Part I

WORK INSTITUTIONS AND EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE

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WORK AND EVERYDAY LIFE

1. Introductory remarks: from a paradoxical observation to a paradoxical conclusion

Let me begin with the paradoxical observation: work is the systematically neglected research topic in the sociology of work. Sociologists of work deal with the social, cultural, economic, political, and technological determinants and consequences of work activities, but they are usually not interested in the analysis of work activities themselves, in their practical, 'in situ' circumstances of interactional setting. Therefore, the topics of the research undertaken in the sociology of work 'surround' - so to say - the sphere of work activities, while keeping it beyond the scope of the analytical interest.

It goes without saying that there is a demand for research specific for the sociology of work. Such research may point to the important external conditions of the process of work, and through the analysis of the consequences of work activities it may be used for forecasting the growth trends in the sphere of social consciousness and in the field of economy. For all that, it is rather perplexing that the researches carried out in the field of the sociology of work are not directly related to the work itself, but usually consist in obtaining information on what the workers feel or think about the work, its conditions

and consequences. Looking realistically rather than sceptically
upon the proper subject of these researches, one should add that
they are in fact focused on the analysis of any opinions or fee-
lings about work that respondents are ready to volunteer to the
researcher or write in a questionnaire. It seems, therefore,
that it would be worthwhile to put more effort into describing
the actual interaction processes going on in industrial plants
and in institutions. The focus on investigating the work activi-
ties provides an opportunity of creating an accurate representa-
tion of work, and it might also make explicit the tacit features,
rules and structures of interaction thanks to which the course
of work acquires a specific form and character. Besides cogni-
tive gains, analyses of this kind might have practical impor-
tance, as their findings might become the basis for formulating
directions for reinforcing the proper and effective forms of
work activities, and eliminating the ineffective and improper
forms. This last remark applies above all to the work activities
which demand particularly complex and hard to master interaction
skills, such as e.g. in the case of the work of a teacher, an
educator, a psychologist, a doctor or a psychotherapist. It is
worth adding, that the practical directions and conclusions could
be very definite and precise.

Let us come back for a while to our point of departure, i.e.
to the observation that the sociology of work, in its generally
known and practised forms, does not deal with work in its prac-
tical setting. I would like now to submit for consideration a
statement of a more general nature: thus, I believe that we are
confronted with a largely analogous situation in the remaining
subdisciplines of empirical sociology. For example, a sociolo-
gist of education asks teachers and pupils for their opinions and
reconstructs their attitudes, motivations and conceptions of
their social roles, while usually he does not undertake systematic
research on the course of daily events in a typical primary or
secondary school. Examples of this sort could be multiplied. In-
stead, I would like to devote somewhat more attention to the cha-
racter of the research in the sociology of culture. A sociologist
of culture often deals with the reconstruction of attitudes,
preferences and conceptions of the creators or the recipients of

culture as regards the created or received cultural goods, such
as e.g. a theatre performance or a TV programme, while he is less
interested in the actual course of cultural events and activities
(as e.g. the process of preparing the performance or a TV broad-
cast, the progress of a performance, the standard 'domestic'
behaviour in front of the TV set). If, however, the sociologist
of culture undertakes research on cultural events and activities,
he usually reconstructs them on the basis of his respondents'
declarations. It may be supposed that interaction research in
the field of the sociology of culture might bring both cognitive
and practical gains. The cognitive gains are obvious with regard
to the new models of cultural activities, such as e.g. a rock
festival, or computer games - although it should be added that
the analysis of such widely known, routine cultural activities
as e.g. watching TV together with the other family members,
could perhaps bring equally cognitively attractive or even sur-
prising findings. The practical gains from interaction research
in the field of the sociology of culture might consists in e.g.
the elaboration of notional categories of a more 'technical'
character, the lack of which is observable in theatre and TV
reviewing, as well as in discussions of mass culture, the youth
culture, etc.

