

Special issue of *East Asian Pragmatics*: Conversation analytic studies of language use in interaction (2)

Introduction

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We are pleased to have this opportunity of presenting a collection of studies of the use of East Asian languages (principally Chinese/Mandarin, Japanese, and Korean) in naturally occurring interactions in ordinary conversation and institutional settings. This is the second of two issues of *East Asian Pragmatics* (2.2 and 3.1) which, we hope will bring to a wider linguistics/pragmatics audience an appreciation of the breadth and vitality of research being conducted from a conversation analytic (CA) perspective, and through these studies, readers who are unfamiliar with CA will obtain a taste of what CA has to offer. As in the previous issue, we solicited these contributions from scholars we knew were doing important and novel work on interactions in their respective languages, using CA to address significant topics and issues in pragmatics. We would welcome the opportunity to showcase more of the research being done in this area, but we hope that these two journal issues together will give a glimpse of the wealth of CA research being done in the field of East Asian languages.

The articles presented here (analysing Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, and Korean interaction), along with those in the previous issue, attest to the 'context-free' and 'context-sensitive' nature of CA methodology, with its wide application to languages beyond English. Over the past few decades, there has been a growing body of research devoted to conducting CA research in East Asian languages, with K. K. Luke's (1990) analysis of utterance particles in Cantonese being one of

the earliest and most influential. Since then, a substantial amount of research in a range of East Asian languages has offered findings that both support existing knowledge about talk-in-interaction and provide new insights based on scrutiny of languages that differ markedly from English, on which early studies of CA were based. These studies have shown that, while much of the rudimentary features of social interaction may be shared across various socio-cultural-linguistic domains, the concrete ways in which aspects of interaction are organised are deeply related to the local pragmatic and grammatical resources available to the participants.

In the first article, Kobin Kendrick contributes to the pragmatic linguistics tradition of studying utterance particles by analysing *ba* in Mandarin Chinese. Kendrick builds on previous work which indicates either that *ba* conveys the speaker's uncertainty or that its purpose is to elicit agreement. By analysing video-recorded, face-to-face social interactions, and taking into account sequence organisation, social action, and epistemics, Kendrick provides support for both views. He finds that the *ba* particle embodies a claim that the speaker has insufficient or incomplete access to the matter formulated in the turn, and in so doing argues that both of the previous approaches are ultimately compatible.

The second article, by Kyu-hyun Kim, investigates the sequential implications of the deployment of the clausal-connective *nuntey* in Korean conversation, in second position to first actions such as offers, requests, account solicitations, and oblique accusations. When used in dispreferred responses, the connective allows the speaker to insert a parenthetical prefatory clause that is incipiently disaffiliative, while simultaneously adumbrating its retractability. This has wide-ranging roles and manifestations, such as for mitigating a forthcoming dispreferred second, for projecting 'escape trajectories' to adumbrate the retractability of an incipient disaffiliative response, and for leveraging an incipient disaffiliative response into an affiliative one. Partly by means of this device, speakers are able to manage the accountability of their actions and stance as well as upholding their moral character.

In another contribution on Korean conversation, in the third article, Younhee Kim examines actions achieved by (slightly variant) self-repetition in child-caregiver interaction and in children's peer talk involving two Korean-English bilingual children and three caregivers. The author shows that (slightly variant) repetition is regularly deployed by both caregivers and children in the face of interactional contingencies, such as some perceived issue with the first saying or the ways in which participants deal with the first saying. It is demonstrated that (slightly variant) repetitions move the sequence forward rather than simply redoing the same action. The author also discusses wider implications of the complex phenomenon of repetition as a site of language usage and practices in children's talk.

The fourth article focuses on institutional interaction. Kushida and Yamakawa analyse psychiatric consultations recorded in a Japanese hospital. In the video-recorded consultations scrutinised here, patients complain about symptoms that continue in spite of treatment, while psychiatrists either formulate them as not requiring a change in treatment or offer no solution. The authors examine the strategies, embedded within a series of moves employed by the psychiatrists to steer the patient away from the complaint, while at the same time maintaining a good relationship. These strategies are revealed to be both transformative, in terms of altering the patient's complaint into a less serious version, as well as being contingent on the way patients complain.

Finally, in the fifth article, Hiroko Tanaka investigates patterns in the relative distribution of laughter between deliverer and recipient of coparticipant criticism in ordinary conversation in Japanese. It is argued that, although solo laughter by either deliverer or recipient of criticism is common, it may be dispreferred for laughter to be 'shared' (i.e., produced simultaneously or in close succession) by both parties to criticism. When only the deliverer or recipient of criticism laughs, the criticism sequence is typically brought to a relatively swift resolution, with the criticised party accepting the criticism. On the other hand, 'shared' laughter in the delivery and reception of coparticipant criticism can signal interactional trouble, requiring considerable work to bring the criticism sequence to a conclusion. The study suggests that the use of laughter in dispreferred environments such as criticism sequences may be more widely shared among different languages than previously thought.