Laughter in Interaction

Laughter in Interaction is an illuminating and lively account of how and why people laugh during conversation. Bringing together twenty-five years of research on the sequential organization of laughter in everyday talk, Glenn analyzes recordings and transcripts to show the finely detailed coordination of human laughter. He demonstrates that its production and placement, relative to talk and other activities, reveal much about its emergent meaning and accomplishments. The book shows how the participants in a conversation move from a single laugh to laughing together, how the matter of “who laughs first” implicates orientation to social activities, and how interactants work out whether laughs are more affiliative or hostile. The final chapter examines the contribution of laughter to sequences of conversational intimacy and play, and to the invocation of gender. Engaging and original, the book shows how this seemingly insignificant part of human communication turns out to play a highly significant role in how people display, respond to, and revise identities and relationships.

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Laughter in Interaction

PHILLIP GLENN
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Acknowledgments

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Chapter 3 reworks two previous publications. The multi-party interaction part appeared in *Western Journal of Speech Communication* (Glenn, 1989). The two-party discussion appeared in *Research on Language and Social Interaction* (Glenn, 1992). Chapter 5 on *laughing at* and *laughing with* is rewritten from an article that appeared in an edited volume of conversation analytic research (Glenn, 1995). Chapter 6 draws on an earlier conference paper, co-authored by Erica Hoffman and Robert Hopper (Glenn, Hoffman, and Hopper, 1996, March). An earlier version of parts of Chapter 6 appears as a chapter in a book (Glenn, 2003) and had an earlier incarnation as a conference paper (Glenn, 2000). The Car Talk from NPR excerpt (Chapter 6) is used with permission from hosts Tom and Ray Magliozzi, c 1997 Dewey, Cheetham & Howe, all rights reserved.

Transcript excerpts used in this book come from a variety of sources. Many are based on recordings I have collected myself or others have given me. These are designated by an identification code that marks collection, tape, and/or page, such as “UTCL AIO,” “SIU JM 99,” or “RAH II.” I either created these transcripts myself, or I revised them from originals by someone else. Where a transcript item is cited from a chapter or article by another author, I have included its source, and sometimes in those sources the authors provide additional locational data (e.g., GTS:I:1:14, 1965, in Jefferson, 1985, p. 28). I invite readers to contact me if interested in obtaining copies of any of my transcripts or recordings.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this book to the family that nurtures and sustains my spirit to laugh, especially my mother, Ethel Chappell Glenn; my uncle, Wallace Chappell; and my wife, Liliana Cirstea Glenn.
Transcription symbols


[ ] brackets indicate overlapping utterances.
= equal marks indicate contiguous utterances, or continuation of the same utterance to the next line.
(.) period within parentheses indicates micro pause.
(2.0) number within parentheses indicates pause of length in approximate seconds.
yes: colon indicates stretching of sound it follows.
yes. period indicates falling intonation.
yes, comma indicates relatively constant intonation.
yes? question mark indicates upward intonation.
yes! exclamation indicates animated tone.
yes- single dash indicates abrupt sound cutoff.
yes underlining indicates emphasis.
YES capital letters indicate increased volume.
"yes" degree marks indicate decreased volume of materials between.

hhh h indicates audible aspiration, possibly laughter.
• hhh raised, preceding period indicates inbreath audible aspiration, possibly laughter.

ye(hh)s h within parentheses indicate within-speech aspiration, possibly laughter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>((cough))</td>
<td>items within double parentheses indicate some sound or feature of the talk which is not easily transcribable, e.g. “((in falsetto)).”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(yes)</td>
<td>parentheses indicate transcriber doubt about hearing of passage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑yes</td>
<td>upward arrow indicates rising intonation of sound it precedes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓yes</td>
<td>downward arrow indicates falling intonation of sound it precedes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£yes£</td>
<td>pound signs indicate “smile voice” delivery of materials in between.</td>
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