

Editorial

Positioning in narrative interaction

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Over the last two decades, researchers in narrative have increasingly turned to questions of identity (e.g., Bamberg & McCabe, 2000; Brockmeier & Carbaugh, 2001; De Fina 2003; De Fina, Schiffrin & Bamberg, 2006; Bamberg, De Fina & Schiffrin, 2007; Georgakopoulou, 2007; Bamberg et al., 2011; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, ch.6; Holler & Klepper, 2013). While Labov and Waletzky's seminal study had sparked off an interest in structural properties of narrative (Labov & Waletzky, 1967), both the rise of interest in autobiographical narratives (Schütze, 1981, 1984; Bruner, 1990) and the discovery of the performative properties of narratives (Bamberg, 1997a, 1997b) paved the way for an understanding of narratives being a primary site of identity construction. Coining the concept of "narrative identity", scholars even went as far as claiming that life is a narrative and that identity has the structure of a life story (Bruner, 1990, p. 99–139; McAdams, 2011). There is much to put forward in favor of a biographical and narrative approach to identity: The temporal unfolding of identity in terms of constancy and change, the interpretive and reflexive nature of identity as a meaningful subjective structure, the historically situated, experientially based unfolding of the identities of the individual and its relationship to others (cf. Bamberg, 2011). However, there is a huge gap between the abstract, theoretical concept of an all-encompassing "narrative identity" and the concrete, situated stories people tell or write (Lucius-Hoene & Deppermann, 2000). From a methodological point of view, "narrative identity" is not much more than a postulate, which is hard to relate to any specific discursive activity of a person said to have this identity. This is so for many reasons:

- There is no single story which exhausts narrative identity;

- narrative identity is rather a virtual structure consisting of or to be abstracted from all different stories a person might tell about him/herself;
- narrative identity is conceived of as a cognitive structure, whose relationship to discourse is not clear;
- the narrative identity approach favors a unified, coherent, continuous concept of identity, which is at odds with fragmentation and context-dependency characteristic of (post-)modern formations of identity;
- non-narrative, perceptual, action-oriented aspects of experience which are not narrativized are conceptually excluded from being facets of identity;
- narrative identity seems to be divorced from the local, interpersonal contingencies of the telling of any autobiographical story in situ.

Although appealing it might be, researchers aiming to study identities empirically in the way they become manifest in storytelling cannot use the metaphysical concept of “narrative identity” as a methodological approach. We are in need of a concept which can capture how identities are deployed in situated narrative interaction. This concept has to do justice to what we know about how narratives in interaction unfold (Quasthoff & Becker, 2005). In other words: It has to be sensitive to structural properties of narratives (and other genres figuring in narrative interaction), to their situated construction in the context of practical action, and to the emergent, recipient-designed co-construction of narratives in interaction. The concept of ‘positioning’ as introduced by Harré and his co-workers (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1991; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) is designed to offer such a discourse-based, interactional approach to selves and identities.

The concept of ‘positioning’ goes back to Foucault’s notion of ‘subject positions’, which are made available and constrained by societal discourses (Foucault, 1969). According to Foucault, discourses position subjects in terms of status, power, legitimate knowledge and practices they are allowed to and ought to perform (Foucault, 1969, ch.4), thereby determining the interpretation of self, (social) world and others (Foucault, 1969, ch.2, 5).

Wendy Hollway (1984) introduced ‘positioning’ into psychoanalytic social psychology, using it to capture how people conceive of themselves in terms of gendered subjectivities. Although Hollway admits that adopting positions from hegemonic discourses is preferred for legitimizing actions, she rejects discursive determinism and underscores that people are able to choose among positions, because there are “several coexisting and potentially contradictory discourses concerning sexuality [which] make available different positions and different powers for men and women” (Hollway, 1984, p.230). In Hollway’s approach, choice of positions is motivated both by people’s prior, biographical positions and by their

psychodynamic “investments” (Freud, 1953). Psychodynamic defense mechanisms like repression, exclusion and projection of repressed desires via other-positioning are seen to be operative in taking up discursive positions, thus being eminently consequential both socially and politically.

