

Sitting Down and Standing Up as Resources for Reorganization of Participation Framework: Analysis of Preparatory Meeting for Nozawa Onsen Fire Festival

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Abstract

In real-life social settings, especially in open fields or public spaces, people often talk while standing, fluidly changing their posture, position, or spatial formation. Therefore, the participation framework is continually reorganized. This paper suggests that body movements for changing posture, especially sitting down and standing up, can serve as resources for reorganization of participation framework. Sitting down and standing up result in the change of the level of eyesight of participants, which dynamically contributes to reorganization of their interactional space, F-formation.

Keywords: participation framework, posture, body movement

1. Introduction

During conversations conducted in experimental settings or closed rooms, participants usually remain seated. Such stable posture of participants lets them continue to talk at the same place and/or with the same interlocutors. On the other hand, in real-life social settings, especially in open fields or public spaces, people often talk while standing, fluidly changing their posture, body position, or spatial formation. Therefore, the participation framework is continually reorganized.

This paper demonstrates the way in which people reorganize participation framework while chatting in an open space, focusing on the change of the participants' posture, especially sitting down and standing up. When we talk in public spaces, we usually keep standing with our body faced to each other, organizing *F-formation* in circular arrangement (Kendon, 1990). However, for some reason, we sometimes sit down and stand up again while talking, and such body movements can influence the participation framework, i.e., who attends the conversation as ratified participants, who is supposed to speak, and who is addressed by the speaker (Goffman, 1981). Sitting down and standing up can serve as resources for reorganization of participation framework, since their movements change the level of participants' eyesight. This paper, by observing excerpts of video-recorded conversation, explicates how the movements of sitting down and standing up make the participation framework reorganized.

2. Data

In this paper we analyze some excerpts from the video recordings of the preparatory work for the fire festival called *Dosojin Matsuri* in Nozawa Onsen, Nagano, Japan. In Nozawa Onsen village, a group of people, called *San'yako*, work for the preparation and operation of the fire festival (Figure 1)¹. *San'yako* consists of almost all the men around 42 years old in the village. The principal members of *San'yako* are 42 year-old men, who play main roles of

the preparation and operation of the festival. Every year the principal members of *San'yako* change, and every three years all the members of *San'yako* change to the next generation. After completing their roles in *San'yako*, the executives of the preceding *San'yako* support the current *San'yako* as advisers or supervisors.

In this paper, we analyze conversation in an informal preparatory meeting from the data recorded in January 2017 (fiscal 2016) (Figure 2). The conversation was conducted by one adviser (AD) from the second preceding *San'yako* (*Kyooai*), two supervisors (SV1, 2) from the preceding *San'yako* (SV1 from *Seishoo* and SV2 from *Kooshin*), and two executives of the current principal members of *San'yako* (*Reishoo*), i.e., the chairman (C) and the vice-chairman (VC).

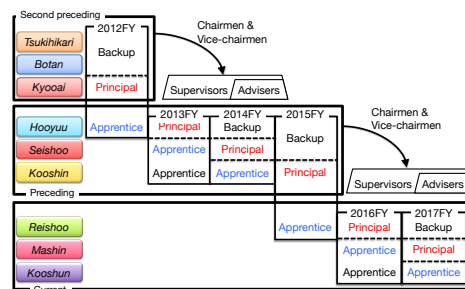


Figure 1: Organization chart of *San'yako*.



Figure 2: Participants of the preparatory meeting.

¹ For more detailed information about *Dosojin Matsuri* and *San'yako*, see Den (2018).

01 SV1 *ichiban:, roku ji kara ku ji no aida ni:, (0.4) soo shuuchuushite, soo kite hoshii ttsutte sa, (0.4)*
the_most six o'clock from nine o'clock GEN between at yes densely yes come want say FP
"Between six o'clock to nine, ((we)) want the most ((people)) to come, ((we)) would say."

02 hi#ru*ma ko(h)re(h)ru(h) yatsu +w*[a kite mo ii n[da #kedo *ttsutte. (0.4)+(0.9)
daytime can_come guys TOP come may JD though say
"Those who can come in the daytime may come, though, ((we)) would say."

03 SV2 [(arigatoo) [(ssu::.)]
"Thank you."

sv2 *turns his face to C *receives the coffee *turns his face to SV1
c +gives the coffee to SV2 +walks to the back of SV2->
fig #1 #2

04 AD ma shigoto dekiru yatsu wa na. (0.4)
INJ work capable guys TOP FP
"Well, ((only)) those who are capable of the work ((may come))."