To sum up, we could say that empirical sociology in general,
focusing on the main subjects of its interest, i.e. on the ques-
tions of 'social structure' and 'social consciousness', largely
relinquishes the observation and analysis of social reality in
its practical circumstances. It is worth noting that this state
of affairs is connected with the dominance of such research tech-
niques as a questionnaire interview or a questionary, generally
speaking - with the dominance of the techniques sometimes describ-
ed as 'techniques based on communication'. These techniques consist
in eliciting answers to given questions, and thus in bringing into
existence a new social phenomenon in the form of a sociological
inquiry. On the other hand, when those techniques are the only
research techniques - as is the case in most of the sociological
research - the observation and analysis of naturally occurring
phenomena, i.e. the social phenomena uninfluenced by the resear-
cher, becomes virtually impossible. Moreover, a questionnaire

interview and the questionary, through the character of the data
obtained with their help, 'push' the researcher into reconstruct-
ing unobservable states and phenomena ('social structure', 'so-
cial consciousness') on the basis of the respondents' declara-
tions.

The thesis with which I would like to close these introduc-
tory remarks may not seem obvious at first sight, but I hope it
is justified in the light of what has already been said here. In
spite of the enormous number of sociological researches, social
life in its concretness and variety is still an area inaccessible
to the conventional sociological research. This area unrecognized
by sociology consists of two partly intersecting domains. One
of them may be described as routine daily activities located in
such settings of everyday life as family life, social life, or
a tram journey. The other domain contains routine activities
located in institutional settings (such as e.g. school, hospital,
local outpatients' surgery, working place etc.). The interaction
tissue of modern societies which have at their disposal socio-
logy as a specialized research discipline, remains perhaps as
unrecognized by sociologists as the customs of pre-literary
societies at the time when they were not yet studied by ethno-
graphers.

2. Some recent approaches to the study of work

Getting through to a particular subject of research depends
on the use of proper research techniques. The analysis of actual
work actuvities (as well as that of the other everyday or insti-
tutional activities) requires such research techniques as parti-
cipant observation and the analysis of tape or video recordings.
These techniques should be applied to naturally occuring pheno-
mena, i.e. to activities and events which are not provoked by
the researcher (like e.g. answers in a questionary), but occur
of themselves in social reality. This does not mean - let me
emphasize this - that we must completely exclude such research
techniques as an interview (especially an unstandardized inter-
view) or a questionary. Such techniques may be useful as auxi-
liary instruments.

The application of research techniques directed at the obser-
vation and registering of social phenomena is an important di-
stinguishing mark of the so-called interpretive sociology, i.e.
of such orientations as interactionism (the research work of
Anselm Strauss and other continuators of the Chicago school),
research work based on the inspiration coming from the works of
Erving Goffman, ethnomethodology, and conversation analysis.
Leaving aside the complex issues of the differences and arguments
between these orientations which together form interpretive
sociology, we must only remark here that the shared preference
for certain research techniques is undoubtedly connected with
methodological and theoretical bases of interpretive sociology.
The idea common to all the orientations of interpretive sociology
is the wish to interpret the social reality in categories close
to those employed by the inhabitants of the analysed reality
themselves in the course of their actions. Another common element
of the interpretive approach is the avoidance or at least limi-
tation of the use of widely known sociological conceptual ap-
paratus.

The research in interpretive sociology has produced analyti-
cal descriptions of various forms and shapes of interaction pro-
cesses in everyday life and in institutional settings. They fill
a wide gap in conventional sociological literature, or rather -
to describe more precisely the current state of affairs - they
shape a new type of sociological literature.

It is worth noting that among the studies of interaction
processes in institutional settings, it is the study of work that
occupies an ever more important position. Here belong, among
others, Anselm Strauss's researches on 'medical work', which
derive from the tradition of the Chicago school, and ethnometho-
dological 'studies of work'.

