

Visualizing Studies on Conversation Analysis: A Bibliometric Analysis from 2010 to 2024

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Abstract: Conversation analysis is employed as a methodology to investigate human social life, which highlights the way speakers conduct and understand social actions in talk-in-interaction. Employing CiteSpace as the instrument and Web of Science Core Collection as the data source, this study made a visualization analysis of conversation analytic studies from the year 2010 to 2024. Through exploring their temporal and spatial distribution, theoretical foundations, and hotspots and trends, this study provides implications for future CA researches.

Keywords: Conversation Analysis; CiteSpace; Visualization Analysis.

1. Introduction

Originating from sociology and subsumed by ethnomethodology, Conversation Analysis (CA) is an empirical approach to study social actions conducted by speakers in interaction, whose goal is to uncover, from an emic perspective, social norms oriented to by human beings through verbal and non-verbal resources in interaction. As a research methodology, the name “Conversation Analysis” is in fact a misnomer (Drew, 2005), which is often misunderstood as a method to merely focus on mundane conversations. As such, conversation analysts prefer the term “talk-in-interaction” to circumvent the triviality connoted in the term “conversation” (Schegloff, 2006), which is considered the primordial form of human sociality (Schegloff, 1996) as well as the primordial site of human social life (Drew, 2005). Focusing on naturally occurring talk-in-interaction, Conversation Analysis pays attention to three mainstays, including social action, turn design, and sequence organization, emphasizing analysts’ shared methods of practical reasoning (Garfinkel, 1967) with interactants themselves so as to figure out social norms underlying the methodical procedures of doing social actions. With Atkinson and Drew’s (1979) research on interactions in courtroom, conversation analysts started paying their attention to institutional talk in its own right, which, based on explorations into mundane conversations, further expanded the research scope of this field.

With emphasis attached to “real” or “natural” research data, more and more research fields begin to adopt Conversation Analysis as their methodology, focusing on naturally occurring talk-in-interaction in real human social life, such as the advent of Interactional Linguistics that integrates CA into linguistic studies. While a large number of CA studies have emerged with diverse focuses and in various fields, there are relatively few publications reviewing the overall development of conversation analytic studies within a certain period. Hence, employing CiteSpace as the instrument, this study makes a visualization analysis of conversation analytic researches from the year 2010 to 2024, aiming to investigate the hotspots and development trend of the field of Conversation Analysis and thereby to provide implications for future researches in this field.

2. Research Data and Method

2.1. Research Data

In order to make a visualization analysis in CiteSpace, this study was conducted with a self-built database of conversation analytic studies from the year 2010 to 2024 in the Web of Science (WOS) platform. To build the database for this study, parameters including the subject term “article”, “Conversation Analysis”, “Conversation Analytic studies”, and timespan “from January, 2010 to December, 2024” were set to retrieve and collect relevant studies collected by Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) in the Web of Science Core Collection. It was shown that within the timespan from January, 2010 to December, 2024, there were totally 3,756 articles being retrieved in the field of Conversation Analysis, out of which 3,237 articles were selected in accordance with their relevancy. After the document de-duplication process in the CiteSpace, all these 3,237 documents proved to be valid and then were collected to build the database for follow-up visualization analysis in the current study.

2.2. Research Instrument and Method

The visualization analysis in this study is made with the instrument CiteSpace 6.4.R1 (64 bit), which is a useful tool functionally based on co-citation analysis and pathfinder network scaling. Before visualizing the data in the self-built database, parameters in CiteSpace were set according to particular research focuses (Chen & Li, 2016). The time slicing was “from JAN, 2010 to DEC, 2024” and the year per slice was set as “1”. As for the parameter of “text processing”, the term source was set to include “title”, “abstract”, “author keywords (DE)”, and “keywords plus (ID)”. The node type was respectively set as “author”, “keyword”, “reference”, and “cited author” for different focuses during visualization analysis. As for the “links” of data, the strength was “cosine” and the scope was “within slices”. The “selection criteria” was a modified g-index in each slice ($g^2 \leq k \sum_{i \leq g} c_i, k \in Z^+$), and the scale factor K was set as “25”. The way of pruning was set as “pathfinder”.