05 SV2 hehehehe *(1.8)+(0.6)
c ->+stands behind SV2->
sv2 *opens coffee->

06 AD osaki(ni)# (itadaitte masu). (0.2)*(0.5)
already_PL have_PL PL
"((Sorry but we are)) drinking ((coffee)) already."

sv2 ->*
fig #3

07 SV2 (konomae) jimukyoku kuru tsuttetta nda kedo, ita tte shibare(h) ne(h)e(h) shi [hehehe *.h hehe .h +.h
the_other_day secretariat come said JD though exist though can_tie NEG and
"The other day ((our)) secretariat said that ((he)) would come, but even if ((he)) comes, ((he)) cannot tie ((the ropes))."

08 VC [h
sv2 *brings coffee to mouth->
c +looks to the snow

09 SV1 (*) ya+ttteru ya. (1.1)
do_IMP FP
"((We could say to him,)) 'Do ().'"

sv2 ->*drinks coffee
c +sits on the snow

10 SV2 iya(h), sore fujin no ie itte nawa nattero ya(h)* 'ttsu(h)'tte(h) (0.#6)%(1.5)*(0.6)v(0.4)*(1.5)
no it women GEN house go ropes twine_IMP FP say
"No, go to the Women's House and twine the ropes', ((we)) would say ((to him))."

sv2 *brings coffee to mouth and drinks it
sv2 *looks down *puts coffee on the ground->
ad %brings coffee to mouth and drinks it
sv1 v#gazes at C->>
fig #4

11 AD ((a *long si(gh))

12 SV1 [Koo]da*i ga ite ichiban shita tte kuro da kke.
Kodai NOM exist the_most young QT black be Q
"Kodai ((is the next grade)), and as for the youngest, is it black?"

sv2 ->*looking down--*looking up->>

13 C (0.5) soo (de)su.
yes PL
"Yes."

14 SV1 (0.1) herumetto. [a, nara ii na, dokomo kabutte [nee kara na:.
hard_hat oh then good FP anywhere overlap NEG because FP
"Hard hats. Oh, then you have no problem, because ((the colors of hard hats of)) all ((the grades)) are different."

15 C [hai.
"Yes."

16 SV2 [ehahahahaha.

Figure 3: Transcript of excerpt 1.

3. Analysis

3.1 Excerpt 1: Sitting Down and Rejoining Conversation

In conversation during preparation of the festival, the participants often go out of and rejoin the conversation for various reasons, e.g. in order to get some stuff relevant to the conversation. Slightly before excerpt 1 (Figure 3, 4), the current chairman (C) had gone out of the conversation, and after a while he came back there. Here we observe how the change of his posture helped him to rejoin the conversation. In the first part of this excerpt (Figure 3, lines 01-03; Figure 4, #1), AD, SV1, SV2 and VC are talking together. In line 01, SV1 suggests when they want their colleagues to come to help them, saying *ichiban:, roku ji kara ku ji no aida ni:, soo shuuchuushite, soo kite hoshii ttsutte sa* ("Between six o'clock to nine, we want the most people to come, we would say."). And SV1 adds a conditional suggestion to his own previous statement, *hiruma koreru yatsu wa kite mo ii nda kedo ttsutte* ("Those who can come in the daytime may come, though, we would say.") (line 02). Before this scene all the four participants were standing and facing each other, but now AD, SV1 and SV2 are squatting. Up to this moment, AD first squatted down and started to drink his coffee, and the SVs followed him, squatting down too.



Figure 4: Transition of participants' posture in excerpt 1.

While SV1 is claiming the conditional suggestion (line 02), C, who had left the conversation in order to get another coffee, comes back and give it to SV2, who had not got coffee before (lines 02-03; Figure 4, #2). First SV2, noticing C approaching him, turns his face to C, and then C gives the coffee to SV2. Receiving the coffee, SV2 says *arigatoo* ("Thank you.") (line 03). Even while SV2 is getting the coffee from and thanking C, SV2's lower body

continues to be mainly involved (Goffman, 1963) in the current conversation, in a body-torqued position (Schegloff, 1998). As soon as he receives the coffee, SV2 turns his face to SV1 again, strongly reorienting to the current interactional space.

Whereas SV2 keeps participating in the conversation with AD, SV1 and VC, C walks to the back of SV2 (lines 03-05), not spatially joining the conversation, that is, continuing to be out of F-formation (Figure 4, #3). In line 04 AD responds to SV1's suggestion (line 02), *ma shigoto dekiru yatsu wa na* ("Well, only those who are capable of the work may come."). Immediately SV2 laughs (line 05), displaying alignment with AD's strict but laughable comment, and opens his coffee (line 05). After a long gap (line 05), AD says to SV2, who is preparing to drink coffee, *osakini itadaite masu* ("Sorry but we are drinking coffee already.")², and the topic of the conversation is tentatively suspended.