Strauss's research is concerned with the hospital care of
chronic patients in the United States. Therefore, from the tra-
ditional point of view it may be said that Strauss's research
belongs to the domain of medical sociology. On the other hand,
Strauss and his collaborators put special emphasis on the fact
that the subject of their analysis in 'medical work' and its
'social organization'. The school of Strauss is concerned with

the analysis of the actual course of activities which are among
the professional duties of the medical staff, and also - above
all - with the analysis of the activities which, according to
the administrative and the sociological definitions are not
part of the professional duties but still belong to the organized
effort of the medical staff and - importantly - of the fellow
patients, which is aimed at giving physical and mental support
to the chronic patients. Thus, it may be reasonably claimed that
Strauss's researches belong to the domain of the sociology of
work. What is more, what results from these researches is a
new conception of work, and also a new perspective for research
in the sociology of work. A fragment of the monograph written
by Strauss and his collaborators is characteristically entitled
'Sociology of Work - But What Work?' [S t r a u s s et al., 1985,
chapt. 10]. It should be also stressed that the research has
practical applications: it is Strauss's intention that his mono-
graph should be used as an aid in the reform of American hos-
pital management. Last but not least, the monograph is written
in colourful language and makes an interesting and illuminat-
ing reading not only for sociologists, but also for doctors,
auxiliary medical staff and above all - for the medical mana-
gement workers.

The main research technique used by Strauss's research team
is participant observation accompanied by other techniques, such
as e.g. the unstandardized interview. Consequently, the resear-
cher must often rely on his field notes. Another feature of
Strauss's research is combining 'conventional' interest in con-
ditions and consequences with a new sphere of interest including
the actual activities which make up medical work.

From the traditional point of view, recent ethnomethodologi-
cal research should be treated as belonging to the sociology of
science. Indeed, the so-called 'studies of work' taken up by
Harold Garfinkel and his collaborators as yet deal with the work
of scientists in such fields as astronomy, neuroanatomy or mathe-
matics. However, the specific character of the analyses made by
Garfinkel, M. Lynch and E. Livingston comes from the rigorous
treatment of scientific activity as work activities, and there-
fore as routine occupational activities taking place in specific

practical circumstances such as e.g. those of an astronomical observatory, neuroanatomical laboratory or a mathematical 'work-site'. Therefore, the main analytical concept is here the concept of work understood as 'lived work', and not the concept of science. It should be hoped that the further development of ethnomethodological 'studies of work' will go well beyond the limits of scientific work and will concern other kinds of work.

The ethnomethodological approach offers the most consistent illustration of the ideas of interpretive sociology. The distinction between ethnomethodology and conventional sociology, which is essential for an ethnomethodologist, is currently formulated as the distinction between 'studies of work' and 'studies about work'. The 'studies of work' consist in a systematic and detailed description of work activities as they take place 'in situ', i.e. in definite and natural circumstances (not created by the researcher). The only techniques of collecting data are participant observation and tape and video recordings. An ethnomethodologist aims at the analysis of the course of work itself, in terms of its own, self-organizing structures. In contrast to the 'studies of work', the commonly pursued 'studies about work' do not offer any analysis of work processes, but deal with such issues as social relations and the role structure among workers, the structure of incomes, etc. In connection with this, Garfinkel and his collaborators maintain that there is a serious gap in sociological literature. This gap consists in the lack of descriptions of how the workers, during the course of work, get along with their tasks. According to Garfinkel, one consequence of this gap in the literature is that the workers usually do not recognize themselves and their own real problems in the sociological analyses of work; it is also true that the workers themselves often see the existing sociological descriptions of work as uninteresting, confusing or irritating.

Moreover, ethnomethodologists stress the fact that, as a consequence of generally accepted methods and techniques of sociological research, actual events, activities and circumstances of a worker's life get 'translated', as it were, into objects understandable within sociological research and theorizing. What is more, because of the above-mentioned gap in sociological lite-

rature on work, the relation between this 'sociological trans-
lation' and the original reality remains unknown.

