3 March 2011 – Day 0
Location: ASB, Haslegaardsvej 10, room HG 120 – 14:00 – 16:00
*PRESENCE NOT REQUIRED*

Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods in Practice
With
Andrea Carugati, Århus School of Business

This will be an introductory day to the course of Qualitative Research Method in Practice. The purpose of day 0 is to plan the course with the students and to assign practical exercises in preparation to the course days 1-2-3. The course is aimed at providing practical skills in carrying out data collection and analysis with three advanced qualitative research methods: Document as Data, Analytical Ethnography, and Qualitative Interviews. Since the days 1, 2, and 3 will be based on data actually collected by the students in day 0 it will be distributed 1 assignment of data collection for each of the research methods in question so that the students will have feedback on their data collection quality as well as they will be able to work with their own data during the classes. Physical presence to this class is not required. The assignments will be posted online for the students to download. Furthermore the instructors will be available to answer emails related to data collection for the respective areas in the period 3 March – 16 March 2011.
Analytical ethnography as a method in management research

with

Joao Cunha, University Nova of Lisbon

This seminar introduces students to the use of ethnography in management and IT research. The focus is on adapting ethnographic techniques to research in settings where a significant part of people’s work and interaction is mediated by information technology. The seminar starts by positioning ethnography as a research tradition and then goes on to explore the impact of people’s use of IT to the use of this research method in organizations. Students will do some hands-on observation before class and will discuss their experiences in class. The process of writing ethnographic data will be discussed before the class finishes with an analysis of two papers using different approaches to ethnography in IS studies.

Content:
1) Introducing ethnography as an instance of practice theory (based on Barnes 2001).

1) Discuss how ethnography can be used to study IT-mediated work (based on Emerson et al. 1995):
   a. Using ethnography to study work
   b. The role of artifacts in ethnography
   c. The role of IT artifacts in corporate ethnography
   d. The challenge and opportunities of computer-mediated communication in corporate ethnographies

1) Conducting ethnographic observation. Students are required to complete an individual exercise of observation in computer-mediated work (assignment available from the instructor 10 days before class). (based on Spradley 1980)

1) Writing up a persuasive first draft of an analytical ethnography (Three first drafts of papers that received a revise and resubmit decision to be distributed directly to students).

1) Deconstructing two ethnographies in computer mediated work (based on Orlikowski, 1996 and an additional reading to be distributed directly to students).

REFERENCES
Coordination in action is hard to observe. A focus on the more tangible aspects of this work, namely documents, provides a useful lens into the work practices of organizational members in general, and those working in heterogeneous networks in particular. I define documents as typified and material communication, whether electronic, paper-based, wall mounted or set in stone, invoked in response to recurrent situations (Østerlund, 2008; Østerlund & Boland, 2009). Studying documents in work allows us to position people’s immediate activities and situated routines in their larger social and organizational context. As documents carry institutional structures and point to both past and future activities they open a window to larger organizational practices.

Content (required readings are boldfaced under references):

1. Introduction to document centric qualitative research
   a. The holy trinity of data collection methods: Documents/artifacts, Participant observation, Interview. (Geiger & Ribes, 2011; Latour & Woolgar, 1986; Østerlund, Sawyer, & Kazianus, 2010; Smith, 2005; Taylor, 1999)
   b. Student presentations: Introduce your Pre-Course Assignment (See attached)

2. Discussing the different phases of a document-centric research approach by comparing it to the seven phases of a research study. (Kvale, 1996) or for an overview see http://www.inside-installations.org/OCMT/mydocs/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Booksummary_Interviews_SMAK_2.pdf
   a. Thematizing
   b. Designing
      i. Instrumentation
   c. Mapping & tracking
   d. Using documents to structure interviews and participant observation
   e. Analyzing
   f. Verifying
   g. Reporting

3. Class Exercise – Design a document-centric study. Students will design a document-centric study related to their own dissertation research. We will discuss various techniques and approached to data gathering, analysis and verifying.

