1   Introduction to first edition

The central idea of this book is that ordinary conversation is made up of linguistic strategies that have been thought quintessentially literary. These strategies, which are shaped and elaborated in literary discourse, are pervasive, spontaneous, and functional in ordinary conversation. I call them "involvement strategies" because, I argue, they reflect and simultaneously create interpersonal involvement.

The field of literary scholarship has examined in depth the language of literary discourse. An understanding of the language of everyday conversation is needed as a basis for that, as well as for linguistic scholarship. Although the analysis of conversation is a burgeoning field, for the most part it has been carried out by sociologists and anthropologists more interested in social and cultural processes than in language *per se*. Without devaluing this rich and enriching body of research, much of which is cited in this book, I believe there is plenty of room in the field of conversation analysis for linguists to join in, and a need for the special attention to and knowledge about language which linguists are trained to bring to their subject.

Overview of chapters

The core of analysis in this book is to be found in chapters 3 through 5. Each of these chapters is devoted to exploring a single involvement strategy. Chapter 3 is about repetition, with particular emphasis on the repetition of words and phrases in multi-party casual conversation. Chapter 4 is about "constructed dialogue": the animation of speech framed as a voice other than the speaker's, with emphasis on stories told in conversation. Chapter 5 explores imagery, in particular the images that are evoked by graphic detail, in conversation and a number of other genres. The concluding chapter 6 shows the elaborated interplay of the involvement strategies examined here, plus others, in two artful genres: a novelistic report of a scholarly conference and a political speech modeled on the African-American sermon.

In a sense, repetition underlies all the strategies explored here. That is why chapter 3, entitled "Repetition," is the first and longest of the chapters

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exploring particular involvement strategies. Whereas chapter 3 concerns synchronic repetition: the recurrence of words and collocations of words in the same discourse, chapter 4 concerns diachronic repetition: the recurrence (or, as I argue, the appearance of recurrence) of words in discourse which occurs at a later time. If dialogue is verbal repetition, then imagery, discussed in chapter 5, is visual repetition: the depiction in current discourse of previously experienced visual impressions, things and people seen rather than heard.[1]

The three central chapters, and the book, move from conversational to more deliberately composed genres. This reflects the progression I posit: that conversational discourse provides the source for strategies which are taken up by other, including literary, genres, both spoken and written. Analysis of conversational discourse is the basis of the book and constitutes by far the largest part of it. But briefly at the ends of chapters 3 and 4, at length in chapter 5, and exclusively in chapter 6 I analyze examples of artfully elaborated speaking and writing that use involvement strategies basic to conversation.

Chapter 2, "Involvement in discourse," discusses the concept of involvement and the sources of my understanding and use of it. I then turn to discussing two ways that involvement is created in language: sound and sense. By means of the sound or music of language, hearers and readers are rhythmically involved; at the same time, they are involved by participating in the making of meaning. Then I list and briefly illustrate a range of involvement strategies that work in these two ways. Following this, to specify how linguistic strategies create involvement in discourse, I explore the essentially scenic and musical nature of thought, experience, and discourse. This discussion also emphasizes the association of scenes and music with emotion.

The ordering of the three chapters examining particular involvement strategies, from repetition, to dialogue, to imagery and details, is in a way a movement from relative focus on the music of language to relative focus on meaning, from sound to sense. Repetition is powerfully musical in effect, as repeated forms establish rhythmic patterns. Dialogue palpably embodies both; the meaning expressed is inseparable from the sounds of voices animated, the sounds and rhythms of speech. Imagery and details are primarily a matter of meaning, as words create visual representations of objects, people, and scenes in which they interact, although they are expressed in verbal forms which have sound and shape.

