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Conversation and Cognition

Written by some of the leading figures in the fields of conversation analysis, discursive psychology and ethnomethodology, this book looks at the challenging implications of new discourse-based approaches to the topic of cognition. Up to now, cognition has primarily been studied in experimental settings. This volume shows how cognition can be reworked using analyses of engaging examples of real life interaction such as conversations between friends, relationship counselling sessions and legal hearings. It includes an extended introduction that overviews the history and context of cognitive research and its basic assumptions to provide a frame for understanding the specific examples discussed, as well as surveying cutting edge debates about discourse and cognition. This comprehensive and accessible book opens up important new ways of understanding the relation between language and cognition.

HEDWIG TE MOLDER is a senior lecturer in Discourse Analysis in the Communication Science Section at Wageningen University, The Netherlands. She has published on a number of topics including government communicators' talk, online interaction and discourse on food choice.

JONATHAN POTTER is Professor of Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences Department at Loughborough University, UK. He has published eight books, including *Discourse and Social Psychology* (with Margaret Wetherell, 1987), more than forty book chapters and sixty journal articles.

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To the memory and inspiration of Robert Hopper

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Acknowledgements

This collection brings together a unique group of leading scholars from the fields of conversation analysis, discursive psychology and ethnomethodology. It features cutting edge debates about discourse and cognition along with illustrative and engaging examples of real life interaction. Some contributors argue that the notion of cognition in interaction analysis can and should be abandoned, others that it should be reworked and others again that it must be preserved but clarified. We hope that this volume provides a thought-provoking overview and reappraisal of the role of mental concepts in the empirical study of text and talk.

When we started it, too many years ago, we could not have imagined the journey that would follow. In many ways, the major issue on which it is focused turns out to be different from what we suspected: more heterogeneous, less definitive in its boundaries and place, and, overall, very much alive. During the process of writing and editing, we never got bored with any of the contributions, and we are grateful that the contributors never got (really) bored with waiting. Their past work has defined the contours of the debate and they show themselves to be ideally placed to move it forward.

Several people have been a continuous source of inspiration and helpful criticism to us. We wish to thank Derek Edwards, Alexa Hepburn and Liz Stokoe as well as the stimulating intellectual context of Loughborough's Discourse and Rhetoric Group. Communication Science at Wageningen University has provided a supportive and challenging environment for discourse work. Frank de Groot has given valuable technical support in preparing the chapters for publication. We gratefully acknowledge the continuing support, patience and good humour of Catherine Max and Sarah Caro at Cambridge University Press.

The book is dedicated to Professor Robert Hopper, who died in December 1998, and was the first to complete his contribution for this volume. After being invited to a pre-conference on discourse and cognition, his enthusiasm for the topic was contagious and he felt no hesitation in writing about it. We hope the spirit with which he explored the convolutions inside these complicated questions will shine throughout the book.

Transcription conventions

The following conventions were developed by Gail Jefferson.

[]	Square brackets mark the start and end of overlapping speech. Position them in alignment where the overlap occurs.
↑↓	Vertical arrows precede marked pitch movement, over and above normal rhythms of speech. They are for marked, hearably significant shifts – and even then, the other symbols (full stops, commas, question marks) mop up most of that. Like with all these symbols, the aim is to capture interactionally significant features, hearable as such to an ordinary listener – especially deviations from a common sense notion of ‘neutral’, which admittedly has not been well defined.
→	Side arrows are not transcription features, but draw analytic attention to particular lines of text. Usually positioned to the left of the line.
Underlining	Underlining signals vocal emphasis; the extent of underlining within individual words locates emphasis, but also indicates how heavy it is.
CAPITALS	Capitals mark speech that is obviously louder than surrounding speech (often occurs when speakers are hearably competing for the floor, raised volume rather than doing contrastive emphasis).
°↑I know it,°	‘Degree’ signs enclose obviously quieter speech (i.e., hearably produced as quieter, not just someone distant).
that’s r*ight.	Asterisks precede a ‘squeaky’ vocal delivery.

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xiv Transcription conventions

(0.4)	Numbers in round brackets measure pauses in seconds (in this case, 4 tenths of a second). Place on new line if not assigned to a speaker.
(.)	A micropause, hearable but too short to measure.
((text))	Additional comments from the transcriber, e.g. context or intonation.
she wa::nted	Colons show degrees of elongation of the prior sound; the more colons, the more elongation.
hhh	Aspiration (out-breaths); proportionally as for colons.
.hhh	Inspiration (in-breaths); proportionally as for colons.
Yeh,	‘Continuation’ marker, speaker has not finished; marked by fall-rise or weak rising intonation, as when enunciating lists.
y’know?	Question marks signal stronger, ‘questioning’ intonation, irrespective of grammar.
Yeh.	Periods (full stops) mark falling, stopping intonation (‘final contour’), irrespective of grammar and not necessarily followed by a pause.
bu-u- >he said<	Hyphens mark a cut-off of the preceding sound. ‘Greater than’ and ‘lesser than’ signs enclose speeded-up talk. Sometimes used the other way round for slower talk.
solid.= =We had	‘Equals’ signs mark the immediate ‘latching’ of successive talk, whether of one or more speakers, with no interval. Also used as below (lines 3–5), where an unbroken turn has been split between two lines to accommodate another speaker on the transcript page.
heh heh	Voiced laughter. Can have other symbols added, such as underlinings, pitch movement, extra aspiration, etc.
sto(h)p i(h)t	Laughter within speech is signalled by ‘h’s in round brackets.

For further details see Hepburn (in press), Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998), Jefferson (1985), Psathas and Anderson (1990) and ten Have (1999).