

**To what extent do the accounts of turn taking in conversation described in Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) and Duncan (1972) agree with each other?**

Turn taking is a process through which participants allocate the obligation or the right to participate in interaction activity. (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974). It is a set of techniques through which participants of a conversation determine at what point they should speak and when they should listen. It is the systematic way through which people coordinate their verbal interaction with each other during a conversation so as to maintain the conversation within cognitive limits. Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson were the first persons to establish the turn taking theory. Turn taking is a specific and basic discourse property that is observable thus allowing for its description, analysis and explanation. While the explanation of turns is still a relatively unexplored, empirical insight has been to interpret this discourse property. It is safe to summarize the turn taking process as a discourse process that aids in the understanding of how actual messages are interchanged and allowing for the functional and structural analysis.

Conversation has the freest turn allocation points as one can freely participate and take turns. How one handles his interaction skills in any conversation ultimately determine his behavior and consequently, his cognitive practices are interpreted. The very nature of any sensible conversation entails turn taking, which is fundamental in organization. It is through this process that we simultaneously accomplish some intricate life skills such as exchange ideas, learning and accomplish goals. The importance of turn taking is paramount in all conversation, particularly in groups

Early sociologists, principally, Harley Sacks, Gail Jefferson and Emanuel Schegloff influenced the development in Conversational Analysis. Conversation Analysis, which is the study of talk in interaction, analyses the turn taking system in two components; the turn allocation and the turn constructional component. The turn constructional component is a description of how turns are fashioned from basic units called turn constructional units, which include clausal, lexical, sentential and phrasal. The turn allocation component on the other hand is a description of how the turns are allocated among the participants of a conversation. A participant has three order options; a current speaker can select a next speaker, the next speaker self selects as the next or the current speaker continues (Huro 2001). Since the length of any conversation is not predetermined, the turn space allocations done by talk in the turn. Certain ceremonies bare contrast as their speaking turns are fixed such as the calling of a class register. Various unit types are usable in a language in the construction of a turn. In English, phrases like “yes” comprise part of these usable unit types.

Conversational Analysis has grown and is applied in fields among many, anthropology, linguistics, psychology and speech communication. Psychologists and sociologists have been involved in empirical and statistical analysis to establish the role of role taking in conversations. In an experiment that involved among seven participants, it was established that turn taking in very similar to a two-person dialogue with overseers (Padilha 2006). A multiagent framework in which each agent represented a participant in the discussion simulated the discussion of the group. The modeling of agent was by use of a set of parameters that gave the likelihood of involvement in turn taking decisions during the simulation. This meant that the participants were able to establish when to act

in a certain way; to talk, to continue taking, to interrupt and to give feedback. This simulation process involves having a system that allows for one at a time talk while allowing for speaker transitions all the while managing simultaneous talks.

Recording of naturally occurring conversations was used to character and to describe the types of sequences organized in conversations. There was particularly keen attention paid to the intonation and the timing of interruption and pauses. This data made plain the existence of organized turn taking patterns in speech. It was established that transitions were keenly coordinated and it was obvious that the turn taking systems were independent of parameters of the particular context such as topics or identities of the participants while maintaining context sensitivity. However, several properties of a conversation would still be captured in a simplest systematics. These apparent properties included the recurrent change of the speaker on at a time, incidences of more than one speaker may occur but are often brief, transition with no overlaps and no gaps between turns are common, varying turn order and turn size which are not predetermined, the length of the conversation, which is not predetermined. Other properties include a varying number of participants even within the same conversation, continuous or discontinuous talk, existence of turn allocation and utterance construction techniques and finally, the existence of repair mechanisms to be used in dealing with turn taking violations and errors. The speaking space of one participant up to a certain point where another participant takes over is said to be the turn. If there is an interval of silence and the same participant continuous taking after that, it is considered to be a turn.

The apparent realization of the turn allocation and turn construction units while accommodating the interests of the parties involved is called turn taking. The turn taking

system is designed to organize only two turns at a time; current and next while maintaining the transition from one point to the next without any restriction to the number of such currents and next it can organize serially. This means that the system exclusively allocates chance to single speakers and its speaker maintains a right to talk (Padilha 2006).

