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CONVERSATION ANALYSIS : A REPORT ON MINI RESEARCH

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Abstract

This article demonstrates several aspects of the conversation analytic approach as revealed from the transcribed data. Through Conversation Analysis (CA), it is revealed that preference organization, another aspect of sequence organization, does occur in the communication. Moreover, CA shows the constitution of the meaning of utterances through sequential reasoning. CA also illustrates that the methods by which participants make sense of their talk may be (re-)specified and (re-)negotiated in the course of interaction.

Keywords: conversation analysis, turn-taking, adjacency pairs, preferred response, dispreferred response

Abstrak

Artikel ini menunjukkan beberapa aspek dari pendekatan analisis percakapan. Dari data transkrip percakapan yang dinalisis ditemukan adanya organisasi preferensi, yang merupakan bagian dari aspek organisasi urutan dalam komunikasi. Selain itu, hasil analisis menunjukkan makna ujaran melalui penalaran berurut. Hasil analisis percakapan juga menunjukkan bahwa metode yang digunakan penutur dalam percakapan mereka bisa dispesifikasi (ulang) dan dinegosiasi (ulang) selama berlangsungnya interaksi.

Kata Kunci: analisis percakapan, alih tutur, percakapan berdampingan, respon yang diinginkan, respon yang tidak diinginkan

INTRODUCTION

Conversation has been the part of everyday life. Everytime and everywhere people talk in order to communicate their feeling and ideas to others whether the nature of the conversation is formal or informal. The basic of a conversation is that it deals at least with the interaction between two speakers. They in nature speak at a time. They

take turn whenever they communicate. Question and answer, opening and closing, offer and acceptance, offer and refusal become the part of a talk-in-interaction.

This kind of human nature has become the analyst research as well. The sociologist, psychologist, as well as the linguist have been engaged in various researches. One of the tools they use in their research is Conversation Analysis (CA). CA is an approach to the study of language that avoids categorizations of use based on native-speaker intuitions. Data in CA consist of audio- and/or videotaped natural conversations, which are finely transcribed using special conventions. A working principle of CA is that no aspect of talk can be assumed to be nonfunctional (Heritage, 1984) which concerns the fact that the nature of talk is structured. Conclusions about language use can only arise by determining how interlocutors themselves orient to a given utterance, as evidenced by explicit, recorded turns of talk—rather than from possibly erroneous researcher or respondent intuition.

Conversation Analysis firstly began in the USA as the tool in analyzing the sociological phenomena in a conversation (Sacks et al, 1978). Sack and his colleagues outlined the turn-taking model. They perceived that there were three distinct features in a conversation such as the existence of turn-taking, the speakers know when to speak, and overlapping appears to be minimized in turn-taking. Hucthby and Woolfell (1998) argue that the way turn-taking in the talk-in-interaction develops becomes the focus of CA. Turn-taking engages people in the conversation. It may come in order way as well as in disorder way (Hutchby & Woolfell, 1998). They further state that there are two things can be exposed in the shift between the turns within the conversation. First, the turn-taking exploits the speakers' understanding when to speak after one another.

Second, in turn-taking itself exists the implication of active analysis in the speakers' side as the way to express their involvement in such interaction.

The turn-taking is used to express the pattern of the conversation in which the speakers interact, also the way they express what they are saying and the duration or length of what they are saying in turn (Hutchby & Woolfell, 1998). In the turn-taking there is always the case of overlapping. It happens when the speaker is perceived to misread the other speaker's utterance (Hutchby & Woolfell, 1998). It sometimes happens when the second speaker fails to notice that the first speaker has already addressed his/her speaking or not. However, it might also the indication for the other speaker to take the floor in the conversation (Hutchby & Woolfell, 1998).

