

# THE ANALYSIS OF TURN TAKING STRATEGIES IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Harris Hermansyah Setiajid<sup>1</sup>, Yanuarius Yanu Dharmawan<sup>2</sup>, Nurmala Eka Putri<sup>3</sup>,  
Susanto Susanto<sup>4</sup>

Universitas Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta, Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

Universitas Bandar Lampung, Indonesia<sup>2,3,4</sup>

Jl. Zainal Abidin Pagar Alam No. 29, Labuhan Ratu, Kedaton, Kota Bandar Lampung,  
Lampung. 35142

Corresponding e-mail: [yanu@ubl.ac.id](mailto:yanu@ubl.ac.id)

---

## Abstract

There are 3 types of turn taking strategies, namely taking the turn, holding the turn and yielding the turn. The purpose of this study is to answer the turn taking used in the classroom with the teacher and students as the participants. This study uses a qualitative approach that analyzes the results of data captured using a video recorder. After recording the data, we do the transcription of the participant conversation based on the recorder. The transcript is based on the theory from Jefferson. Then, to analyze what type of turn taking used by the participants we used Stenstrom theory. Based on the findings in this study, it was concluded that there were several types of turn taking strategies that were not found due to circumstance and timing which were not suitable for use, including 'metacomment' and 'giving up' strategy. From this research it is found that each individual has an original character that builds a conversation with a unique pattern.

**Keywords:** *turn taking; turn taking strategy; discourse analysis*

---

## INTRODUCTION

Turn-taking exists to manage the run of a conversation. The analysis of turn-taking is related to how the speaker and the interlocutor take turns in speaking and who speaks when determined. It makes us realize that conversation involves talking done by some people as they should aware the role of the conversation. People should know when they start to talk and when other people reply. Stenström (1994) said that there are three kinds of the turn taking strategies. The first type is taking the turn, the second type is holding the turn, and the third type is yielding the turn. These types explain about how people start the conversation, how people carry on in talking and how people give the chance to others.

Turn taking strategy is important to be studied because it can be used to find out how the participants manage and take to exchange of speaking turn in interaction so the goals of the conversation can be achieved. In our daily life, people have

different communication situation such as ordinary talk and institutional talk. In this research, we emphasize on institutional talk which tries to identify the turn taking between teacher and students in English Language class. The class is chosen because there are many chances for student and teacher to talk and communicate each other even more using English or Indonesian. However, the teacher is more dominated in the conversation. The aim of this study is to identify what kind of turn-taking strategies used in the English Class.

This research is important to do because we can know how teacher build the conversation, how students give respond, how they engage the conversation, and how they take their turn in conversation so the learning process can run smoothly.

Discourse analysis is a way to identify the social distinction situated with use of words, speech acts and interactions, thoughts and feeling, object, and circumstance (Gee, 2005). Additionally,

conversation is a very good example of interactive and interpersonal nature communication in oral discourse (Brown, 1994). The type of discourse analysis that focuses on the rules of conversation is called conversation analysis. Another explanation about turn taking is declared by Giles (1989: 52), "Speaker and listener signal to each other. One turn has come to end and another should begin." Speaker and listener take turn in conversation naturally when the speaker ends his speaking and immediately the next speaker continues the conversation. Stenström (1994) said that there are three kinds of the turn taking strategies. The first type is taking the turn, the second type is holding the turn, and the third type is yielding the turn. These types explain about how people start the conversation, how people carry on in talking and how people give the chance to others. Turn-taking exists to regulate the run of a conversation, as speakers or listeners. According to Hutchby and Wooffit (1998: 47) there are some basics about conversation in turn taking that occurs. In daily conversation, speakers generally pay more attention to the content than the principle although casual conversation is organized with a set of rules.

## **METHODOLOGY**

We used qualitative approach to analyze turn taking strategies used by the teacher and the students in the class. This research used this approach in order to get an understanding of how turn taking strategies was formed in the classroom situation. It analyzed the script of the conversation based on the video that have been recorded in the class as turn taking is one of the aspects of conversational interactions. Furthermore, we intended to reveal how the participants take the turns, hold the turn and yield the turn in the class. The qualitative method is to make interpretations of the data based on theory. Moreover, this method is used because the data is in the form of words descriptively, not in the form of a percentage or numeral.

