

Japanese Inversion and Organization of Talk: A View from Conversation Analysis

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0. Introduction

A grammatical phenomenon can be studied from various points of view. Japanese inversions (so-called *touchi*) can be discussed from a discourse perspective. This paper employs the framework known as Conversation Analysis (CA) to investigate the relationship between inversions and organization of talk. Students of CA make the following three assumptions: (i) interaction is structurally organized, (ii) contributions to interaction are contextually oriented, and (iii) these two properties inhere in the details of interaction, so that no order of detail can be dismissed, *a priori*, as disorderly, accidental or irrelevant (Heritage 1984a, 1989). These assumptions lead to the view that "the meaning of a particular utterance (including the sense of particular descriptive terms) is indexical to a specific context and purpose" (Schiffrin 1994). Conversation Analysts' (e.g. Sacks 1992) research procedures reflect this particular view. They first collect recurrent patterns in the data and hypothesize sequential expectations based on them. Then they show that such sequential expectations actually are oriented to by participants, and that, "as a consequence of such expectations, while some organizational problems are resolved, others are actually created, for which further organizations will be required" (Levinson 1983: 326). Thus, focus here will be on how inversions, as a recurrent pattern in conversation, contribute to the participants' way of constructing systematic solutions to recurrent organizational problems of talk, specifically, inversions as self-repair devices, and how they are applied to the management of the topic of the conversation (cf. Ono and Suzuki 1992).

1. Adjacency pair and context-shaped utterance

This paper looks at the data from the perspective of how three inverted utterances are locally organized in talk in terms of a particular action sequence, the adjacency pair. This adjacency pair notion developed as a "normative framework for actions" (Heritage 1984a: 247) in CA, and defines it as follows: (i) A sequence of two utterances, which are (ii) adjacent, (iii) produced by different speakers, (iv) ordered as a first part and second part, and (v) typed so that a first part requires a particular second part (or range of second part) (Heritage 1984a: 246). In CA, the existence of adjacency pair organization (e.g. greeting-greeting, Q-A, invitation-acceptance/rejection) and its local

organization with regard to the entire interaction has been discussed. However, as will be seen shortly, 'adjacency' does not require that a particular first pair part (e.g. greeting) is always returned with a second pair part immediately (e.g. greeting), nor does it require that the second pair part is always placed in the next turn. In other words, as Heritage (1984: 252) points out, CA does not claim the adjacency pair notion "as an invariantly implemented structure for particular kinds of actions." Rather, the normative character of adjacency pair structure is revealed by breaches. In the present discussion, it will be seen that three inverted utterances are related to the second pair part of Q-A and assessment-reply pairs.

The following data (1) show that an inverted utterance (1d) appears as a second pair part of Q-A adjacency structure. Note that the first pair part (i.e. a question) in (1a) and the second pair part (1d) are separated by an insertion sequence (1b-c):

- (1) (a) B: e: ? buihati? konna no nonderu no?
 (b) A: dame?
 (c) B: iya iya iya damezyanai kedo,
 (d) A: datte: datte ano aihaisu tte sa: nanka sono asa tukuru no,
zibun de.
 (e) [de tyoisu ga ammari [nai no.
 (f) B: [huun [ii n da kedo.
- English gloss:
- (a) B: What? V8? Do you drink this?
 (b) A: No good?
 (c) B: No, no, no. I'm not saying that it's not good but,
 (d) A: Because we make [our own breakfast] ourselves.
 (e) And we don't have much choice.
 (f) B: I see.

Before the discussion of the position of the inversion in this particular data set, how the preceding exchange is organized should be examined. B's utterance *e: ? buihati? konna no nonderu no?* 'What? V8? Do you drink this?' (1a) takes a question format, i.e. truncated/colloquial plain form of the verb *nonderu* plus a sentence final particle *no* with rising intonation. The object of drinking is marked with *konna no* 'such a thing as this', which presumably expresses the speaker's negative evaluation of the referent. Further, note that *nonderu* expresses a progressive action for a certain period of time rather than referring to the action in progress at the time of the utterance. Although B uses a question format, he expresses his low-evaluation toward the beverage which A may have been drinking for lunch. That is, (1a) is construed as B's assessment of that particular drink. This assessment invites A's question *dame?* 'No good?' (1b), which is used to request B's explanation of why he

expresses his low-evaluation of this particular drink. Note that this is a beginning of an insertion sequence (1b-c); the question provided in (1a) remains unanswered in this turn. On the other hand, this initiation of an insertion sequence is also a question requiring an explanation from B. Recall that Q-A format predicts that a question provides a slot for an answer. The question of (1b) *dame?* 'No good?' now requires a response from B, and B provides an answer to this question in (1c), adjacent to (1b).

