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## Preface

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Research into spoken language has been a preoccupation of many renowned linguists in recent decades. Despite the intensive development of new linguistic disciplines, such as discourse analysis and conversational analysis, it seems to be a never-ending task to pursue the study of natural language data in the most common everyday situations, with regard to the multiplicity of potential and current meanings. I believe the language used by speakers in such situations most adequately represents language use: "Everyday language is the best data" (Coupland 2001:4). The study of the existing rituals and routines governing our conversational behaviour is part of contemporary mainstream linguistics. Conversation is a versatile, multifunctional and multifaceted means of communication in all areas of human activity.

Partial results of my study of spoken English have been published, mainly in the series *Brno Studies in English* (see the works cited). This book includes some of the topics already presented, mingled together with some more recent considerations in a more systematic arrangement.

I hope the book will be of interest to those who find the study of spoken English a thought-provoking, challenging and rewarding pursuit.

Brno, March 2002