3. Findings and Discussions

3.1. Temporal and Spatial Distribution of CA Studies from 2010 to 2024

To examine how conversation analytic studies were temporally and spatially distributed can present the development and trend of research in this field. Specifically, the amount of articles published annually showcases and projects the development trend of the field, and the turning point in a particular year enables follow-up researchers to reflect on the hotspots in that period. Besides, the spatial distribution with reference to researchers of publications can indicate influential contributors to this field.

3.1.1. Temporal Distribution of Publications

Diachronic investigations into the publications in a particular academic field make it clear how the field develops within a certain period. The following Figure 1 presents the development of Conversation Analysis from the year 2010 to 2024, in which the number of articles issued per year is presented and the index of the number ($R^2>0.9$) is also displayed in a dotted line to indicate the trend of publications in this field. There were totally 3,237 articles issued during this period.

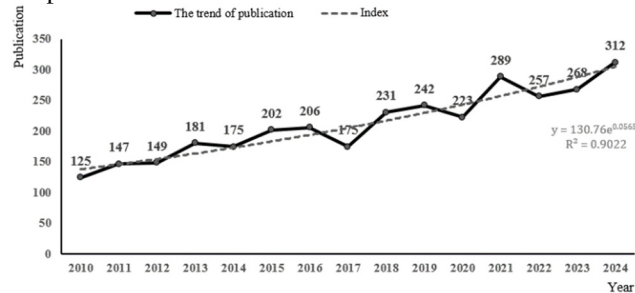


Figure 1. The Temporal Distribution of Conversation Analytic Studies (2010–2024)

As is demonstrated in the figure, this timespan has witnessed an overall upward trend of the amount of conversation analytic studies and meanwhile forecasts a good future growth. Notably, from the year 2010 to 2014, the number of publications in this field remains below 200, which experienced a significant rise from the year 2012 to 2013. Then, there was a slight decline from the year 2013 to 2014, which, along with another three declines in the years 2017, 2020, and 2022, showcases the temporary downward trend of publications in this field. What should be noted is that it is from the year 2015 that the number of CA studies exceeded 200, despite the significant drop in 2017. After this drop, there were two significant surges in 2018 and 2021, with 231 and 289 pieces of publication respectively. And in the year 2024, the number of publications in this field mushrooms to an ever largest number ($N=300$).

In summary, while there were several temporary dips, the overall development presents an upward trend of publications in the field of Conversation Analysis, which indicates the growing influence of methodology Conversation Analysis. More and more attention has been paid to this field, especially those laying emphasis on naturally occurring talk-in-interaction. And the line of index implies that there will be continuing upward trend in the future.

3.1.2. Researchers of Publications

Visualization analysis of the researchers who published conversation analytic studies in this period can provide an

insight into core authors, through which the research level and orientation can be uncovered. A total of 473 authors have contributed to conversation Analytic studies from the year 2010 to 2024, whose co-occurrence is visualized in the following Figure 2. In this figure, the larger the node is, the greater the influence of a particular author will be. Besides, the years of publication are represented by various colors, which can show whether an author's contributions are long-term and persistent, namely, the richer the node's color is, the more lasting the author's contributions are. In addition, the greater the account of the warm color tone is, the more recent contributions are made by the author.

