

Disciplined Improvisation: characteristics of inquiry in mindfulness-based teaching

Mindfulness Journal

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Introduction

This online resource provides further background information about the project including:

Methodological considerations

Further details of how we analysed the data and how we ensured fidelity to the applied Conversation Analysis (CA) approach.

Transcripts and analytical commentary

Further annotated transcripts from the research project along with analytical commentary to illustrate the analytic process in action.

Suggested uses for these transcripts and the commentary

The transcripts can be used to supplement the information available in the accompanying article by providing examples of conversation that were too long to include in the original article.

They can also be used by mindfulness-based teachers to reflect line by line on examples of the teaching process in action.

The materials we are presenting here are not finished analyses and should be viewed as work-in-progress observations. Much of what is present here is still at the 'feature spotting' stage of analysis where we are noticing potentially interesting parts, rather than presenting a full analysis. All the 'findings' presented are tentative observations rather than definitive conclusions. The sequences presented are extended and complex, and would require further detailed analysis to establish any definitive conclusions. None the less we believe the richness of the material and the initial feature spotting work we have undertaken will be of interest to teachers and researchers in this field.

Methodological Considerations

How reliable and how generalizable are the findings in this study?

CA does not necessarily adopt a statistical approach to designing samples, Heritage (1988) suggests:

‘CA has adopted the naturalist’s strategy of building up large collections of data from as many natural sites as possible. Like a good collection of naturalist’s specimens these databases contain many variations of particular types of interactional events whose features can be systematically compared. Analysts constantly seek for new variants and may focus their searches on particular settings in the expectation of finding them’ (Heritage, 1988, p. 70).

Sacks (1992), suggests that whatever natural conversation sample is available is always going to be the right sample because it is by definition an example of conversation and therefore must demonstrate some features of how talk is organized.

‘It may be that we can come up with findings of considerable generality by looking at very singular particular things. By asking what it takes for those things to have come off.’ (Sacks, 1992, p. 298)

From Sack’s perspective, having an extensive database of samples might be valuable but the primary aim of CA is simply to examine any available recording of natural conversation to identify examples of how people achieve tasks through conversation.

In a statistical sense the recordings analysed in this study are samples of convenience. From a CA perspective the samples are valid because they are akin to a naturalist’s samples, and are a good basis for starting to investigate conversations in mindfulness-based classes because they are, by definition, examples of conversations in mindfulness-based classes and therefore display features of what can be observed in a mindfulness-based class. The data collected for this study is therefore best understood as part of a database of natural samples which can provide a useful beginning for understanding the teaching process.

Analytical Procedure

There is no one right way to make sense of observational data. The analysis in this study was undertaken collaboratively by three researchers. We were interested in understanding how people shape the turns of conversation and the effects that different types of talk have on the forward movement of conversation.

Psathas (1990) advises that researchers try to adopt a neutral stance to the data and examine it through 'unmotivated looking':

'The investigator is open to discovering phenomena rather than searching for instances of already identified and described phenomena or for some theoretically pre-formulated conceptualisation of what phenomena should look like.' (Psathas, 1990, pp. 24-25)

ten Have (2007, p. 122) and Hutchby and Wooffitt (2009, pp. 89-91) point out that subsequent stages to the investigation become increasingly structured and rigorous. Hutchby and Wooffitt advise that:

'First ...identify a possibly interesting phenomenon. The second step... is to describe one particular occurrence formally...if patterns can be located in sequential contexts in which potential phenomena occurs in the data then there begins to be the basis for a robust description. The third step is to return to the data to see if other instances of the phenomena can be described in terms of this account...gradually a formal account of a sequential pattern can be developed.' (2009, p. 90).

ten Have (P 151) suggests that 'the ultimate results of CA are a set of formulated rules or principles (of conversation) that participants are demonstrably orientated to in their natural interactions' and that these 'rules' or 'principles' are identified by analysing a single sample of conversation and then 'testing' the extent to which the rules or principles hold true for other samples.

Following Psathas' (1990) suggestion to try to adopt a stance of unmotivated looking and following the three steps set out about by Hutchby and Wooffitt (2009), the researchers in this study first independently listened to recordings and reviewed first draft non-annotated transcripts of inquiry sections that made up the data for the project.

The three researchers then met to review recordings and transcripts together. We identified sequences that appeared to contain repeating forms of talk. We then selected a narrower range of exemplars of repeating forms of talk for much closer scrutiny. We then listened repeatedly to each recorded exemplar section and collaboratively transcribed qualities such as tone, pace, overlapping speech and so on using the Jefferson transcription annotation system as summarised by Antaki (2011, p. xii).

This system is specific to CA and is designed to capture the fine-grained action orientation of talk, rather than assuming talk is mental expression. The transcription indicates things like: identification of speaker; length of time of a speech act; length of time of a silence; overlapping speech acts; qualitative features such as rising pitch, volume, added stress and noises and utterances by speakers other than words (paraphrased from Liddicoat (2011, p. 27ff)). For an overview of the transcription conventions in CA see, Hutchby and Wooffitt or Liddicoat (2011, pp. 27-66) or ten Have (2007, pp. 93-115). These authors emphasise that transcription goes beyond producing a verbatim script of words spoken but rather researchers must attempt to capture all the qualities present in actual speech.