4. Deconstruct two document-centric studies (Østerlund, 2008; Suchman, 2000)
References  (required readings are boldfaced):


A day-long seminar will introduce students to different types of grounded theory methods popular in IS research. Starting with an acknowledgement that grounded theory will be heavily shaped by researcher’s paradigm, the seminar will focus on how different approaches will fit different paradigms. We will also discuss how different types of grounded theory studies can convince readers of their validity and authenticity. Finally, students will be asked to deconstruct two GT studies.

Content (required readings are boldfaced)

1) Introduce the concept of interpretive research tradition and how it differs from positivist research tradition.  (Summary of Burrell & Morgan: http://faculty.babson.edu/krollag/org_site/org_theory/Scott_articles/burrell_morgan.html). Supplementary readings in this tradition are: (Amis et al. 2008; Burrell et al. 1979)

2) Discuss how qualitative research can be conducted within either positivist or interpretive tradition but for different purposes. Say a few words about critical theorizing as a common tradition in interpretive research. Distinguish four different rhetoric approaches to qualitative research (Walsham 1995):
   a. qualitative approach as exploratory precursor to quantitative method use
   b. qualitative approach as a complementary approach used together with quantitative methods
   c. qualitative approach as being particularly suited for certain phenomenon (e.g., where interpretation of the events by the participants is particularly important)
   d. qualitative research rooted in strong interpretive tradition should replace quantitative research routine in positivist tradition (because all knowledge is contextually-situated and subjective)


4) Writing up grounded theory in a convincing way. Supplementary Reading for this is (Golden-Biddle et al. 1993).

References:


Biography of the Lecturers

Andrea Carugati is Associate Professor at the Århus School of Business, Århus University. He holds a PhD from the Danish Technical University. His research interests revolve around the use of IT in organizations with special focus on the deviating behaviors afforded by the use of IT. He uses regularly qualitative research methods and at times mixed qualitative-quantitative methods. His research has been published, among others, in the European Journal of Information Systems, Electronic Markets, Database for Advances in Information Systems, and conferences like ICIS, AoM, and EGOS. For the time being his focus is on the issue of IT as a modernization engine for conservative sectors. Cases under study involve the use of technology in agribusiness and in nursing homes.

Carsten Østerlund is Associate Professor at the iSchool, Syracuse University. He holds a PhD from the Sloan School of Management at MIT. His research Interests involve the organizational implications of information systems and technology, the organization, creation, and use of documents in distributed, mobile and virtual work environments, the spatial tracking devises in healthcare settings, and organizational learning and knowledge. He has published research work in, among others: the Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems, Computer Supported Cooperative Work, Journal of Management of Information Systems, and with Paul Carlile in The Information Society in 2005. He is currently involved in a variety of projects including: The role of documents in distributed care for youth with chronic diseases as they transition into adult care: HealthyTransition institute – in collaboration with Upstate Medical University. (www.HealthyTransitionsNY.org); and Indoor spatial tracking systems for healthcare settings in collaboration with Cefkin at IBM Research Almaden.

Joao Vieira da Cunha is an assistant professor in management and information systems at the School of Management and Economics of the Universidade Nova in Lisbon. He holds a PhD from the Sloan School of Management at MIT. His research focuses on unprescribed work practices in organizations and the role of information systems therein. His research has been published in leading international journals such as the Academy of Management Review, Information and Organization, Human Relations and the Journal of Management Studies. He is on the editorial teams of journals in the fields of management and of information systems. In 2010 he co-organized the EGOS Colloquium — the largest European conference in organization studies.

Natalia Levina is Associate Professor at the Stern Business School at New York University. She holds a PhD from the Sloan School of Management at MIT. Her research interests revolve around issues of outsourcing where she focuses in particular on cultural problems and knowledge dynamics. Her research has been published on prestigious journals like Academy of Management Journal, MIS Quarterly, ISR, in multiple occasions. She has also published at ICIS, AoM, and EGOS. She is considered one of the leading experts in Grounded Theory Methodology.