Writing up your interview field notes

For Project 1
Due January 15, 2007

What we want to know

• What representations of time exist in the cognitive ecology of time keeping and time management?
• What cognitive processes and cultural practices are required to:
  – Interact with a temporal representation productively (e.g., read a clock or a schedule; make inferences based on that reading)
  – Set up the representation so that the information is useful (e.g., constructing a day planner, setting your VCR clock)
• What cognitive activities do these representations support? Planning, decision making, inference, etc.
  – Do I have time to…?
  – When should I do X?
  – Should I eat this?

Conducting an interview

• Prepare your questions in advance.
• Use them to organize your activity.
• Make it easy for your informant to tell you what you want to know.
• Be ready to abandon some of your questions if they are shown to be irrelevant.
• Be ready to discover new questions – listen carefully to your informant.

Taking field notes

• Who, what, where, when, how?
• Your description of the event.
• Doing two things at once
  – Conducting an interview
  – Recording it in field notes

Writing up your field notes

• Review
  – Re-read and use your memory to fill in details that you did not have time to record.
• Synthesize
  – How do the parts fit together?
• Reflect
  – What did you learn? What can you say now about the cognitive ecology of time keeping that you could not say before?
• Critique
  – How well did your questions work?
  – If you could do the project over again, what would you do differently to produce a better result?

What to turn in on Tuesday Jan 15

1. Your original questions
2. Rough notes that you took during the interview
3. 1-2 page observation about the cognitive ecology of time keeping of the person you interviewed based on the data you collected
4. One page reflection on method: what would have made the interview procedure more effective?