

MASTER'S THESIS

粵語會話話輪替換信號

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Date of Award:
2001

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粵語會話話輪替換信號
The Turn-Shifting Signals
in Spoken Cantonese

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哲學碩士學位課程

香港浸會大學

二零零一年十二月

ABSTRACT

Through the analysis of conversational structure, this study aims at the discovery of the perceptual clues used by the speaker to shift the turn in their talk in order to allow a smooth and successful connection between different turns in conversation. Before taking a closer look at the ways in which these clues participate in the organization of discourse, however, a detailed acoustic analysis of speech has to be made and their distribution in the language is computed. The language of the conversations is Cantonese.

Previous studies that discuss the signals before the closing of an exchange have tended to focus on “syntactically well-structured”, “semantically complete” as well as the peripheral linguistic features “pause” and “accent” in both English and Mandarin. In this article, initial observations of Cantonese data explore that their criteria cannot satisfy to explain the phenomenon. It is clear that the pragmatic point of view should be brought into the discussion and analysis of the issue.

Based on this understanding, in the third part of this article we provide a description of five characteristics of conversation form to be analyzed concerning the aspect of co-occurrence, namely “afterthought”, “question tag”, “particle”, “intonation” and “buffer words”. From the analysis, it is found that only “buffer word” is not used in the utterance final slot. This finding can counter-prove that “buffer word” has a function of keeping a turn. This thesis concludes that the phonetic device “intonation” is the essential signal to indicate an end in a conversation. It must be accompanied by other devices, for example, particle and pause to enhance the

reliability. Besides, 14 ending combinations appear at the TRP are also deduced in the thesis.

Apart from that, the intonation may also appear within a turn that always make use of level tone or an addition of buffer words in the end to indicate that there are still words behind. The prominent characteristic of the two means is that both of them indicate that the present turn has not reached the transition-relevance place (TRP). If the buffer words are added at the end of the above combinations, it means the signal of “letting go the conversation turn” is dismissed. From the preliminary observation of our data, a total of 9 combinations found within turns are impossible to exist in the place where TRP appear.

The conclusion considers some characteristics of the above mentioned turn-recognition strategies, in which one of the most reliable hint to identify the end of the turn is the pattern [*particle + intonation with prominent change in pitch range*] followed by an average 0.869 pause, which is called the model of turn cognition in this study.

提要

本文嘗試透過會話結構〔conversational structure〕來討論話語中聽話人怎樣對口頭語言進行解碼，及憑甚麼信號來判定話輪〔turn〕與話輪之間的「過渡關聯位置」〔transition-relevance place, TRP〕繼而把話輪接過去。

本文先指出「句法穩妥」〔syntactically well-structured〕、「語義完整」〔semantically complete〕及外緣語言特徵〔peripheral linguistic features〕「停頓」〔pause〕和「重音」〔accent〕四者之不足恃，要探討有關課題必須帶入語用學〔pragmatics〕視野，從中加以闡明。據此，本文提出五個必須注意的會話形式特徵〔conversational formal features〕：「追補語」〔afterthought〕、「附加問」〔question tag〕、「語氣詞」〔particle〕、「語調」〔intonation〕、「緩衝詞」〔buffer words〕，並探究它們的共現〔co-occurrence〕情況，其中只有「緩衝詞」不可能出現在話輪末尾，從而反証它保持話輪〔holding the turn〕的功能。本文最後指出只有可感知的語音手段〔phonetic device〕——「語調」才是不可或缺的完結標記，然而語調雖為必要條件，卻非充份條件，所以語調一定要加上其他手段例如語氣助詞和停頓等來增加其可靠性，本文歸納出所有在話輪過渡相關位置上〔TRP〕找得到的 14 種完結組合。

此外，語調形式也可能出現在「話輪內」，完句的語調往往利用「平調」〔level〕或後面加上「緩衝詞」來表示話輪還沒有來到完結之處，「平調」表示後續有話，「緩衝詞」是說話人不想失去話輪，以之來填補話語空間，兩者最大的特色就是顯示當前的話輪還沒有來到「過渡相關位置」〔TRP〕，完輪的組合要是後面加上緩衝詞就等如取消了放棄話輪的信號。就我們對語料的初步觀察，共有 9 種在「話輪內」發現的組合不可能在換輪之處出現。我們最後把話輪的理解策略歸納出一些特徵來，以為最可靠的提示就是：〔語氣助詞 + 音域上下限變化明顯的語調〕 + 平均 0.868 秒的停頓，並稱之為話輪識別模式〔model of turn recognition〕。

目錄

Declaration.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
提要.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v

第一章 前言

1.1 研究目的.....	1
1.2 研究材料.....	4
1.3 拼音系統.....	12
1.4 基本概念.....	14
1.4.1 短時記憶.....	14
1.4.2 信息理解系統.....	16
1.4.3 話輪.....	17
1.4.3.1 文獻回顧.....	17
1.4.3.2 話輪的構成.....	19
1.4.3.3 疑問性話輪.....	22
1.4.3.4 陳述性話輪.....	31
1.4.4 反饋性項目.....	37
1.4.5 換輪模式.....	44
1.4.5.1 重疊〔overlap〕.....	44
1.4.5.2 同時開始〔simultaneous start〕.....	47

1.4.5.3 「A-B-A-B」模式〔turn by turn pattern〕	48
1.5 小結	50
1.6 附注	52

第二章 話輪交替的可能途徑及其問題

2.1 引言	54
2.2 問題的提出	54
2.2.1 以「句法穩妥」〔syntactically well-structured〕為判斷標準的可能性及其問題	54
2.2.2 以「語義完整」〔semantically complete〕為判斷標準的可能性及其問題	57
2.2.3 以外緣的語言特徵〔peripheral linguistic feature〕「停頓」為換輪信號的可能性及其問題	66
2.2.4 以外緣的語言特徵〔peripheral linguistic feature〕「重音」為換輪信號的可能性及其問題	75
2.3 小結	81
2.4 附注	83

第三章 話輪交替信號的可靠性及其限制

3.1 引言	86
3.2 追補成份〔afterthought forms〕	86
3.3 附加問句〔question tag〕	96
3.4 語氣助詞〔particle〕	100
3.5 語調〔intonation〕	113
3.5.1 語調和追補成份的共現	120

3.5.2 語調和附加問句的共現.....	125
3.5.3 語調和語氣助詞的共現.....	127
3.5.4 完句語調和完輪語調.....	137
3.6 緩衝詞的可取消性.....	151
3.7 小結.....	160
3.8 附注.....	163
第四章 總結.....	166
引用資料.....	170
Bibliograghy.....	174
附錄.....	178
履歷.....	254