

## Instructions as grammars for action

Oskar Lindwall, University of Gothenburg

With a starting point in studies of basketball practice, handicraft instruction, architecture education, and online video tutorials, this presentation discusses four different uses of the term instruction and how they are interrelated. First, instruction is often used to refer to the act or practice of ‘teaching’ or, perhaps more generally, ‘education’. In this sense, instruction is the central business of a variety of settings, with schools and classrooms as paradigmatic examples. Second, the term is sometimes used to refer to certain social actions, such as directives or orders, which, in the words of Candy Goodwin, “are designed to get someone to do something”. Although students are repeatedly told to open their books, raise their hands, and speak one at a time, it is clear that directions or orders are not specifically tied to educational activities. Instructions are also used to coordinate actions, to get help and assistance, and to address various troubles. Third, the term instructions might refer to written texts such as manuals, recipes, and guidebooks. This sense of the word overlaps with the other two, since manuals and guidebooks sometimes are used for educational purposes and typically consist of a sequence of directives. A fourth and more specific use of the term can be found in Harold Garfinkel’s writings about instructed actions in ethnomethodology’s program, where it is used to conceptualize the achieved orderliness of social actions and activities. Throughout the presentation, the theme of the conference (speech – interaction – multimodality) is topicalized through questions about the relation between instructions and the following of instructions. How are verbal directives turned into practical actions? What are the differences between being instructed by an expert and following directions found in video tutorials or printed manuals? It is argued that a move from talk-in-interaction to instructions and instruction-in-interaction also necessitates a shift in how we understand interaction and its different “modes”.