

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY  
IN CROSS-CULTURAL PRAGMATICS:  
AN INQUIRY INTO DATA  
COLLECTION PROCEDURES

跨文化语用学  
· 语料收集方法研究 ·

洪岗 著



外语教学与研究出版社  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

浙江(110)目藏图全并图

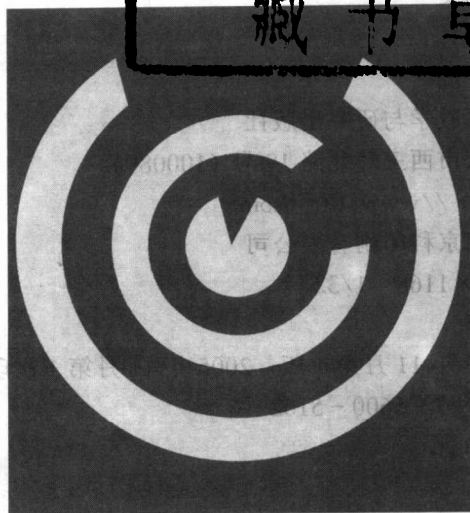
# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN CROSS-CULTURAL PRAGMATICS: AN INQUIRY INTO DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

## 跨文化语用学

语料收集方法研究

江苏工业学院图书馆

藏书章



外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

北京 BEIJING

## 图书在版编目(CIP)数据

跨文化语用学语料收集方法研究 = Research Methodology in Cross-cultural Pragmatics: An Inquiry into Data Collection Procedures / 洪岗著. — 北京: 外语教学与研究出版社, 2005.9

ISBN 7-5600-5162-6

I. 跨… II. 洪… III. 跨文化语用学—语料收集 III. H0-3

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2005) 第 112690 号

出 版 人: 李朋义

责任编辑: 李少林

封面设计: 袁 璐

出版发行: 外语教学与研究出版社

社 址: 北京市西三环北路 19 号 (100089)

网 址: <http://www.fltrp.com>

印 刷: 北京京科印刷有限公司

开 本: 850×1168 1/32

印 张: 6.25

版 次: 2005 年 11 月第 1 版 2005 年 11 月第 1 次印刷

书 号: ISBN 7-5600-5162-6

定 价: 9.90 元

\* \* \*

如有印刷、装订质量问题出版社负责调换

制售盗版必究 举报查实奖励

版权保护办公室举报电话: (010)88817519

## 作者简介



洪岗, 教授、博士。浙江师范大学外国语学院院长、浙江师范大学外国语言学与应用语言学研究所所长、中国语用学研究会常务理事、《外语研究》编委会委员、浙江省哲学社会科学

“十五”规划学科组(语言学)成员、浙江省外文学会副会长、浙江省大学外语教学研究会副会长。在《外语教学与研究》、《外国语》、《现代外语》等刊物上发表论文20余篇。主编、参编《新编语用学概要》、《新编简明英语语言学教程》、《小学生彩图分级英汉词典》等专著、词典、教材10多部。目前研究兴趣主要有跨文化语用学和语际语用学。

在跨文化语用学研究中，语料收集方法一直是令广大研究者困惑的问题。作为国内首部对跨文化语用学研究中的语料收集方法进行系统、全面研究的著作，本书对于从事跨文化语用学及相关领域研究的硕士生、博士生以及其他研究人员，都具有很好的参考价值。

# 序

语用学在二十世纪六、七十年代的崛起是现代语言学发展的必然结果，跨文化语用研究在八、九十年代的兴起又是语用学本身发展到一定阶段的必然结果。语用学家以某一种语言作为语料为依据得出的结论常常会被其他语用学研究者拿到另一种语言上去比较、验证，以测定它的普遍程度，由此在世界各国出现了大量跨文化的语用研究。任何研究都要讲究方法，但令人遗憾的是在大批研究者热衷于对语用原则和现象进行跨文化研究的同时，却很少有人对此类研究的方法进行系统的研究。