It is observed that *konna no nonderu no?* (1a) is the speaker's evaluation in the form of a question. In this context it can be noticed that A's utterance, while not answering the question (1a), does display an analyzable relatedness to it. It is this relatedness which provides its warrant to occur where it does. That is, (1b) is not an 'out-of-context' utterance; its relatedness is confirmed by the very utterance of B in (1c), which could be a third position repair (i.e. A's understanding of B's utterance is shown in (1b), and if this understanding needs a correction, B could 'repair' this understanding with restatement).

Meanwhile, although it seems that A's utterance (1d) is not directly related to the preceding context (1c), it is actually not (1c) but (1a) which provides this particular slot. In this case, therefore, an inverted utterance *datte: datte ano aihausu tte sa: nanka sono asa tukuru no, zibun de* 'Because we make our own breakfast ourselves' is realized as a second pair part of Q-A structure. It has been argued in CA literature that Q-A structure is a typical adjacency pair. However, although (1a) takes the format of a colloquial yes-no question, what is provided in (1d) is not the answer to this question but an explanation; *hai* 'yes', *un* 'yes' or *iee* 'no' does not appear at the beginning of the utterance but A begins with *datte*: 'because'. This particular utterance (1d), therefore, shows how A construed B's question in (1a). Heritage (1984: 255) says,

"The point here, and it is a crucial one, is that *however* the recipient analyzes the first utterance and whatever the conclusion of such an analysis, *some analysis, understanding or appreciation of the prior turn will be displayed in the recipient's next turn at talk.*"

Regardless of B's intention in uttering (1a), A hears it as a low-evaluation of her possession. This point is confirmed by the fact that (1a) is not followed by an answer to the question but a counter-question to B's assessment. This very point of A's provision of an explanation reveals that A hears (1a) as a wh-question, asking *why* she has the drink, rather than a simple yes-no question.

The notion of 'preference organization', especially assessment-reply structure (Heritage 1984a; Levinson 1983; Pomerantz 1984), is indispensable in the observation of how an inverted utterance is locally organized in the data (2). The notion indicates that there are responses preferred over others in adjacency pairs (Levinson 1983: 307). However, it should be noted here that such preference is not based on the speaker's psychological state or individual preference (Heritage 1989). Preferred actions are performed "directly and with little or no delay" (*ibid.*), while dispreferred actions show such 'marked' features as

"(1) the action is delayed within its turn or across a sequence of turns; (2) the action is commonly prefaced or qualified within the turn in which it occurs; (3) the action is commonly accomplished in mitigated or indirect form and (4) the action is usually accounted for" (Heritage 1989)

Pomerantz (1984) observes that dispreferred second action, namely, disagreement, is routinely avoided, withheld or delayed when agreement is preferred (see next data (3) discussed below, in which speaker's self-deprecations prefer disagreement). In the following data (2), two inversions are observed, i.e. (2g) and (2k), which are both captured in terms of preference organization. Because of the limitation of space, the discussion is focused on the latter case.

- (2) (a) A: demo kare wa maa okanemoti da mon ne. dokutaa X.
 (b) B: @ dokutaa X.
 (c) A: soo ne,
 (d) B: bonbon tte yuu ka /??/ aa koitu wa bonbon kana /??/?/ aa koitu wa bonbon da na tte yuu..
 (e) A: soo.. omou kedo, demo nanka sodati no ii tokoro ga ii na to omotte.
 (f) B: so so so. [aru aru aru. aru aru.
 (g) A: [atasi soo yuu hito tte tukiaiyasui kara suki, **gatugatu siteru yori mo.**
 (h) B: demo demo ano nitiyoo no misa ni konaika tte yuu..
 [are dake wa =
 (i) A: [a doo sita? [yameta? itta?
 (j) B: [=yamete hosikatta.. iya, iya, iya
 ikanakatta yo.
 (k) A: mmm.. a demo kekkoo kare wa tyotto kinisiteta n zya nai?
ammari kyoosei sitya ikenai tte yuu no.
 (l) demo warito.. tika razuyokatta?
 (m) B: un. tika razuyokatta.
- English gloss:
- (a) A: But he is rich, right? Doctor X [last name].
 (b) B: Ha ha ha. Doctor X.
 (c) A: Let's see,
 (d) B: I wondered if he was naive /??/...
 and I was sure that he was naive.
 (e) A: Yea, I think so too, but I think his having manners is good.
 (f) B: Right, right, right.