Bronwyn Davies and Rom Harré (1990) were the first to bring ‘positioning’ to bear on interactive exchanges and to relate it to narratology. They regard positioning activities as the primary locus of the discursive production of selves, “whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines” (Davies & Harré, 1990, p. 48). The basic constituents of Harré’s conception are represented by the ‘positioning triangle’ (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré et al., 2009):

- *Story-lines* are taken to be the organizing principle of discourses. Story-lines provide positions of categorically defined actors related to each other within a sequence of acts and events. Storylines are constitutive of “our own sense and how the world is to be interpreted from the perspective of who we take ourselves to be” (Davies & Harré, 1990, p. 47).
- *Social acts* are defined by their illocutionary force in the sense of Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). However, it is only on behalf of their being embedded in jointly produced story-lines that speech-actions become socially determinate speech-acts.
- *Positions* are intimately tied to story-lines. They are defined by rights and duties they imply for the actors they are assigned to. Positions are complementarily organized in terms of dual or triple socio-categorical relationships, such as ‘doctor/nurse/patient’, ‘mother/father/child’, ‘leader/disciples’, etc. Positions are reflexively related to social acts: While people are positioned by social acts, the meaning of social action may depend itself on how its producer is taken to be positioned, i.e. which rights and entitlements to action s/he is perceived to have.

Slocum-Bradley (2009) proposes to extend the triangle to a ‘positioning diamond’ by adding *identities* as a forth component. In her view, identities are ascribed on behalf of how persons use their rights and perform their duties, which may lead to the ascription of personal moral characteristics like being ruthless, sleazy, honest, etc. Identities, in turn, imply positions conferring different rights and duties to their incumbents.

Davies and Harré (1990, pp. 49–58) stress that acts of positioning may be multi-layered and ambiguous, because they can be seen to project several positions at once and they may be interpreted differently by various actors. Positions are dynamic, emergent, and possibly subject to change over the course of an interactional episode, which Davies and Harré (1990, p. 53) equal to an “unfolding

narrative". Davies and Harré (1990, p. 47) regard 'positioning' to be the basic mechanism by which a self and identities are acquired in social interaction, because by positioning, people commit themselves practically, emotionally and epistemically to identity-categories and discursive practices associated with them. Therefore, the authors insist on an immanentist understanding of selves as part and parcel of discursive practices. They reject a unitary notion of a fully integrated self; instead they stress the multiplicity of ongoing, fleeting positionings, which entails a multiplicity of practice-based selves. A positioning view of self and identity thus is opposed both to a monadic, static view of identity in terms of personality as defined by (essentially biologically based) traits and to an equally individualized conception of the self as being a representational, cognitive structure, i.e., the self-concept.

By situating the concept of 'positioning' within a theory of discourse and conversational interaction and by discussing its relationship with 'self', 'identity' and 'personhood', Harré and his colleagues have provided theoretical underpinnings and a conceptual apparatus for 'positioning' as an analytic tool for discourse analysis. Still, their theory faces major methodological and theoretical problems. Although 'positioning' is designed to be more adequate than other concepts dealing with 'selves' to capture the dynamic aspects of actual interactional episodes, Harré's approach does not really sit well with the state of the art of fine-grained interactional and linguistic analysis of narrative and social interaction. Studies by Harré and his co-workers rely on made-up examples and sketchy glosses, whose empirical basis in terms of data is unclear. They do neither use detailed sequential analysis of authentic social interaction based on audio and video recordings nor do they attend to the precise linguistic and narrative choices and strategies employed to project and negotiate positions. Consequently, Harré and his co-workers have analyzed which positions are accomplished in "discourses", but they have not identified linguistic, communicative and interactional practices of positioning. A second criticism has to be made from a narratological point of view in particular. Although the notion of "story-lines" figures prominently in the approach and although Harré and his co-workers emphasize that positioning analysis is firmly grounded in narratological analysis (cf. Harré et al., 2009, p. 6; Slocum-Bradley, 2009), 'story-lines' and 'narrative' are used only as evocative, metaphorical concepts, which gloss over distinctions which are most vital to a serious analysis of narrative practice. Their theoretical and empirical content is vague at best, if not plainly ambiguous and self-defeating. 'Story-lines' and 'narrative' are equally used to refer to texts (novels), the contents of conversations (which are said to consist mainly of personal narratives), their sequential deployment (which is said to be organized according to a story-line), and even life itself (which is claimed to be a lived narrative, consisting of fragments of life, which are organized according to story-lines). This use of 'narrative' and 'story-lines' conflates epistemological