Turn taking corresponds to the various places of the potential spoken transition, which recurs in the course for a turn at the possible completion of the turn-construction units. From the beginning, the turn construction units project features of their construction and their direction and what it would take to complete them. They can suggest to attentive participants their completion. It is possible to analyze a sentence beginning in their production course so as to determine their possible direction and completion points. Any sentential unit thus has the ability to reveal its projectable direction and even conclusions. In the event that the further course will be modified, it will be further defined (Duncan 1974). This element of projectability is a vital aspect of the turn taking systematics and is a compatible system of units. It seeks to explain in detail the accurate timing and coordination that are displayed in many transitions of speech, which should display appropriate stunts after turns without any gaps. It also aims to explain the multiple concurrent starts that are without gaps that may occur at some transitions that is a testimony of the independent albeit almost identical projections of the transition-relevance place. Jefferson (2003) states that listeners are endowed with the ability to start with precision in the respect to the ongoing talk and be able to select a place at which they will begin speaking all the while making their utterances sound as a continuation of the previous speech.

The act of starting to speak with the intention of appearing as if in continuation of prior talk without any silent gap or overlapping is called latching. A latch is the seamless speaker transition. Regrettably, the projection is not always precise as the variation of the articulation may still result in the occurrence of an overlap. However, they are often brief. An overlap may be the result of several matters such as an unspotted transition relevance point, an attempt to shut down a speaker or even sheer eagerness to join in the conversation.

The other part of the system is the turn allocation. Sacks at (1974) came up with four major ways of selecting a next speaker by the current speaker. The central technique is the production of a first pair part by addressing a specific party by use of adjacency pairs, such as question answer, offer-acceptance, farewell-farewell and so on. Impact obligation on a cooperative party makes it relevant for its response to qualify a next –in line speaker. The first pair-part thus make it possible to determine the next action by not allocating the next turn to an individual but by addressing an individual who is then selected. There are two basic ways of addressing someone. The first one is through the use of gaze. Gaze is a complex and powerful tool used in face-to-face interaction. The listener, to signal interest, uses gaze to monitor acceptance or attention and most importantly, coordinate turn taking. The other approach is the use of a vocative such as, “ Tell me, mister, is this your child?” It can also be placed at the beginning and used by itself such as “Mister!” The second way of turn allocations is by the use of tag questions through the attachment to utterances such as, “Aren’t you late?”. This automatically selects a next speaker and is a clear indication on a “Done talking” scenario. An elliptic is a reduced question that interrupts a question and is interpreted by the reference as his turn to talk. There are at

least two known reduced questions. One is a confirmation that is actually an echo of the previous question. One can say, “married him?” as a follow up to a statement that Mary married Tom today. The other types of question are questions of interrogative pronouns such as “Where?” and “How much?” The fourth turn allocation approach is social identities that make an individual automatically selectable without any explicit form of address. You can tell someone, “Why don’t we go to the movies together?” This leaves no doubt over whom “we” involves.

The self-selection aspect of turn allocation is a basic technique that individuals select themselves to turn- on talk. This is an emphasis that the single speaker starts and takes an appropriate turn of talk and not necessarily that he starter takes the turn. This means that there is a lot of pressure at transition relevance points to minimize the size of the turn. This gives a two-sided coin that on one side encourages participants to take up opportunities or to otherwise lose their chances to take part in the conversation’s context. On the other side of the coin, the speaker makes an attempt to construct a turn s talk with the intention of allowing intact formation in the face to the face of the size minimization pressure (Sacks 1974). The consequence is that the transition relevance point are the locus of overlapped talk because of the existence of many post completers tag questions, variations and articulatory extensions in the last points of the talk.

Sacks et al. (1974) advocate for the need to speak up early in a transition relevance points although this is constrained by the planning and collocation contingencies of the beginning of the turn. As turn beginnings are often to multiple overlaps sources, it is necessary to adapt a careful timing technique because the alternative would result in an impairment of the analyzability and the impact of the

speech. It is therefore necessary to come up with a class of constructions called oppositional beginnings such as “Well,” “But,” “So” etc, which have an extraordinarily common nature. This is so because they require no planning as they require no planning as they are not a part of the turn’s context.

There are several turn taking practices, rules and regulations that govern the turn construction and provide actual allocation of the next turn to one party. They coordinate transfer with the intention of minimizing the gap and overlaps. This means that the gaps and overlaps are localized at the transition relevance points within their immediate points. These roles are rules are ordered so as create a sense of hierarchy and prioritization. One rule is that if the turn so far had been created to facilitate the ‘current speaker selects next’ technique, then the selected party has the right the right and obligation to take the next turn to speak while the others hold no right or obligations. In the event that the turn so far fails to involve a select the next technique, the other two rules are applicable. The second rule thus possibly involves the self-selection for next speakership but does not need to be instituted. The otherwise third rule requires that the current speaker may continue although it is not necessarily required unless another speaker self selects.

The Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson model studies the face-to-face interaction that proceeds through a sequence of turns. Although on the surface it appears seamless and effortless, the turn taking system requires the organization of the speaker changes and any recurrence afterwards. This model has been applied across the board to many languages. It is also regulated by how the participating speakers organize their sequences during the face to interaction not through any particular grammatical sequence or meaning (Roy 2000). Consequently, this model deals with singles or transitions while have an allocation

for the next turn. It also deals with all likely ways that turns can occur. Through the specification of how the transitions or turn are interchanged, the model accounts and describes facts about the conversations. The rules and regulations governing the turn taking system are a provision for the description of the likely silence in the turns and conversation times. It also gives an account for the changes of the speaker and recurrences without making an automatic occurrence. The Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson model thus identifies two turn taking principles: the completion of turns units and the turn allocation, which allows for the selection of another speaker, self-selection or continuation. These three choices that face the speaker are recurrent and are so listed.

The turn taking model takes into consideration the event of whether a participant talks or not talks and the point at which they arrive at the possible completion point in their utterances. These points should ideally correspond to the various places of transition relevance. Transition relevance is the point where the speaker makes an attempt to steer the conversation to a new direction. It is the most obvious marker of turn taking systematics. The speaker makes indication of transition by beginning his sentences with beginnings such as, "By the way.." or "First of all..". (Padilha 2006). At this point, their internal characteristics and procedures are described.

This model is extensively analyzed through a comprehensive series of quantitative evaluations while computing various statistics such as the aggregate number of single and multiple talk, multiple and false starts, abandoned utterances and many more. While the Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson model has only made analysis on conversations; these three authors have claimed severally that their model is not entirely unique to conversations. They imply that the linear array of turn taking systems that comprise of the



preallocation of all turns on one end and the one a turn allocation are applicable in beyond conversation scopes. (Coleman 1989). In general, the model makes specifications about turns. These include the one a time speaker, the common but brief overlaps, gaps and overlaps during transition though it is likely that the transition may be void of these anomalies. It also specifies the length and orders of turns vary and that the orders of turns are not specified in advanced. This model is thus a basic system for the accounting of turns while standing the test of time. This model thus provides a categorization for the described turns.

However, the Sacks et al.'s model was met by several objections. The first one was against the model's assumption of a central position in the present study by a assuming that there was an abstract operating system for the turn taking. O'Connell et al. (1990) came to the conclusion that their study did not support the existence of a turn taking system, whose deviation would otherwise lead to a faulty conversation. This meant that a formal system was not in place for the turn taking analysis. It was therefore unrealistic to generalize the roles governing the turn taking system for any speech. For example, the rules governing the debate bore a sharp contrast to those governing a conversation among friends. It was also unrealistic to generalize roles turn taking across cultures. Literature on stammering also conveyed a different message. Sacks et al. turn management system allowed for very little no overlaps in speech as less than five percent of the speech flow is delivered in laps and overlaps between the given speakers is very frequently measured within a few microseconds. However, stammering is often characterized by speech dysfluency, which means that the speech is strained and disjointed. Yet another criticism to the Sacks et al. turn taking systematics model is the

convention of prescribing rules. The one at a time process to which all participants must vehemently adhere. Power and Mortello (1986) state that Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson assume a little too easily as a social convention that specifically prescribes the regularity of social behavior. The authors of the model fail to discuss that these regularities fail to discuss that these regularities are due to the specifics of the turn taking conventions (Roy 2000). All this is due to the fact that the use of components and rules used in the conversation analysis are usually qualified with words such as “machinery” and “apparatus”. This puts an emphasis of mental mechanics of sorts that lead the participants of a conversation to follow the rules in spite of their own desires and goals.

In conclusion, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson were by far and large in agreement with each other when they gave their accounts in turn taking. Their sociology based research focused on the sequential and hierarchical organization for talk. They established that for any successive communicative process, all speakers must be allocated a chance to speak so as to prevent any overlaps in their speeches. They therefore presupposed that there must be a formal apparatus in place that will give an account of the systematics of a turn taking organization. They came to a conclusion that the given apparatus strive to be dual-purpose in nature; it should be sensitive to its various operations while at the same time be context free in nature.

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