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English Conversation

英语会话

Amy B. M. Tsui (徐碧美)



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出版前言

去年5月本社出版了从牛津大学出版社引进的19种“牛津应用语言学丛书”,受到了外语教学界师生的一致好评和欢迎,在短短的一年中,重印了4次。为了向我国的外语教学和研究人员提供更多的学术参考专著,帮助读者了解近年来国外应用语言学和外语教学研究的理论,促进我国外语教学的研究和改革,本社又挑选了10本该系列中的精品,奉献给广大读者。希望本套丛书能够对于借鉴国外研究成果和总结我国自己的外语教学经验,形成具有中国特色的外语教学理论有所帮助。

《英语会话》的作者徐碧美(Amy. B. M. Tsui)博士是香港大学课程设置专业的高级讲师,英语教师培训中心主任。本书出版于1994年,至今已重版3次,深受读者的欢迎。

本书作者以真实的环境中自然产生的言语为语料,提出了一个描述会话语句、会话组织和会话发展趋向的框架,并在应对模式的顺序方面提出了独到的见解。

本书第一部分从总体上提出了会话语言描写框架的四个关键问题:描述和分析会话的单位;交际中的话语结构以及预期反应;会话的组织结构;会话过程。第二部分(2、3章)提出了描述和分析会话的框架。第三部分(4-7章)详细讨论了起始言语动向中言语行为的四个分类。第四部分(8-9章)探讨了会话研究中一向易被忽视的方面:反应及被称为后继行为的话语互换。第五部分(10章)重点研究会话过程。本章中应用了作者提出的描写框架,分析了一则电话会话,并讨论了需进一步研讨的会话句型与话语特征。

本书作者借鉴了许多相关领域的理论,诸如言语行为理论、民族方法学、话语分析等,从中获得启示,增强洞察与分析的能力,从而提出了一整套缜密的理论与分析方法,深化对语言的理解。本书作者的研究有利于推动语篇描写、语言理解的发展、改进口语教学。

本书是一本具有启发性的英语会话分析专著,它适用于英语专业、语言学和应用语言学专业的硕士生和博士生,可以作为他们的教材或参考书,对于专门从事会话研究的专家和学者也具有较高的参考价值。

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2000 年 5 月

*In memory of my father, Tsui Wai Ning,
and my mother, Wong Sau Ping.*

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I owe my deepest gratitude to my mentor and friend, John Sinclair, who introduced me to discourse analysis and helped me to understand language. If not for his guidance and encouragement, this book would not have materialized. I thank him for being very critical and demanding and yet very caring and supportive.

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Finally, I wish to dedicate this book to the memory of my father, Tsui Wai Ning, and my mother, Wong Sau Ping, who both died while I was still writing it. I thank them for working very hard to give me a good education and for standing behind me whenever I needed them.

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The author and series editors

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John Sinclair has been Professor of Modern English Language at the University of Birmingham since 1965. His main areas of research are discourse (both spoken and written) and computational linguistics—with particular emphasis on the study of very long texts. He has been consultant/adviser to a number of groups, including, among others, the Bullock Committee, The British Council, and the National Congress for Languages in Education. He holds the title of Adjunct Professor in Jiao Tong University, Shanghai. Professor Sinclair has published extensively, and is currently Editor-in-Chief of the Cobuild project at Birmingham University.

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Foreword

Describing English Language

The Describing English Language series provides much-needed descriptions of modern English. Analysis of extended naturally-occurring texts, spoken and written, and, in particular, computer processing of texts have revealed quite unsuspected patterns of language. Traditional descriptive frameworks are normally not able to account for or accommodate such phenomena, and new approaches are required. This series aims to meet the challenge of describing linguistic features as they are encountered in real contexts of use in extended stretches of discourse. Accordingly, and taking the revelations of recent research into account, each book in the series will make appropriate reference to corpora of naturally-occurring data.

The series will cover most areas of the continuum between theoretical and applied linguistics, converging around the mid-point suggested by the term 'descriptive'. In this way, we believe the series can be of maximum potential usefulness.

One principal aim of the series is to exploit the relevance to teaching of an increased emphasis on the description of naturally-occurring stretches of language. To this end, the books are illustrated with frequent references to examples of language use. Contributors to the series will consider both the substantial changes taking place in our understanding of the English language and the inevitable effect of such changes upon syllabus specifications, design of materials, and choice of method.

John Sinclair, *University of Birmingham*
Ronald Carter, *University of Nottingham*

English Conversation

In this book Amy Tsui subjects patterns of conversational interaction to detailed scrutiny. Using authentic, naturally-occurring data as a source for examples, she offers refinements and extensions to well-developed descriptive frameworks for the analysis of conversational data, and establishes in the process important new insights into the sequencing of patterns of interaction. Dr Tsui is distrustful of traditions in the analysis of conversation which prioritize the negotiable, interpreted, and participant-centred nature of events; instead she is deeply committed to a view of conversation as rule-governed and specifiable. Her study presents a range of carefully-formulated arguments and a wider range still of replicable analyses in support of this view of conversation. It is to her credit that the analyses she provides are sufficiently explicit to encourage further refinement and development in an area of vital importance to the description of longer stretches of text, the teaching of the spoken language, and to linguistic understanding in general.

Ronald Carter

Transcription notations

Data with a label beginning with [B] are telephone conversations and those with a label beginning with [C] are face-to-face conversations. [BCET] stands for Birmingham Collection of English Texts, and the data from this corpus used here consists of face-to-face conversations. [Fieldnotes] consist of conversations which are taken down verbatim after occurrence and texts which are taken from real-life communication such as letters, advertisements, notices, etc. [I] stands for invented data. (Other abbreviations within the square brackets are references to location of the data, and may be ignored by the reader.)

Where the data is taken from published studies, the original notations are retained. Where the data is my own, the following notations are used:

- [Overlapping utterances.
- = A single speaker's utterance which is a continuous flow of speech but has been separated graphically in order to accommodate intervening interruption;
or
a second utterance being latched immediately to the first utterance with no overlap.
- Short untimed pause within an utterance.
- ((*pause*)) Long untimed pause within an utterance.
- ((2 sec)) Timed pause. Pauses are timed only when they illustrate a certain point made.
- (()) Description of non-verbal elements in the conversation, e.g. ((*laugh*)), ((*knock*)).
- (NV) Non-verbal action.
- () Doubtful transcription or indecipherable part of the conversation.
- capitals Prominence, e.g. I have THIRTy at one point.
- ... Intervening utterances which have been taken out.
- // // Tone unit boundary.
- p Proclaiming tone.

Transcription notations

r+/r	Referring tone.
Ø	Oblique orientation (i.e. a level or neutral tone).
<u>YES</u>	Capitals underlined: tonic syllable.
<u>YES</u>	
// <u> </u> //	High key.
// <u>YES</u> //	Mid key.
// <u> </u> //	
<u>YES</u>	Low key.
bc	Back-channel cues.
< >	Interpolated utterance.
{ }	Attempted utterance: an utterance which was started but abandoned because of interruption or overlap.

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