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Book Review:

Pentti Haddington, Lorenza Mondada and Maurice Neville (eds), *Interaction and Mobility: Language and the Body in Motion*, Berlin and Boston, MA: Walter de Gruyter,

This ambitious volume sets itself the challenge of exploring embodied interaction in various contexts of mobility. Its 11 papers address the dynamic terrain of verbal and nonverbal interaction in a variety of contexts and settings where bodies, either real or virtual, are in motion. These different contexts and interactional ecologies are organized in four themes, supplemented by a fascinating and extensive Introduction, as well as a brief Epilogue.

The first theme, 'Staging and collaborating for mobility', comprises four chapters that concentrate their attention on the navigation of space. Beginning with Vom Lehn's consideration of couples negotiating their transit around an art gallery, we move through Broth and Lundstrom's analysis of waterside conversations at a marina, to De Stefani's observations of shoppers in a supermarket and Neville's scrutiny of interactions in the more confined space of a battlefield helicopter. These four opening chapters serve the book well in establishing the breadth of analytic approaches, as well as its interest in mobility in both open arenas and those defined by physical or activity-specific confinement.

'Projecting and engaging mobility', the book's second theme, continues this interest in confined spaces by focusing on interaction in the restricted environment of motor vehicles. Haddington considers the interactions between passengers and drivers at junctions, while Laurier concentrates his analysis on the occupants of vehicles entering, traversing and exiting roundabouts. Having considered mobility and the extension of the relatively still body in a mobile environment, the penultimate theme addresses the coordination and control of mobilities from a distance. The three chapters in this section cover the management of airspace by air traffic controllers (Koskela, Arminen and Palukka), the setting of meeting points via mobile phone communication (Licoppe and Morel) and interaction for coordination of video-game avatars (Mondada). These chapters extend the range of what is to be drawn into the analysis of mobility – offering some intriguing insights into the communication of our understanding of spaces where an 'other', real or virtual, is present, or negotiating

spatial relationships where one or more of the potentially participating parties is currently absent.

The final theme, 'Creating and performing mobility', feels the least cohesive. Keevallik addresses the communication of 'here' in dance instruction; while interesting, the chapter does little to explain the relevance of its findings beyond this highly specialized field. On the other hand, Ting and colleagues' contribution – which documents a performance art intervention in Manchester's Piccadilly Gardens, part of the 2010 Futuresonic Festival – was for me one of the highlights of the book. The freeze performance, in which participants froze mid-movement to playfully disrupt public performances, provided a genuine breach experiment. While all chapters in the book acknowledge the influence of Garfinkel's ethnomethodology, only here do we see his radical experimental tradition continued. If the editors' intention was to end the volume on a high note, as in making sure you leave your audience wanting more, they succeeded. On the downside of that, though, we are left with the feeling that more of the book should have been in this vein.

The book also includes a useful key to the transcription notation conventions used by many of its authors, based on the work of Gail Jefferson, and detailed author and subject indices. As a final chapter, Paul Mcllvenny provides a brief Epilogue that is a real asset to the volume; it draws together what may otherwise feel like disparate threads and ties them effectively, if not neatly. Mcllvenny rightly highlights the valuable methodological contributions made by the contributors, and the advances they have made in the capture, documentation, annotation and presentation of mobility. It is an excellent, if rather brief, summation of a volume that has considerable breadth. That breadth, however, is both strength and weakness. In dealing with such a variety of interactive ecologies in a considerable amount of detail, it addresses none to a satisfactory depth. The book does not seem intended to be read through, cover to cover; it is a book in which one should paddle, not bathe. Such a volume seems destined for the university library shelf and not the student book case; yet it deserves to be there. As a resource to stimulate thoughts for new methodologies, conventions of annotating video-captured mobilities and the location of interactive ecologies, it will be a valuable addition to any collection. From my reading, I can see new avenues for aspects of my own research (on political discourse), and potentials for fresh collaboration with others in my department and with other departments. That interest, though, comes with a proviso: the limited conceptualization of context that all the

contributions exhibit. The volume's framework is predominantly orientated towards a Scheglovian conversational analysis, and a tightly focused interpretation of Garfinkel's ethnomethodology, neither of which accommodates comfortably the wider social, cultural or political context. (The ideas of Merleau-Ponty seem to have deeply influenced many of the authors, but his name remains noticeably absent from the person index.) Such a narrowly focused construal of context emphasizes the mundane in the case studies, missing the opportunity to engage with their broader relevance. The section on the control and coordination of mobility could have included, for example, communications between police when kettling protesters, or the mechanics of war-drone operation. If insufficient research is available in these areas, this seems a gap that deserves to be plugged quickly. But, more generally, the chapters could have done more to highlight the meaningfulness of their conclusions beyond improving our descriptive arsenal. The volume is nonetheless fascinating and, in its own way, stimulating. It can open up new insights in understanding how mobility and the body can have an important place in the analysis of interpersonal interactional discourse.

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