Chapter 3, "Repetition in conversation," focuses on repetition and variation of words, phrases and clauses, with briefer reference to phonological and prosodic repetition, in conversation. It begins with a discussion of the implications of the analysis of repetition for linguistic theory, suggesting that repetition is at the heart not only of how a particular discourse is

created, but how discourse itself is created. I discuss what has been called "prepatterning," "formulaicity," or "idiomaticity": the many ways that any current utterance can be seen as repeating prior utterances. I begin analysis of repetition by reference to prior research. I then suggest that syntactic repetition functions in conversation in production, comprehension, connection, and interaction, and that the congruence of these functions contributes to a fifth, overriding function in conversational coherence. I consider the conventional wisdom by which repetition in conversation is viewed as undesirable. Preparatory to more extensive illustration of repetition in numerous short conversational excerpts, I illustrate the pervasiveness of repetition in conversation and give a sense of the range of forms it can take. I then systematically survey types and functions of repetition by adducing numerous short examples from an extended dinner table conversation. In the next section, I demonstrate a range of forms of repetition operating simultaneously in a single short segment from this conversation and then briefly consider how uses of repetition reflect individual and cultural differences. I next present examples of repetition in excerpts from other discourse types: public speaking (a scholarly talk compared with the published version of the same talk), oratory, and drama. Finally, I demonstrate the automaticity of repetition and discuss neurological evidence for a basic human drive to imitate and repeat. I explore the purpose served by this drive and the significance of automaticity for an understanding of involvement in discourse and of language.

In chapter 4, "Constructing dialogue in conversation," I question the term "reported speech" and claim instead that language framed as dialogue is always constructed dialogue, a creation for which the speaker bears full responsibility and credit. To demonstrate this, I begin by considering examples of reported criticism in everyday conversation. I then discuss the significance of dialogue in discourse in general and in storytelling in particular. Next I present examples of constructed dialogue from a collection of tape recorded, transcribed conversational narratives in order to demonstrate that what is framed as dialogue is not a "report" at all because it was never spoken by anyone. If constructed dialogue does not report speech, what then does it do? To answer this question, I look closely at three different types of narratives which make use of constructed dialogue: a conversational story spontaneously told in a group of American friends, a collection of conversational stories told by Greek women, and a Brazilian man's retelling of the traditional fairy tale, "Little Red Riding Hood." Based on these analyses, I suggest that speakers use constructed dialogue to create scenes peopled by characters in relation to each other, scenes which hearers and readers recreate upon hearing, resulting in both understanding and involvement.

4   Talking voices

Chapter 5 concerns images and details. After an opening intended to demonstrate at the same time that it discusses the emotional power of specific, concrete, imageable details in discourse, I begin analysis by recounting examples of details told in conversation which were effective in communicating the points of stories. Then I discuss the function and placement of details and images in conversational narratives: first, stories told by women in modern Greek about having been molested by men, and then narratives spontaneously told by Americans in conversation. This section ends with examples from two somewhat exotic sources: writing in a small magazine by a local storyteller and columnist, and a fictionalized account of an Australian Aboriginal storytelling. I move then to examining details and images in nonnarrative and quasinarrative conversational discourse. I consider details within the strategy of listing. In the next section I discuss the role of telling details in creating interpersonal rapport in conversation. I then discuss the related idea that the telling of details establishes (romantic) intimacy. After this, I shift to examining an image in a more formal conversational genre, radio talk show talk. This relatively literary example is a blend of speaking and writing in that its key image is recited from memory from a piece that the speaker had written for oral presentation on the radio. It thus serves as a bridge to examining details and images in written literary discourse, including examples from comments by book reviewers, from the novel *Household words*, and from other works of fiction and film. Having presented an example of literary speaking, I next present an example of high-involvement writing, and then discuss a recent trend in journalism toward reporting details which do not contribute significant information to the news report. I consider briefly cultural variability in valuing and using details, and also negative and unsuccessful uses. The concluding discussion recapitulates the significance of details in creating images which contribute to imagining scenes associated with emotion and enabling understanding.

In chapter 6, the concluding chapter, I show how these and other involvement strategies work together in examples of artful discourse. The chapter begins with analysis of a short segment from Mary Catherine Bateson's *Our own metaphor*, a novelistic account of a scholarly conference. I then briefly analyze an excerpt from a journalistic account of Lubavitcher Hasidim, an orthodox Jewish sect living in Brooklyn, New York. In this connection, I discuss the essential nature of interpersonal interaction for understanding all written as well as spoken texts. I then turn to political oratory. To show how the involvement strategies analyzed separately in chapters 3 through 5 work together with each other and with other strategies in another genre, I examine a speech by the Reverend Jesse Jackson. My analysis thus ends with a view toward the continuing investigation of how strategies that are

pervasive and spontaneous in conversation are intertwined and elaborated
in a range of types of private and public discourse.

