

## Angouri, Jo

### Managing disagreement in meeting talk at the multinational corporate workplace

- Presentation 45 mins -

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#### Abstract

The meeting is a central communicative event in corporate white collar workplace environments and has been identified as the microcosm of an organisation's communication. Its importance and frequency is commonly agreed among researchers studying the workplace from any perspective. However, meeting *talk* is still under-researched. This paper draws on real life data from two multinational companies in Europe. Special attention is paid to the ways in which meeting participants manage disagreement in meeting talk. Confrontational disagreement is typically rare in workplace talk and interactants pay special attention to the face needs of their interlocutors (Holmes and Stubbe 2003). However in a broader sense, disagreement (i.e. opposing views) is often a "necessary part of the process of reaching agreement" (Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris, 1997:193) in a meeting. Research has also shown how disagreement can be used to create intimacy and similarly Georgakopoulou (2001: 1897) has suggested that "the occurrence of disagreements does not seem to pose a threat to the participants' relation" in her data. My research shows that the enactment of disagreement is related to the norms of different groups and hence in this paper I discuss how disagreement is managed in different teams in the multinational corporate world. The paper closes by problematising the operationalisation of concepts such as culture, cultural difference and cultural conflict in the context of the multinational corporate workplace

#### Learning outcomes for participants

- Insights into the 'interactional turn' in organizational communication
- Knowledge of findings of current research in meeting talk
- Developing ways of accessing and using research data for designing training materials

#### Profile

Jo Angouri is a Senior Lecturer at the University of the West of England, UK. Jo's areas of research specialisation are sociopragmatics and discourse analysis. Her research focus is language in the workplace. Jo has published work on meeting talk, workplace written discourse and (foreign) language use and language policy in the corporate workplace. Her work includes a comparative analysis of discourse in business meetings. Jo is a core network member on the ESRC funded Discourse Analysis Network.