was happening, to show how these same resources could be understood with a different meaning when other participants' accounts provided an alternative lens for re-viewing the footage. The video's detail points out that my fieldnotes are only one possible (partial) way of understanding what happened as the project unfolded: I missed aspects of the meeting; I interpreted a phrase one way rather than another. However, in all the three examples in the previous section, new meaning is derived not just from a closer analysis of sequential and synchronic detail, but also from my attempts to imagine a *betweenness* story that links the account data and the embodied interaction shown in the video, based on my own phenomenological experience of having been there and of now experiencing something different. It becomes the sensed and emergent relationships (Shotter, 2010), as they develop over time and across the different forms of data, which are important for this meaning-making process.

The footage also helped to highlight the *otherness* of different experiences and understandings - where I could not understand the readings between the texts; where there were conflicting readings in the same text - even as I tried to relate to their other perspectives and concerns within the unfolding project. Through re-viewing, I am being shown where I am not the same as my participants. Moreover, the detail not only challenged my interpretations about what had happened in the meeting but also in the post-meeting

interviews. It helped to deconstruct participants' accounts, to show how these also could be read in different ways, how absences in our conversations might be sensed. The intertextual dialogue challenged me to engage in further discussions with participants, to reconstruct a slightly different narrative about the phenomenon of withholding.

To clarify why this particular form of video was important, the approach required a *fixed-camera* position which remains ambiguous and open, and which includes all the participants in the interaction, as a canvas onto which many different interpretations can be applied. Using a mobile camera, which followed a subjective gaze or which prejudged which elements of the interaction were meaningful to record, would not have provided such a canvas upon which the independent voices of participants could have developed. Furthermore, the reflexivity required the *unedited* version of the recording. The three examples in this article were included because in some way there were particular moments in a meeting, identified not by me but by research participants, that were called on to support their interview account: when the group were talking about the process rather than substantive content (Sean); when Paul looked uncomfortable (Kerry); when Nina was leaving the meeting (Alison). However, only in Sean's case, in Example 1, did that same identified strip of interaction become a defining feature of my interpretation of that participant's account. In the other two examples, it was other strips in the video that became pertinent during my attempts to engage with their accounts of withholding, as I used the accounts to filter and direct attention within the footage. If I had imposed my choice of what I considered the most relevant video strips to analyse or to replay to participants - where I thought the phenomenon of withholding might have occurred, based on my viewing of the footage - I would probably not have chosen the moments presented here.

There are two particular differences worth highlighting between the use of video footage here and an interactionist use of similar video resources. The first concerns the conceptual relationship between the video and other data texts; the second concerns the relationship between the researcher and those who appear in the video. To begin with the first, some of the analytical insights were generated from the surprising dialogue between video and other texts, rather than from the more systematic analytical technique preferred in interactionist studies. The intertextual readings between the video recordings, fieldnotes and interview accounts here were dynamic and unpredictable. The outcomes of the analytic process varied. In Example 2, what is shown in the video recording disrupts my understanding of another text. Sometimes the disruption is more complicated, as in Example

3, with other texts proposing competing narratives within the video images. While the research approach relies on the audio-visual stability of the detail in the image, there is no longer one inherent stability of meaning which is sought through the use of the video image. Meaning does not reside within the video image but becomes generated through moving between texts, using the logic of the Glance rather than the Gaze (Cunliffe, 2003). The relationship between the video recording and other data inscriptions could be characterised as egalitarian in the sense that other forms of data were not being generated purely for a more accurate analysis of the video interaction. Other data had as much priority and importance as the video. In such a research positioning, video recordings become just one more medium through which partial data can be recorded and analysed, rather than being treated as a special and privileged form of somehow more accurate and truthful data through which to deliver a monologic, finalised narrative.

The second difference is that here research participants and I are involved and engage with each other, both in and out of the frame. My experience is in the video recording too, and becomes an integral part of the data. The video captures us momentarily in the frame, but does not hold us there permanently in the way that the social interaction is held in the frame as the analytic focus for interactionist study. Instead, the video recording itself becomes an object in the unfolding fieldwork process of developing relationships and generating data. The footage questions my assumptions about how participants are relating and responding to each other and to me, in a second-order reflexive inquiry. It serves an emotional-volitional (Shotter, 2008) elicitation purpose, to prompt me to consider how my own interpretation is being shaped, and how my next move should be made in this ongoing dialogue, what new questions now seem pertinent to ask, and how to engage in what now seems to be a relationally appropriate and ethical manner.

