



Coordinators:

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Symposium format:

- **Symposium Multimodal**

Symposium mode:

- **Hybrid**

Sub-themes:

- LANGUAGE RESOURCES: multi-modality (including gesture), corpora, artifacts,
- LANGUAGE IN USE: communication, interaction, conversation analysis, discourse corpus, media
- LANGUAGES IN PROFESSIONS: translation & interpreting, transdisciplinarity justice, medicine, food, forensics

Short abstract

Reporting interviews: what happens when a turn at talk is written down?

Interviewing is a key method of acquiring and producing information in many professions. Usually, talk is transformed into text, and turns at talk are lifted out of their interactional contexts to be written down for one purpose or another. Depending on the domain, the way turns at talk are used in written genres can vary significantly.

Exploring diverse professional contexts, this symposium aims to better understand *how* material coming from interviews is reported in written texts (*practices of reporting*) and *why* it is used that way (*norms of reporting*). In doing this, it will address the complex relationship between what is produced during an interactional event and what remains once reported in a written text, knowing that the circulation of verbal material across different modes leads to the transformation of discourse (e.g., meaning, illocutionary force) and the loss of some key aspects in interaction (e.g., prosody, gaze, posture).

We call for papers that explore the transformation from interview to written report either on a theoretical/general level or within a particular profession. We welcome papers from different research traditions and settings, and with different intentions regarding the applicability of their results outside the academy.

Reporting interviews: what happens when a turn at talk is written down?

Interviewing is a key method of acquiring and producing information in many professions (Briggs 2007). Usually, talk is transformed into text, and turns at talk are lifted out of their interactional contexts to be written down for one purpose or another (research article, journalistic output, police interrogation record, job interview report, patient record, language learning textbook, asylum report, etc.). Depending on the domain, the way turns at talk are used in written genres can vary significantly.

Exploring diverse professional contexts, this symposium aims to better understand *how* material coming from interviews is reported in written texts (*practices of reporting*) and *why* it is used that way (*norms of reporting*). In doing this, it will address the complex relationship between what is produced during an interactional event and what remains once reported in a written text, knowing that the circulation of verbal material across different modes leads to the transformation of discourse (e.g., meaning, illocutionary force) and the loss of some key aspects in interaction (e.g., prosody, gaze, posture).

To exemplify some of the tensions this process might involve and how the process is affected by particular professional practices and norms, here is an excerpt from an interview (orig. in Finnish) between a journalist writing for a business magazine and a Chinese immigrant in Finland. Their discussion on the importance of language skills and local qualifications for immigrants concludes as follows:

- INTERVIEWEE: although I was so good (.) I can say that I was a qualified
 engineer and everything (.) education and career and (.) at the
 peak [of my career] in China at that time
- JOURNALIST: yeah
- INTERVIEWEE: but when I came here I'm (.) a zero (.) if you can't-

At this point, the journalist interrupts the interviewee's ongoing utterance by asking:

- JOURNALIST: was it a hard situation to accept
- INTERVIEWEE: yes yes it was
- JOURNALIST: okay

Later on, the journalist wrote an article including the following quote, which was attributed to the interviewee:

"In China I was a successful, qualified engineer, here I was nothing. It was hard to accept."

This excerpt would certainly inspire a wide range of analyses and conclusions (see Haapanen 2017: 828–831), but let us focus here on one particular observation. From the point of view of



journalistic ethics, quotes are supposed to be verbatim reproductions of interview utterances, but here, one of the quoted sentences (*it was hard to accept*) is not based on the interviewee's utterances. Instead, it is a reformulation of the journalist's question (*was it a hard situation to accept?*), which the interviewee answered affirmatively (*yes yes it was*). The interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee is not visible in the resulting quote. This simplification process, tentatively termed *monologization* in journalism studies (Haapanen 2017), mainly takes the form of obscuring the role of the interviewer. The quote appears to be a continuous and unprompted utterance produced by the interviewee. Such an adjustment meets practical needs, which relate to both audience design and textual coherence (Merminod 2020).

Journalism is just one of the many professional contexts in which interviews are used to produce written texts. Practices and norms of reporting raise issues that are probably as diverse as the specific uses of reporting in different professional activities. We therefore call for papers that explore the transformation from interview to written report either on a theoretical/general level or within a particular profession. We welcome papers from different research traditions and settings, and with different intentions regarding the applicability of their results outside the academy. With contributions from a range of fields, this symposium will lead to a collection of papers that contribute significantly to our understanding of professional language use.

Briggs, Charles. 2007. Interviewing, and Communicability in Contemporary Society. *Current Anthropology* 48: 4, 551–580.

Haapanen, Lauri. 2017. Monologisation as a quoting practice. Obscuring the journalist's involvement in written journalism. *Journalism Practice* 11:7, 820–839.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2016.1208057>

Merminod, Gilles. 2020. Narrative analysis applied to text production. Investigating the processes of quoting in the making of a broadcast news story. *AILA Review* 33, 103–118.
<https://benjamins.com/catalog/aila.00032.mer>