- (g) A: I like that type of person rather than an ill-mannered person because they are comfortable to be with.
- (h) B: But, but I didn't want him to ask me to come to Sunday mass.
- (i) A: What happened? Didn't you go there or did you?
- (j) B: No, no, no, I didn't.
- (k) A: I see. But I think he was worrying about it, wasn't he? About that putting too much pressure (on you) is not good.
- (l) B: But ... was it forceful?
- (m) B: Yeah. He was insisting.

B says that he felt discomfort when X, whom A and B know, invited him to Sunday mass. *Demo demo ano nitiyoo no misa ni konai ka tte yuu .. are dake wa yamete hosikatta* 'But, but I didn't want him to ask me to come to Sunday mass' (2h-j) is an assessment that expresses B's personal opinion of X. This statement is comparable with A's preceding assessment on the same person,

- (2e) A: soo.. omou kedo, demo nanka sodati no ii tokoro ga ii na to omotte.
'Yes, I think so, too but I think his having manners is good.'
- (2g) A: atasi soo yuu hito tte tukiaiyasui kara suki, **gatugatu siteiru yori mo.**
'I like that type of person rather than an ill-mannered person because they are comfortable to be with.'

Note that B's assessment expressed in (2h-j) opposes A's, in (2e) and (2g). Although (2h-j) is a first pair part of assessment-reply structure, what appears in the next turn of A is not the second pair part of the structure. *A doosita? yameta? itta?* 'What happened? Didn't you go there or did you?' does not serve as a second pair part of an adjacency pair because, as a normative structure, it is assumed that assessment requires a particular second pair part such as agreement or disagreement of the hearer. Rather, (2i) is a first pair part of Q-A structure serving as an insertion sequence. Thus, although it is an insertion sequence, this particular utterance (2i) requires an answer from B. Note that B's response to this question, *iya, iya, iya ikanakatta yo* 'No no no, I didn't go [there]' is not a correction of A's utterance -- B could correct A's utterance if B thinks that A does not understand what B said in (2h-j), i.e. third-position repair. Instead, this answer of B (2j) shows that this insertion sequence is not misplaced in the structure.

It was observed that B's assessment (2h-j) is followed by an insertion sequence, a Q-A pair (2i-j). After this insertion sequence, A takes the turn. It is reasonable to expect a reply to B's assessment in this position. This utterance (2k) is not irrelevant to the preceding context because it shows some features of dispreferred second part in assessment-reply (or generally preferred organization). The reply, *a demo kekkoo kare wa tyotto kinisiteta n zya nai?* 'But I think he was worrying about it, wasn't he?' is delayed due to *mmm...* which shows that the speaker is thinking

something. It should also be pointed out that *n zya nai?* 'isn't it?' is a kind of hedge (R. Lakoff 1980) mitigating the power of assertion and inviting the hearer's agreement. These features indicate that (2k) is a particular utterance directed to B's assessment, and that it is a dispreferred second action. In other words, what is observed here is an instance of "first pair parts making a limited set of second pair parts relevant next" (Schegloff 1988: 113).

The following data (3) constitute an interesting case with regard to (i) intersubjectivity, namely, how the hearer interprets the preceding context, and (ii) an inverted utterance that occurs as a repair device (Schegloff et al. 1977).

- (3) (a) A: tatoeba ima atasi ga nihon ni kaettara minna aa hutotta na to
omou kamo sirenai
(b) B: a honto?
(c) A: wakannai [kedo
(d) B: [so?
(e) A: a demo dakara..
(f) B: a: mainiti atteru kara kamo sirenai.
(g) A: @ dakara nikiro gurai na n da kedo, **taizyuu de hueta no wa...**
(h) demo yappari kaeru to syokku daroo na.

English gloss:

- (a) A: If I go back to Japan now, maybe everybody will think that I
gained some weight.
(b) B: Really?
(c) A: I'm not sure...
(d) B: Is that so?
(e) A: But, so ..
(f) B: [the reason I haven't noticed is] maybe because I see you
everyday.
(g) A: About two kilograms though, I gained.
(h) I will be shocked if I go back [to Japan].

