Chapter 6
Summary and Discussion

ABSTRACT

The book developed an approach to interviewing that takes, as its point of reference, a functional communication theory and uses some of its units for conceptualizing interviewing practices in terms of canonical genres and textual strategies. Planning interview protocols now involves a process of assigning canonical genres to the candidate questions. During the interview process, enactment practices facilitate the smooth enactment of the interview and aids interviewers in reflecting and learning in both static and go-along interviews. In the final chapter, the argument and findings of the book are summarized and future research directions for this approach to interviews and interviewing are suggested. The domains of interest in the book have been related to organizations and business. Potential future applications are suggested that involve the storing, processing and manipulation of interview texts and the searching and retrieval of generically coded segments that can benefit knowledge and experience management in organizations.

INTRODUCTION

There are three main aims of the chapter. The first aim is to summarize the argument employed in the book. Functional communicative theory and a selection of its resources can form the foundation for planning interviews as well as conducting them. Specific resources used for this purpose include canonical genres that act as communication patterns, their associated textual strategies, as well as so-called enactment practices that facilitate interviewees
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in packaging up their responses. Enactment practices are identified for conventional, static interviews, and also for the special case of go-along interviews. Enactment practices for static interviews are also applicable to go-along interviews although the reverse is not true (hence the special case status of go-along interviews). Selected canonical genres, textual strategies, and enactment practices form the focus of the book, *Elicitation Strategies for Interviewing and Fieldwork*

The second aim of the chapter has been to identify the contributions of this approach. Theoretical contributions include describing the planning and process of interviewing from a functional linguistic perspective and also selecting appropriate methods for interviewing and fieldwork. The concept of an elicitation strategy represents a contribution from a methodological standpoint, specifically the development of a methodological framework. Employing it, a particular probe is elicited for specific canonical genre that leads to a response being packaged in such a way as to ensure its greatest chance of being intelligible and useful to both interviewer and interviewee. A significant component of elicitation strategies are enactment practices that facilitate conventional and go-along interviews. These involve a range of concepts that have never previously been exemplified or proposed in the literature.

The third and final aim of the chapter is to suggest future directions for this research. Some of these are immediate, supplement the descriptions of the canonical genres with diagnostic language features, as well as formulating methods for the many enactment practices identified in this study. The book must be supplemented by others in the medium-term that move these ideas from exploratory to confirmatory research and apply them in other domains of study where interviewing is a central research activity. Another medium-term goal is to develop tools to support the formulation of interview protocols and to support the actual interview process. These tools need to be tested for utility and usability in field conditions. This work needs to supplement the long-term future research directions of providing information systems to support the capture, organization, processing and management of textual resources in organizations (audio, transcripts, and so on) with extensible and open system architectures. Using these information systems, entirely new applications will be achievable for organizations.