

Outline of PhD thesis

Talking about Violence: women reporting abuse in Brazil

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Chapter 1 I present an overview of the issue of domestic violence as a public concern in Brazil, including a discussion of the role of women's movements in seeking to combat violence against women and the creation of special Women's Police Units to deal exclusively with violence against women. I consider the Brazilian experience in the context of violence against women in an international perspective and point to some of the deficiencies and omissions of existing research which I aim to address in my own work.

Chapter 2, I present the rationale for using Conversation Analysis (CA) as a methodology to study women's help-seeking, and discuss some key methodological issues in my research the places in which it was conducted, the process of data collection and some issues on working in English with Brazilian Portuguese data. This chapter also examines some of the ethical issues involved in doing this research, including a self-reflection on the ethics of my research practice within a feminist perspective.

Chapter 3 is a technical CA chapter (which arose out of some translation issues in the early stages of my work) in which I analyse responses to Yes/No Interrogatives in Brazilian Portuguese in their conforming 'default' form and non-conforming forms, showing what they do interactionally.

Chapter 4 addresses the strategies police officers use for making a police report and the issues they manage, dealing with some possible implications of those strategies to the making of the report. It also considers the way in which women are active agents in the police interviews and shows women's strategies for taking over and/or resisting police control of the interaction.

Chapter 5 deals with some interactional problems that women reporting abuse may experience (such as having their cases dismissed, challenged and/or blocked; and the clashes between how women talk about their 'experience of violence' and what the police treat as 'reportable violence'. This chapter connects the use of some conversational tools – such as third position repair and the use of

'sim/yes' – with the problems women face when reporting abuse and some broader implications in terms of legislation, justice etc.

Chapter 6 builds on the differences in strategies police officers adopt to conduct the making of report in terms of the first references to the abuser. This chapter considers how these references are accomplished and what the implications are for the cultural understanding of violence against women.

Chapter 7, I conclude with considerations about possible contributions (i) to the understanding of women's help-seeking processes, (ii) to services for abused women, (iii) to research on violence against women from a conversation analytic perspective, (iv) to conversation analysis both from the perspective of working with women reporting abuse and from the vantage of a researcher working with Brazilian Portuguese. I end with some considerations about directions for future research.