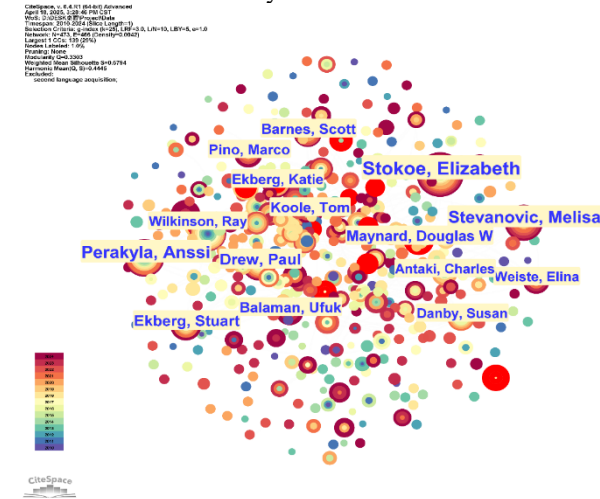


Figure 2. The Co-occurrence Mapping of Authors (2010–2024)

As is shown in the figure, authors including Paul Drew, Elizabeth Stokoe, Melisa Stevanovic, Anssi Peräkylä, and Charles Antaki are representative contributors to this field in the past 15 years. Specifically, contributions from Elizabeth Stokoe are primarily made after the year 2017, with more warm color tones visualized in the node, which is similar to those from Melisa Stevanovic. By contrast, the more equally distributed color tones in the node of Anssi Peräkylä indicate his persistent contribution to this field during this 15-year timespan. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the total number of warm color tones is larger than that of cold tones, implying that more and more attention was paid to this research field. And the larger amount of those small scattered nodes shows that many researchers have emerged to contribute to this field over the past 15 years.

The following table presents the top 18 authors who issued most publications between the year 2010 and 2024, among which the top 5 authors are Elizabeth Stokoe ($N=50$), Anssi Peräkylä ($N=34$), Melisa Stevanovic ($N=33$), Lorenza Mondada ($N=25$), Paul Drew ($N=23$). Hence, it can be seen that these researches have significantly contributed to conversation analytic studies.

According to the burst of authors issuing articles from 2010 to 2024, top 14 authors with strongest citation bursts are presented in the following Figure 3, where the authors are ranked according to the beginning time of the burst. Visualization analysis of the burst of authors enables reviewers to better understand the publishing trend of some emerging researchers within a certain period.

Table 1. Top 18 Authors with Most Publications (2010–2024)

Ranking	Author	Number of Articles (N)
1	Elizabeth Stokoe	50
2	Anssi Peräkylä	34
3	Melisa Stevanovic	33
4	Lorenza Mondada	25
5	Paul Drew	23
6	Stuart Ekberg	21
7	Douglas W. Maynard	20
8	Scott Barnes	18
9	Tom Koole	17
10	Ufuk Balaman	17
11	Kevin W. H. Tai	16
12	Katie Ekberg	16
13	Marco Pino	16
14	Eunseok RO	16
15	Charles Antaki	15
16	Ray Wilkinson	15
17	Elina Weiste	15
18	Susan Danby	15

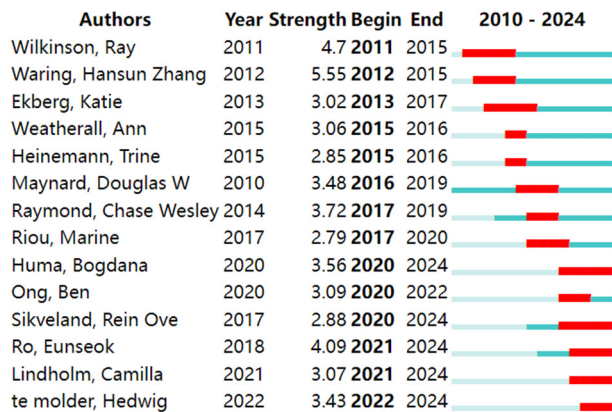


Figure 3. Top 14 Authors with the Strongest Citation Bursts

It is obvious that the earliest burst among these authors is from Ray Wilkinson, which began in 2011 and ended in 2015, whose lasting duration was similar to that of Katie Ekberg, Bogdana Huma, and Rein Ove Sikveland. In terms of the strength of burst, that of Hansun Zhang Waring ranked the first, followed by Ray Wilkinson and Eunseok Ro. Besides, among these 14 authors, most of their citation burst occurred between the year 2020 and 2024, showing a comparatively profound advancement of this field in these years and indicating more emerging contributions in the future.