The data sources are video that have been recorded on 11<sup>th</sup> grade student of Science in SMAN 1 Tegineneng. The participants are the students and the English teacher. The students of this class are 32 students. The video was recorded twice in the same class before transcribed. Transcription was also an important part of this research because it gave detail of interaction that is analyzed. In order to collect data, we use video recorder to record the activities of the teacher and students in a teaching learning process. Mazeland (2006) stated that the investigation to reveal the turn taking is using recorder and/or video recorder. Then we interpret the data in written form to make it easy to analyze by using Jefferson (2004) techniques. We do it because we want to know what are the turn taking strategies uses by the participant. The population of this research is all the students which have English lesson and the sampling technique is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is judgment or subjective sampling which choose to be the participant of the study. It is based on what we think and realize (Etikan, 2016). After collecting the data, we analyzed the data using qualitative approach because all the data in texts not numeric or percentage. We read the transcription and find the turn taking strategy based on the data included in taking the turn, holding the turn or yielding the turn.

The procedures of the analyzing data are followed:

First, we watched the video in several times to comprehend the pattern of turn taking strategies that used by the participants in the talk show. Then, we transcribed the data based on data transcription. In this step, we need some symbols by Sacks et.al (1974) for typing the participant's conversation such as:

// (Double obliques): indicates the point at which a current speaker's talk is overlapped by the talk of another

- [ (A left bracket): indicates the point of overlap onset (the currently used alternative to the double obliques)
- ] (A right bracket): indicates the point at which two overlapping utterances end
- = (Equal signs): indicates no break or gap
- 2 (0.0) (Number in parentheses): indicates elapsed before time by tenths of seconds
- (A dash): indicates the sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound
- :: (Colon): extended or stretched sound, syllable, or word
- (( )) (double parentheses): contain transcriber's descriptions
- CAPS particular loudness of that part of a unit
- ? (Question Mark): rising vocal pitch
- (Arrows): marked rising and falling shifts in intonation.
- After transcribing the data, the researcher classified the data transcription to mark in which part the participants used Turn Taking Strategies.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Data 1

The "hesitant start" can be identified with filled pause (e.g uhh,mmm), filled pause is an articulation to fill gaps in speech. In this research the filled pause can be seen from the Teacher: =mm::mm, last meeting we have learned about analytical exposition?= In the sentence above the teacher asks about things done in the previous week using the past form. Filled pause might be occurring when the speaker tries to select the function word and the structure which might be change.

### Data 2

In the second data it was found that there were moments where the teacher raised the volume. Someone is raising the pitch with the intention to be noticed in a noisy situation and wants to be heard (Verderber & Verderber, 2016). In this case she increases the volume due to cut off the

conversation from the student who makes mistakes when he speaks. She raised the volume to interrupt him so that she is heard because the teacher arranges everything in class in other words, she/he regulates the linguistic behaviour of students. This relates to power in the institutional role which assumes that the teacher knows better about everything like answering questions, giving examples and explanations. Besides that, the teacher also has a solidarity relationship with students. This makes their relationship close to each other as the teacher is the parent of the student at school.

### Data 3

In the third data it was found that there are silent pause and lexical repetition done by the two participants. Silent pause is a condition in which the present speaker waits for the other speaker to stop talking (Stenstrom:1994)

(06.07) Teacher: ::OK. ?kalimat ada?

(06.10) Students & teacher: ::dua, KALIMAT ?verbal

(06.13) Teacher: dan KALIMAT

(06.15) Students: ?nominal

(06.16) Teacher: VERBAL?

(06.17) student: silent

(06.21) Teacher: ::kalimat yang gak ada kata ?kerja?