Afterward SV2 laughingly says *konomae jimukyoku kuru tsuttetta nda kedo, ita te shibare nee shi* ("The other day our secretariat said that he would come, but even if he comes, he cannot tie the ropes.") (line 07), thereby retopicalizing the concern which had been introduced by AD in line 04, about who should come to help. At the end of the utterance SV2 brings his coffee to his mouth, when C looks to the snow on the ground. And SV2 drinks his coffee while SV1 is responding to him (line 09) (although the content of his response cannot be clearly transcribed), during which C sits on the snow (Figure 4, #4).

After C sits on the snow, SV2 says *iya, sore fujin no ie itte nawa nattero ya tsutte* ("No, go to the Women's House and twine the ropes, we would say to him.") (line 10), which is a joking statement imaginarily addressed to their *jimukyoku* (secretariat). From the end of the utterance SV2 again starts to drink his coffee, and AD also drinks his. Subsequently SV2 looks down and puts his coffee on the ground, when SV1 begins to gaze at C, who is sitting on the snow (line 10).

After a rather long silence, in which multimodal conducts by several participants are observed (line 10), overlapping with a long sigh by AD, SV1 asks a question *Koodai* ((the name of the next chairman from *Mashin*)) *ga ite ichiban shita ite kuro da kke* ("Kodai is the next grade, and as for the youngest, is it black?") (line 12). He does not use any address terms, but SV1 keeps gazing at C, addressing the question to him. Although what he is asking by the question is not clear, in the next turn C answers *soo (de)su* ("Yes.") (line 13). In line 14, responding to C, SC1 utters *herumetto* ("Hard hats."), which is an increment to his own previous question, and subsequently says *a, nara ii na, dokomo kabutte nee kara na:* ("Oh, then you have no problem, because the colors of hard hats of all the grades are different."). SC1's question is about the colors of hard hats of *San'yako* members, which can be similar and thus confusing between the three grades. Through this sequence C is invited to rejoin the conversation by SC1.

When he came back to the conversation, C was standing outside of the F-formation (Figure 4, #3), and therefore he was not a main participant of the conversation, i.e., neither a speaker nor an addressee, but a side-participant (Clark, 1996). On the other hand, afterward he sat down and his level of eyesight was lowered (Figure 4, #4), which seems

to enable him to be directly seen by SV1. The utterance of SV1 was a question which could be answered by either C or VC, as Kodai's superior, in terms of epistemics. However, interestingly, the addressee was not VC, who had been present in the conversation and kept standing all the time, but C, who just arrived back there. C succeeded in rejoining the conversation by sitting down and being gazed at by one of the participants.

3.2 Excerpt 2: Standing up and Integration of Two Conversations

Excerpt 2 (Figure 5, 6) is a conversation a few minutes after excerpt 1. At the beginning of this excerpt, unlike in excerpt 1, the conversation is separated into two groups, that is, they are schisming (Egbert, 1997). AD, SV1 and VC are talking on the left side of the picture, and C and SV2 are talking on the right side (Figure 6, #1). The first half of the transcript indicates that they are respectively conversing, although much of the conversation is unfortunately inaudible because of the recording condition, especially for C and SV2. Now two of the participants of the conversation on the left side are squatting, but afterward they stand up, and the change of their posture contributes to the transformation from two separated conversations into a single conversation.

In lines 01-03 (Figure 5) AD, who works as a woodcutter, talks about his job during the preparation of this festival, although what he says is not clearly understandable. After saying *juuni gatsu ni natte kara yama ()* ("From the beginning of December, the mountain, ().") (line 01), AD, who has been squatting till then (Figure 6, #1), stands up and says *ni kai shika dekite nai* ("I have been able to do it only twice.") (line 03). Responding to him, SV1 nods twice (line 04). At the same time AD slightly steps forward, and then looks to the left, where C and SV2 are talking. However, after two seconds AD returns to the front, thereby reorienting to the current interactional space he is involved in (line 04; Figure 6, #2). In line 05 AD continues to talk to SV1 and VC, *kanzenni (gekkyuu nanoni) dare ga (yaru) ka ()* ("Who does it though monthly paid?"), to which VC responds with laughter (line 06). Subsequently SV1, who works as a woodcutter with AD, also talks about his own job, *kyoo yuki furi soo dakara ika nai kedo ()* ("Today, it is likely to snow, so I won't go.") (line 07). During the utterance of SV1, VC slightly steps forward as if he responded to AD's stepping. At the end of his turn, SV1 stands up, when all the participants are no longer squatting.