distinctions, which have proved to be essential in research on narrative and social interaction, namely, the differences between (discursive) practice, (retrospective) memory and representation of practices (Rosenthal, 2006; Lucius-Hoene & Deppermann, 2004a, pp. 29–30), the telling and the plot of a story (see, e.g., Genette, 1972). These ontologically distinct orders of phenomena, which each are organized according to their peculiar logics, have to be kept apart in order to be analytically clear, whether life is at issue in the way it is experienced, remembered, told or enacted. Although Harré & van Langenhove (1991, p. 397) distinguish between “performative positioning” (via action) and “accountive positioning”, i.e., talk about previous acts of positioning, they fail to flesh out what this distinction might entail in terms of communicative and semiotic properties of these different modes of positioning and their relationship to narratives. Instead, as proponents of “narrative identity” do, Harré identifies life as it is lived with life as it is told. The epistemological inadequacy of this idealizing equation was already targeted by fiction authors of the early twentieth century, such as James Joyce, Robert Musil and Virginia Woolf. Equating life with a narrative obscures the retrospective, memory- and discourse-based processes of selection, framing, interpretation, ordering, evaluation and construction of a dramatic plot with a possibly univocal morale. These are features which are vital to and constitutive of narrative, which help to structure, but do not simply mirror lived experience. Similarly, the equation of conversations with narratives assimilates conversational episodes unduly to idealized narrative schemata. Moreover, it does not do justice to the state of the art of research about conversational organization (Schegloff, 2007), activity types (Levinson, 1992) and genre (Hanks, 1996). The same applies to “discourses”, which may be organized in a myriad of different text-types, narrative being only one type among plenty of others. In short, using ‘narrative’ and ‘story-lines’ as cover-terms for discursive organization seems to be misleading. It obscures relevant properties of text and talk, which are also most important when dealing with positioning in narratives.

Whereas the understanding of ‘positioning’ by Harré et al. was not satisfactorily grounded in the state of the art of narratological research, Michael Bamberg (1997a) was the first to propose a notion of positioning designed to capture how identity work may specifically be carried out by narration. Bamberg (1997a, p. 337) distinguishes three levels of positioning.

1. Positioning on the level of the story: “How are the characters positioned in relation to one another within the reported events?”
2. Positioning on the level of the interaction: “How does the speaker position him- or herself to the audience?”

3. Positioning with respect to the “Who am I?”-question: “How do narrators position themselves to themselves?” (see also Bamberg, 2011). Other formulations of level-3 positioning make clear that Bamberg thinks of more general and more enduring, “portable” aspects of self and identity, which transcend the ephemeral, local interactional moment and its action-related contingencies (see also De Fina this volume). Bamberg & Georgakopoulou (2008, p. 385) add that level 3-positioning concerns “how the speaker/narrator positions a sense of self/identity with regards to dominant discourses or master narratives”, by which the teller “establishes himself as a particular kind of person” (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008, p. 391).

Bamberg’s interest in positioning developed from empirical observations on evaluation and the display of emotional stance (like anger) in stories (Bamberg, 1997b), the ascription of agency being a major concern of practices of positioning. Bamberg (2003) criticizes that Harré still adheres to a view according to which discourses provide the semiotic and moral frameworks within which subjects are positioned. Subjects thus are only “semi-agentive” in this approach, picking out identity positions among those made available by societal discourses. In contrast, Bamberg stresses that it should be a question to be settled empirically, whether people also construct discursive positions agentively themselves. Agency involves two “directions of fit” (Bamberg, 2011, p. 7): Active agency implies a subject-to-world direction of fit, passive agency a world-to-subject direction of fit. By ascribing agency, the narrator conveys his/her perspective and evaluative stance and calls for empathy and affiliation without necessarily producing overt assessments of the story characters. With his turn to small stories (Bamberg, 2007; Georgakopoulou, 2006, 2007), Bamberg has increasingly focused on interactive, level-2 positioning (Bamberg, 2004; Korobov & Bamberg, 2004, 2007). Since small stories are embedded in conversational interaction and occasioned by situated discursive concerns, such as justifying actions, blaming, advice-seeking and -giving, etc., interactional positioning becomes the prime motivation for storytelling and, consequently, for story-tellers self- and other-positioning by the story.