3.2. Theoretical Foundations of CA studies from 2010 to 2024

The advancement of a subject is theoretically based on what has already been accumulated in this field and its relevant fields. Likewise, a research has to reference articles priorly issued in the field and other pertinent fields, which serve as the knowledge foundation for it. Visualizing the co-

cited references of publications in a research field is of vital significance for examining its theoretical foundations, thereby providing clues for future relevant studies (Li *et al.*, 2017). In this session, visualization analysis was made of researchers and references co-cited by conversation analytic studies issued from the year 2010 to 2024.

3.2.1. Co-cited Researchers Analysis

Investigation into co-cited researchers in conversation analytic studies provides insight into the influential sources of follow-up publications and the association between articles in this academic field. Besides, co-citation analysis manifests essential fundamental understandings of the field. Co-cited researchers refer to those whose articles are cited by one or more follow-up literature at the same time. The number of literature referring to prior articles can indicate the strength of co-citation. For instance, if A's work and B's work are cited by C's work at the same time, then the author A and the author B are called co-cited researchers. And the strength of their co-citation relationship is labeled as "1" since they are co-cited by only one work (C's work here).

Visualizing the co-occurrence mapping of co-cited authors allows reviewers to determine whose articles are influential in a certain research field and to examine the close relation between different authors. The stronger their relation is, the more similar their research focuses will be. The following figure presents the co-occurrence mapping of co-cited authors in conversation analytic studies from the year 2010 to 2024.

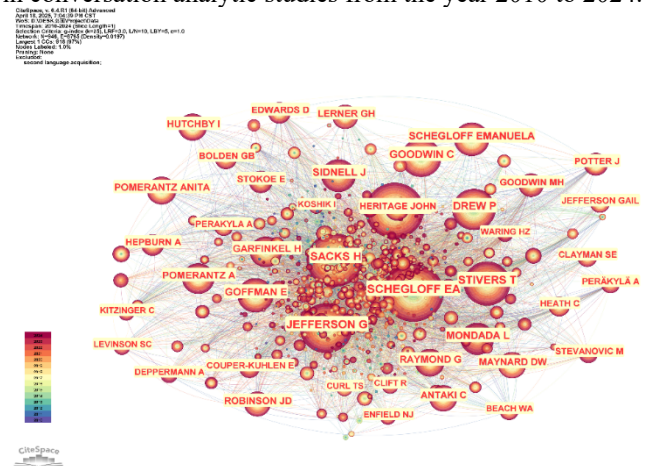


Figure 4. Co-occurrence Mapping of Co-cited Authors (2010–2024)

As is displayed in the figure, the top frequently co-cited authors are labeled by larger nodes, indicating their greater influences in this field, primarily represented by Harvey Sacks, Emanuel A. Schegloff, Paul Drew, John Heritage, Tanya Stivers, Anita Pomerantz, and Charles Goodwin. Different colors represent the year of the work by these co-cited authors, and it can be seen that the articles of these co-cited authors were primarily distributed between 2016 and 2024. This distribution implies the overall advancement of the research field.

The following Table 2 more clearly shows the influential co-cited authors with their ranking of co-citation frequency. The higher the frequency is, the more closely the authors are related to other researchers in this field.

The researcher Emanuel A. Schegloff is the most frequently co-cited authors (N=2,953), followed by John Heritage (N=2,274) and Harvey Sacks (N=2,205). The total frequency of co-citation of these three researchers all exceeded 2,000. And there were five authors whose total

frequency of co-citation was above 1,000, including Gail Jefferson (N=1,860), Anita Pomerantz (N=1,265), Charles Goodwin (N=1,230), Tanya Stivers (N=1,228), and Paul Drew (N=1,143). According to their frequency of co-citation, it is obviously demonstrated that these authors have built a strong academic relationship with researchers in this field and have exerted great influence in its development through serving as theoretical foundations for follow-up researches. In order to specifically reveal the influential literature closely connected in conversation analytic studies, the following session will provide a thorough visualization analysis of co-cited references in this field from 2010 to 2024.

