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## **AN INVESTIGATION OF SOME BASIC TURN-TAKING MECHANISMS IN DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

One typical issue in every day interaction is how it can be possible to have turn taking with minimum overlap and gap. The aim of this paper was to clarify this concept. In other words, it wanted to explore the typical mechanisms in turn taking including the processes of selecting other participants and transfer of turns in conversations. To restate this issue, two ideas of time allocation and transition relevance places have been discussed. The organization of turn taking has mainly been elaborated through a mechanism suggested by Sacks *et al.*, (1974). This model was basically investigated and its pros and cons were mentioned. In the subsequent parts a range of variables that affect the orientation and functions of suggested mechanisms were discussed.

**Keywords:** *Transition -Relevance Place, Turn allocation, Turn - Constructional Units*

### **INTRODUCTION**

It is clear that conversation, similar to other group and collective activities requires organization and management of the roles of people who are involved in it. In conversation, turn taking system is used to distribute the chances of participation.

In ordinary conversation, turn taking is an outstanding achievement. It is probably, the most basic characteristic of the conversation, and the fact that turn taking is a necessity while talking and the distribution of turns is carried out in a certain way among people forms an extensive set of phenomena in conversation. To express it simply, we can say that turns are the fundamental units of conversation and, as Sacks *et al.*, (1974) mentioned the distribution of turns is within the "economy" of chances to speak it. At the beginning of any conversation, neither party is aware of the number of turns, the kind of topics to be discussed or the way they will be treated, the length of each turn, whether there will be more participants, the way the turns are to be given to related parties, and so on. In addition, the duration of a speaker's turn is not predetermined at the start of the turn. Still, in spite of these and lots of other circumstances of being unsure, it is greatly probable that the transfer of turns is carried out in an organized way: we will find very few times when more than one party is speaking, and these cases have rather short length of time, and consecutive turns are constructed in order to minimize any sort of gap or delay before the following person, showing that there is an influential level of exactness in timing considering each other. How do we achieve this level of orderliness?

To answer this question we need to understand the concept of turn-taking. The idea of turn-taking in conversation was first treated systematically by Sacks *et al.*, (1974). Turn-taking has been a subject in the field of conversation analysis which has attracted lots of attention since then. Conversation analysis itself as an interdisciplinary subject fascinated many scholars from communication studies, discourse oriented linguists having discourse orientation, and other fields (Heritage, 1984; Levinson, 1983).

This paper aims to explore the area of turn location: how does a participant take a turn at the conversation? How is the process of turn selection done in the conversation? And how is the selecting of the other participant as the next speaker or the process of self- selecting fulfilled? The other concept which the current paper is going to clarify is the transfer of the turn in the conversation.

#### **Turn Allocation**

Agar (1994) mentioned one of the basic concepts of the operation of turn-taking in conversation. He says that somebody speaks, and the other party lies back and listens let them roll for a period of time. When they have finished, there will be a silence which operates like a green light to indicate that somebody else

### Research Article

can be taking the floor. A potential definition of turn-taking in linguistics based on Goodwin (1981) is that the participants talking will be changed through this process.

According to this concept, people involved in conversation wait for someone talking to stop, and after that another one starts talking. We can find some shortcomings in this description. First, pauses and more exactly gaps cannot always separate turns-at-talk. Instead, speakers indicate unbelievable exactness in their capability to start speaking at the appropriate moment, and lots of their transitions are carried out with no gap and no overlap (Sacks *et al.*, 1974). This doesn't show that we don't have gaps in talk or that they are to some extent unnatural, but it expresses the fact that when we have inter-speaker silences, they are indicative of intentionality, purposefulness, and meaningfulness. Second, it is not transparent that how such an explanation can provide the right of speaking for the next speaker. This may sound clear if there are only two parties. Still, even in situations where we have only two sides, one strong possibility is that the same speaker starts speaking again.

Furthermore, if we accept that conversations are structured in this way, some sort of clear signals that show the completion of turns are needed. If we ignore such signals, it might get problematic to put a difference between a pause during the course of turn-at-talk and a pause that indicates its completion.