A's mentioning her own weight gain, *tatoeba ima atasi ga nihon ni kaettara minna aa hutotta na to omou kamo sirenai* 'If I go back to Japan now, maybe everybody will think that I gained some weight' (3a) is a self-deprecating statement (Pomerantz 1984) in assessment-reply (agreement/disagreement) structure. It is self-deprecation in that she imagines people's reaction to her weight gain, *aa hutotta na* 'oh you gained weight' and takes it as a sign of potential negative evaluation by people. In other words, instead of saying that she dislikes her weight gain (self-evaluation), she is interested in how people react to it and how this reaction affects herself, i.e. it would shock her (cf. the

restatement of the point in (3h)). As seen above, a particular first pair part of adjacency pair requires a particular second. Pomerantz (1984) argues that in the case of self-deprecation, what is preferred in the next turn is the hearer's disagreement.

Note that B's response to this assessment, *a honto?* 'really?' (3b) is alien to disagreement or agreement. Also, this question does not refer to people's reaction, i.e. 'would they really think so?', which does not make sense in this context. Rather, this question refers to her weight gain; B is asking whether A really gained weight to the extent that people would notice some change. It is interesting that A, upon hearing B's utterance (3b), construes what B wants to know by saying *honto?* 'really?' is whether or not people in Japan would really think so, which is strange in this context. *Wakannai kedo* 'I'm not sure, but' (3c) is the statement of a situation in which the speaker lacks certain information required in the previous turn. What is certain is that A herself recognizes that she has gained weight. It is unlikely that A says that she is unsure about her weight gain because in (1a) it is obvious that she worries about people's reaction to it. Rather, this utterance shows that she is not sure about people's reaction; A interprets B's question as concerned with people's reaction to her change.

B's next utterance *so?* 'Is that so?' can be construed referring either to A's preceding utterance *wakannai* 'I don't know' or to the same question as (3b) which refers to the weight gain. *A demo dakara* .. 'But, so..' (3e) shows that she notices that B is actually referring to her weight gain but not to people's reaction; a 'oh' at this beginning of this utterance seems to indicate a change-of-state token (Heritage 1984b). *Dakara* 'so' is a common device to summarize or to restate the speaker's point. Then what is A's point in this interaction? Recall that utterance (3a) is a self-deprecation, and it requires a dispreferred second pair part as a reply, which has not been provided so far. In a sense, therefore, (3e) is an attempt to repair the situation in which B has doubts about her weight gain -- weight gain itself is not the point of the initial utterance (3a). This attempt is interrupted by B's next utterance, in which he provides a reason for not having noticed her weight gain. This recognition of weight gain is the admittance of the likelihood of people's reaction, and it further indicates that he acknowledges her weight gain. It is a dispreferred second in the current assessment-reply structure. The inverted utterance (3g) occurs as a delayed repair in the next position. It is a statement of how much weight she gained, which has interested B in the preceding interaction, although not the point of the assessment-reply structure. Because the self-deprecation is replied to by a dispreferred second acknowledging her weight gain and her change, another attempt at self-deprecation is made in the next turn of A, *demo yappari kaeru to syokku daroo na* 'I will be shocked if I go back [to Japan]'.

The above discussions involving three data sets demonstrate how inversions are locally organized in talk: they are structurally organized as a second pair part of Q-A structure and as a repair in assessment-reply structure. These observations confirm CA's claim that any participant's communicative action is contextual; an utterance is 'context-shaped' because "its contribution to an

ongoing sequence of actions cannot be adequately understood except by reference to the context in which it participates" (Heritage 1989: 22). This CA assumption implies that a speaker designs his/her utterance with reference to the preceding context. However, the problem of how particular utterances are related to the following context, namely the 'context-renewing' aspect of the participant's particular action (Heritage 1984a, 1989), remains.