The book ends with an Afterword in which I comment on an enterprise
to which I intend it to be a contribution: humanistic linguistics.

By way of transition from this introduction to my discussion of involve-
ment in discourse, I comment now on the subfield of linguistics to which
this study belongs: discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is uniquely heterogeneous among the many subdisciplines
of linguistics. In comparison to other subdisciplines of the field, it may seem
almost dismayingly diverse. Thus, the term "variation theory" refers to a par-
ticular combination of theory and method employed in studying a particular
kind of data. The term "conversation analysis," as it is used to refer exclu-
sively to work in the paradigm pioneered by ethnomethodologists Harvey
Sacks and Emanuel Schegloff, refers to a particular combination of theory
and method employed in studying a particular kind of data. The same could
be said of the terms "transformational grammar" and "ethnography of com-
munication." Those who do traditional studies in sociolinguistic variation,
ethnomethodological conversation analysis, extended standard theory, and
ethnography of communication, share assumptions and practices regarding
their theories, methods, and data, as well as, perhaps most importantly, disci-
plinary backgrounds and training. But the term "discourse analysis" does
not refer to a particular method of analysis. It does not entail a single theory
or coherent set of theories. Moreover, the term does not describe a theoreti-
cal perspective or methodological framework at all. It simply describes the
object of study: language beyond the sentence.

Furthermore, language in sequence beyond the sentence is not a particu-
lar, homogeneous kind of data, but an all-inclusive category. Discourse –
language beyond the sentence – is simply *language* – as it occurs, in any
context (including the context of linguistic analysis), in any form (including
two made-up sentences in sequence; a tape recorded conversation, meeting,
or interview; a novel or play). The name for the field "discourse analysis,"
then, says nothing more or other than the term "linguistics": the study of
language. Why then does the field have a separate name? The term devel-
oped, I suspect, to make legitimate types of analysis of types of language
that do not fit into the established subfields of linguistics, more narrowly
focused, which had come to be regarded by many as synonymous with the
name of the discipline, and to encompass work in other disciplines that also
study language. Some of the work of Jakobson, Sapir, and Whorf, were
they working today, would be considered discourse analysis. The term was

not needed in their time because then linguistics did not exclude any of the kinds of linguistic analysis they did.[2]

A recent collection of representative articles in discourse analysis (van Dijk 1985) has been criticized by some reviewers for its heterogeneity: for not reflecting a monolithic theory and a consistent method of analysis. Some critics indulgently shake their heads and suggest that discourse analysis is not "mature" enough to be theoretically and methodologically monolithic. This strikes my ear as similar to the conversational nose-thumbing by which many have learned to apply the psychologically sophisticated epithet "immature" to behavior that does not mesh well with their expectations, or is not to their liking. Discourse analysis will never be monolithic because it does not grow out of a single discipline.

If "discourse" is nothing less than language itself, and "discourse analysis" attempts to admit a broad range of research to the analysis of language, then it is by nature interdisciplinary. Criticisms to which it has been subjected are then the inevitable fate of all interdisciplinary endeavors, as Widdowson (1988:185–6) eloquently describes and explains:

The conventions of the paradigm not only determine which topics are relevant. They determine too the approved manner of dealing with them: what counts as data, evidence and the inference of fact; what can be allowed as axiomatic, what needs to be substantiated by argument or empirical proof. The paradigm, therefore, is a sort of cultural construct. So it is that the disciplines which concern themselves with language, from their different epistemological perspectives, constitute different cultures, different ways of conceiving of language phenomena and different ways of using language to convey their conceptions.
. . . This means that those who try to promote cross-cultural relations by being inter-disciplinary are likely to be ostracized by both sides and to be stigmatized twice over as amateur and mountebank.

