**Talking Together: An Introduction to Conversation Analysis** [**https://www.thoughtco.com/introduction-to-conversation-analysis-1691802**](https://www.thoughtco.com/introduction-to-conversation-analysis-1691802)

**Fifteen Key Concepts and Eight Classic Essays**

Bottom of Form

**by**[**Richard Nordquist**](https://www.thoughtco.com/richard-nordquist-1688331)

**Updated March 14, 2018**

*Though a man succeeds, he should not (as is frequently the case) engross the whole talk to himself; for that destroys the very essence of*[*conversation*](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-conversation-analysis-ca-p2-1689924)*, which is*talking together *.*
(William Cowper, "On Conversation," 1756)

In recent years, the related fields of [discourse analysis](https://www.thoughtco.com/discourse-analysis-or-da-1690462) and [conversation analysis](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-conversation-analysis-ca-1689923) have deepened our understanding of the ways in which [language](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-language-1691218) is used in everyday life. Research in these fields has also widened the focus of other disciplines, including [rhetoric](https://www.thoughtco.com/rhetoric-definition-1692058) and [composition studies](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-composition-rhetoric-1689774).

To acquaint you with these fresh approaches to language study, we've put together a list of 15 key concepts related to the ways we talk. All of them are explained and illustrated in our [Glossary of Grammatical and Rhetorical Terms](https://www.thoughtco.com/grammar-glossary-4133037), where you'll find a name for . . .

1. the assumption that participants in a conversation normally attempt to be informative, truthful, relevant, and clear: [cooperative principle](https://www.thoughtco.com/cooperative-principle-conversation-1689928)
2. the manner in which an orderly conversation normally takes place: [turn-taking](https://www.thoughtco.com/turn-taking-conversation-1692569)
3. a type of turn-taking in which the second utterance (for example, "Yes, please") depends on the first ("Would you like some coffee?"): [adjacency pair](https://www.thoughtco.com/adjacency-pair-conversation-analysis-1688970)
4. a noise, gesture, word, or expression used by a listener to indicate that he or she is paying attention to a speaker: [back-channel signal](https://www.thoughtco.com/back-channel-signal-communication-1689153)
5. a face-to-face interaction in which one speaker talks at the same time as another speaker to show an interest in the conversation: [cooperative overlap](https://www.thoughtco.com/cooperative-overlap-conversation-1689927)
6. speech that repeats, in whole or in part, what has just been said by another speaker: [echo utterance](https://www.thoughtco.com/echo-utterance-speech-1690584)
7. a speech act that expresses concern for others and minimizes threats to self-esteem: [politeness strategies](https://www.thoughtco.com/politeness-strategies-conversation-1691516)
8. the conversational convention of casting an imperative statement in question or declarative form (such as "Would you pass me the potatoes?") to communicate a request without causing offense: [whimperative](https://www.thoughtco.com/whimperative-sentence-types-1692606)
9. a particle (such as *oh, well, you know*, and *I mean*) that's used in conversation to make speech more coherent but that generally adds little meaning: [discourse marker](https://www.thoughtco.com/discourse-marker-or-dm-1690463)
10. a filler word (such as *um*) or a cue phrase (*let's see*) used to mark a hesitation in speech: editing term
11. the process by which a speaker recognizes a speech error and repeats what has been said with some sort of correction: [repair](https://www.thoughtco.com/repair-speech-1692044)
12. the interactive process by which speakers and listeners work together to ensure that messages are understood as intended: [conversational grounding](https://www.thoughtco.com/virgin-marys-miracles-in-guadalupe-mexico-124600)
13. meaning that's implied by a speaker but not explicitly expressed: [conversational implicature](https://www.thoughtco.com/conversational-implicature-speech-acts-1689922)
14. the small talk that often passes for conversation at social gatherings: [phatic communication](https://www.thoughtco.com/phatic-communication-1691619)
15. a style of public discourse that simulates intimacy by adopting features of informal, conversational language: [conversationalization](https://www.thoughtco.com/conversationalization-public-colloquial-1689803)

You'll find examples and explanations of these and over 1,500 other language-related expressions in our ever-expanding [Glossary of Grammatical and Rhetorical Terms](https://www.thoughtco.com/grammar-glossary-4133037).