By reviewing audio recordings together and preparing annotated transcripts in such depth, we had a lot of exposure to the data and eventually had sufficient shared familiarity to enable us to begin hypothesising about what might be happening in the conversations.

Developing the Analysis

We began to hypothesise and refine theories about possible rules or principles that the teachers and participants appeared to have established to organize their conversations. These did not have to be elaborate models, but might simply be making the 'taken for granted' visible. For example, a principle that teachers and participants adhere to is that generally, in the early weeks of an MBCT or MBSR course, teachers ask questions and participants offer answers and in this way they organize conversation to achieve certain tasks. We developed our analysis and theories about what we were observing by considering questions such as:

1. How is turn taking organized in this conversation?
2. What appear to be the unspoken rules or principles for agreed socially normative patterns of communication in these inquiry sequences and how is this rule or principle established and maintained in the conversation between teacher and participants?
3. How are the tasks of teaching mindfulness-based courses achieved in the conversation?
4. What privileges are established for different speakers and how is this achieved?
5. What effects does one piece of talk have in terms of the response it is met with from the next speaker?

We also considered how content (words) and form (pace, tone, pauses, cross-talking and so on) and rhetorical devices (like summarising or questioning) help achieve these.

Once we had a small collection of possible rules or principles for how the inquiry conversations were organized by teachers and participants we reviewed other samples to see if these rules of principles held true and how they were brought into effect in conversation (for example

what conversational methods were used). We then selected samples of conversation to present in the paper that illustrated these principles in a succinct way.

Ensuring Fidelity to the CA Approach

CA analysis emphasises observation and the action orientation of talk and purposefully avoids interpreting the intention of the speaker. The distinctive feature of CA is that in the analysis of talk we shift away from looking for intentions behind speech, to looking interactionally at previous and next turns, to see how participants themselves display their understandings of turns. An example, in this study, might be that we hear a mindfulness-based teacher displaying warmth in both word and tone. In analysing this, the temptation is to interpret what the teacher's intention is (we might suggest we are observing talk that reflects a teacher's intention to communicate empathy or unconditionality). However, from a CA perspective, the aim is to step back from inferring intention and describing what we observe (which is a little like noticing and noting experience and phenomena in mindfulness meditation practice). So a teacher might be said to have a form of communication that displays or signals warmth but we would not then begin to hypothesise about intention. Our aim would be to describe how the warmth was displayed, the effect it had in helping to organize the conversation and the effect it had on achieving the institutional tasks of the conversation.

To cultivate the ability to simply listen, we sat in mindfulness meditation before reviewing each recorded exemplar with the aim of stilling the conceptual mind and being able to approach the recordings with a stance of unmotivated listening (Psathas, 1990). Obviously this was an aspiration rather than something achievable and at many points in the analysis procedure we reflected together on whether we had moved beyond observation into suggesting intention. Taking a mindful perspective and having the three researchers' review the data together helped enhance fidelity to the CA approach of simply observing.

Key Considerations in Presenting the Analysis

CA uses a great deal of challenging jargon to describe what is happening in a piece of talk. Technical language has the advantage of providing a shorthand way of describing complex phenomenon observed in conversation. However, it can render descriptions of the findings impenetrable. This is a disadvantage in research that is intended to inform professional practice. In the paper and in this resource we have attempted to minimise the use of technical terms and describe in everyday English what was observed, except where a technical term clearly adds to understanding.

The data covered many hours of mindfulness teaching. Unsurprisingly, we observed that mindfulness teachers do many things in an inquiry sequence including different forms of questioning, signalling affiliation and praise, and didactic teaching. Any one of these areas could be suitable for an extensive piece of research. In the transcripts in this online resource we have focused on:

- Providing further details on the material presented in the paper
- Providing some further examples that we think are of immediate practical relevance for practitioners (including questioning and turn taking, reformulation, signalling affiliation and establishing what is socially normative to talk about)
- Transcript one illustrates the analytic process by providing a line by line commentary and summary of key observations to illustrate the process of our conversation analysis and our observations on how institutional tasks are being achieved and the conversational means the teacher uses to achieve them
- Transcripts two, three and four have limited commentary that, rather than giving a line by line account of the transcripts, highlights examples of some of the key conversational actions we observed teachers performing in order to achieve key institutional tasks of teaching mindfulness-based courses.

Transcripts and commentary

Example Sequence One – Organising conversation to address institutional aims of noticing and describing the ordinary

This example is from an inquiry sequence during week two of an MBCT course where the teacher is asking the participants about their experience of the body scan practice at the beginning of the session. In this extract we provide a line by line commentary and summary of key observations to illustrate the process of our conversational analysis as it evolves on a line by line basis.