In CA, a conversation is perceived as a pattern of sequences, as indicated in the most basic one of adjacency pairs (Schegloff, 1972; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Adjacency pairs are the noticeable feature inferring linkages between utterances by speakers and listeners (Sacks et al, 1978). It involves sequences that have the following characteristics: the sequence is close to each other, involving two different speakers, always coming in form of first and second pair, and developed in a way that the first speaker gives a way for the second speaker to respond in appropriately. Mey (2009) describes that requests, invitations, offers, proposals, informatives, complaints, or accusations establish similar expectations regarding a continuation with fitting type of second pair part in the next turn.

In a talk, when the two-part pairs occur frequently, preferred or dispreferred responses will exist (Pomerantz, 1984). The other aspect in a talk-in-conversation is repair. It is actually the part of basic turn-taking rules (Schegloff et al., 1977). It covers the phenomena of errors made in the conversation. It happens when there is a problem

in the word selection, misspelling the word, problem in hearing, as well as misunderstanding the other speaker. Such correction can be made in four different ways as Hutchby and Woolfell (1998) put in: first, self-initiated self repair which is carried out by the speaker when he/she himself/herself made a mistake; second, other-initiated self-repair which is made by the speaker who produced the mistake but initiated by the other speaker; third, self-initiated other-repair which is taken by the other speaker to correct the mistake; and fourth, other-initiated other-repair which is initiated and carried out by the other speakers.

Considering the limitation of the space, this paper only analysed the turn-taking, adjacency pair, and preferred and dispreferred response in general. Besides that, deeper analysis could not also be conducted regarding the space limit.

METHOD

Regarding that conversation analytic methodology is strongly data driven (Mey, 2009), this mini research was developed based on a single case analysis where the researcher focused on the interaction in a single episode with respect to some interesting or relevant aspects. The researcher analyzed the description within context which can be distinguished in the level of turn design as in practices of turn construction and the description of the kind of social action implemented by practices of turn construction as a sequential level.

In order to avoid problems with respect to the ecologically validity of data (Mey, 2009), naturally occurring interactions data was taken from recorded *Oprah Winfrey's Show* on February 28, 2005. In the talk show, Oprah was interviewing Chris Rock, an actor, the host of 2005 Oscar, and Jamie Fox, the best actor of 2005 Oscar winner from

film industry regarding with the Oscar night. Considering that the talk show was publicly aired, it is not necessary to obtain consent from the participants as the sources of data in this study.

The recorded data then was transcribed according to the conventions (see Appendix 2). The transcription of the two-minute conversation in this study was made based on the transcription symbols developed by Clark (2007). Besides generating how initial ideas about how people communicate in talk-in-interaction, the transcription also allows the researcher to make her data available to the scientific community and retrievable for the audience (Mey, 2009).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The following is the presentation of findings and the analysis of turn taking and sequence in the transcript given.

Extract 1 1. OW: Did you feel that this was aaahh .hhhh (0.5) STEP up <u>mo</u>ment?
  2. CR: (.) ah YEAH (0.2) I was it's <u>wei</u>rd I got calls g(oh hah) (.) when I was driving here (1.2) IRELAND <u>call</u> like my my er my my <u>book</u>in' agent said we gotta do YORK <u>right</u> now.
  3. OW: (0.2) Do you think that their humor would be the same (0.3) that YOUR <u>hu</u>mor would translate in Ireland?
  4. CR: YES (.) here's the thing. When you when you travel (1.5) you know <u>dude</u> Lord jokes and stuff like that don't work everywhere. But when you talk about MAN and WOMAN and re<u>la</u>tionships A:::LL over the world.

Line 1 produced by Oprah represents the first component of a question-answer adjacency pair in which the first part constrains the second part. The sounds of *aaahh* and the in-depth breath *.hhhh* as well as the pause followed by the emphasized word stopped in raising intonation made Chris replied not simultaneously (as in line 2) but

took a tenth second and came with an assurance which was positive response as Oprah expected. Here, the nature of the turn-taking went in sequence. There was a question followed by an answer which was preferred one. The elaborated response infers that Chris wished to talk more with Oprah about the event being discussed.

