

Analyzing Race Talk

Multidisciplinary Perspectives on the Research Interview

The interview is one of the most important sources of social scientific data yet there has been relatively little exploration of the way interviews are conducted and interpreted. By asking internationally respected scholars from a range of traditions in discourse studies including conversation analysis, discursive psychology, and sociolinguistics to respond to the same material, this exciting new book sheds light on some key differences in methodology and theoretical perspective. Key topics are addressed such as the forms of knowledge produced in interviews, the interview as social interaction and the foundations for the study of talk and texts in qualitative research. The use of interviews exploring issues of race and racism further broadens the scope of the book, enabling the contributors to explore sensitive questions around the construction and interpretation of interviews on controversial topics.

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*Multidisciplinary Perspectives on the
Research Interview*

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Dedicated to the memory of
Hanneke Houtkoop-Steenstra

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Preface

During the very last phase of our work on this book, we received the devastating news that our co-editor, Hanneke Houtkoop-Steenstra had died. We knew that she was severely ill but her sudden death was unexpected. We mourn her passing and miss her greatly.

Hanneke studied linguistics at the University of Amsterdam. After finishing her Ph.D. thesis in 1987 on the analysis of proposal-acceptance sequences, she was appointed to a position at the Utrecht Institute of Linguistics (UIL-OTS) and the Institute for Dutch Language and Culture at Utrecht University. She was a dynamic and wholehearted researcher fascinated by the structure and organization of ordinary conversation and conversation within an institutional context. Hanneke's contributions are numerous. She had a particular interest in the interaction between interviewer and interviewee in research interviews and is, of course, well known for this work. Hanneke liked to transgress conventional disciplinary and institutional borders, and she demonstrated, for example, the relevance of conversation analysis for critical reflection on traditional survey methodology. She played a crucial role in the design and editing of this book and was inspirational in pushing forward our scheme of encouraging researchers from many different perspectives to analyze the same data set. Her comments on all our work were marked by a delightful combination of professional rigor, straightforwardness and disarming humour. We only wish that she could have been here to share our pleasure in its publication.

To honor her contribution to the field of conversation analysis as well as to the field of the methodology of research interviews, we dedicate this book to her memory.

HARRY VAN DEN BERG AND MARGARET WETHERELL

Acknowledgments

We want to thank all those who contributed to this book and pay tribute to their willingness to play the game proposed to them. It is not easy to work on shared data to analyze texts produced in very unfamiliar contexts. The result, however, has proven well worth the effort.

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Last but not least we would like to thank Kate Henning for her major contribution to the administration and management of the editing process.

Transcriptions symbols

I =	interviewer
R =	respondent
D =	respondent's daughter (in Interview 44)
[xxx]	overlapping talk
[yyy]	
word=	latched utterances; no interval
=Word	
(1.0)	timed silence in seconds
(.)	micropause (less than 0.3 sec)
word.	falling intonation
word,	continuing intonation
word?	rising or questioning intonation
word!	exclamation like prosody
wor-	abrupt cutoff
↑word	higher pitch
↓word	lower pitch
wor:d	stretched sound
w <u>o</u> rd	emphasis
WORD	louder talk
°word°	quieter talk
>word<	faster talk
<word>	slower talk
wo(h)rd	laughingly spoken
.hhh	inbreath
hhh	outbreath
((note))	transcriptionist's note and comment
(word)	transcriptionist's uncertain understanding
[. . .]	lines omitted