

**RT 1.1 CNRS/UNIVERSITÉ  
LYON 2**  
LANGUAGE DYNAMICS AND THE  
MANAGEMENT OF DIVERSITY IN  
MEETING INTERACTIONS WITHIN  
A MULTINATIONAL COMPANY

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This working paper sketches some of the scientific activities of the Lyon's team during the period from October 2007 to March 2008. I offers first a reminder of the research task RT 1.1., focused on the interactional organization of plurilingual resources for the achievement of professional tasks in meetings and other work encounters, and of the theoretical positions adopted by the team, inspired by conversation analysis and interactional linguistics. In order to illustrate the way in which data are gathered in fieldwork and treated through their transcription and their analysis, the paper focuses on a single case analysis, dealing with an extended sequence of laughter in a professional meeting. This analysis is introduced by a presentation of the ethnographic context in which the excerpt has been recorded - an international meeting of the european branches of a multinational company. It is then developed in detail, showing the delicate intricacy of interaction, emergence of laughter and participants' orientation towards relevant ethnic and linguistic categorization of present and absent parties. In this way, a detailed analysis of a laughter episode casts light both on the way in which the categorization of persons (as foreigners, as belonging to this or that culture and language, as being non natives, etc.) is invoked in interaction and on the way in which other's language can be dealt with as "foreigner", "stranger", "funny". The working paper concludes by providing some hints for further investigations and more general topics and by making a synthesis of the work done on the various corpora of data currently under scrutiny, as well as the work to be done in the next months.