Thanks to the ethnomethodological 'studies of work' we have
obtained convincing evidence of the practical character of scien-
ce: researchers have offered us an analytical description of
'an ordinary night's work' of some astronomers, during which a
previously unknown heavenly body was 'discovered' [G a r f i n-
k e l, L y n c h, L i v i n g s t o n, 1981], have provided an
analytical description of 'shop work' and 'shop talk' of research
workers in a neuroanatomical laboratory [L y n c h, 1985], and
have presented a description of the work of proving the mathe-
matical theorem [L i v i n g s t o n, 1986]. The common feature
of these researches is that they point out the way in which the
so-called objective scientific reality is constructed in the
course of practical activities and routine conversations. These
researches provide epistemologists with materials of previously
unheard-of systematicity and variety of 'technical' details.

Yet another orientation of interpretive sociology deserves
separate treatment here. This is conversation analysis, which
is a continuation of ethnomethodology, specialized in investiga-
ting ordinary conversations. The investigation consists in a
detailed analysis of tape or video recordings. Only such conver-
sations are recorded as occur 'naturally', i.e. as would take
place in identical form even if the researcher were not present.
The broad scope of conversation analysis includes the study of
the rules of conversations in everyday life, as well as the study
of the rules of conversations occurring in actual institutional
settings. Conversation-analytic investigations of work belong to
the latter of the above-mentioned types of research. We should
make a reservation, however, that because of the objective
interests of conversation analysis, only those kinds of work
that are based on conversation as their main activity, may be
effectively studied. Bearing this reservation in mind, we may
observe that conversation analysis has been applied as yet to
the following kinds of conversations:
    - a court trial [A t k i n s o n, D r e w, 1979, et al.],
    - a lesson [e.g. M e h a n, 1979],
    - doctor - patient interaction [e.g. H e a t h, 1986].

From the traditional point of view, these studies belong to relevant subdisciplines of sociology: sociology of law, sociology of education, or medical sociology. On the other hand, considering the detailed, 'technical' character of conversation-analytic research, these studies offer insight into specific ways of doing work by means of conversing, or more generally, interacting with others. Once more, it is worth pointing out the possibilities of practical application of the research on work activities, which in the case of conversation analysis could even be of use in professional training.

Let us end this portion of our remarks with the statement of the fact that work activities and the possibilities of analysing them have become one of the most important problems of interpretive sociology. What is more, the interest in work activities has marked integrative consequences as regards the traditionally conceived subdiscipline divisions in sociology. The unifying factor in all research of work activities is not, however, just any sociological definition of work adopted a priori. Quite the opposite, in the study of work activities strong emphasis is laid on the heterogeneity and the 'material' and 'technical' specificity of various kinds of work. What is common to all the studies of work is the conviction that work is the basic routine activity performed in institutional settings. Another important unifying factor is the already mentioned, more or less common set of rules of research approach.

3. The study of work activities - an example

The subject of my study is psychotherapy understood as work, i.e. as professional, routine activity performed in a specific institutional setting. The small scale of this study has forced me to limit the subject under research to a chosen fragment of individual therapy. The fragment chosen for analysis is the so-called in-take interview. The question I asked at the outset of my research was: in what way does the therapist form an institutional relationship with a patient, i.e. how is the therapist-patient relationship established? In other words, I am con-

cerned with the analysis of the means by which, in the course of
the in-take interview, it is established that from a particular
moment one person will act as a therapist towards the particular
other person, and this other person will then become a patient
of this specific person whom he recognizes as his therapist.
The forming of the therapist - patient relationship is labelled
by therapists as a 'contract'. The contract between a therapist
and a patient is sometimes made in the course of several meetings,
and so it may happen that it will go beyond the in-take interview.
Also, forming the contract or the elements of the contract in the
course of the in-take interview sometimes takes place within an
easily distinguishable fragment of the interview, sometimes it
happens in stages, and in other cases the forming of the contract
can hardly be distinguished in the whole course of the interview.
It may also happen that during the first meeting the therapist
refers the patient to another therapist or to a doctor. Finally,
the patient may take advantage of the possibility of rejecting
the therapist's offer of contract.