2. Context renewing and maintenance of floor

It is claimed in CA that "any particular participant's communicative action is doubly contextual" (Heritage 1984a, 1989) -- context-shaped and context-renewing. How a particular utterance, the inverted utterance, is contextually-shaped by the preceding context has been considered. With regard to this latter contextual feature, context-renewing, Heritage writes,

"Communicative action is also context-renewing. Since every current utterance will itself form the immediate context for some next action in a sequence, it will inevitably contribute to the contextual framework in terms of which the next action will be understood. In this sense, the context of a next action is inevitably renewed with each current action. Moreover each current action will, by the same token, function to renew (i.e. maintain, adjust or alter) any broader or more generally prevailing sense of context which is the object of the participants' orientations and actions." (1989: 22-23)

This argument can be expanded to consider how particular utterances (in our case, three inverted utterances) form an immediate context for the next turn. The concern of the role the inverted elements play in context-renewing function is of special interest.

What is observed in all three data sets discussed above is that the speaker retains her turn after the inverted utterance (English glosses are omitted):

- (1) (c) A: datte: datte ano aihaisu tte sa: nanka sono asa tukuru no,
zibun de.
- (d) de tyoisu ga ammari nai no.
- (3) (g) A: @ dakara nikiro gurai na n da kedo, **taizyuu de hueta no wa..**
- (h) demo yappari kaeru to syokku daroo na.
- (2) (k) A: mmm.. a demo kekkoo kare wa tyotto kinisiteta n zya nai?
ammari kyoosei sitya ikenai tte yuu no.
- (l) demo warito.. tikarazuyokatta?

The first pair part of Q-A and assessment-reply structure project what type of second part is required (cf. (1) and (2)), and a repair occurs as a result of the delayed repair (cf. (3)). That is, each inverted utterance is indexical to the preceding context, enabling the speaker to orient herself. Her orientation to the context is revealed in the inverted utterances. This speaker's orientation, without being interrupted by the other interlocutor, is maintained in the next utterance.

(1c) is a second pair part of Q-A structure, i.e. an explanation. This explanation mode is maintained in the next utterance as well. *De toyisu ga ammari nai no* 'And we don't have much choice' (1d) is not irrelevant to the preceding utterance. Rather, this pair of utterances should be construed to form a unit of explanation -- lack of either of these two components would result in an incomplete explanation. Note also that the question that triggers this explanation is also construed as B's assessment. The provision of this piece of information functions not only as an explanation but also as a dispreferred second to oppose the low-evaluation directed to A's possession, which presumably reflects A's personal preference. In this regard, the inverted element, *zibun de* 'by ourselves' is not a dispensable element because she acknowledges that it is she who actually selects the content of her lunch. Despite her own preference, she says, she has no choice but to select this particular drink (1d) because of the limited number of items available.

Another instance is observable in the sequence of utterances (3g-h) where the speaker's orientation to the context is maintained. The inverted utterance, @ *dakara nikiro gurai na n da kedo, taizyuu de hueta no wa.* 'About two kilograms though, I gained' (3g) functions as a (delayed) repair device for B's misunderstanding of A's initial mention of her weight gain (3a). That is, the purpose of this inverted utterance is to make B notice the fact that B does not understand the statement of self-deprecation (3a). Note that (3h) *demo yappari kaeru to syokku daroo na* 'I will be shocked if I go back [to Japan]' is a restatement of the current topic of the conversation, A's weight gain, with the speaker's intention to solicit the other interlocutor's disagreement. These two actions of A, (3g) and (3h), are projections of the speaker's same orientation, self-deprecation-disagreement structure, introduced in (3a).

The pair of utterances, (2k) and (2l), seems to stem from the speaker's different orientation. Close examination of the stepwise organization in these three data sets shows that (2k) is a dispreferred second in assessment-reply structure, i.e. B's utterance (2h-j) requires a particular second (2k). It was noted that the first part of the inverted utterance is qualified with a hedge, *n zya nai?* which mitigates the power of assertion and invites hearer's agreement. This inverted utterance (2k) is thusly context-shaped by the preceding first pair part. However, the following utterance (2l) begins with a disjunction, *demo* 'but', which prefigures that the coming utterance contrasts with/opposes the preceding utterance. And indeed, *warito.. tikaazuyokatta?* (2l), as a first pair of Q-A structure, is her request for clarification of whether or not their mutual friend was forceful about the matter. Even though *kyoosei suru* 'force someone to do something', which appears in the inverted clause, has the same semantic content as the *tikaazuyoi* 'forceful', the former is related to what she thinks X was concerned about, while the latter relates to her no longer being sure about X's attitude.