The understanding of ‘positioning’ has become increasingly empirical, situated and interactive. Researchers have started to deal with audio and video data, attending to the fine grained linguistic details by which positions are deployed and negotiated in interaction. Research on small stories has shown that interactional negotiation, emergence and action-oriented design are pervasive features of positioning in narrative interaction. Although opportunities for interactional trajectories and co-construction are much more restricted in the autobiographical research interview (cf. Wengraf, 2001), Wortham (2000, 2001) and Lucius-Hoene & Deppermann (2000, 2004a, b) have shown that also in this setting, narratives need to be conceived

of as (inter-)action. Equally, tellers do not only position themselves and others on the representational level of the story, but they do so on the level of situated action as well (Wortham, 2001; Lucius-Hoene & Deppermann, 2004a,b). This distinction clearly resonates with Bamberg's positioning levels 1 and 2. Drawing on Bakhtin (1981), Wortham uses the concept of 'voice' in order to refer to different positions tellers enact locally: People use ways of speaking which index social positions, contexts, assessments, and ideological stances, which have become associated with linguistic choices by previous social usage. Wortham insists that positioning analysis needs to be advanced by answering the question: "How do linguistic and paralinguistic cues position the narrator and the audience interactionally?" (Wortham, 2001, p. 15). He proposes five types of cues: Reference and predication, metapragmatic descriptors (verbs of saying), quotation, evaluative indexicals, and epistemic modalization (Wortham, 2001, p. 70–75). Still, he admits that linguistic forms do not code positions directly. Rather, they are used to cue relevant features of context indexically (cf. De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 176–178).

Lucius-Hoene & Deppermann (2004a, b; Deppermann i.pr.) propose a communicative model of positioning in narrative interaction which builds on Bamberg's levels 1 and 2, aiming to refine them.

- 1a. Level 1: *Positioning of story-characters vis-à-vis each other*: On the story-level, the narrator acts as an animator (Goffman, 1981): In reported dialogues, s/he lends his/her voice to the characters, indexing to render only what others have said.
- 1b. Level 1: *Positioning of story-characters by narrative design*: Characters' acts of positioning are not uninterested renderings, but they are strategically designed by the narrator from his/her present point of view (cf. Bakhtin, 1981; Günthner, 1999).
- 2a. Level 2: *Self-positioning of the teller by extra- and meta-narrative self-reflexive activities*: Tellers may explicitly take a stance towards past events and their past self by meta-narrative, retrospective comments, argumentations and evaluations from the present point of view. Such activities do not only position the narrated self (level 1); the teller simultaneously positions his/her current self, representing biographical change.
- 2b. Level 2: *Interactional positioning by narrative design*: Tellers position themselves towards the listener performatively by their story-design, e.g., as being a skilled entertainer, having a message to teach, or being a victim in need of support.
- 2c. Level 2: *Interactional positioning by meta-narrative activities* of the teller includes formulating assumptions or asking about the recipient's knowledge and evaluative stance, seeking agreement, explaining to the recipient, etc. In this

way, the narrator can position the recipient as a representative of significant others, rivalling inner voices, authorities, etc. (Lucius-Hoene & Deppermann, 2000, p. 213–215).

- 2d. Level 2: *Interactional positioning by the story recipient's factual activities*. By asking and responding, the recipient becomes a co-author and takes part in negotiating interactive positions.

The complexity of positioning in narrative interaction is mainly derived by the fact that the different levels may be related to each other in complex relationships of elaboration, commentary, contrast, warrant, etc.

While it is hard to relate grand theories of identity to local communicative action in text and talk in everyday life, ‘positioning’ offers a practice-based approach to identities specifically tailored to narrative interaction. Its distinctive properties and advantages become clearer by comparison to other approaches that deal with selves and identities in interaction.

Classic psychological and sociological concepts of *identity* (cf. Eriksson, 1959; Mead, 1934) and approaches to *narrative identity* (Bruner, 1990, pp. 99–139; Ricoeur, 1990, pp. 137–198) posit an overarching, abstract, non-empirical concept of identity, which is importantly characterized by normative notions of coherence and consistency. Positioning theory, instead, strictly sticks to what people observably do, and it sees positions as accomplished by situated action. In this way, the concept of positioning is very close to the conversation analytic approach to “identities in talk” (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998).