When the expected or preferred response came with more elaboration, it then was sequenced by another adjacency pair in form of follow-up question as in line 3. Oprah tried to attract Chris' attention by focusing on answering his humor side when it came to Ireland audiences. It was indicated by the way she paused and stressed the word *your* and *humor*. Positively, as in line 4, Chris came with a positive assessment that explained how his humor worked everywhere.

Extract 2 5. JF: [Rock (.) hey Rock I'm gonna tell you right now Rock th(hh) what's so special about Chris Rock and I've been watchin' Chris Rock for <u>year</u>s is that (.) HE is SO::: SMART

6. OW: Y::ESSS

7. CR: °Thank you°

8. JF: (.) And what he does (1.2) and (1.2) and the thing about the (.) the change and everything like that. <u>that's</u> what YOU WANT the <u>jo</u>::you:s thing (0.5) to: ME was just BRI::LL:IANT

9. OW: [oh yeah]

10. CR: °Thank you°

Extract 2 shows that the third person, Jamie, attempted to take the floor as he realized that there was an entry point where he desired to attend to face Jamie's need. As Jamie in line 5 stopped talking, Oprah went into the conversation simultaneously (as in line 6) with great and long emphasis indicating a very positive assurance to Jamie's statement as well as the overlapped commentary in line 9. Becoming the listener who were constantly observing and listening to Jamie and Oprah about himself, Chris showed

cooperation by giving preferred, agreeing response through humble replies (as in line 7 and 10) since the volume of his voice was lower than the surrounding talk.

However, there was a time when the talk came to a dispreferred disagreement response from Chris as the following extract:

Extract 3   17. OW: [where did you get that suddenly where did you get that job from?
                18. CR: (1.4) I (yah) you know, O:prah (hahah). I didn't know where I got it in. I don't wanna sound like Michael Jackson, the jokes just come to me!
                19. OW: ((laughter))
                20. JF: ((laughter))
                21. CR: ((laughter)) just come to know. <u>That</u>'s like getting my magic tree! with the <u>k</u>ids
                22. OW: [((laughter))
                23. JF: [Oh SHUT UP (0.5) SHUT UP (1.2) I GOT it.
                24. CR: [<u>hey</u>]
                25. JF: SHUT UP

As Oprah produced such question in line 17, Chris seemed to hesitate. At first, he gave the impression of being not sure what to reply as indicated in the way he delayed the response for quite a long time and followed by such prefaces as *I (yah) you know* as well as the laughter he produced when he tried to address Oprah's question. He did not want to answer the question openly but left it to the floor as he put in line 18 when he came with a playful sound in producing *the jokes just come to me!*

Such dispreferred answer emerged not because of the speaker's misunderstanding. He did understand what Oprah wanted to reveal from him. It was just the way he let the others to figure out the answer. What Chris expected from his answer then came into realization when the others laughed and finally was caught by Jamie in line 23 and 25. Jamie gave a positive reply not by addressing it to Chris or Oprah but to the floor in general.

Extract 4   26. OW: (2) Everybody was afraid you're gonna swear
　　　　　27. CR:　　　　　　　　　　　[No. I'm not gonna swear
　　　　　28. OW:　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[Yeah I know you're not
　　　　　　gonna swear

The above extract also shows the dispreferred answer. Oprah's statement in line 26 was replied in a negative one by Chris in line 27 indicating the denial to everyone's opinion. Such statement was produced because the floor has the common background knowledge on Chris' temper in public for swearing all the time. Therefore, in order to meet Chris' face needs, and since the disagreement is actually preferred in this context, Oprah simultaneously signaled her agreement.

Overlapping has always been the case in a conversation. Failing to notice the other speaker's indication in stopping the utterance might lead to this situation. The following is the analysis of overlapping in the transcript given.

Extract 5   11. JF: (.) And it's like (1) STARS
　　　　　12. OW: [how long (.) yeah]
　　　　　13. JF: [stars have to get over themSELVES a little bit. Because (1.3) it really is a joke and
　　　　　　it's really (0.7) if you tease the president. He's (0.3) he's the one who run the
　　　　　　coun[try yeah EY (0.3) EY (.) EY. He could he has an attitude he want it to.
　　　　　14. OW: [but where did that (1.5) no.
　　　　　15. CR: I(yah) I'm sure he will
　　　　　16. JF: He could definitely
　　　　　17. OW:　　　[where did you get that suddenly where did you get that job from?