This sequence exemplifies some key conversational patterns we observed. By the end of this series of turns the teacher’s talk has clearly established that the socially normative thing to do in this context for participants is to comply with teacher questioning, with responses that display evidence of good noticing of the subjective experience of ordinary experiences such as sleepiness or physical tightness.

		Transcript	Observations
1	T	What did you notice? What did you notice about this body scan? (.) This one(.)You know, it doesn't have to be a big (.) theory about it (2) just what (.) struck you? Maybe something small.	<p>Notice the pauses – this question is slow, with long pauses – it goes beyond conversational questioning tone and displays an intimate and somewhat exaggerated degree of curiosity.</p> <p>Note the repetition of `notice`.</p> <p>Note the encouragement to limit responses to describing the recent experience of the body scan - signalled in the long pause and re-emphasised `this one' which has the effect of encouraging talk about the recent experience of 'this' body scan. It encourages talk about the recent past not talk about the week or evaluative talk about how well the task was performed.</p>

2	P1	(4.) I didn't sleep as much °as I do at ho[me°	The respondent offers a comparative difference with body scans at home. Her reply follows long silence in the group after which she self-selects to speak. Her speech is tentative and quiet.
3	T	m? ((laughter)) (.) Didn't you? so what um: [Mmmm er: you did a little sleeping? [Did you have...?	Note the very elongated mmmm with its rising tone that signals strong curiosity about what is superficially a mundane response. Note the laughter which again signals significance to the mundane report about sleep. Note the teacher does not respond to the issue of sleeping more at home but inquires about sleeping that occurred in the practice - which is only inferred by the participant's reference to sleeping less than at home. This is a subtle reformulation of participant's report that deletes reference to longer sleeping at home and designates the inferred sleep that happened in the session as the object of interest. Note also the teacher is strongly projecting for agreement that it would be socially normative to focus on this topic in this context. Teacher talk here is performing a wider task of establishing the socially normative themes for conversation and conversational task for both the participant and the group.
4	P1	[Yeah, I definitely drifted off but not only as much.	The participant complies and offers the requested information.
5	T	Okay. Okay. Did you notice kind of when (.) and how that (.) was there a kind of a rhythm to it did you come and go or (.)	Note the falling intonation at the end of each okay. This has the effect of validating what the participant has said and the teacher then immediately directs the conversation to the task of describing a recent prior experience (the body scan). The conversational focus is mostly not about present moment experience, but about recollections of direct experience within meditation practices that have just been carried out. Participants are co-constructing these

			<p>memories/accounts of a recent experience. This is oriented to by the teacher inviting the participants to describe specific aspects of recent experience (she lists qualities that might have been remembered). This question strongly projects for an answer. It is now strongly established in these teacher-participant turns that the socially normative responses are limited to describing very recent experience of the previous practice. The participant would have to actively break these limits to change the conversational direction. Note also the teacher's pauses. This slows the pace and signals a social norm in this context for considering the apparently ordinary in an unhurried way.</p>
6	P1	Kinda came and (.) went, you know in a kinda random, kinda (.)	Participant complies and provides description of her more recent experience (albeit with limited detail)
7	T	Okay. And any particular part of the body (.) "that you remember"	Teacher again validates and seeks more specific detail signalling that the socially normative response in this context is to talk about specific detail of recent experience. Note the quieter 'that you remember' which signals affiliation and close interest.
8	P1	Usually it stops (.) I usually drift off around here.	Participant provides more specific information
9	T	Okay, on both (.) [on both sides	Teacher continues to validate and request further detail – the request for 'detail' here is a request to specify the precise bodily part where the attention/awareness drift. Note the conversation has moved from a discussion about the fact that more sleep occurred at home to a discussion on the recent experience of sleep which is in line with the institutional tasks of the class. Note this has been achieved rapidly, partly by signifying this superficially ordinary topic as an important one

			to explore, by the use of an affiliative tone and by sustained signals of curiosity. The teacher here uses questions that project for specificity.
10	P1	[Yeah, there's usually a big gap in the middle.	Participant responds to the request for specificity by displaying greater specificity than before.
11	T	Okay (.) so you've kind of (.) you have legs laughter=	Note further encouragement to specificity followed by affiliative laughter. This has the effect of inducing laughter from the whole group.
12	Group	Laughter by whole group and inaudible speech by another participant.	Affiliative laughter
13	P1	laughter Yeah	
14	T	=And then (.) when did it come back?	Further request for specificity (timing this time rather than location), further displays that this kind of detailed describing is the socially normative conversational material for this setting.
15	P1	It usually comes round the head=	
16	T	=Oh, interesting?	Again an example of a rapidly provided signal that this kind of detail is of some significance. Note the rising tone signalling a degree of interest that may seem exaggerated in other contexts. This has the effect of eliciting further speech on this topic from the participant.
17	P1	And what you said this morning about there's a word yours was 'gentle', mine is 'jaw', when she says 'jaw', I kind of bailed out laughter	The participant now begins to provide more elaborate observations of her process (and makes reference to an earlier conversation).
18	T	Ah:? Jaw:? That's interesting? (.) Does this	Teacher continues to signal engaged and exaggerated curiosity and continues to request specific information about