本专著的作者洪岗教授是首先注意到这个问题的为数不多的语用学家之一，也许可以说在国内是首先注意到这一缺憾的第一人。洪岗教授对这个问题的觉察源自于他早在八十年代末撰写他的硕士论文之时，那篇论文属于跨文化研究范畴，在写作过程中他便敏感地意识到研究方法的滞后，此后他便十分注意积累国外在跨文化语用研究中所使用的方法，用心琢磨，九十年代中期，他有幸得到去英国进修的机会，师从两位著名的英国语用学大师 G. Leech 和 J. Thomas，更是如虎添翼，如鱼得水，使这个课题的研究有了长足的进展，为他的博士论文和这本专著奠定了坚实的基础。综观洪岗教授对跨文化语用研究方法所倾注的精力和功夫，真可谓是十年磨一剑。

本专著的学术意义和应用价值我想都是显而易见的，无需我赘言。对跨文化语用学的研究方法进行了如此系统研究并撰写成专著的，在国外据我所知并不多见，在国内则可以肯定是第一人。这是我国的语用学界可以引以为豪的一个成果。对许多想做一些跨文化语用研究的硕士生，博士生，以及其他的研究者，洪岗教授的这部专著无疑是一部必读书。它必定会对我国的跨文化研究起到积极的推动作用，使其更规范、更科学、更系统、更有效。

我和洪岗教授相识有近二十年之久，从他是一名年轻的硕士生直到一名在中国的语用学界颇有名声的教授。我始终觉得他是一名很有学术潜力的青年人。近年来他身负教学和行政管理两副重担，但仍然能完成这本很有价值的专著，令人敬佩，可喜可贺。我祝愿洪岗教授在未来的岁月里有更多的著作问世。

何兆熊

2005年8月

# **Preface**

Cross-cultural pragmatics is a relatively new academic discipline; it does not have a developed methodology of its own. Most methods exploited in cross-cultural pragmatics research are borrowed with a little adaptation from other disciplines in social sciences, without fully taking the characteristics of cross-cultural pragmatics into consideration. Controversies have often been found on the research results in the literature of cross-cultural pragmatics research in the past three decades due to the different research methods, different ways of interpreting data, and different conceptions of jargons and other terms employed in the field. This book attempts to provide a data collection methodology that can solve most of the problems found in cross-cultural pragmatics research so far.

It first clears the ground of cross-cultural pragmatics by elucidating the distinction between 'cross-cultural' and 'intercultural', outlines its development and delimits its scope of research. Then it characterizes different types of data-collection methods, discusses their merits and demerits, warns against some pitfalls in using the methods and outlines their scope of application based on a critical review of the data-collection methods employed in some of the most influential cross-cultural pragmatics empirical research in the past three decades. It claims that no single tool is good for everything since



the best screwdriver makes a lousy hammer, and a worse saw. After that, it advances the issue of equivalence in cross-cultural pragmatics empirical research since inconsistencies and even contradictory results have arisen due to the negligence of the issue. It contends that at least five types of equivalence should be addressed to obtain valid and reliable data: research target, situational variable, concept, research instrument and sample. It also suggests ways to achieve these kinds of equivalence in cross-cultural pragmatics research. Based on the above discussion, the thesis proposes an 'observational-eliciting-metapragmatic (OEM) approach' to data-collection, which is expected to solve most of the problems inherent in the data collection procedures employed in the research undertaken so far. However, the data gathered by means of OEM approach alone do not suffice to interpret adequately the research results. Thus, it finally suggests that ethnographic perspectives, which take larger social-cultural contexts into account and examine the linguistic behaviour in a holistic manner, be integrated into data collection and interpretation in cross-cultural pragmatics research.

The issue of equivalence, the OEM approach to data collection together with the integration of ethnographic perspectives will hopefully produce more valid and reliable data and more satisfactory interpretation of the results in cross-cultural pragmatics research.

Finally, it points out that the methods suggested in this book are not a panacea since cross-cultural pragmatics research is still in its early stages. The development of pragmatics requires new methods to satisfy its needs. Methodologies suitable for studying different research objects and questions need to be further explored, just as

Kasper (2000: 340) says, 'Given the decisive impact of data collection on substantive findings and theory construction, research into adequate data gathering methodology remains a lasting concern in pragmatics research'.

This book would not have been possible without the insight and support of numerous teachers, colleagues, and friends. First and foremost, I own my deepest debt of gratitude to my PhD thesis supervisor, Professor He Zhaoxiong who meticulously read and reread the entire manuscript and made detailed comments. His remarkable insights and valuable suggestions have contributed greatly to the completion of this book. I would like to extend my hearty thanks to Professor Xu Yulong, who generously provided the consultation and articles I needed, Dr He Wenzhong, who solved various irritating computer problems for me in the process of my research. I would like to especially thank Dr He Chunyan, who read my drafts, made critical comments and valuable suggestions, and also took pains to proofread the drafts for me.