In this extract, line 11 shows how Jamie made a statement that refers to Chris. He made it obvious by saying *stars* in emphatic way. However, Oprah as line 12 failed to notice that Jamie was still going to continue his speaking. She started asking a question to Chris when Jamie had not finished his utterance, which was Oprah thought the end of the utterance and became her turn to speak. Oprah, as seen in line 12, stopped anyway because she then realized the urgency or the significance of what Jamie was going to

say next. What Jamie did in line 13 actually stopped Oprah from continuing her interview to Chris since he insisted on continuing his part. By saying such utterance as these *EY, EY, EY* times and times, Jamie sure knew that Oprah would stop and gave the floor to him.

In line 14, however, Oprah tried to cut Jamie's part since she thought it was the best time to turn to Chris. She realized it when she thought Jamie has come to the end of his part which in fact not. She then paused for while and stopped her attempt to take the floor. She afterwards tried another attempt again as seen in line 17 when she was sure the conversation could be taken over to her. This time she did get her turn to speak to Chris.

Discussion

Extract 1 and extract 2 show that there exists a mutual understanding during the conversation among the speakers. The conversation shows a mutual understanding which is accomplished in form of question-answer on adjacency pairs with preferred response. However, extract 3 and 4 show the preference organization in negative way. The dispreferred responses marked by the delay and prefaces showing hesitation in showing complete agreement as well as direct form of disagreement. Therefore, the characteristic of talk in which two-part pairs occur frequently (LoCastro, 2012) does exist in the talk discussed with adjacency pairs and preference organization concept revealed in it.

As overlapping has been always the case in a conversation, failing to notice the other speaker's indication in stopping the utterance marks this situation. Intending to lead the conversation might also be the indication to an overlapping as well (Hutchby &

Woolfell, 1998). Extract 5 shows how this situation takes place. As typical of interactional discourse (Yule, 1996) such interaction in extract 5 reveals the competition for the right to speak. In this interactional situation, the next speaker is left to compete for the next turn without any signal from the current speaker (LoCastro, 2102).

Therefore, the transcribed data analyzed in this study has indicated how the participants involved in a talk-in-interaction orient to as the social action through talk is organized. The data introduces another aspect of sequence organization: preference organization. Besides that, it shows how the meaning of utterances is constituted along lines of sequential reasoning. The utterance in a turn at this talk is not just what it says, but what it does in a particular sequential context. Last, the analysis illustrates that the methods by which participants make sense of their talk may be specified and negotiated in the course of interaction.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conversation Analysis is only one of a number of discourse analytical approaches (Burns, 1998). Since it consents to the analysis in micro-level such as turn-taking, adjacency pairs and turn types that involves the preferred or dispreferred responses, the teacher might be able to explore and elaborate some aspects of the micro-interactional level of talk to the students. Moreover, Burns et al. (1996) state that CA can be of use for classroom application when the language teacher wants to explore language performance on turn taking and turn types. The analysis on the patterns and strategies used in turn taking, analysis on turn types, disclosure on the kinds of strategies the speakers use in renegotiating turn taking, and analysis on the relationship

between turn taking and the social context of the conversation are the significances of CA use in the classroom.

The analysis of the transcribed data demonstrates several aspects of the conversation analytic approach. First, it introduces another aspect of sequence organization: preference organization. Second, it shows one more time how the meaning of utterances is constituted along lines of sequential reasoning. Third, the analysis illustrates that the methods by which participants make sense of their talk may be (re-)specified and (re-)negotiated in the course of interaction. Finally, the discussion demonstrates some aspects of CA methodology discussed in the former section.