It is obvious that for conversations where we have more than two people, a stronger explanation is needed. For instance, in natural conversations in which we have three parties, the turns are not usually in a model of ABCABCABC, though in language classrooms where the conversations are mainly preplanned, this arranged pattern has dominance. For the given pattern, this simplistic wait-to-stop elaboration of turn taking doesn't seem suitable.

In search for finding the more comprehensive bases of turn taking, we come up with the basic fact that the characteristics of turn-taking are ubiquitous. They hold across cultures and social strata, in spite of differences in the particular forms of the verbal and nonverbal regulators used (Caspers, 1998; Hafez, 1991; Kjaerbeck, 1998). As far as the evidence indicates, no culture or group has been discovered in which the basic qualities of turn-taking are absent. This is true even when the physical material of conversation is extremely different from that of ordinary speech, as in the situations where we have sign language used by the deaf (e.g., Coates and Sutton-Spence, 2001) and tactile sign language that the deaf-blind use (Mesch, 2000, 2001). Finally, turn-taking appears early in human development, as the structure of babies' vocal and bodily interactions with caregivers shows (Beebe *et al.*, 1988; Bloom *et al.*, 1987).

In conclusion we can say that these findings refer to the grounding of turn-taking in basic human cognitive processes. As Sidnell (2001) has asserted, turn-taking in conversation may build a species-specific biological adjustment. Turn taking is a natural phenomenon. Generally, regardless of the social contexts, we can find a collection of rules that dominates turn taking system (Sacks *et al.*, 1974):

(a) When the current speaker selects the next speaker, the next speaker has the right and, at the same time, is obliged to take the next turn;

(b) If the current speaker does not select the next speaker, any one of the participants has the right to become the next speaker. This could be regarded as self-selection; and (c) if neither does the current speaker select the next speaker, nor any of the participant's become the next speaker, the current speaker may resume his/her turn.

According to Sacks *et al.*, (1974), what makes it possible to obtain such mild turn-transfer is the design of the turn-taking system that includes different components, the first of which Sacks *et al.*, (1974) have named the "turn-constructive component" (op. cit. 702) of the system. By this Sacks *et al.*, comprehend the fact that speakers may design their turns as diverse "unit types", such as lexical, phrasal, clausal or sentential structures. This lets the participants to project the unit-type under way and anticipate the possible completion place of the current turn before the speaker has really reached it. The project ability of turn structures is of certain relevance for turn-taking because potential turn completion junctures make up so called transition relevance places (TRPs), around which speaker shift occurs (Sidnell and Stivers, 2013).

The second part of the system, which Sacks *et al.* name the "turn allocation component" (op. cit. 702), contains two fundamental groups of turn transfer :i) those cases in which the next turn is allocated by the

### Research Article

current speaker choosing a next speaker and ii) those cases in which one of the participants self selects as next turn taker (ibid.). The two parts, the 'turn-constructural component' and the 'turn-allocation component', are supplemented by "a basic set of rules governing turn construction, providing for the allocation of a next turn to one party, and coordinating transfer so as to minimize gap and overlap" (op.cit. 704). In other words, This organizational model of turn taking having two basic components of turn construction and turn allocation to specify the occurrence of the places where transition to a following speaker becomes relevant (*transition -relevance place*, or TRP); and the allocation of turns (turn - allocation component), which means the methods through which the next speakers are determine (Sidnell and Stivers, 2013).

They offer their theory in the form of a collection of rules, and it is important to make clear immediately what these rules are going to portray. The crucial point is that they are not going to illustrate a model of behavior to which participants always conform. They have, rather, the force of a cultural custom: their aim is to illustrate the way people in our culture must behave if they are not to be considered as unqualified or uncooperative.