Table 2. Top 15 Most Frequently Co-cited Authors

Ranking	Author	Total Frequency of Co-citation (N)
1	Emanuel A. Schegloff	2,935
2	John Heritage	2,274
3	Harvey Sacks	2,205
4	Gail Jefferson	1,860
5	Anita Pomerantz	1,265
6	Charles Goodwin	1,230
7	Tanya Stivers	1,228
8	Paul Drew	1,143
9	Erving Goffman	929
10	Lorenza Mondada	836
11	Jack Sidnell	759
12	Harold Garfinkel	659
13	Charles Antaki	593
14	Ian Hutchby	574
15	Douglas W. Maynard	504

3.2.2. Co-cited Reference Analysis

As aforementioned, analysis of co-cited references can showcase the theoretically fundamental role of literature with high degree of similarity. The following Figure 5 presents a co-occurrence mapping of co-cited literature in conversation analytic studies from 2010 to 2024.

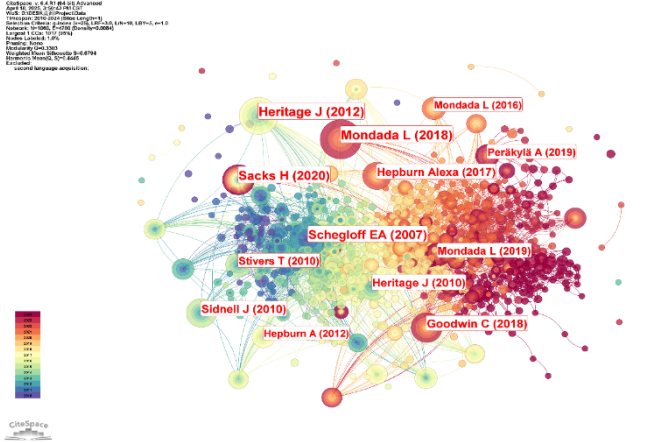


Figure 5. Co-occurrence Mapping of Co-cited References

As is manifested in the figure, the most frequently co-cited

reference from 2010 to 2024 is written by Emanuel Schegloff (2007), which has been co-cited 145 times with other articles. In terms of the year when these prominent literature were referenced, it is found that most of them were co-cited after 2017, which closely associates with the time when they were issued. Besides, it should be noted that the more colors a note has, the wider the reference will have an influence on this research field and the closer its relation to other references will be. For example, the re-published work of Harvey Sacks (1987) in 2020 served as a vital source of theoretical foundation through being co-cited across the longest timespan. And this also demonstrates that the content of this literature is informative and universally instructive.

The following Table 3 lists the top 10 most frequently co-cited references in conversation analytic studies from 2010 to 2024, making it more visual the strength of co-citation of these references.

Table 3. Top 10 Most Frequently Co-cited References

Ranking	Co-citation Frequency (Strength)	Co-cited References	Author(s) and Year of Publication
1	145	Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis, Vol. 1	Emanuel A. Schegloff (2007)
2	130	Multiple Temporalities of Language and Body in Interaction: Challenges for Transcribing Multimodality	Lorenza Mondada (2018)
3	117	The Epistemic Engine: Sequence Organization and Territories of Knowledge	John Heritage (2012)
4	104	On the Preferences for Agreement and Contiguity in Sequences in Conversation	Harvey Sacks (1987/2020)
5	78	Cooperative Action	Charles Goodwin (2018)
6	70	Conversation Analysis: An Introduction	Jack Sidnell (2010)
7	63	Transcribing for Social Research	Hepburn Alexa & Galina B. Bolden (2017)
8	62	Talk in Action: Interactions, Identities, and Institutions	John Heritage & Steven Clayman (2010)
9	53	Mobilizing Response	Tanya Stivers & Federico Rossano (2010)
10	52	Contemporary Issues in Conversation Analysis: Embodiment and Materiality, Multimodality and Multisensoriality in Social Interaction	Lorenza Mondada (2019)