		happen (.) was this unique to this time or...?	the participant's observation of subjective experience – this time she mentions frequency of occurrence encouraging description of any pattern noticed.
19	P1	U: no, no that's happened on more than one occasion.	The participant orients her response towards the teacher and starts to describe overall patterns of her experience (in this instance frequency of occurrence).
20	T	So how was that (.) Really good noticing of precision here. What was that? How did that feel?	Notice here the teacher makes an explicit positive appraisal of the participant's skills in noticing with precision and orientating the participants turn back towards the most recent experience rather than general patterns. In this utterance the teacher is explicitly signalling the socially normative types of talk that are required in this context.
21	P1	I kind of go off in my head because I've been carrying a lot of tension in my jaw for (.) a good six months. So that makes me kind of go oo: It's connected to that and that starts my mind thinking about it rather than...	Notice here the participant provides a detailed observation of experience of her mind being taken away from the present moment in response to thinking activated by an association with the word 'jaw'. See the teacher's reformulation in her next utterance.
22	T	So you hear the word 'jaw' and you're brought back to 'jaw' and then the thought comes in about all the tense stuff that's going on (.) So the jaw is tense is it? when you come back to it or not?	Notice this reformulation. The teacher ostensibly repeats the description given by the participant but edits and organizes the content in a way that is more consistent with the institutional aim of seeking to support the class to develop precision in noticing subjective experience. The teacher lists and organizes the participant's description into a coherent sequential process which displays to the whole group a highly refined way of describing subjective experiences and the relationships between one experience and the next.
23	P1	Ye:: to a degree but not as much as it has been.	Participant provides a comparison with previous experience in this response.

24	T	okay. okay. What happens (.) this might be a crazy question but what happens when (1.0) you hear the word 'jaw' and you come to the jaw (.) what happens to tightness and looseness (.) what do you notice at that point (.) Is it tight?	Notice here the teacher responds to the participant's last response by returning to a request that the participant describe specifics of the recent practice. The teacher inquires about a more complex level of noticing – noticing the effect of paying attention to the tightness in the jaw. Notice how the question is described as 'crazy' signifying it as different to previous questions. It has the function of requesting permission to request something unusual without breaking the rapport between teacher and participant. Throughout these turns there seems to be a very subtle pulling and pushing here: the participant seems to be trying to make a general observation about common occurrence (class vs home; what 'usually' happens in the body scan generally) whereas the teacher is trying to pull her descriptions back to the body scan they have just done. Compare lines 14 ('when did it come back') and 15 ('it usually comes') for an illustration of this.
25	P1	I don't know	Participant signals she is unable to provide the requested information.
26	T	=Okay, yeah. Invite you since it seems to be um a familiar thing for [you=	This has the effect of changing teacher behaviour and the teacher discontinues her questioning. The teacher validates the participant with an affiliative 'okay yeah' and shifts from questioning to assigning the participant the task of continuing the practice of noticing in the way that has been demonstrated in the turn taking questioning and answering.
27	P1	[Yeah	Affiliative agreement
28	T	=to play with that, notice what happens when you've brought your attention to (.)this before it's gone-off into a thought	

29	P1	=Yeah	Affiliative agreement
30	T	=Yeah, lovely. Really good noticing. Thank you, thank you (.) Anyone else noticed anything?	Teacher ends this series of turns with validation of the participant's performance and an appraisal that she has excelled the institutionally valued task of 'really good noticing'.

By the end of this series of turns the teacher's talk has clearly established that the socially normative thing for participants to do in this context is to comply with teacher questioning and talk in turns that display evidence of good noticing of the subjective experience of the most mundane experience such as sleepiness or physical tightness. In particular we can observe:

- A pattern whereby the teacher asks questions and a participant self-selects to respond is established as the socially normative pattern of turn taking.
- The teacher's questions signal socially normative responses are subjective description about the recent experience of the practice and designate the apparently mundane as an important topic (note the teacher does not seek present moment description of what is happening now or seek descriptions of special or extraordinary experiences). Throughout these turns there seems to be a very subtle pulling and pushing: the participant often seems to be trying to make a general observation about common occurrence (class vs home; what 'usually' happens in the body scan generally) whereas the teacher is trying to pull her descriptions back to the body scan they have just done. Compare lines 14 ('when did it come back') and 15 ('it usually comes') for an illustration of this.
- The teacher shapes the responses from the participants by reformulating the participant's responses. This has the effect of further narrowing the range of socially normative responses the participant can give but without disturbing the collaborative turn taking that a more direct challenge might result in. In response the participant makes small 'repairs' or adjustments to make her turn better fit with the conversational direction indicated by the teachers.
- Teacher talk is accompanied by laughs and minimal reinforcement tokens (small sounds that signal 'I am listening' and 'go on') that have the effect of developing and sustaining affiliation. Overall the style of turn taking created is collaborative and affiliative.
- The teacher displays exaggerated curiosity signalling strongly that there is something significant about small apparently mundane aspects of the participant's subjective experience.