Here at first we concentrate on the idea of turn allocation, and in the subsequent part the concept of transition relevant place is dealt with. Sacks *et al.*, (1974) turn - taking model gives two categories of methods for turn allocation. These include (i) the methods where we have 'current - selects - next' techniques, which means techniques through which a current speaker selects somebody to continue the speech, and (ii) self - selection methods, which means techniques through which participants allocate a turn to themselves regarding the opportunity of taking the floor. The following part is going to explain how these two different sorts of turn allocation are functioning.

#### Current - selects - next Techniques

How can a current participant show that s/he is selecting a certain co- participant to talk next? Based on Sacks *et al.*, (1974), a fundamental method is to form a turn - at - talk that represents a first *pair - part like* a question (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973), and address it to a particular co- interact ant. Both steps of constructing a first -pair part and directing it to someone else are necessary to specify the next speaker. For instance:

- (3) (Sacks *et al.*, 1974, modified. Cited in Sidnell and Stivers, 2013)
- 1 S: Oscar, did you work for someone before you worked for Zappa?  
2 O: ->Yeh, many many.  
3 (3.0)  
4 O: -> Canned Heat for a year.  
5 S: Didya?  
6 O: ->Poco for a year.  
7 T: ooh when they were good?

In the example above, we have the direction of O's utterances in lines 2, 4 and 6 to S; however, S is not (necessarily) selected as the subsequent speaker. Here, the directed utterances don't necessitate relevant responses from the addressed ones. So a combination of both steps would be needed.

How is addressing a certain speaker carried out? It can be either in an explicit form or a tacit one. In the explicit way, we have at least two procedures to achieve this purpose (Sacks *et al.*, 1974): (i) focusing gaze at some certain co - participant, and (ii) employing an address term. If the directed gaze wants to be successful, the intended participants must see it to understand that the utterances are being addressed to them. As far as it is concerned with address terms, Lerner (2003) argues that address terms are usually used in two kinds of situations where something behind simple addressing are engaged. First, situations in which it could be troublesome to have access to the intended addressees, an address term are used as a tool to ensure his/her availability. Next type of situations in which address terms are usually used is where personal concern or stance is expressed toward the addressed ones either positively or negatively. Tacit method is another device to address the intended speaker. Here, 'tacit' ways of addressing that employ context - specific features covering the production of a sequence - initiating action, including turn content, composition, placement, topic, Identities of parties that are situationally clarified and so on.

## Research Article

### Self- selection Techniques

Sidnell and Stivers (2013) believe that if there is no selection of the next speakers before reaching a place of completion, other participants may self- select and start a next turn. If more than one party employ this practice, it will be very likely that the first starter takes the floor. This gives motivation to other possible next starters to begin as early as possible. Even we can observe the likelihood of starting taking floor slightly before the completion of the current speaker leading to the brief overlapping of some segments. These terminal overlaps are one of the most widespread kinds of overlapping talk seen in the following example (cited in Jefferson, 1984):

1 Joann: We weren't crying we were lau:[ghing.

2 Pam: [I know ut.

As we see in this example, despite the fact that the length of terminal overlaps may be brief, their occurrence could cause a risk of damaging the hearing of the beginning of the early starters' turns by their recipients and impair the perception of the ongoing turn by the recipients. One way to solve this problem as offered by Sacks *et al.*, (1974) is to start their initiation by appositional beginning, e.g. *well, but, and, so, and so on*. Appositional beginnings start a turn without showing much about the constructional characteristics of the turn being generated, and in this way, their involvement in overlap may not influence the intelligibility of the next turn as in the following example cited in Jefferson (1984).

1 Earl: Yeah go ahea: d that's it su::re. Su::re. (.) Su:re.=

2 Bud: -> =That other stuff's kinda [bulging.]

3 Earl: -> [But u h] look uh. .hhBu:dyuh know

4 that ring's gotta come offathe:re,

Some particular features of the rules offered above can be pointed out: the first one is connected to the logical connection between the turns that make up paired sequences. When a speaker generates the first part of a pair, naturally we expect that an allocated next speaker should generate the suitable second pair. There is a conditional relevance for their second one after the first part has been generated (Schegloff, 1972). Therefore, if the first part determines the following speaker, he/ she is forced to speak and is expected to supply the suitable one in relevance to the first part or give a reason for its lack.