As is shown in this table, there are four references whose co-citation strength exceeded 100. The first is Schegloff's *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis, Vol. 1*, which is a foundational literature for investigating sequence organization of talk-in-interaction, guiding conversation analysts to pay more attention to how sequence exerts its role in performing and interpreting social actions in interactions. The second is Mondada's *Multiple Temporalities of Language and Body in Interaction: Challenges for Transcribing Multimodality*, a attaching much emphasis on embodied resources in interaction, which, along with verbal resources, were considered being employed by interactants to accomplish social actions. This literature contributed to the “multimodal turn” and led conversation analysts to expand both their research focuses and their research data to investigate naturally occurring talk-in-interaction. The third is Heritage's *The Epistemic Engine: Sequence Organization and Territories of Knowledge*, which took sense-making of knowledge into consideration during analysis of social actions in interaction. This dimension helped analysts to better understand the process of interactants' intersubjectivity. The fourth one is Sacks' *On the Preferences for Agreement and Contiguity in Sequences in Conversation*, which is a foundational work that deepened understanding of progressivity in talk-in-interaction.

It can be concluded that the similarity of these high-frequently co-cited references is that either they are instructive articles that guide other researchers in this field to conduct authentic and scientific conversation analytic studies, or they serve as a classic literature in a particular research topic to provide potential avenues for future relevant studies. The similar characteristics of these references make them universally applicable and high-frequently cited by follow-up studies. Besides, this general applicability makes them greatly pertinent to other references in this field.

To uncover the exact timespan when these references burst into being co-cited, the following Figure 6 presents top 25 references with the strongest citation bursts.



Figure 6. Top 25 References with the Strongest Citation Bursts

According to the figure, Schegloff's *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis, Vol. 1* has the strongest citation burst (Strength=54.03), showing its vital significance in this field, which is followed by Mondada's *Multiple Temporalities of Language and Body in Interaction: Challenges for Transcribing Multimodality*, whose burst strength is 47.58. The third one is Heritage's *The Epistemic Engine: Sequence Organization and Territories of Knowledge*, with the burst strength of 40.65. In addition, with regard to the time duration of the burst, Goodwin's work *Cooperative Action* ranks the first, with a burst timespan of 5 years. This is followed by

several references whose burst time duration is 4 years, including Mondada's (2019) *Contemporary Issues in Conversation Analysis: Embodiment and Materiality, Multimodality and Multisensoriality in Social Interaction* (Strength=17.03), Stokoe's (2012) *Moving forward with membership categorization analysis: Methods for systematic analysis* (Strength=12.63), Stivers et al.'s (2011) *The Morality of Knowledge in Conversation* (Strength=14.07), and Sidnell's (2010) *Conversation Analysis: An Introduction* (Strength=26.37).

For further examining the similarity of these co-cited references, this study visualized the clusters of co-cited references in conversation analytic studies from 2010 to 2024, which can be shown in the following Figure 7 (Modularity $Q=0.684>0.5$; $S=0.8638$).

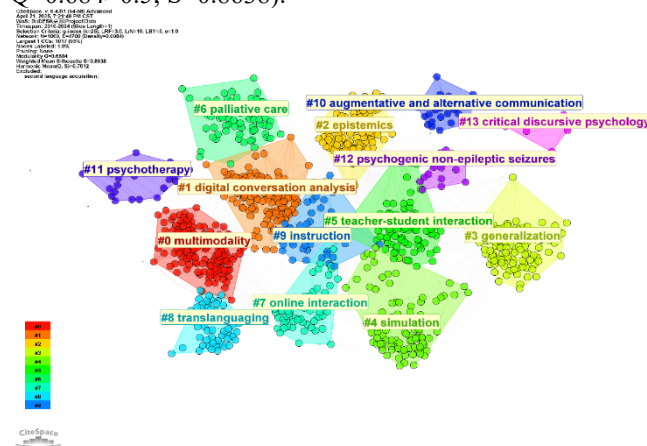


Figure 7. Clusters of Co-cited References in Conversation Analytic Studies (2010-2024)