The conversation analytic approach to identities in talk relies on the concept of ‘*membership categorization*’ (Sacks, 1972; Schegloff, 2007; Stokoe, 2012). It deals with how members categorize persons and how this is used as a resource of ascribing properties, explaining and evaluating actions, attributing responsibility and engendering inferences and expectations regarding actions of category-members. Kitzinger & Wilkinson (2003) seem to identify a conversation analytic approach to positioning with membership categorization analysis. They point out three practices of positioning: “Naming or indexing a category”, “invoking categorical membership”, and “invoking attributes” (Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 2003, pp. 174–176). While it is beyond doubt, that explicit categorization and ascription of actions and attributes by description are basic and pervasive practices of positioning, Deppermann (this volume) argues that membership categorization does not exhaust practices of positioning. Especially in narratives, the double temporal indexicality of narratives (telling vs. tale) and their potentially biographical scope (thus speaking to the dimension of constancy and change, cf. Bamberg et al., 2011) can index more complex identities than categorization and action-description.

Davies & Harré (1990) oppose ‘positioning’ to ‘role’. They argue that ‘positioning’ is better equipped to do justice to the flexible, self-determined and interpretive character of individual situated action than the more static and ritualistic notion of ‘role’, which tends to imply socio-structural determinism of individual action. Moreover, ‘role’ does not include facets of identity which have to with psychological, biographical and moral characteristics.

Footing’ is another concept which is to capture “participant’s alignment, or set, or stance or projected self” tied to “a strip of behavior” (Goffman, 1981, p.128). Goffman introduced ‘footing’ to refer to different production formats speakers may use (acting as animator vs. author vs. principal) and different participation frameworks according to which reciprocity can be organized (ratified participants, over-hearers, eavesdroppers, by-standers). While these observations and the terminology Goffman proposes are also useful for positioning analysis, the above quote lets transpire that it is very unclear what ‘footing’ means beyond production format and participation framework.

Another concept sometimes used for aspects of identity in talk is ‘voice’ (Bakhtin, 1981). “Voice” is an acoustic metaphor, whose emphasis is on different ways of speaking (cf. Hymes, 1974) associated with different genres, registers and social personae. It is an evocative notion, which has not been fleshed out in terms of which facets of identity in talk and which practices it is to capture, how voices are constituted, etc.

Stance’ (DuBois, 2007) and *perspective*’ (Graumann & Kallmeyer, 2002) are other concepts sometimes used to refer to how subjectivity is brought to bear on action and narrative. Both concepts are primarily designed to capture the kinds of epistemic access and claims speakers display vis-à-vis the contents of talk and the moral and evaluative position they take. Again, these are important aspects of positioning (cf. Lucius-Hoene, 2013), which, however, do not exhaust it.

This sketchy overview of approaches to identity in talk is to show three things:

- a. Firstly, positioning is specifically equipped to capture practices of identity-construction and facets of identity peculiar to narrative. No other approach to identity in talk refers specifically to the double temporal indexicality of narratives, which includes both representation and action, and its biographical, individual dimension.
- b. Secondly, positioning is to capture the situated, action-oriented and practice-based nature of identity construction.
- c. Thirdly, the concept is inherently relational and process-oriented, covering both interactional, emergent co-construction in the sequential trajectory of interactions and the complementarity of self- and other-positioning.

The contributions to this volume all advocate this situated, practice-based and action-oriented approach to positioning in narrative interaction. They subscribe to the need of studying positioning on the basis of audio- and video-recordings and transcripts, following the methodological tenets of sequential analysis established by conversation analysis (CA; Schegloff, 2007; Sidnell, 2010; Deppermann, 2008). However, they take different stances on whether positioning can be studied only by recourse to CA-concepts and whether and how CA has to be complemented by ethnographic methods. The aim of this volume thus is to open up the debate over how ‘positioning’ may figure within a conversation analytic approach to identity in social interaction and how researchers need to go beyond the methodological tools offered by CA so far in order to arrive at a comprehensive analysis of positioning in narrative interaction. The contributions center around the following debates:

Establishing positioning epistemologically as discursive practice: Taking issue with both cognitivist and discourse-theoretic understandings of ‘positioning’, Neill Korobov argues for adopting an epistemic discursive psychology approach (cf. Potter, 2010), which builds on CA-methodology. This involves conceiving of positions as being constructed by performative social action, which neither mirrors nor is determined by pre-discursive social or cognitive entities. In line with the discursive psychology approach, Korobov underscores the rhetorical and situated, action-oriented nature of the deployment of discursive strategies used to work up and resist identity positions in interaction.