One of the reasons why I have chosen the contract as
the subject of analysis is that in the therapists' opinion, a
contract is one of the crucial factors determining the success
or failure of further therapy. Moreover, it is impossible to
lead the therapeutic interview and observe it at the same time
- as it impossible, too, in the case of all the other kinds of
conversations. It seems thus that the systematic analysis of the
in-take interview, or at least of some of its aspects, with
special regard to the phenomena relevant to the making of con-
tract, might bring cognitive gains in the shape of the descrip-
tion of the actual course of a therapist's work, and might also
prove useful in training or improving the methods of therapeutic
work.

The research procedure I have adopted is conversation analysis.
From the 'technical' point of view, a research in conversation
analysis consists of four stages: the recording of the conver-
sation, the preparation of a transcript using a complex system
of symbols of transcription, the analysis (based on the repeated
listening in to the recordings and studying the transcripts),
the preparation of a research report. The present state of my

research is as follows: some in-take interviews (about twenty) have been recorded and the transcripts of selected fragments of several of them have been prepared; also, I have made initial attempts at analysing the material. At the present stage of the research one cannot yet speak of any conclusions. So, instead of the premature drawing of conclusions, in lieu of the summary of this paper, I would like to offer an illustration of the use of conversation analysis in the research on therapeutic work activities.

The following sequence occured in one of the in-take interviews:

(1) Therapist: Leki tutaj,   Medication here,
                         (.)   (.)
        Patient: No nie pomagają=   Well doesn't help=
        Therapist: =↑Nie pomagają   =↑Doesn't help
                          ⌐°w zasadzie°   ⌐°practically°
        Patient: └   └

Transcript symbols used in sequence (1):

,   continuing intonation
(.)   micropause, i.e., pause of 0.2 sec.
___   stress
= =   continuous utterances
↑   marked rising shift in intonation (immediately following the symbol)
⌐   overlapping utterances (onset)
° °   a quieter passage

This sequence attracted my attention because it contained the following event: the therapist brought the patient to produce the completion of the phrase uncompleted by the therapist. The conversation concerned one of the most essential conditions of therapy, and it seemed interesting to me that by virtue of this sequence, agreement was reached in an indirect way (i.e., it was not the case that the therapist stated to the patient that medication was not used in the therapy, and then waited for the patient's approval of such a statement).

In the following I take the subsequent research steps (A,B,C) according to the conversation analysis.

A. Looking for other instances of the same kind of sequence in psychotherapeutic in-take interviews.

Sequence (2) is another example of the identified sequence:

                                          (stylistic translation)
(2) T.: wypisanie recepty i,   you get a recipe and,
              (.)   (.)
    P.: i na tym koniec.=   and that's it.=
    T.: = i na tym koniec   = and that's it
        prawda:?   ri:ght?

Transcript symbols used in sequence (2); other than those given above by example (1):

T.   Therapist
P.   Patient
:   prolonged sound
?   rising intonation

B. The next step of the analysis consists in finding the re-current regularities of this kind of sequence.

On the basis of the above examples, one may point to the fol-lowing common features of the sequence:
- the sequence consists of four elements;
- element 1 - the therapist does not complete his utterance and suspends his intonation;
- a short pause follows,
- element 2 - the patient completes the phrase uncompleted by the therapist;
- element 3 - the therapist repeats the completion of the phrase uttered by the patient;
- there is no pause between elements 2 and 3;
- element 4 - the comment provided by the patient (example 1: 'w zasadzie', 'practically') or by the therapist (example 2: 'prawda:?', 'ri:ght?').