Since discourse analysis embraces not just two disciplines but at least nine: linguistics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, literature, rhetoric, philology, speech communication, and philosophy, and there are culturally different subdisciplines within each of these disciplines, the goal of a homogeneous "discipline" with a unified theory, an agreed upon method, and comparable types of data, is not only hopeless but pointless. To achieve such uniformity, were it possible (which it obviously is not; as with Esperanto, uniformity could only mean privileging one linguistic / cultural system and banishing the rest), would defeat the purpose of discourse analysis: to open up the field of language study to make welcome a variety of theories, methods, and types of language to be studied.

To say that discourse analysis is not monolithic is not, however, to exempt individual works (or individuals' work) from having and having to make clear theoretical, methodological, and, when appropriate, empirical

frameworks. My own analysis of discourse grows out of my training in linguistics, with prolonged exposure to anthropology and an earlier background in the study of English and modern Greek literature. From Robin Lakoff I acquired a theoretical framework of politeness phenomena and communicative style. Compatible with and complementary to this is the theoretical framework of conversational inference which I gleaned from John Gumperz. From Lakoff I learned a method of systematic observation of interaction and expository argumentation from accumulated examples, from Gumperz a method of tape recording and transcribing naturally occurring interaction which becomes the basis for interpretive microanalytic exegesis of selected samples. To Wallace Chafe I trace my inclination to combine the recording of naturally occurring conversation with deliberate elicitation of extended discourse, and an abiding interest in comparing speaking and writing. From A. L. Becker I learned to question the metaphors and constraints of "mainstream" contemporary linguistics, and my understanding of "coherence." Paul Friedrich has contributed greatly to my interest in and understanding of poetic language. With the exception of Lakoff, whose training and background were in linguistics and classics, all the scholars I have named stand squarely on feet planted firmly in both linguistics and anthropology. The work of these scholars and others provides the foundation for my analysis of involvement in discourse.

Introduction to second edition

In introducing this new edition of *Talking voices*[1] I have seen my task as
threefold: first, to recontextualize the book in light of current theory;
second, to survey related research that has been carried out since the book's
original publication; and third, to indicate how my own research has built
on and expanded the approach that I introduced and developed here.
Addressing these tasks in that order, I begin with a discussion of the theo-
retical paradigm that this book would now be seen as part of: intertextual-
ity. I discuss how the term has been used, as well as some of the research
that has been done under its rubric. Second, I briefly survey research that
has been done on repetition and dialogue or, as it is still frequently referred
to, reported speech. (I have not come across work done on the topic of
details.) Finally, I indicate how my own research has extended and further
developed the approach to discourse introduced in this book; first, in a
study building most directly upon it – comparison of an author's convers-
ational and fictional accounts of the same incidents – and then in a series of
papers analyzing family discourse.

Intertextuality

In recent years, a rich and varied body of research has been carried out
under the rubric "intertextuality." This term, as G. Allen (2000:5) notes in a
book that takes the term as its title, "foregrounds notions of relationality,
interconnectedness and interdependence in modern cultural life." Allen
includes in his analysis nonlinguistic domains such as architecture and
painting. For linguists, though – and for this book – intertextuality refers to
"notions of relationality, interconnectedness and interdependence" in dis-
course.

A field in which intertextuality has become a key focus is linguistic
anthropology, as reflected in a special issue of the *Journal of Linguistic
Anthropology* entitled "Discourse across speech events: Intertextuality
and interdiscursivity in social life" (Agha and Wortham 2005). The issue
gathers articles that, as its co-editor Asif Agha (2005:1) explains in the

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Introduction, "explore the many ways in which features of discourse establish forms of connectivity across events of [*sic*] using discourse." For linguistic anthropologists, Agha continues, the notion of intertextuality serves to "open up our traditional concern with communicative events to a concern with social processes that consist of many events, ordered or linked to each other in time." The ordering or linking of discourse events is referred to by a range of terms. In addition to "interdiscursivity," which appears in most of the papers included in the issue, we find "interdiscursive indexicalities" and "interdiscursive speech genre" (Michael Silverstein), "discourse enregisterment" (Asif Agha), "interdiscursive chains" (James M. Wilce), "interdiscursive fabric" (Judith Irvine), "chains or trajectories of events" leading to "trajectories of socialization" (Stanton Wortham), "intertextual series" (Jane Hill), and "intertextual sexuality" (Kira Hall).