The next point is concerned with the gaps after the allocation of turns. Gaps following turns where the next speaker has been selected will be interpreted by the co-interactants as the lack of a certain person's talk. In such cases, the lack of talk is normatively a remarkable issue, in that it is likely that negative interpretations may be made about these speakers since they are not taking the floor when the turns are allocated to them. Therefore the system allocates the turn to the next speakers to begin their turn at the earliest time (Sidnell and Stivers, 2013). Based on Sidnell and Stivers (2013) following point concerns minimizing gaps. The system employs several procedures to achieve this purpose: Next speakers can predict the emergence of the places where the relevant transitions occur with relative certainty, and as a result begin their turns. However, there are some features of the structure system that attempts to minimize the gaps between the turns. For instance, if there is no selection of the following speaker to take turn, then it is likely that the possible next speakers may self- select at the first transition point. If we have more than one potential speaker, there is an opportunity where the speakers can start talking as early as possible to take the floor. There is a motivation for the possible following speakers to start talking as close as possible to take the turn. In the same way, it is likely that the current speaker self selects and goes on behind the transition point. Under this circumstance other interactants who want to take the floor are required to start talking as soon as possible at the first accessible transition point.

The great success of Sacks *et al.*'s system for turn-taking resides in the fact that it discovered the accuracy and orderliness that exists in such an ordinary activity as ordinary conversation. In this respect, as Oreström (1983) pointed out, the framework represents a precious achievement as it contributes to the perception of how conversation is systematically arranged. However, he asserts that Sacks *et al.*'s work despite being a great step towards such a perception has its transparent limitations. One central point of the critique has very often concentrated on CA's conceptualization of overlapping, a violation of the one-at-a-time rule and consequently a kind of remarkable linguistic behavior that needs repair.



### Research Article

By investigating Sacks *et al.*'s (1974) turn-taking framework, we recognize that there is a space of interaction available to all parties in the conversation to the same degree. This interactional space is named the 'floor'. Participants in the interaction take turns in taking up the floor by following their contributions to the conversation. Oreström (1983) considers this as a limitation in the system in the sense that all speaking-turns are given equal ranks. He proposes that it is needed to concentrate more on how involved participants plan their turns to make them in line with the rules.

The other criticism of Sacks's turn-taking model concerns the issue of one-at-a-time. Schegloff (2000) considers the organization of *one party talking at a time as the most usual default 'numerical' value of speakership in talk-in-interaction*. Clearly, the argument posed by Schegloff that one-at-a-time is to be comprehended as one person-at-a-time. However, as Sidnell and Stivers (2013) point out we might be a bit surprised to find that a party may not be synonymous with a person, at least in collective interactions, as Schegloff talks about the fact that:

*Co-members of a party [...] may come to talk simultaneously because their party has been selected to speak next, but in a fashion that does not specify which of them is to do the speaking. (op.cit. 48, note 8)*

Clearly, then, for Schegloff a *party* is not necessarily equivalent with a *person*, as a party may include several individuals operating as one party to talk-in-interaction. In exchanges between two participants the number of persons usually equals with the number of parties. With three or more interlocutors, this is not necessarily the case, as transparently several people might form one party for a special stream of talk. The conceptual difference between *party* and *person* hence gets only logical if one tackles talk-in-interaction among more than two persons. Schegloff (1995) explains the issue a bit more and underlines the idea that the mechanisms for selecting a next speaker elaborated in Sacks *et al.*, (1974) operates on the level of parties, not on the level of persons.