- The teacher does not digress but is highly faithful to the task of co-constructing a conversation about description of recent experience of the practice. The teacher leads this task.
- The teacher continues to use brief reformulations to direct the conversational flow.
- The teacher displays that it is socially normative in the group to respond to turns with humour.
- After a series of question and answer turns the teacher gives an extended reformulation that organizes the participant's responses into a learning point for the whole group. We observed this pattern often in inquiry sequences. This pattern has also been observed in CA research into teaching, medicine and other institutional settings where an institutional speaker asks a question, a participant replies, and the teacher reformulates the answer given to better fit the institutional aims.
- Reformulation in this inquiry sequence serves multiple conversational functions including displaying the key learning points to the group, displaying a form of speech for describing experience, designating what is the socially normative focus for the conversation, displaying inter-subjective awareness ('I hear you', 'I understand you').
- The descriptions of subjective experience by participants are appraised and praised by the teacher. This signals that this is an important conversational competency for participants to display in this context which will be met with teacher praise.
- The teacher determines the end point for the series of turns of questions and answers (a pattern observed in many inquiries we analysed).
- By the end of this series of turns the teacher's talk has established that the socially normative thing to do in this context is for participants to display evidence of 'good noticing' by describing the subjective experience such as sleepiness or physical tightness.
- A general principle is that teacher talk signals affiliation and contains positive appraisals of participant's displays of 'good noticing'.

Example Sequence Two – A Teacher organising conversation to address institutional aims of noticing and describing the apparently ordinary aspects of subjective experience

This example from week two following a body scan is analysed within the article. The sequence here is longer, includes discourse between samples quoted in the article and shows further examples of a teacher setting up a question and answer turn taking pattern where a reformulation or didactic teaching point takes place on the third turn. The sequence also includes further examples of a teacher signalling affiliation and establishing that the conversational aim is to describe subjective experience. The commentary here is limited to the main observations highlighted in the article.

1	T	s:::o (.) what did you experience what did you notice in that, in that practice(.)let's start off just by(.)just perhaps sharing little snippets little little words or or different parts of your experience, so just ⁰ you know wha wha wha different things did you notice in that ⁰	The teacher's requests descriptions of what was noticed in the practice. Her approach, is warm and affiliative in tone (inviting 'little snippets' and communicating that any aspect of experience can be shared). Simultaneously however, the teacher limits the type of preferred range of possible responses and specifically directs participants to talk about their observations of the recent experience of the practice as opposed to, for example asking an evaluative question like 'how well did you manage that?' There is an invitation for small amounts of input from lots of participants
2	P1	I think it is easier to focus it <u>here</u> in the class than [it is at home	When the participant offers a second turn that is an evaluative, comparative response. Notice also that the a participant (lines 2-6) offers an extended description whereas the teacher has asked for 'little snippets little little words' . The teacher tries to turn this extended turn into a 'little snippet' (ease, of focus). The teacher also talks over the participant and rather than responding directly to the evaluative aspect of the talk she mirrors what the participant says but makes a subtle amendment that places emphasis on the participant's current subjective experience ('easier' becomes an emphasised 'ease'). This reformulation does two things. First it is affiliative, the mirroring of the participants own words with slight, but significant, modification is actually a correction that
3	T	[So you noticed you noticed [ea::se of focus	
4	multiple P's	[yes	
5	T	you <u>all</u> noticed that	
6	Multiple P's	Yes	

			rejects the participant's offered focus while at the same time communicates warmth and non-judgement rather than challenge. Second, it successfully achieves general agreement (note the confirming multiple participant 'yes' that description of the process (rather than content) of present moment subjective experience is the topic for discussion. The teacher then broadens the reformulation to the whole by giving emphasis to 'all' (opening the conversation back out for others to add little snippets).
7	T	Okay	
8	T	ea:sier to focus [right	
9	P2	[I think it is getting easier	
10		(1.0)	
11	T	getting [easier	
13	P2	[to er stay with it here [in the class	
14	T	[getting easier to stay with it [yeah	
15	Multip le P's	[mmm yeah ()	
16	P3	[I'm I'm I'm finding the opposite (.) still=	
17	T	=right=	
18	P3	=I'm finding it <u>very</u> difficult [still	
19		[<u>very</u> difficult	
20	P3	yeh [(laughter))	
21	T	[sure sure .hh so leh can we explore a little bit abou about it being difficult .h so ↑wha do you notice when you do the practice (.) what actually happens=	Notice that the teacher has taken a 'snippet' ('very difficult') as an object of inquiry. This teacher turn redirects the participant's conversational focus back to the task of

			describing specific experience rather than evaluating performance at doing the practice.
22	P3	=I just to:tally relax [an:d	
23	T	[right	
24	P3	well I find it very difficult to stay awake	
25	T	Sure	
26	P3	and I I you [know	
27	T	[so nods there so [so also difficult to stay awake yeah=	
28	Multiple P's	[((laughter))	
29	P3	[=and also I I I'm thinking the most <u>bizarre</u> things as [I'm	
30	T	[right	
31	P3	down there you [know	
32	T	[right	
33	P3	listening to your voice and [trying	
34	T	[right	
35	P3	to focus on what you're saying=	
36	T	=sure	
37	P3	=and my ↑mind is just going to the most <u>bizarre</u> things [that	
38	T	[right	
39	P3	that you know	
40	T	so do the others of you find that d'you d'you find that your mind (.) moves <u>awa:y</u> from where you are in the body [<u>yes</u>	Notice this reformulation – the teacher repackages what the participant has said to fit institutional teaching aims and also uses the act of reformulating to shift from individual inquiry to the wider group.
41	P1	[it does wander	
42	T	[it wanders	