While SV1 is standing up, SV2, who has been talking with C, also changes his posture. SV2 turns around and looks back, saying something unclear (*Rei () (suk ka)*) (line 09; Figure 6, #3). *Rei* is C's first name, so SV2 seems to be responding to C's inaudible utterance in lines 04-07. In the direction to which SV2 attends there is a vast field for the fire festival, where other members of *San'yako* are working. After SV2 started to turn around, AD and subsequently SV1 look to the field as well. Through this sequence, the participants, who has been talking separately, come to orient themselves to the same object, that is, the festival field.

After the participants looked to the festival field together, SV2 and SV1 returns to the front again (line 10), when all

² This is a Japanese idiomatic statement to display politeness toward a senior when a junior does something selfish before the

senior do. In this sequence, AD, who is the eldest, is using the idiom as a kind of joke.

<p>01 AD juuni {1} gatsu ni natte kara yama (). December in become from mountain "From the beginning of December, the mountain, ()." 02 (0.4)%(0.1)#(0.2){2}(0.2) ad %stands up-> fig #1 03 ni kai shika dekite nai. (0.2) twice only can_do NEG "((I)) have been able to do ((it)) only twice." 04 SV1 ((nod %3) nod)) (0.2)%(2.0)%(0.4) ad ->%slightly steps forward ad %looks to the left ad %turns to the front 05 AD kanzenni (gekkyuu# nanoni) dare ga (yaru) ka [(). perfectly monthly_pay though who NOM do Q "Who does ((it)) though monthly paid?" 06 VC [hahahaha fig #2 07 SV1 kyoo\$ yuki [furi soo dakara ika{4} [navi kedo (). today snow fall likely because go NEG though "Today, it is likely to snow, so ((I)) won't go." 08 VC [.h .h [()i. vc %slightly steps forward sv1 %looks to the field-> 09 {5}(0.5)%(0.6)#(0.1){6}√ ad %looks to the field-> sv1 %looks to the field-> sv1 ->%looks back-> fig #3 10 (0.4)*(1.3)√(0.7) sv2 ->*returns to the front sv1 %returns to the front-> 11 AD ((a long√ sigh)) sv1 ->%looks to the field 12 (3.9) 13 AD a, %ashi/vta:., (1.1)%(0.7) +ashi%ta (0.5) oh tomorrow tomorrow "Oh, tomorrow, tomorrow," ad ->%looks at SV1 %turns to the left ad %looks down and looks at SV1->> sv1 %looks at AD c +looks at AD 14 SV1 ashita made matte mite mite sono ato:., dooro u[mere#ru yooni natte. tomorrow until wait try that after road can_cover come_to "((We would)) wait until tomorrow, and after that, ((we)) come to be able to cover the road." 15 SV2 [((nod nod nod nod nod)) fig #4</p>	<p>C {1}([.){2} SV2 [((nod)) (2.0) C {3}() () (*).{4} sv2 *turns around (0.4) SV2 {5}(Rei)(*)(suk ka).{6} sv2 Rei do Q ->*looks back-></p>
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Figure 5: Transcript of excerpt 2.



Figure 6: Transition of participants' posture in excerpt 2.

the participants are faced to each other. However, no one starts speaking, but instead AD produces a long sigh and SV1 reorients to the field (line 11). Here the participants' mutual orientation looks weakened, but after a long silence (line 12) AD starts to speak, *a, ashita:* ("Oh, tomorrow,"), looking at SV1 (line 13). Responding to the AD's action, SV1 looks at AD, displaying of reciprocity (Goodwin, 1981; Heath, 1986), but AD suspends his turn and turns to the left, where SV2 and C are standing. C responds to AD's movement and gazes at him. At this moment, all the participants being faced to each other again, their interactional space for conversation, that is, a common F-

formation is set up. Subsequently AD says *ashita* ("tomorrow") again, looking down and then at SV1. Gazed at by AD twice, SV1 starts to say *ashita made matte mite sono ato:*, *dooro umereru yooni natte* ("We would wait until tomorrow, and after that, we come to be able to cover the road."), as if he took over AD's utterance. Then SV2 nods several times as a response to the SV1's utterance. Here both SV2 and C, who were talking separately from AD, SV1 and VC, are invited to join the conversation with them, and the conversation between all the participants is restarted (Figure 6, #4).

In this way, the change of posture of AD and SV1 successfully triggered their conversation, which had been separated into two parts, to be integrated into a single conversation again.

4. Concluding Remarks

This paper suggested that body movements for changing posture, especially sitting down and standing up, can serve as resources for reorganization of participation framework. Sitting down and standing up result in the change of the level of eyesight of participants, which dynamically contributes to reorganization of their interactional space, F-formation.

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