Are conversational assessment sequences evaluative?

Saul Albert (s.albert@qmul.ac.uk) & Patrick G. T. Healey (p.healey@qmul.ac.uk)

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Abstract

Assessment sequences where someone ostensibly expresses likes or dislikes are core CA phenomena, but do they actually constitute evaluative actions? Analyses of the preference organisation of agreements and disagreements with assessments inform CA studies of how participants index respective rights to do evaluations. However, the evaluative action is usually attributed to the use of prospective adjacent pairs of conventional 'assessing terms': a somewhat circular definition. This talk focuses on gallery visitors' copresent assessments and structurally related sequences from a large corpus of everyday talk to show how such assessments are organised as reflexively accountable and only retroactively evaluative actions. Assessments, noticings, and other retro-sequential structures are therefore especially useful for doing (and analysing) 'defeasible' actions where participants work to remain equivocal about their current activities, participation roles, and interactional foci. CA studies of action formation and ascription have noted the difficulties of coding such actions into clear 'types'. This presentation shows how participants themselves produce this obscurity as an interactional resource.

See http://saulalbert.net/blog/are-assessment-sequences-evaluative for a bibliography and online data.

Extract 1 CABNC_KB8_070201_1

```
1           (6.5) ((Motorcycle revving sound))
2 -> ANN:   Blo:ody:: 'e::ll.
3           (0.7)
4    HEL:   Wha:t,
5           (0.5)
6    ANN:   WOO WOO wOo::m.
            (5.2)
```

http://bit.ly/CABNC_KB8_070201_1

Extract 2 Pomerantz (1984) p. 62 (10) [JS:11:28]

```
1    J:    T's tsuh beautiful day out isn't it?
2    L:    Yeh it's jus' gorgeous...
```

Extract 3 Pomerantz (1984) p. 61 (12) [VIYMC 1:2]

```
((J and R are in a rowboat on a lake))

 1 -> J:      It's really a clear lake, isn't it?
 2    R:      It's wonderful.
```

Extract 4 Pomerantz (1984) p. 57 (1) [VIYMC 1:4]

```
 1    J:      Let's feel the water. Oh, it...
 2 -> R:      It's wonderful. It's just right. It's like bathtub water.
```

Extract 5 SBL:2.2.-2: from Pomerantz (1984) p. 57 (2)

```
 1    A:      An how's the dresses coming along. How d'they look.
 2 -> B:      Well uh I haven't been uh by there- ...
```

Extract 6 TATM2012_J-A_1008_1

```
 1            (5.2)
 2 -> JIM:  I like this play by play by the French pheophhle huh hh ((sniff))
 3          ·HahHu hHui≈
 4    ALI:  ≈E::evesdropping?
 5           (48.4) ((Jim sniffing continuously))
 6 -> ALI:  wHhuH were they talking about?
 7    JIM:  Huh?
 8    ALI:  What were they talking about?
 9           (1.1)
10    JIM:  c·hhHHhus this guys >giving like a play by play< and then like (.)
11          they're like u::uohh (be::e ess) aigh and so hes like hey (.) this
12          ihs AHHhh°rt hhh kh kh kh° (1.1) ((sniff)) but like *eeh* being
13          sarcastic.≈
14 -> ALI:  ≈Wahw
15           (43.0)
```

http://bit.ly/TATM2012_J-A_1008_1

Extract 7 CABNC_KC6_055604_1

```
1          (4.2)
2   GAV:   ↑Oo::h there's been a crash.
3          (1.3)
4 -> SUE:  Ooh dear. (.) where?
5   GAV:   Here.
6          (0.8)
7 -> SUE   O:::h yeh.
8          (2.1)
```

Extract 8 TATM2012_R-A-J-K_1028_1

```
1          (1.3)
2   ROB:   TCh (0.4) O↑::h:︓w. <it's:: one of these
3           things.
4          (2.0)
5   ABI:   I: KNo:w what it i::S:?
6          (1.3)
7   ABI:   What's the ti:me ↓mister wolf.
8          (3.0)
9   ROB:   Are those people in the middle the wo::lf
10         (1.9)
```

Extract 9 TATM2012_K-S-N_1027_1

```
1          (2.8)
2 -> KEE:  Oh WH↑Ath? (.) what is happeni:ng. I'm so conf↑used.
3   SAS:   °Performance.°
4   KEE:   And all these people are part of it?
```

Extract 10 CABNC_KB9_062308_1-1

```
1          (1.4)
2   ANN:   O::h look at the:: e::m ⌈  (.) things with the broo::c⌉hes!≈
3   TRA:                        ⌊ O:::h   i'nt   it  ni::ce. ⌋
4 -> TRA:  ≈The::y're ni:ce (.) got a:ges in.≈
5   ANN:   ≈Yeah.
6          (3.7)
```

Extract 11 TATM2012_A-J_1024_1

```
1    ALE:   Do ↑you:: think the guy in the red hat is re:ally cute.
2 -> JES:   The r- the guy in the red hat?≈
3    ALE:   ≈ye:ah
4 -> JES:   Where's the re- (0.8) ⌈fwo::ah⌉
5    ALE:                        ⌊Julia b⌋rought him round before I was
6           like don't look at him he's beau:tifu::l
7           (2.3)
```

Extract 12 CABNC_KE6_036801_1

```
1    BEV:   It's ↑muggy out.≈
2    MIC:   ≈Ye::ah. oh god mu:ggy out ↓the::re ⌈(.) in the end≈
3    BEV:                                       ⌊M:hmm
4 -> BEV:   ≈I:: know that I went ou⌈ts↑i:de.
5    MIC:                          ⌊MMmmh.
6    MIC:   But my hair was wet look.
```