43	P1	[yes it does wander	
44	T	↑Jenny does [↑yours	
45	P2	[a little=	
46		=a little=	
47		=but not so much I think the hardest part of doing it all week=	Notice the participant provides an evaluation of her experience and a comparison with her experience in the week – see how the teacher meets this below.
48	T	=yes=	
49	P2	=is actually [staying	
50	T	[so I'm	
51	P2	Awake	
52	T	↓okay (.) so we're going to stay with <u>this</u> practice it is very tempting to go back into [the week	Notice how directive this is – it is in effect a statement of the socially normative types of response that `we' (the group) will be adhering to (i.e. discussion of this practice, not other practice and not evaluating how hard it is in the week).
53	P2	[ah oh [right	
54	T	[so lets just for now we'll stay with this practice and then we'll go back to the week so with <u>this</u> practice you noticed that your your mind went into bizarre places=	Notice the emphatic restatement of where the focus of the conversation will be. As well as subtle redirection and reformulation teachers give emphatic instruction.
55	P3	=yeh it did it was almost like I know I wasn't asleep=	
56	T	=no=	
57	P3	=because I was very aware of your voice=	
58	T	=okay=	
59	P3	=I could hear it all the time	
60	T	Okay	
61	P3	but it was it was almost like a dre:am you [know	
62	T	[right	
63	P3	you are sort of ((laughter))like and I	

		[thought	
64	T	[right	
65	P3	cor `↑why am I thinking like that' you know 'focus or something', ((laughter))very very strange	
66		so so I mean one of the things that that I'd love to ask you is (.) did you did you know mind did you know your mind did that (1.0)	
67	P3	[erm	
68	T	[did you know that your mind	
69	P3	[my mind	
70	T	[can be focused on one thing=	
71	P3	=yeh=	
72	T	=and can also drift of to all these bizarre thoughts	
73	P3	well I I'm not awa' I'm I never really thought about it [to be honest ()	
74	T	[you neve' so you <u>weren't</u> aware of it before	
75	P3	<u>no</u> (.)because it's er it's just how you are isn't it you don't [know any different	
76	T	[↑ <u>well</u> (.) that's right and I guess mostly we're just in automatic	
77	P3	[yeh	
78	T	[so we are not <u>aware</u> of this mind that wanders (.)what you are describing is compl::etely normal and it is what we <u>all</u> do (.)it's what exactly what we <u>all</u> do (.) but what's interesting is that you're aware of it now	The teacher and participant have gone through a sequence 'unpacking' the way that the participant's attention was carried into streams of thinking that the participant experienced as 'bizarre'. The teacher here is ending this teaching sequence by making a third turn that includes a shift into the pronoun 'we' and the declarative teaching point that what has been unpacked with this participant is what all participants will experience. Notice that this is very definite and not at all tentative or propositional. Notice also the

			transition from inquiry with one participant to direct teaching to the group. Notice also the teaching point to the group that it is not that subjective experiences occur, but the noticing of these experiences that is the task of the group.
79	P3	Yeh	
80	T	so there you are you you didn't drift off to those places did you	
81	P3	No	
82	T	they kin' of it sounds like kind of came an' went	
83	P3	Yeh	
84	T	so up came this bizarre [thought	
85	P3	[mmm	
86	T	and then (.)it sounded from what you said that there was like a (.) a sort of commen↑tary on it like 'what am I thinking ↑that for'	
87	P3	yeh ((laughter))	
88	T	↑yes(.) ((laughter))[↓yes	
89	P3	(.) [go back to what we are doing((laughter))=	
90	T	>go back to what we are doing< so that's interesting as <u>well</u> that there is some is there a bit of judgement in that ' <u>come back</u> ' (.)is ↑ <u>there</u>	
91	P3	Yes	
92	T	there's a bit of judgement=	
93	P1	=you're here to do this((laughter))	
94	T	so you are here to do that [right	
95	P1	[yeh yeh	
96	T	so that <u>again</u> is interesting so we're focused on a place in the body and we're we're	Notice this use of the pronoun 'we' again stating that the participant's experience is universal.