With regard to classroom implication, CA can be of a great use since it gives the way for the language teachers to explore the aspects of the speaking and discover the language learners' performance. Moreover, by elaborating the function of the authentic transcript used in the classroom, both the students and the teachers can investigate the important parts in the running of a conversation. The students are able to understand the nature of the conversation while the teachers are able to monitor the progress of the language learners.

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APPENDIX 1

Transcript

Notes:　OW = Oprah Winfrey; CR = Chris Rock; JF = Jamie Fox

1. OW: Did you feel that this was aaahh .hhhh (0.5) STEP up <u>mo</u>ment?
2. CR: (.) ah YEAH (0.2) I was it's <u>wei</u>rd I got calls g(oh hah) (.) when I was driving here (1.2) IRELAND <u>call</u> like my my er my my <u>book</u>in' agent said we gotta do YORK <u>right</u> now.
3. OW: (0.2) Do you think that their humor would be the same (0.3) that YOUR <u>humor</u> would translate in Ireland?
4. CR: YES (.) here's the thing. When you when you travel (1.5) you know <u>dude</u> Lord jokes and stuff like that don't work everywhere. But when you talk about MAN and WOMAN and re<u>la</u>tionships A:::LL over the world.
5. JF: 　　　　　　　[Rock (.) hey Rock I'm gonna tell you right now Rock th(hh) what's so special about Chris Rock and I've been watchin' Chris Rock for <u>years</u> is that (.) HE is SO::: SMART
6. OW: Y::ESSS
7. CR: °Thank you°
8. JF: (.) And what he does (1.2) and (1.2) and the thing about the (.) the change and everything like that. <u>that's</u> what YOU WANT the <u>jo</u>::you:s thing (0.5) to: ME was just BRI::LL:IANT
9. OW: 　　　　　　　[oh yeah]
10. CR: °Thank you°
11. JF: (.) And it's like (1) STARS
12. OW: 　　　　　　　　　[how long (.) yeah]
13. JF: 　　　　　　　　　[stars have to get over <u>them</u>SELVES a little bit. Because (1.3) it really is a <u>jo</u>ke and it's really (0.7) if you <u>tea</u>se the president. He's (0.3) he's the one who run the coun[try yeah EY (0.3) EY (.) EY. He could he has an <u>atti</u>tude he <u>wa</u>nt it to.
14. OW: 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[but where did that (1.5) no.
15. CR: I(yah) I'm sure he will
16. JF: He could definitely
17. OW: 　　　[where did you get that suddenly where did you get that job from?
18. CR: (1.4) I (yah) you know, O:prah (hahah). I didn't know where I got it in. I don't wanna sound like Michael Jackson, the jokes just come to me!
19. OW: ((laughter))
20. JF: ((laughter))
21. CR: ((laughter)) just come to know. <u>That</u>'s like getting my magic tree! with the <u>ki</u>ds
22. OW: 　　　　[((laughter))
23. JF: 　　　[Oh SHUT UP (0.5) SHUT UP (1.2) I GOT it.
24. CR: 　　　　　　　　　　　[<u>hey</u>]
25. JF: 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　SHUT UP
26. OW: (2) Everybody was afraid you're gonna swear
27. CR: 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[No. I'm not gonna swear
28. OW: 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[Yeah I know you're not gonna swear

APPENDIX 2

Conversation Analysis Transcription Conventions

All of the transcription used in this study use Clark's (2007) convention.

(.)	=	just noticeable pause indicating a short silence of less than 0.2 seconds
(0.2) (1.5)	=	examples of exactly timed pauses, in seconds
word.	=	full stop (period) after a word donates the falling and end of an intonation [contour]
word?	=	question mark after a word depicts a rising, questioning intonation
wo:rd	=	a colon indicates stretching of the preceding sound
(word)	=	transcriber's guess at an unclear word or words
( )	=	unclear talk
<u>word</u>	=	underlined words are those which are spoken loudly
WORD	=	capitals indicate even louder speech
°word°	=	lower voice than the surrounding talk
[overlap]	=	overlapping speech
((word))	=	double parentheses contain information on nonverbal events accompanying the interaction