I wish to express my gratitude to the SBFSS which sponsored my research in Lancaster University, Britain in the year of 1995-1996, during which I began to undertake research on cross-cultural pragmatics methodology and did some of the literature review. At the same time, I would like to thank Professor Geoffrey Leech, who encouraged me to do research in this area, and Jenny Thomas, who supported me to use the interlibrary loan, discussed with me the research work I did in this area at Lancaster University and made critical comments and professional suggestions. I am also grateful to the approval and grant given by the Planning Office of Philosophy and

**Social Science of Zhejiang Province to the project for research.**

**Finally I should like to register a special debt to my father, my mother, my wife and my daughter for their less tangible but no less vital support.**

**All the people referred deserve much of the credit for the virtues of this study and none of the blame for its vices.**

# **Contents**

<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>Cross-Cultural Pragmatics</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1	Introduction	8
2.2	Cross-cultural and inter-cultural: The terminological issue	8
2.3	The development of cross-cultural pragmatics	16
2.3.1	The historical background	16
2.3.2	Preliminary stage	19
2.3.3	Developing stage	20
2.3.4	The flourishing stage	23
2.4	The scope of cross-cultural pragmatics	25
2.4.1	Pragmalinguistics	26
2.4.2	Sociopragmatics	28
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>Data Collection Methods</b>	<b>34</b>
3.1	Introduction	34
3.2	Types of data	35
3.2.1	Qualitative versus quantitative	36
3.2.2	Intuitive versus observational	37
3.3	Types of data collection procedures	38
3.3.1	Instruments for perception	41
3.3.2	Instruments for controlled production	56
3.3.3	Observational instruments for natural speech	82

<b>Chapter 4 Equivalence .....</b>	<b>97</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	97
4.2 Kinds of equivalence .....	100
4.2.1 The equivalence of research targets .....	102
4.2.2 The equivalence of situational variables .....	106
4.2.3 The equivalence of concepts .....	111
4.2.4 The equivalence of research instruments .....	115
4.2.5 The equivalence of samples .....	120
 <b>Chapter 5 Integrating Ethnographic Perspectives Into</b>	
<b>Data Collection .....</b>	<b>125</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	125
5.2 Research employing combined methods for data collection .....	127
5.3 An observational-eliciting-metapragmatic approach .....	138
5.4 Integrating ethnographic perspectives into the OEM approach .....	141
5.4.1 The necessity .....	141
5.4.2 What is ethnography? .....	144
5.4.3 Some principles of ethnographic research .....	145
5.4.4 What support can ethnography lend to cross-cultural pragmatics studies? .....	148
5.4.5 How to integrate ethnographic perspectives into the OEM approach? .....	151
 <b>Chapter 6 Conclusion .....</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>167</b>

## Chapter 1 Introduction

Since Austin proposed his speech act theory in the 1950s (and published in 1962) in his *William James Lectures* at Harvard University and Searle (1969) popularised the notion of speech acts some thirty years ago, it has triggered an unprecedented explosion of interest in the study of language use. In the last two decades, Brown and Levinson's (1978) face-saving theory and Leech's (1983) politeness theory have also generated a wealth of conceptual and empirical research. Groups of scholars large and small in different countries have been undertaking empirical research in more or less systematic ways to verify the universality of the principles and theories governing various kinds of linguistic acts ranging in scope from whole discourses to monosyllabic interjections, at finer and grosser degrees of granularity. Some 500 academic articles have been published in this field in recent years and each year sees a number of M.A. and Ph.D. theses produced in this area. Thus, cross-cultural pragmatics has become a booming academic area.

