

Abstract

Workshop on *Laughter and Other Interactional Vocalisations in Speech*  
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*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, Act I:  
Some Comparisons of Text and Film

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Interjections in Act I of Edward Albee's play (1962) *Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?* are compared with interjections in the film performance thereof (Nichols, 1966). On a theoretical level, this comparison incorporates a transformation from literacy to orality in performance. Albee's play has been chosen because of the salience of negative verbal affective expressions therein. Interjections include conventional and nonconventional primary interjections, secondary interjections, and onomatopoeia. The comparisons are intended to reveal how both the author of the text and the actors in the film use interjections to express affect and to carry the narrative dynamic of the play forward. Primary response measures include numerosity of interjections, length of interjections in graphemes in the text, and duration in seconds in the performance. Of particular importance are the following phenomena: the oral articulation of stereotypical graphemic representation of laughter in the text (e.g., *ha, ha, ha, ha*) and of graphemic prolongation of interjectional syllables (e.g., *awwwwwwwwwww*), and the use of interjections to differentiate the characters in the play.