There is, however, an unresolved tension and reflexive limitation at the heart of this research approach that is based on Bakhtin's dialogic theory, on ideas of polyphony and of challenging the researcher's monologic narration. The intertextual dialogue between the video, fieldnotes and interview accounts is mediated by me as the researcher, and is in effect separated from the dialogue with research participants, such that participants cannot directly challenge or contribute to my interpretations of the video images. Despite the video's role in destabilising my own account, there are limits to the destabilisation across the wider ethnographic project. It was still my choice of how to set up the camera, and its location essentially prioritised my own gaze. It was my transcribed version of the meetings, rather

than a direct viewing of the video footage, that we used in the post-meeting conversations. I took up the ethnographic position of participant-observer, but the other project group members did not become positioned as researchers. Practical reasons can be used to justify this approach to video analysis: participants had little time to view recordings of project meetings lasting two hours or so every couple of weeks, and this was not set up as an action research project designed for organizational learning outcomes. The benefit of this use of video footage derived primarily to my research project, rather than to the research participants, from the clearer delineation of my own involvement in the processes of ethnographic data construction: the autoethnographic element of generating my own withholding as data, the highlighting of both the contingency of my interpretation and the clumsiness of my line of inquiry at certain moments, the questioning of my ethical responsiveness to the emergent concerns of participants, and the creation over time of lines of questioning that provided opportunities to surface and discuss aspects of social relationships, which otherwise may have remained hidden and difficult to raise, yet potentially important for the research question being explored.

One question that arises, therefore, is whether - and if so, where and how - this methodological use of video footage might be further developed for greater reflexivity and more polyphonic emphasis in ethnographic research, through participants' direct commentary and feedback on the video, so that the researcher's (otherness/betweeness) interpretations of the video footage and the intertextual associations might be explicitly explored in intersubjective dialogue between researcher and research participant. Another question to consider is whether - and how - this approach could be developed in more participatory projects, where the researcher/research participant distinction breaks down further, and where the benefits of a second-order reflexive inquiry are more widely distributed, or whether its limits are reached with the researcher's own radically reflexive use of it. Other interventionist research projects, for example, have used short extracts of video footage, chosen by the researchers from the longer recording, as the basis for discussion about changing practice (e.g. Erickson, 2007; Iedema et al, 2006). The challenge in the methodology described in my paper may be to find other research topics and situations where researcher-participants wish to engage in reflexive dialogue together, and that warrant the significant time investment to view the complexity of unedited footage, or that find another way to reduce that time and complexity whilst still maintaining the openness of the radically reflexive, dialogic possibilities of video recordings. As a tentative suggestion, potential situations might be

found in research questions concerning concepts, for instance psychological or emotional phenomena, of interest to organizational behaviour and organizational psychology researchers, that are embedded in the unfolding processes of social interaction, and where alternative, potentially destabilising analytical perspectives might be explored in the video's interaction, for a greater phenomenological appreciation of the different meanings and experiences of others within the interaction caught in the footage.

Concluding comments

Dicks (2013: 670) asks the question about the circumstances and research questions for which one might call on the particular insights and methodologies of different approaches to video to be in dialogue with each other. I hope that the empirical study described here might suggest one way in which two different qualities, of interactional detail and experiential immersion, in unedited, fixed-position footage might be usefully combined. This paper contributes to ongoing discussions about video methodology by developing a particular use for this type of footage, as a radically reflexive tool for the ethnographic fieldworker, within a relationally responsive research approach.

I have proposed here that unedited, fixed-camera-position video footage contributed to this approach by entering into an intertextual dialogue, where the analytic outcome of viewing and re-viewing the video could not be predetermined, and thus by prompting a reflexive focus on how interpretations were emerging over the fieldwork period and what new lines of inquiry might be constructed. A challenge now is to consider how a more enhanced reflexivity and a greater polyphonic dimension might be developed in such an approach, that allows for a deeper opening up of the researcher's emergent interpretations by means of the participants' own video viewing, and that facilitates a greater sharing between both researcher and research participant of the potentially surprising outcomes of the reflexive dialogue in which video talks back.

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