Since cross-cultural pragmatics is a relatively new academic discipline, it has not developed systematic research methodology of its own. Thus the bulk of cross-cultural pragmatics research has been undertaken in the theoretical and methodological traditions of a number of social sciences, such as linguistics, applied linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, cultural anthropology, ethnography, and communication. Take data-collection method for example. Intuition is obviously a canonical method adopted in traditional linguistics study and observation is a typical instrument employed in cultural anthropology. Role-play that Fraser et al. (1980) introduced

into the study of language use is a compromise between the method of intuition and observation. DCT (Discourse Completion Task), a method that has been most extensively used in cross-cultural pragmatics research, especially in interlanguage pragmatics research, was first developed by Levenston & Blum (1975) to test oral proficiency of adult immigrants of Canada. Not surprisingly, problems of various kinds appear in cross-cultural pragmatic empirical research. In the literature of the past three decades, inconsistencies and even contradictions have arisen on the research results of the same or similar topic due to the different research methods, different ways of interpreting data, and different conceptions of pragmatic terms used in cross-cultural pragmatics research. The past two decades, especially the 1980s frequently saw invalid and unreliable research results because researchers resorted to the same research technique (for example, discourse completion tasks) for convenience though they had different purposes. These problems have drawn researchers' attention to the issue of research methodologies, especially data-collection methods in recent years. Many linguists, especially applied linguists, began to examine closely and revise the techniques they employed.

Among dozens of published articles on research methods, the overwhelming majority have been devoted to data-collection methods and only a few deal with other aspects of research methodology. It is hardly surprising because data-collection occupies the paramount position in empirical research. The most extensively discussed data-collection technique in cross-cultural empirical pragmatics research is DCT. Since DCT was first adapted by an international group of researchers undertaking a project entitled Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Patterns (CCSARP) to investigate

cross-culturally the realisation patterns of two speech acts, namely, requests and apologies, it has been widely used to collect different cross-cultural speech act data. Up to now many researchers such as Wolfson et al. (1989) have examined the validity of DCT and some others like Rose (1992) question the validity of DCT in non-western countries. Rose (1992) compared different forms of DCT (DCT with and without hearer's response); while Beebe & Cummings (1985), Rintell & Mitchell (1989), Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig (1992), Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford (1993) and Hinkel (1997) compared the data collected by means of DCT with written questionnaire, role-play, multiple-choice and observational data. They do find some differences between data obtained through different forms of DCT and between data collected using DCT and those gathered by means of other data-collection methods. Still some others have undertaken research comparing other data-collection methods such as production questionnaire and role-play (Sasaki, 1998), written DCT, oral DCT, field notes and natural conversations (Yuan, 2001). What they have done aims at the same thing — trying to ameliorate the method they use and make it an effective one that can be employed to collect reliable data for cross-cultural pragmatics research. The techniques and methods and their various forms that researchers have developed and examined to collect data in order to answer the myriad of questions that they are stirred to ask are so diverse that many researchers are unfamiliar with more than a few. Green (1995: 1-17) notices that there is a concern that the growing focus on techniques threatens to fractionate the field of pragmatics research into warring camps of paranoid cults, each believing they have found the One True Way to investigate questions of language use. It turns out (hardly surprisingly) that believing in One True Way entails circumscribing



the set of questions that define the field to just those that can be answered by that One True Way, and naturally enough, different ideas about the One True Way determine sets of questions that are not congruent with each other.

Besides the above-mentioned articles dealing with different data-collection methods, we can also find in the linguistics literature a few articles discussing different data-collection methods systematically, for instance, Kasper & Dahl (1991), Hong Gang (1996) and Kasper (2000). Kasper & Dahl (1991) provides a descriptive overview of methods of data collection employed in 39 studies of interlanguage pragmatics with a main focus on the validity of different types of data, in particular, their adequacy to approximate authentic performance of linguistic action. Hong Gang (1996) gives a critical review of the data-collection methods used in some of the most influential research in cross-cultural politeness phenomena. And Kasper (2000) discusses the types of data-collection most commonly used in pragmatics research (not cross-cultural pragmatics research), focusing on the design features of individual data-collection procedures and their applications in pragmatics research. All of the above articles focus exclusively on data-collection methods. The articles on other aspects of cross-cultural pragmatics research we can find so far are Davis & Henze's (1998) and Hudson et al.'s (1992). The former suggests ways to approach issues in cross-cultural pragmatics from an ethnographic perspective and the latter is a technical report of 'a project designed to provide a framework for developing valid tests of cross-cultural pragmatic ability' (1992: 2). Unfortunately, they either discuss a specific aspect or approach it from one particular angle. None of them has attempted to develop a more systematic approach suitable for different purposes in cross-cultural