Consequently, while the turn-taking system elaborated in Sacks *et al.*, (1974) for the selection of a next *party* does not necessarily supply the selection of an individual *speaker* for that party; all it does is to present repair mechanisms to solve overlap when it takes place. To restate what has been said we can say that it seems the idea of party is slightly confusing. It is vague whether 'one-at-a-time' is to be understood now as 'one-party-at a time' or 'one-person-at a time' since both phrases are used by Schegloff (2000). Second, it is not very reasonable, on the one hand, that turn-taking is in progress between parties (not speakers), but coincidentally argue, as Schegloff does, that the deep structure rule speakers follow when taking turns at talk is 'one *speaker* at a time', and not one *party*. Solving this issue, however, sounds to be crucial so as to probe turn-taking and coincident speech in group interactions.

In general we can say that turn-taking system based on Sacks *et al.*, (1974) has two fundamental characteristics of being "locally managed" and "party-administered". *locally managed* means that it structures only current and following turn and not, for example, what will occur in twenty seconds, in six minutes or next week. *Party-administered* means that there is no person to judge and determine who should take the floor next and for how long. Again it must be pointed out that we have a range of different forms of talk that are not structured in this way. For example, in formal debate the order of participants and the duration of the turn are determined, at least partially, in advance. In classroom, this is the teacher who decides the ones that should speak next. Observing such structures reveals that conversation is not structured in this manner (see Greatbatch, 1988).

### Turn - Constructional Units and the Transition -Relevance Place

At this point, we want to investigate some phenomena regulating and influencing the course of turn-taking. The aim is to probe their occurrence in the conversation and try to find out their relative role in the course of interactional turn-taking among participants. These could include a range of variables including the idea of transition relevance place.

A fundamental point is that since the arrangement of speakers, duration of turns, and the content of conversation are not determined in advance, such matters must be handled by the involved participants over the course of interaction. Sacks *et al.*, (1974) mentioned that turns include *turn-constructional units*, which can contain a range of different things from a word to a sentence, relying on the context. In other words, full sentences, single lexicons, non-lexical items, or single phrasal or clausal units can be the

### Research Article

building blocks of such units. Turn construction units (TCU) are the main bases for the occurrence of turns. The completion of every TCU indicates a transition relevance place in which the possibility of changing speakers' turns becomes available that may or may not be materialized at any specific TRP. Next point is that context enables the participants to project the completion of a TCU and moving toward a TRP through foreshadowing that the current TCU is going to end. Anticipating that the turn transfer is going to occur at certain stages in the flow of speech is going to minimize the problem of overlapping, whereas foreshadowing of these places tend to offer the speakers the prior preparation for taking the floor (concentrating their thoughts on the subject, a deep breath for feeling relaxed, etc.) to reduce the emergence of gaps between turns as much as possible (Sidnell and Stivers, 2013). Here the aim is to investigate some practices involved in projecting and transition - relevance places. To begin, three kinds of turns have been shown below (Arrows indicate the relevant turn.)

(2.1) Single word turn (From Sacks *et al.*, 1974)

Fern: Well they're not comin'

-> Lana: Who.

Fern: Uh Pam, unless the c'n find somebody.

(2.2) Single phrase turn (From Sacks *et al.*, 1974)

Anna: Was last night the first time you met Missiz Kelly?

(1.0)

Bea: Met whom?

-> Anna: Missiz Kelly.

Bea: Yes

(2.3) Single clause turns (From Sacks *et al.*, 1974)

A: Uh you been down here before havencha.

B: yeh.

-> A: Where the sidewalk is?

B: Yeah,

How is it possible for participants to recognize when it is suitable to begin their turn? One influential element is our tacit, presupposed knowledge concerning turn construction units. We have the occurrence of a transition relevance place (TRP) at the end of each turn construction unit. They are the places where the change of participants may properly take place. Sidnell and Stivers (2013) mentioned that such actions or behaviors at the end of units exhibiting the transfer of turn can be regarded pragmatically meaningful and complete by speakers. They also asserted that turn construction unit has some distinct qualities. One is that when it is completed, next participant may start: it is likely that turn transfer starts at this place. We have the relevance of turn transfer at the end of turn construction units. The word relevance indicates that it is not compulsory; rather, it is something that is likely to happen. The fact that participants attempt to start their turns at or around the transition relevant places exhibits our tacit comprehension about the normatively suitable turn –transfer at such places. A second characteristic reveals that when they are in progress, it is possible to predict their completion time. It shows that other participants can time their turn initiation with some accuracy. Numerous factors are involved in the procedure of projecting the completion of TCU. These various factors are blended to form a harmonious transfer of turns. Here I want to investigate some important ones.