		exploring that experience and the mind hops away (.) righ' it jumps of and it gets into all these <u>bizarre</u> things (.) right, no rhyme or reason to different thoughts that just ↑yeah [anything can come up	
97	P3	[yeh <u>really</u> totally random things=	
98	T	=totally random things .h and <u>then</u> there's a judgement	
99	P3	yes	
100	T	Yes	
101	P3	[very much so	
102	T	[so in comes the mind that goes <u>m m m m</u> [is that right	
103	P3	[Yeh yes	
104	T	shouldn't be doing this=	
105	P3	=yeh=	
106	T	=yeh <u>how</u> does it go	
107	P3	it just says >'oh for goodness sake what are you doing' sort of thing<=	
108	T	'=for goodness sake what are you doing'	
109	P3	Yeh	
110	T	and <u>then</u> what [what happens then	
111	P3	[and then 'just <u>focus</u> ' and then so	
112	T	[' <u>just focus</u> '	
113	P3	[and and then I do and then it ↑goes again	
114	T	and then it goes again	
115	P3	and then (.)the voice comes back [and you know	
116	T	[right right right so this is familiar to everybody ((laughter))	Notice this statement about the universality of the experiences is a small reformulation and a piece of declarative teaching. One conversational effect is that it

			punctuates an individual inquiry and enables the teacher to enact her privileged role as the person that can decide to shift from inquiry with one individual to a more didactic teaching sequence with the whole group. By this shift in focus the teacher achieves the transition smoothly.
117	Multiple P's	[Yeh yeh ((laughter))	
118	T	[certainly familiar to me and and you know you know what's (.) <u>this</u> is the practice (.) <u>this</u> is the practice (.) the practice is <u>not</u> to imagine ...	Notice this strong declarative statement – there is absolutely no guided discovery or tentative exploration here – participants are unambiguously told what `practice' is. This type of teaching is very common and seems to be used conversationally by teachers after reformulation or a series on turns on an inquiry to provide unambiguous declarative teaching. This type of direct statement about what practice is often occurs as a punctuation or termination of one sequence of teaching and has the conversational effect of ending group discussion of subjective experience. It's not usually met with a further turn by participants but generally leads to the teacher introducing the next teaching sequence.

In this series of turn we see the teacher:

- Repeatedly taking responses from an individual and using reformulations and shifts to personal pronouns such as `we' and `all' to extend the conversation horizontally across the group and indicate the universality of the experiences the participant describes.
- Firmly establishing that the socially normative focus for conversation is describing subjective experience of the recent practice.

- Teaching through emphatic statements about what is and what isn't practice. These statements follow on from turn taking between teacher and a single participant in which the participant is 'coached' to describe subjective experience in the process of inquiry.
- Signalling warmth and affiliation.

Example Sequence Three – A teacher establishes the pattern of turn taking and starts to establish that the conversational task is to describe subjective experience.

This sequence is the first inquiry following a body scan meditation in session one. The teacher sets up a conversational pattern whereby she questions and participants answer (establishing conversational privileges from the outset) and starts to establish that in this context the socially normative type of response from participants is to describe subjective experience and the experience of noticing. The commentary here is limited to noting examples of key conversational processes identified in the research.

	T	so: just having some feedback from that into the bigger group so, what did people notice, in that body scan °that we did°	
	Group	(cough) (cough cough)	
	S1	Aches and pa::ins	
	T	Aches and pa::ins	Notice the mirroring (in particular of the extended `pains`) is a display of inter-subjective awareness - the teacher repeats/mirrors/echoes the participants' words and emphasizes them. This kind of mirroring might be a display of empathy but from a CA perspective we need to be wary of reading intention into this kind of speech act.
	S1	°m°	
	T	m::: m: (.) and where did you notice the aches and pains	
	S1	oh:: [(laughter)]	

	T	[lots of aches and pains=	
	S1	=quite a few, yes	
	T	>quite a few<	
	S1	that- when I- we focused >on the kn-<, I know I have a pa-problem in this knee	
	T	>okay<	
	S1	an- it wasn't hurting before but when we focused on it it started hurting quite a bit (.) s[o to ease it but yeh= [()	
	T1	[ah:: =m:: and wha-[what (.) what happened next so having <u>no</u> :ticed those [() bits	
	S1	[yeh	
	T1	what happened then when you noticed "oo: this is painful,"	Notice that the teacher is balancing validating the patients experience by mirroring her and adopting a sympathetic tone with extended vowel sounds (oo) and moving the teaching task forward by continuing to enquire about what was noticed. The teacher is using reported speech ("Oo this is painful") which again might be 'doing' empathy - imaginatively putting themselves in the participants' shoes.
	S2	er:m (.) er- (.) then just let it go, when- when [you said "let it go"	
	T	[right	

	T	<p>ah so that's interesting >you you noticed the pain but actually were able to move away from, ye:ah [thank you yeah</p>	<p>This is a reformulation – the teacher summarises and designates the noticing, rather than the pain, as the object of interest.</p> <p>Notice also that the effect of the participant's turn is on the teacher - i.e. it prompts the teacher to signal the end of this inquiry with a thank you.</p>
	S1	<p>[yeah yeah [yeah</p>	

Example Sequence Four –A teacher supports a participant to talk about the experience of having thoughts.