C. The final, most important stage of the analysis should consist in showing that the recurrent pattern in the sequence is not a mere regularity of behaviour, but that it is an 'achieved orderliness,' i.e., a meaningful structure constructed step by step by the conversants. The strongest evidence for arguing that a given regularity reaches an 'achieved orderliness' would consist in showing that when the given regularity is not fully realized by the conversants, they themselves indicate their recognition

of that event in the course of further conversation. However, in the case of the sequence presented here, we are supposedly dealing with a less patterned structure, which is not analysable in the way that we have mentioned. We should then look for a different way of showing the 'methodical' and 'meaningful' character of this structure. This might be achieved by pointing to the relevance of the sequence to the rest of the conversation. In other words, we are looking for the evidence that the sequence is a meaningful interactional consequence of what went before it, and at the same time we are also interested in pointing out the consequences to which this sequence will lead in further conversation. On the basis of initial observations I would claim that there is strong evidence for the 'ordered' placement of the sequence in the broader conversational context.

Another version of the sequence occurs when the sequence is introduced not by the therapist but by the patient. In one variant of the sequence the patient does not complete his utterance and suspends his intonation. A short pause follows. However, afterwards the therapist does not accept the interactional solicitation provided by the patient. Instead he says to the patient: "go ahead and complete what you are saying". An example of this kind shows how the microstructural division of power is displayed in psychotherapeutic interview. In the basic form of the sequence the patient comes to be involved in the interaction game introduced by the therapist, while the therapist refuses the participation in the analogous game when proposed by the patient.

The remarks which have been formulated above have an introductory character, and their presentation in the present form was motivated by the need to illustrate a number of phenomena investigated by conversation analysis and the degree of minuteness and systematicity required in this type of research.

In the conclusion, I would like to return to the question of work and everyday life. The complex relations between work and everyday life may now be studied - with the use of conversation analysis - in a more detailed and concrete way. E.g., an important task for further analysis of the sequences identified above would be to compare this sequence as it appears in a psychotherapeutic context with analogous sequences which possibly

occur in other professional settings (court hearings, school
classes, academic discussions) as well as in the context of
everyday conversations (at home, during train trip, etc.). This
kind of contrast analysis might lead to better understanding
various kinds of professional conversation as well as differences
between professional and everyday conversation. In the latter
case conversation analysis offers the unique opportunity to show
in detail what the professional use of the everyday conversation
resources means.

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PRACA I ŻYCIE CODZIENNE

W artykule podejmuję tzw. interpretatywne podejście do bada-
nia pracy. W części pierwszej punktem wyjścia jest paradoksalna
obserwacja, iż czynności pracy stanowią zaniedbany przedmiot ba-
dań socjologii pracy, zajmującej się raczej uwarunkowaniami oraz
konsekwencjami procesów pracy, aniżeli samym przebiegiem pracy.
Uogólniając, nie tylko procesy pracy, lecz także szeroki zakres
zjawisk interakcyjnych w obrębie życia codziennego oraz instytu-
cjonalnego pozostaje poza zasięgiem konwencjonalnego badania so-
cjologicznego. W drugiej części artykułu omawiam główne kierunki
interpretatywnego badania pracy, tzn. szkołę Anselma Straussa, et-
nometodologiczne "badania pracy" oraz analizę konwersacyjną w za-
stosowaniu do tego rodzaju rozmów, które są częścią procesu pracy
(jak np. w służbie zdrowia, psychoterapii, szkolnictwie, sądowni-
ctwie itp.). W trzeciej, ostatniej części artykułu przedstawiam
próbę własnej analizy psychoterapii. Zgodnie z zasadami anali-
zy konwersacyjnej, wskazuję na konkretne sposoby prowadzenia roz-
mowy (sekwencje), poprzez które terapeuta realizuje swój proces
pracy.