#### Syntax

Sacks *et al.*, (1974) asserted that syntax supplies a significant sign on impending completion. At times it is likely that TCUs can include only a single word, though in many cases larger units structured by syntactic rules would be more necessary. The employment of syntax for completion projection gets so clear in the inclination of participants to overlap the final syllable of a sentence when stretching or drawing of that syllable occurs. The following example is going to clarify this idea: (Sacks *et al.*, 1974)

1 A: Well if you knew my argument why did you bother to a:[sk.

2 B: [Because

3 I 'd like to defend my argument.

### **Research Article**

Clearly the answerers in this conversation have not been waiting for the completion place of the prior participant to initiate a response turn to avoid having a gap. Conversely, relying on the syntactic form of the ongoing turn, they try to project ahead and time the start of the response. The slight overlap strengthens the idea that the efforts are made by participants at projecting completion.

#### *Prosody*

In projecting transition relevance places (Sacks *et al.*, 1974), at which the floor may legitimately be shifted from one speaker to another, interactants depend not only on syntactic signals, but also on prosodic features (Wennerstrom, 2001). In spite of its outstanding role in utterance interpretation, still, prosody remains comparably ignored in discourse studies.

In lots of cases concerning turn transition in conversation, a new speaker may react to phonetic cues from the end of the previous turn, including variation in prosodic characteristics such as pitch and final lengthening. Heldner and Edlund (2010) found a large level of variation in timing of the onsets of new speakers' turns, with the most number of turn transitions across three corpora containing a "just-noticeable" gap (i.e. silence) of around 200ms. Heldner (2011) demonstrated more that simultaneous speech and gaps at turn transitions must have duration of at least 120ms so as to be understandable to listeners. Heldner and Edlund (2010) find that based on their data; the next speaker could possibly use phonetic information from the end of the prior turn as a signal to turn transition because at least 41% of cases contained long enough gaps.

In English, models of intonation at prosodic boundaries have been accompanied by cuing turn hold or transition. Local *et al.*, (1986) note that high pitch rises or low falls usually at speaker transition in Tyneside English, associated with other phonetic cues such as slowing and centralizing of vowels. This finding on intonation has recently been repeated by Gravano and Hirschberg (2009) in a corpus of American English. In the same line, Auer (1996) announces that "integrated" pitch contours, which do not show characteristics extremely different from what has come before, are often employed in turn-continuations in German.

#### *Pragmatics*

Turn - constructional units can be interpreted with respect to the actions that they offer, and as a result, actions and limits of actions are involved in the projection of the potential turn completion.

There is proximity between action boundaries and syntactic ones. But action has significance in two distinct ways. The first is related to the ongoing TCU form. As it was pointed out TCUs can take different syntactic forms, so what is necessary for the participants is to acquire the knowledge of those forms before such knowledge can be employed for predicting completion. To some extent the ongoing action in a certain sequential setting can be used for determining that knowledge.

The next one is concerned with the level of an action which can be posing the projection of compound or multi-unit turns. Turn transfers may be suspended at syntactic or prosodic completion conjunctures. If we have complicated actions (Selting, 2000). For example, if the utterances which have referential ambiguity, - having pronouns or other elements which cannot be inferred from the existing context- project more talk to clarify what is unclear.

While some complex actions have completion junctures that are transparently marked and well comprehended (e.g. a projected question is complete when the right question, usually marked by interrogative syntax, is offered; see Schegloff, 1980), other complex actions have completion places that are either not yet perceived, or are more 'open' and need to be negotiated and co-constructed (e.g. advice - giving, story - telling; see Heritage and Clayman, 2010; Houtkoop-Steenstra and Mazeland, 1985). Description of transition relevance will be incomplete until we achieve a more transparent grasp of how courses of action that exceeds the individual TCU are brought to closure.

