MULTIMODAL TURN-TAKING

Anthony Baldry and Paul Thibault

This talk looks at multimodal turn taking and reports on joint work in relation to the analysis of the BBC’s *Hardtalk* interviews (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/programmes/hardtalk/). It is part of research into multimodal corpus linguistics (Baldry and Thibault, 2001, 2006b, 2008) which suggests that this type of approach can add new and valuable dimensions to work in corpus linguistics in general.

Anthony Baldry will look at the macro aspects of multimodal turn-taking (Baldry 2000: 14-6) reviewing pair and group turn-taking (Baldry, 2005b) in relation to both distance and face-to-face interactions (Baldry, 2005a) suggesting the added value of multimodal approaches to turn-taking vis-à-vis classic descriptions (e.g. Coulthard, 1985; Goffman, 1981; Sacks et al 1974).

Paul Thibault will carry out a fine-grained micro-analysis of turn-taking within a scalar system of multimodal text analysis (Baldry and Thibault, 2006a). In this framework, he will consider the exploratory and coordinative nature of “turns”. These will be discussed in relation to the norms and conventions of the (*Hardtalk*) television interview. Against the widespread view that meaning-making is reducible to predictable arrangements or sequences of determinate textual or discourse-level units such that interaction reduces to “text-in-context”, Thibault will focus on real-time bodily activity and dynamics as the basis around which emergent understandings and actions are coordinated (Thibault 2004: 194-201, 2008). In engaging with multimodal analysis, he will illustrate some of the ways in which these perspectives can be analysed and theorized (Thibault 2003, 2005). In doing so, the audience will be invited to think anew about the nature of “language” itself and how we can feed this thinking back into our conception of multimodal corpus linguistics.

References