(06.22) Student: silent

(06.22) Teacher: silent

(06.25) Student: ?tunggal

(06.26) teacher::: itu sifatnya

There are several possibilities why someone does a silent pause, one of which is worrying about being criticized and then being shy as well as a barrier for students to speak a second or foreign language. This is a factor that influences fluency in speaking, that is, when students fear mistakes, they may be more hesitant and speak with pauses (Al-Ghazali & Alrefaee, 2019). It can be seen from the conversation that students are silent because they feel afraid of speaking incorrectly. It is revealed from the next conversation. But what's interesting here is

the teacher uses the silent pause to lure his students to talk while he is holding her turn. This is different from the opinion of Stenstorm (1994) which said that the silent pause is a syntactic and semantic strategy used for a speaker waiting for other speakers to stop talking. In this case the speaker does a silent pause to lure other speakers into speaking.

#### Data 4

A form of repetition in a language is a repetition of words that have been used, either in the same form or with some changes. Furthermore, it was found that the lexical repetition conducted by the teacher was shown in minute (06.52).

(06.50) Student: ?conjunction?

(06.52) Teacher: =conjunction ya atau ::kata penghubung. ::First, ::second kaya gitu ya conjunction ?kata penghubung. *Last meeting, I will ask you to make example ya about analytical exposition. Have you finished your task?*

The teacher said the word "conjunction atau kata penghubung" twice. This was due to indicate the word "conjunction" because the understanding of a text was largely based on the power of cohesion lexical repetition in text construction (He, 2014). Nation (2001) said that teaching vocabulary should be repeated again and again to ensure it is learned. The teacher repeated the sentence twice to make sure that the student really can understand the meaning of conjunction

(06.50) Student: conjunction

(06.52) Teacher: conjunction ya atau kata penghubung. First, second kaya gitu ya conjunction kata penghubung. Last meeting, I will ask you to make example ya about analytical exposition. Have you finished your task?

#### Data 5

Prompting is one of the strategies used in speaking and requires answers that are directly answered such as, greetings, apologies, invitation, etc. Based on the

finding the teacher asks question to the students below:

(0.17) Teacher: how is your life?

(0.19) Students: ?I'm fine. Alhamdulillah, amazing?

In the conversation above the teacher asks a question to the students with utterance "how is your life?" and is directly answered by students in minutes (0.19) "I'm fine. Alhamdulillah, amazing". "How is your life" is the question. Questions are sentences that serve to request information. One of them is greeting, and part of greeting people often ask "how do you do", "whatsup" or more formally can use "how is your life". From the definition which states that the question is a sentence that requires information, then answering greeting is something that must be answered. By asking how someone is feeling, we get emotionally closer. In the classroom, the teacher is the facilitator, director, and mentor the student for the smooth learning-teaching process. So, there must be emotional attraction before the teaching and learning activities begin, usually greeting occurs at the beginning and end of the learning activities. Austin (1962) stated that greetings is considered as a type of performative concerns behaviour towards others to show attitudes and feelings.

#### Data 6

Finally, we found "appealing". Appealing is asking explicit questions to the other person to get feedback. Explicit means clear and exact (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). The question needs the answer directly. This conversation is shown in minutes:

(1.25) Teacher: and then you can get the :: point, you can ::make note about analytical exposition right? Right?

(1.33) Students: ?yes?.

In the conversation above the teacher uses the word "right" to get answers directly from students. Appealing is indicated by (all right, right, Ok, you know, you see). On this finding, the uses of word "right" will be

answered “yes”. The use of right in question indicates that the person who asking expects a certain answer from the collocutor. From that dialogue it’s concluded that the teacher expects the student already have a note and understand about the certain topic that they have learned before.

## CONCLUSION

The first form of turn taking that was first discovered was “hesitant start”. Hesitant start is often used by speakers when they want to start talking. This shows he wants to think first what he wants to talk about so the other person is waiting for what he wants to explain. He can think about grammar and also choosing the right functional word. In this case the teacher must think about choosing the right grammar and functional word as it becomes important to make clear instructions when talking to students. So, the hesitant start can function as a tool to make instructions clearer.

The second form of turn taking used by teachers in this study is "interrupting". This interrupting is a moment where other speakers try to disturb other speakers who are taking turns. This is done by raising the volume and cutting off the conversation. In this case the moment shows the form of solidarity relationship between teacher and student. The teacher has the power to correct and regulate the teaching and learning process in the classroom. So, this interrupting can be used to show the relationship between power and solidarity between speakers.