#### *Gaze*

Gaze has an important and complex function in day-to-day conversation. People involved in conversation need to have a look at each other to assess the other party's understanding or acceptance, to ensure concentration and interest, and to coordinate the process of floor taking. On the contrary, participants may not look at one another to have a chance to organize their speech, or to focus on more complicated

### Research Article

activities. Beattie (1980) discovered that gaze's function in taking turn depends on context: when the general level of gaze is not high, like in conversations among strangers, or when the participants feel that the topic of conversation is too cognitively loaded, gaze can take a more important role.

Next point regarding the gaze is that it can play a complementary role in many conversational situations. Watanuki and Togawa (1995) evaluated levels of bilateral gaze in two-sided conversations. They found that gaze and nodding as two devices employed in such conversations had inverse relation. The conclusion was that they were complementary devices of confirming the other speaker.

Of course the availability of these different factors makes the process of indicating and projecting completion complicated. At one hand these devices can converge, enhancing the transparency projected places and make easier coordinated turn transfer, or they may be divergent to make completion junctures unclear and ambiguous (Auer, 1996; Ford *et al.*, 1996; Schegloff, 1996).

Still, some people believe that TRP as elaborated by Sacks *et al.*, cannot always be relevant as a place of turn taking (Hayashi, 1996). In natural interactions, participants often overlook the rule of turn construction unit. She proposes that it is needed to probe the mental strategy the interactants take when they interact and exchange a turn. In another debate, a collection of six particular and discrete cues is proposed as a turn- eliciting signal (Duncan 1972): intonation, drawl, body motion, sociocentric sequences such as *but, uh, or something, you know*, pitch or loudness associated with sociocentric consecutive series, and syntax. Other set of turn-eliciting signals contain: adjacency pairs (Schegloff and Sacks in Oreström, 1983), where the first part expressed by a participant requires the second part to be expressed by the next participant to form a pair; a silent pause after a part that is grammatically complete shows completion of a turn (Jefferson in Oreström, 1983); and some sort of response that usually follows a question (Oreström, 1983). Eye contact also shows turn-taking, particularly in British culture, the participant looks away over his/her turn and looks back to the listener in his/her eye at the turn-completion point (Cook, 1989).

We can draw a conclusion that semantics, syntax, prosody, eye gaze, and signals of body movement generated by the speakers are different devices employed by the listeners to estimate the end arrival of the turns (Bavelas *et al.*, 1995; Wells and MacFarlane, 1998) at the opposite side, when listeners are eager to take the floor, they can demonstrate their willingness by using some tools such as movements, hearable in breath, or interjected words (Bavelas *et al.*, 1995; Dittmann and Llewellyn, 1968). In addition, speakers can react to these endeavors with adaptation in their own production, like a *rush-through* or the interjection of semantic signals, like “then” or “anyway,” to show a desire to go on (Fox Tree, 2000; Schegloff, 1982). In fact, recognizing the possible turn transition may be a procedure depending on opportunity, where participants employ any available means which can be different across cultures, languages and circumstances. For instance, visual signals may be exploited in face -to- face conversations but will obviously be of no use for telephone calls or conversations in the dark, where we have the occurrence of normal turn-taking nevertheless (Sellen, 1995).

### Conclusion

Turn taking in conversation is usually as easy as breathing. Still, few people (and few language instructors) have paid enough conscious attention to just precisely how we handle our turn-taking in talk-in-interaction. This paper has attempted to illustrate the norms of conversational turn-taking. To do so, two concepts of turn allocation and turn transfer needed to be elaborated. TCU endings tend to be taken up with the issue of turn transition, regardless of whether such transition really occurs at that juncture. A set of variables (syntactic, prosodic, pragmatic, nonvocal) that affect projecting TCU completion and thereby establishing the relevance of turn transfer have been discussed.

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### Research Article

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