Social action formats in embodied interaction

The workshop explores the notion of ‘social action formats’ (for convenience, SAFs), or conversational patterns for routinely enacting particular activities and actions in interaction. Social action formats can be broadly understood as recurrent conversational patterns or turn-constructional formats which originate in the interactional needs of participants in talk-in-interaction, and encompass both language and embodiment.

This introductory presentation will first provide an overview of the papers to be given in the workshop, in order to stimulate and facilitate discussion during the three days. The presentations explore SAFs within different languages, by variously focusing on the relations between linguistic form, sequential organization and embodiment.

We will discuss the following theoretical approaches and assumptions observable in the papers:

- Starting points for papers: when searching for conversational patterns in interaction, we can begin with linguistic form, social action, turn or sequence organization, or embodied action. Does the starting point matter (for SAFs)?
- Features of conduct: papers examine and contribute to several areas of conversational research relevant for social action formats. How are the findings on SAFs related to and relevant for current research concerns in conversation analysis and related areas?
- Different understandings of social action formats: the papers employ a multiplicity of terms for what we understand as SAFs, and thus explore the limits of SAFs, i.e. their relationship to units, formats, practices, patterns, functions and actions. What is the scope and reference point of the terms used?

Second, as one prominent focus in the workshop is embodiment, we will provide a synthesis of our current understanding of different analytic foci for SAFs and for studying language and the body in situated interaction. We will try to encourage discussion and a search for some common ground on the above pertinent issues throughout the workshop, to be pulled together in the final discussion.