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Authors
Guthrie, Anna
Stivers, Tanya

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Editorial

The Organization of Participation

When we talk about the organization of participation in social interaction, there are a number of ways we can conceptualize this phenomenon. Among the many possibilities researchers have explored, we can consider who the focal participants are in the interaction at any given moment and how they become focal or peripheral. We can ask when certain interactants participate and how this is organized. We can ask how interactants' various identities can be made relevant through their participation in the interaction. Additionally, we can look at the physical body and ways in which it is an integral part of the interaction.

This special issue came out of many discussions about the growing and continuing interest in the diverse aspects of the phenomenon of participation and how it is organized within social interaction. It was our hope to bring together a collection of articles which would reflect the range and diversity of research perspectives. We received a wonderful array of submissions to our call for papers, and it is thanks to the collaboration of many people that we have the collection shown here. Because of the different methodologies and contexts represented by these papers, the reviewers enlisted for the selection process included experts from many disciplines and methodological traditions.

We are very excited that the final collection of manuscripts explores the organization of participation in five language communities and in five different cultural and social contexts. The manuscripts also reflect the importance of looking at naturally occurring audio or video taped interaction in analyzing participation as a social phenomenon. Arminen explores participation in various phases of Finish Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. He investigates how the talk during these meetings brings into being the concept of "mutual help." Fatigante, Fasulo, and Pontecorvo look at children's participation in Italian dinner conversations. They bring Goffman's concept of frontstage and backstage talk to bear on their phenomena and show a variety of ways in which children can be talked about in these dinner conversations. Field brings together both a macro and a micro analysis of participation as she explores question asking in a Navajo preschool and examines some of the cultural differences which might explain silence as a response. Kang examines triadic participation in Korean cultural center interactions, specifically looking at how in-group membership is developed through the interaction between the participants. Finally, Curley investigates the use of directives during a Japanese tea ceremony lesson. She argues that an understanding of the organization of participation requires an analysis both of the participants' talk and of their body deployment.

This year marks the first in several years when ial will not publish the pro-

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ceedings from the annual Conference on Language, Interaction, and Culture which has been held at UCLA. This year the proceedings will be published by a new journal: Crossroads in Language, Interaction, and Culture. Congratulations to CLIC for accomplishing this, and we hope that you will consider supporting this new venture. For more information please contact us at ial.

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Anna Guthrie
Tanya Stivers