How three inverted utterances are connected to the following context with respect to the speaker's orientation has been shown. While the speaker retains the floor in these cases, the speaker

could maintain her orientation to the whole context (cf. (1) and (3)) or change her stance from hedging to uncertainty (cf. (2)). It appears that the speaker's maintenance of the current turn is correlated to the use of an inverted utterance; although the data are not extensive, it can be argued that inverted utterances are generally used to maintain the current turn. Regardless of whether or not a postverbal element originates in the preceding clause, its appearance suggests that such an 'addition' can be extended to more than one constituent. Although the data considered here do not include such a case, the following data from Ono and Suzuki (1992) demonstrate that the postverbal element is not restricted to just one element:

(Ono and Suzuki (8), their Hepburn convention is preserved)

- (a) O: ... jikan kimendemo ee shi.
- (b) ... owatta tokoro de yametara ee kara.
- (c) nijikan gurai shabettemo.
- (d) betsuni anata ga ii n yattara.

English gloss

- (a) O: (We) don't have to decide the time
- (b) because (we) can stop when (it) is over,
- (c) even if (we) talk for about two hours,
- (d) if (that) is OK with you.

These three phrases (8b-d) are used to "elaborate the suggestion made in the preceding sentence" (Ono and Suzuki 1992: 434-435). In other words, the appearance of the postverbal element does not indicate the transition-relevance place (Sacks, et al. 1974). The following excerpt from (2) shows that such a maintenance of the floor cannot be observed, but the other participant is required to interrupt with urgency:

(2, English gloss is omitted)

- (g) A: atasi soo yuu hito tte tukiaiyasui kara suki,
gatugatu siteru yori mo.
- (h) B: *demo demo* ano nityoo no misa ni konaika tte yuu.. are dake wa
yametehosikatta..

A could have kept the floor and continued revealing her people preference. Also note that (2g) is an assessment in the assessment-reply structure. Although B's statement is a dispreferred second in this structure, providing information regarding some negative aspects of their mutual friend, it is not preceded by a hesitation or qualified by a hedge. Rather, B's utterance begins with repetition of a disjunctive *demo* 'but'. This urgent manner of B's contradiction implies that the inverted utterance functions to maintain the floor; A might have continued to keep the floor after the inverted utterance (2g).

3. Summary

CA sheds light on the relationship between organization of talk and inversions in terms of the local organization of talk. The notions of adjacency pair, especially Q-A and assessment-reply structures, enabled examination of the organization of the conversation. It was observed that three inverted utterances are placed in talk as second pair parts of such adjacency pairs, as well as used as a repair. Through this discussion, the 'context-shaped' aspect of an utterance was clarified. The contribution of a participant's particular action to current talk "cannot be adequately understood except by reference to the context in which it participates" (Heritage 1989: 22).

On the other hand, it was observed that the same 'context-shaped' inverted utterance is also 'context-renewing'. With regard to this point, it was suggested that an inverted utterance does not concern the transition-relevance place at which turn change is observable. The speaker's maintenance of the floor (or revelation of her orientation to the context) is possible with this particular structure because the existence of the postverbal element indicates that further elaboration of the point could be provided in the talk that follows.

Transcription Convention

The romanization of the data follows the Kunrei system; however, capitalization is avoided throughout the data. Other conventions are:

- ... indicates pause of 1/2 second or more
- .. indicates perceptible pause of less than 1/2 second
- @ indicates laughter
- , indicates continuing intonation
- ? indicates rising intonation
- /?/ indicates unintelligible utterance
- | indicates overlapping of A's and B's utterance
- = '=' at the end of A1 and the beginning of A2 shows the continuity (Schiffrin 1994)

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論文要旨

談話の中の倒置文 ～会話分析による試論～

金城克哉

本論文では、談話分析の手掛かりを会話分析（CA）に求め、談話の中で倒置文がどのような現われ方をするのか、即ち、倒置文の談話の中での分布を前後のコンテキストとの関わりの中で調べることを目的とする。CAでは発話者がどういう人物であるか、その意図は何であるのか、（状況を含む広義の）コンテキストはいかなるものであるのか等の点は考慮の対象外になるが、「隣接ペア」の概念を用いて、ある発話がどのように先行する発話に影響され、更に次の発話に影響を及ぼすかを観察するのに適していると思われる。ここでは、倒置文はアランダムに現われるのではなく「隣接ペア」の中での第二文（ABというペアならばBにあたる）に現われ、それが「修正」の機能を持つことが明らかにされる。また、倒置文の使用は発言権の維持につながることも指摘される。