Positioning and CA-concepts of identity: As stated above, the approach to deal with identities in talk mostly taken by CA-researchers is membership categorization analysis. In my paper, I argue that practices of membership categorization are core practices of positioning. However, positioning in narrative reaches well beyond positioning. This is because practices of positioning also make use of the double temporal indexicality of tale and telling, the biographical scope of personal narratives, temporally stretched narrative patterns with peculiar potentials for projecting identities and indexical practices of performance not attended to in CA-analyses. The temporalities of positioning in narration thus deploy temporally structured identities which range beyond membership categorization. Dennis Day and Susanne Kjaerbeck also discuss how work in CA relates to the analysis of positioning in interaction. They argue that facets of positioning are not only dealt with by membership categorization, but also by the CA-concepts ‘alignment’ and ‘affiliation’. While alignment concerns the status of participants vis-à-vis each other in joint activities, affiliation has to do with sharing evaluative stances. Day and Kjaerbeck show how positioning is deeply entwined with the local order of the participation framework of interactional narration and its sequential organization, providing opportunities and expectations for alignment and affiliation,

which, in turn, also contribute to the negotiation of membership categorization. Drawing on the distinction between category assignment, ascription of action and evaluation as basic practices of membership categorization (cf. Hausendorf, 2000), Uta Quasthoff analyzes how tellers use evaluative practices in a narrative interview context as interpretive frames for modulating membership categorization and the ascription of category-bound activities. She shows how background expectations of normalcy are invoked in order to discredit institutional opponents' actions and stances and to normalize teller's past behavior criticized by opponents. A major focus of her paper is on the relationship between the portrayal of biographic experiences and the position the teller adopts in the current interaction.

Positioning and the micro-macro problem: Conversation analysts reject the invocation of societal discourses as an analyst's resource in order to make sense of local acts of positioning (cf. Schegloff, 1997; Deppermann, i.pr.). This methodological stance resonates with the ontological position that it is not societal discourses, which determine subjects' positions in interaction. Rather, positions are discursively claimed and ascribed by subjects, who may or may not orient to societal discourse in their talk (Stokoe, 2005). Still, the question remains how local, "micro" acts of positioning in narration relate to larger "macro", more enduring structures of identities, which matter for the participants beyond the interactional episode recorded (cf. De Fina, 2008). Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopoulou deal with this issue, which concerns Bamberg's positioning level 3. Methodologically, the question is: How we can get access to larger structures of discourse which are needed in order to understand indexicalities (cf. Eckert, 2008) and motivations of local acts of positioning which are not manifestly displayed in these acts themselves? Conceptually, the idea is that people rely in their discursive practices on taken for granted structures of locally relevant discourses which provide a backdrop for their manifest displays of identity. De Fina shows how close sequential analysis of talk is to be combined with ethnographic field-work in order to get access to discourses and ideological positions which are deeply entrenched in the social practice of the field under study and which provide a framework for local positions being assigned and their interpretation. Georgakopoulou adverts us to the fact that continuity and consistency of identities matter for participants themselves. Methodologically, she therefore pleads to attend to iterativity of positions claimed and ascribed in larger samples of data, allowing to discover recurrent, broader patterns of identity formations, people regularly orient to as being stable. Having an eye on iterativity in the ethnographic context also might lead us to discover how positions are regularly tied to certain sites and interactional occasions of story-telling within communities of practice.

In sum, the contributions to this volume give strong evidence that narratives are interactively occasioned, negotiated and designed with respect to relevancies

of individual and collective action. In addition to the empirical findings reported, the papers advance the methodological debate in important ways a) by discussing how acts of positioning can be conceived of as practices in the sense of conversation analysis and b) by providing innovative contributions to how to link conversation analytic, discourse-theoretic and identity-theoretic concerns in a way which is in line with the state of the art in the analysis and both narrative and social interaction.

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