Clusters of co-cited references can display what is concerned and highlighted by follow-up CA studies. As is shown in the figure, the top 14 most frequent topic of these co-cited references are “multimodality”, “epistemics”, “generalization”, “simulation”, “teacher-student interaction”, “palliative care”, “online interaction”, “translanguaging”, “instruction”, “augmentative and alternative communication”, “psychotherapy”, “psychogenic non-epileptic seizures”, and “critical discursive psychology”. From these clusters, it is demonstrated that Conversation Analysis is increasingly adopted as methodology in diverse fields, particularly highlighting its practical values in guiding real-life contexts, such as medical treatment, palliative care, pedagogical process, and psychotherapy. This then showcases that follow-up and future CA studies pay more attention to CA's application in real-life contexts.

In brief, analysis above is made to investigate the theoretical foundations of CA studies from 2010 to 2024, uncovering the influential researchers and publications in this field. The next session will further explore the hotspot and trend of CA studies from 2010 to 2024, aiming to provide valuable clues for future studies.

3.3. Hotspot and Trend of CA studies from 2010 to 2024

To examine the hotspot and trend of conversation analytic studies from 2010 to 2024, it is essential to visualize keywords in these studies, including the co-occurrence of keywords, clusters of keywords, and citation bursts of keywords.

3.3.1. Co-occurrence of Keywords

Keywords of an article can display the research focus and

themes, the analysis of which can help reveal the hotspots and trend of a particular field. The following Figure 8 presents the co-occurrence mapping of keywords in conversation analytic studies from 2010 to 2024. The node type in this mapping was set as “keyword” and a total of 676 keywords with 5,534 connected lines were generated in this figure. The size of the node changed in accordance with the frequency of the keywords. The larger a node is, the more frequently the keyword occurs in articles. Warmer colors indicate that the keywords occur more recently in articles. Besides, the connecting lines between different nodes display the close connection between different keywords.

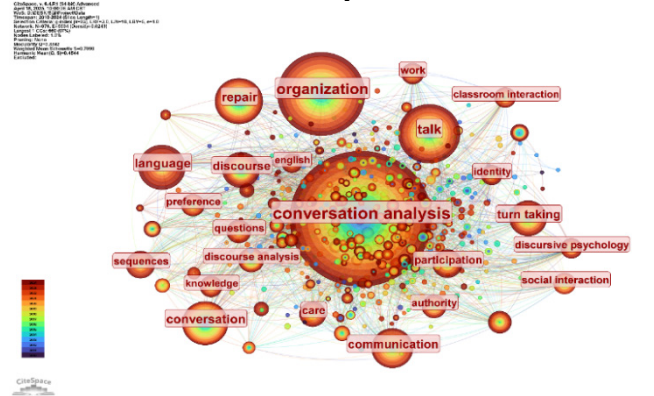


Figure 8. Keywords Co-occurrence in Conversation Analytic Studies (2010-2024)

As is demonstrated in the figure, the keyword “Conversation Analysis” most frequently occurred in conversation analytic studies in the past 15 years, which strongly associated with other keywords. This is followed by keywords “organization”, “talk”, “conversation”, “repair”, “turn-taking” and so on. To more clearly present the frequency of these keywords, the following table showcases the ranking of them in terms of their total frequency.