Part of this sequence from session four of an MBCT course is quoted in the paper. Here a teacher and student have a conversation about the experience of having thoughts. Notice the use of a reformulation by the teacher to achieve the institutional aim of the course (supporting the participant to develop ability in recognising and describing her experience). The commentary here is limited to noting examples of key conversational processes identified in the research.

1	S	I didn't want to come out of that space in between the thoughts	
2	T	°m:: m:: °	
3	S	when you said "thinking thoughts" I wn- (.) "I don't wanna go there"	
4	T	when I invited you to [bring thoughts to mind=	
5	S	[m:: to yr yeah yeah	
6	T	=and to [focus on a thought	
7	S	[m::	
8	S	in fact, almost a little bit of resistance "oh <u>please</u> no"	
9		(.)	
10	T	so that's a thought	Notice that this is a reformulation. The teacher has not joined the participant in discussing the theme of 'resistance' but has

			offered back a paired down description of the participant's process.
11		(.)	
12	S	k- and that's when it STA::RTed [COming ba:ck	
13	S2	[((laughter))	
14	S	[yeh	
15	T	[yeah yeah:	
16		(4.0)	
17	T	is there a sense that there can be a flo:w	
18		(5.0)	
19	S	tk .hhh there wa:s flow obviously there, wa:s a flow becos <u>th</u> :inking started again (2.0) I just wanted to be left in my spa:ce °I think°	
20		(1.0)	
21	T	I think that's a-a a thought that many of us have (.) u::m (.) but I need to underscore again that we're not getting rid of the thoughts	Notice that following the series of turns unpacking the subjective experience of noticing thoughts this teacher reformulates and then extends to offer some didactic teaching (an example of a third turn)
22	S	Nuh	
23		(.)	

24	T	we're (.) seeing if we can touch into that (.) spaciousness that is underneath the thought it's underneath the sounds it's underneath the sensations it's underneath everything that arises in our awareness (.) but the awareness is there, you know, you're not losing it	The teaching continues. It is characterised by definitive statements about the nature of awareness.
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Summary of key conversational processes

The table below summarises key observations about teacher conversational actions from the project and the institutional tasks they appear to support.

Conversational action	Possible institutional function
Asking general questions about what people in the group noticed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invites engagement and sets up a question and answer turn taking pattern. • Establishes the teacher as the questioner and the participants as respondents in this conversation.
Asking questions that project for specificity in describing experience recent prior experience (usually the most recent practice).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes that socially normative responses in this context are descriptions of specific experience. • Teaches the institutionally valued competency of being able to precisely describe/remember a recent prior experience (the most recent practice). Note this is not the same as being able to describe present moment experience. We don't tend to find teachers asking 'what is happening now?' in inquiry sequences.
Listing possible types of experience that may have been noticed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models the institutionally valued competency of being able to describe present moment experience with precision and reinforces this as the socially normative type of answer.
Brief Reformulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redirects conversation to the institutionally valued direction but without challenge that may disrupt the alliance or elicit disagreement. • Displays inter-subjective awareness (signals 'yes I understand your internal experience – so I understand you to be saying').
Extended reformulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarises participant answers into institutionally valued teaching points

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforces the role of the teacher as the lead organizer of the conversation. • Provides corrective feedback and refinement without direct challenge. • Re- establishes the institutionally valued direction for conversation.
Emphatic declarations - `this is the practice' and `this isn't the practice' or declarations that `this is what we are doing' or this is `the work.'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used after reformulation or inquiry to provide unambiguous declarative teaching. • Occurs as a punctuation or termination of one sequence of teaching and has the conversational effect of ending group discussion of subjective experience. • Not usually met with a further turn by participants.
Displays of affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward for institutionally valued types of response • Signals the institutionally valued style of the conversation (warm and gentle)
Displays of strong (what sounds conversationally like disproportionately strong or exaggerated) curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that even very mundane topics are a socially normative topic for detailed conversation.
Appraising and praising `good noticing'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signalling and rewarding the specific type of preferred responses.
Inviting participants to continue to explore a theme after the inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signals the end of the inquiry sequence • Re-emphasises the core task is to repeatedly practice noticing

Summary Practitioner Points

- Developing competence in leading mindfulness-based inquiry involves responding intuitively to the moment, combined with particular interactional skills.
- The interactional skills demonstrated by skilled mindfulness-based teachers can be observed as repeatedly occurring practices in sequences of conversation between the teacher and his/her participants. Recognising these conversational patterns may enable mindfulness-based teachers to develop their inquiry skills.
- Skilled mindfulness-based teachers display a refined capacity to use language to direct a single participant's attention to a specific aspect of their experience, and then to work collaboratively with the group to construct recognition of the universality of this experience.
- Key features of mindfulness can be seen in action during teacher-led inquiry in MBCT and MBSR classes: inquiry sequences have clear direction and purpose; teachers direct participants' attention towards their experience in a new way to stimulate curiosity; and there is a co-constructed atmosphere of affiliation.

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