"Intertextuality," then, in its many guises, refers to the insight that meaning in language results from a complex of relationships linking items within a discourse and linking current to prior instances of language. Rereading the original introduction to this book, I was intrigued to see that the term "intertextuality" appears, but at the time its provenance was so narrow that I did not include it in the index. Noting that it was used primarily by literary theorists, I referred to the term in the context of "joint production" – the theoretical perspective that discourse is not the sole production of a speaker, but rather the joint production of speaker and listener or (since the very terms "speaker" and "listener" misleadingly indicate one active and one passive participant) "interlocutors" or "interactants."

Now I would use the term "intertextuality" to describe the topic of the entire book. The topic of the first analytic chapter, repetition, as I note in chapter 1, encompasses the linguistic strategies that are examined in subsequent chapters. It is self-evident that "intertextuality" describes the subject of the first and longest analysis chapter, repetition: ways that meaning is created by the recurrence and recontextualization of words and phrases in discourse. The first chapter focuses in particular on what I call "synchronic repetition," by which I mean the recurrence of words, and collocations of words, within a conversation or text. The topic of the second analytic chapter, "dialogue" – the representation of speech in discourse – is also about the relationship between a current utterance and a prior one, insofar as it frames utterances as representations of what someone said or thought in the past – although, as I demonstrate, the dialogue often bears no relation to any actual prior utterance but rather frames a current utterance as dialogue in order to dramatize the speaker's evaluation of it and to create a recognizable scene as well as captivating rhythm. This too, however, can be thought of as a kind of diachronic repetition, because it depends for meaning on a connection to previously experienced discourse. The final linguistic strategy I examine, details, is

a kind of visual repetition: like dialogue, details convey meaning by associa-tion with previously experienced interactions. Thus, in examining repetition, dialogue, and details, I explore (in G. Allen's definition) "relationality, inter-connectedness and interdependence" in language, or (in Agha's) "the many ways in which features of discourse establish forms of connectivity."

Intertextuality and repetition

In *Talking voices* I lay the groundwork for the theoretical framework I develop by discussing the work of Gregory Bateson, A. L. Becker, and Mikhail Bakhtin. Here I will say a bit more about how these scholars' work relates to the concept of intertextuality as it has recently been used.

Bateson (1979) gives us a vision of an overarching concept of intertextual-ity in *Mind and nature*, where he argues that all meaning emerges from "pat-terns that connect," where patterns are created by "repetition and rhythm." As his title indicates, Bateson shows that this is true in the natural world as well as in humans' ways of thinking about and understanding that world (10). To exemplify this insight, Bateson notes that a crab is characterized by two claws (repetition) and that each claw exhibits the same pattern of parts (also repetition). The same holds true for language. It is misleading, he explains, to say that a noun is the "name of a person, place, or thing" or that a verb is "an action word." Rather, "a noun is a word having a certain relation-ship to a predicate. A verb has a certain relation to a noun, its subject" (18).

Thus, Bateson argues, things exist only in their relation to other things. It is likewise misleading to say that a stone, for example, is hard or stationary:

"The stone is hard" means a) that when poked it resisted penetration and b) that certain continual interactions among the molecular *parts* of the stone in some way bond the parts together.

"The stone is stationary" comments on the location of the stone relative to the location of the speaker and other possible moving things. It also comments on matters internal to the stone: its inertia, lack of internal distortion, lack of friction at the surface, and so on.

In other words, " 'things' . . . are made 'real' by their internal relations and by their behavior in relationship with other things and with the speaker" (67). These two types of relational patterns – on one hand, internal, and, on the other hand, with the speaker and with other things, correspond, respec-tively, to patterns of repetition which I here refer to as "synchronic" and "diachronic."

Bateson's most direct descendant in linguistics, A. L. Becker, argues that "grammar is context shaping" (1995:189). In Becker's holistic and deeply humanistic view, "languaging" (the term he prefers to the more static "lan-guage") "is context shaping":