meaning is social networks 2

essays and sketches

1. Read the assigned readings. The Goodwin papers will give you some background in conversational analyses - read them to think about what can be observed and what is significant in visualizing a conversation. David Small's paper will give you a very well designed approach to displaying large amounts of text. My paper on visualizing conversations provides overviews and critiques of several visualization projects and ideas about the social aspects of such visualizations.

2. Observe a real world conversation. This can be formal, e.g. a seminar discussion or informal, e.g. a party or casual gathering of people in an office, etc. Take notes - you will be using this as a starting point for the rest of the assignment. Some things you may wish to pay attention to are: arrivals and departures, greetings, changes in tone, verbal content, and the participants' location, gestures, & attention.

a. Make an abstract sketch of the conversation. Are you representing it as a narrative over time? Physical space? or a more conceptual notion of "space"? Are you depicting individual participants? Do not include any text. Think about Tufte's "Narratives in time and space".

b. Add words from the conversation. You may keep the same form as above or depart from it. How are you using the size and placement of the text? Would you want this text to be navigable? Are the words quotations? Names? Commentary?

3. Observe an online conversation. Go back and do steps a and b for this conversation.