Table 4. Top 20 High-Frequency Keywords in Conversation Analytic Studies (2010–2024)

Ranking	Keywords	Frequency (F)
1	conversation analysis	2,227
2	organization	934
3	talk	483
4	language	300
5	repair	286
6	conversation	270
7	communication	242
8	discourse	200
9	turn taking	194
10	participation	124
11	care	120
12	questions	113
13	sequences	108
14	discourse analysis	105
15	authority	104
16	preference	103
17	work	101
18	social interaction	96
19	identity	92
20	discursive psychology	91

From this table, it can be seen that the frequency of “conversation analysis” is much more than the rest (F=2,227), which is perhaps due to the fact that the term “conversation analysis” is not only a term for a research field but also a methodology representing specific perspectives in this field.

The second is “organization” (F=934), which is a vital concept in CA studies in which the sequence organization of interaction is attached much emphasis. This concept is closely tied to the keyword “sequences” (F=108), which play great role in participants’ performance and understanding of their social actions in interaction. The keyword “talk” (F=483) ranks the third, which is the research object of CA studies that highlight social actions in naturally occurring talk-in-interaction. In addition, the keywords “repair”, “turn-taking”, and “preferences” (or preference organization) are significant research focuses in CA studies, which have been expanded and refreshed by follow-up studies over the past 15 years.

3.3.2. Bursts of Keywords

In order to figure out the recent hotspots and trend of CA studies in the past 15 years, it is also necessary to look into the burst of keywords in this domain. The following Figure 9 presents top 25 keywords with the strongest citation bursts, showcasing the starting and ending time of the burst, the strength of the burst, and the timespan of the burst.

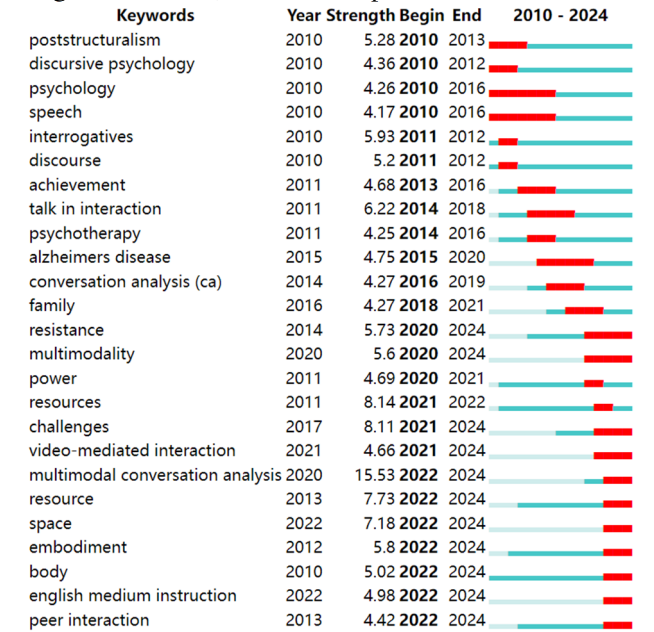


Figure 9. Top 25 Keywords with the Strongest Citation Bursts in CA Studies (2010–2024)

As is shown in the figure, the strongest burst belongs to the keyword “multimodal conversation analysis” (N=15.53), indicating a turn from traditional conversation analytic studies to multimodal conversation analytic studies, of which the latter emphasizes the role of embodied resources in face-to-face interaction. This turn not only expands the research scope of CA studies, but also it promotes a more thorough and better understanding of real-life talk-in-interaction in which diverse verbal and embodied resources collaboratively contribute to the accomplishment of social actions. This keyword occurred in 2020 with Mondada’s publications on multimodality in interaction, whose burst began in 2022 until now. This is closely connected with the burst of “multimodality” (N=5.6), whose burst started in 2020 and has been lasting for 4 years. This research focus may continue to be highlighted in the future CA studies. What should also be noted is that with the emphasis on “multimodality” and “multimodal conversation analysis”, attention was also paid to face-to-face interaction via particular platforms, with the occurrence of keywords such as “video-mediated interaction” (N=4.66). In addition, conversation analysis was increasingly adopted in investigating real-life therapeutic contexts, with

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