The third form of turn taking found in this study is "silent pause". Silent pause is used when someone feels doubt and confusion to convey what he wants to say. Slightly different from doing hesitant, speakers who feel unsure will be silent for a moment before continuing to talk compared to doing filled pause (e.g mmm, hmmm). In this study it was found that feeling embarrassed and afraid of being criticized

became the motive for why someone did a silent pause.

The next form of turn taking found is "lexical repetition". Lexical repetition occurs when someone repeats the same words mentioned earlier. Some people often use this to connect sentence by sentence uttered. In addition, repeated words can also be interpreted that the word is an important word and must be remembered by students. As students of English as a foreign language, remembering some new words is an obligation so that later it can be implemented in writing or speaking.

The fifth form of turn taking found is "prompting". Prompting is a moment where someone asks for an answer directly such as inviting, apologizing, greeting, etc. We find this moment a lot when communicating. While someone gives greetings, we automatically reply to that greeting directly. For example, when someone says "good morning" we will respond to "good morning too" by saying "good morning" then he expects to be answered directly and at that time prompting is used

The last form of turn taking is "appealing". Appealing itself is asking explicitly to interlocutor. This can be used when we ask for clear answers such as "yes / no / OK". These words are used for persuading by expecting certain answers from the other person.

In this study the speaker uses all the strategies mentioned by Stenström (1994). However, some subclasses are not used such as “metacomment” and “giving up”. Metacomment itself is a condition where someone interrupts someone else's conversation by asking permission (e.g may I talk, can I) intended to be more polite and formal. Giving up is a condition where the speaker does not want to continue his speech and uses silent pause as a signal for the next speaker to take a turn. This type is not found because the conversation that occurs tends to be dominated by questions raised by the teacher and then answered directly by students.

By giving this, we concluded that in every conversation there is a unique pattern. In conversations with the type of institution power and solidarity is needed furthermore, the use of language as a medium of learning, the ability of each speaker to understand the social context, grammar and diction. Therefore, teachers who faced students directly must know how to encourage students' speaking and writing abilities. On the other hand, students must understand the teaching and learning process.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Al-Ghazali, A. M., & Alrefaee, Y. (2019) Silent Pauses in the Speech of Yemeni EFL Learners. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 2(1), 39-48. <https://doi.org/10.34050/els-jish.v2i1.6142>
- [2] Austin, J.L. (1962) *Sense and Sensibilia*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- [3] Brown, H. D. (1994) *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Third Edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents
- [4] Etikan, Ilker. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*. 5. 1. 10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11.
- [5] Gee, James Paul (2005) *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, Second Edition. London: Routledge.
- [6] Giles, H., & Smith, P. M. (1979). Accommodation theory: Optimal levels of convergence. In H. Giles & R. St. Clair (Eds.), *Language and social psychology* (pp. 45-65). Oxford: Blackwell.
- [7] He, Qingshun. (2014). Implications of Lexical Repetition Patterns for Language Teaching. *International Journal of Linguistics*. 6. 46. 10.5296/ijl.v6i4.6115.
- [8] Hutchby, Ian and Robin Woffitt., (1998) *Conversation Analysis: Principles, Practices and Applications*. Malden: Blackwell
- [9] <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/explicit>
- [10] Jefferson, Gail (2004). "Glossary of transcript symbols with an Introduction." In *Conversation analysis: Studies from the first generation*, ed. By Gene H. Lerner, 13.31. Amsterdam: John Benjamin.
- [11] Mazeland, Harrie. (2008). Inleiding in deconversatieanalyse.10.13140/RG.2.1.3639.5362.
- [12] Nation, I.S.P. (2001). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [13] Sacks, H., Schegloff, E., & Jefferson, G. (1974). A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation. *Language*, 50(4), 696-735. doi:10.2307/412243
- [14] Stenstrom, Anna-Brita (1994) *An Introduction to Spoken Interaction*. London and New York: Longman.
- [15] Verderber, Rudolph F. dan Kathleen S. Verderber. (2008). *Communicate!* 12<sup>th</sup> ed. USA: Thomson Higher Education.