

A Conversation Analysis of Turn Taking in the Pakistani Classrooms

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Abstract

This study focuses one of the research areas called turn-taking during the conversation in an institutional setting. Conversation is highly dependent on the ways how people take turns during their ordinary talks or the conversation in an institutional setting. The researchers collected data from student's tests, video-taped classroom interactions and the interviews with the teachers. The researchers adopted a Conversation Analytic [CA] framework in order to analyze how turn-taking was done by the students and teachers in a classroom interaction. The general design of study included the four phases typical of CA research projects: recordings of natural interaction, transcription of the recordings, analysis of selected episodes, and reporting of the research. The instructors of English, both female, and male participated in the study. Much of the classroom interaction was based on the instructors' talk: to review covered material, to introduce new material, and to evaluate student turns. The analysis of turn-taking in a Pakistani classroom showed that the underlying *rules* or guidelines of interaction were the same as those found in studies of other languages: one speaker at a time, no gaps, no overlaps. Discipline played an obvious role in this kind of language-teaching methodology. It was also observed that when an instructor did not have control of the class and therefore of the turn-taking system, there were more instances of 'broken rules' e.g. more overlaps and more repairs as a result of behavioural lapses.

Key Words: Conversation Analysis, Turn Taking, Interaction, Classroom, Instructors

1. Introduction

Institutional interactions include talks among people in the organizations. These organizations may be a hospital, a school, courts, calling centers. The institutional interactions are strictly based on the identities of the organizations. When people visit doctor or appear in the court or talk to teachers for their kids' performance they talk in a specific genre that is identified in the particular organization. When faculty members meet students in an institution they interact in the institutional contexts. As you know when seminars are conducted on students counselling or on any awareness programme, it may be about any disease or health care, the talks take place in a particular context. People use language in the context of organization in which they are engaged in, either as professional members of those organizations, or as their clients (customers, students, patients and the like) (Drew and Sorjonen, 1997). The participants in an organization with their identities and roles construct the institutionality of dialogue and it is further specified with their daily tasks and activities which are assigned to them in an organization (Ibid: 94). For an instance a receptionist in an organization has to greet or converse with the client in a strict institutional setting as per the roles and identities assigned by the institution (Drew and Heritage, 1992). Conversation analytic tradition usually covers talk in interaction; talk or conversation are of two types: one is ordinary conversation and the other is conversation oriented from the institutional setting and identities. Talk in interaction is the central means of accomplishing the goals and targets set by the individuals in an organization. To study institutional interaction, we must also consider what is termed ordinary conversation [OC]. Any communication that takes place in an institutional setting or as ordinary conversation needs a framework to distinguish between ordinary conversation and institutional conversation. Social interaction is the primordial means through which the business of the social world is transacted, the identities of its participants are affirmed or denied, and its cultures are transmitted, renewed and modified. Such treatments of gender were 'global' and "assumed that women's and men's language are necessarily different" (Millsm, 2003, p. 23). The concept of gender in the recent years has undergone a shift with regard to the study of gender and language. More localized investigations of gender have proved that both male and female have different speech styles and the current researches show that that men and women speeches are not homogeneous (Schleef, 2008, p. 515). According to (Drew and Sorjonen, 1997, p 94).

Of all the approaches to institutional talk outlined here, discourse analysis is the approach built most directly on the notion of speech act in the analysis of spoken interaction, as developed by the Birmingham discourse analysis group through the examination of classroom and medical interactions (Drew and Sorjonen, p. 95). The Birmingham group described the standardized sequences in interaction that are characteristically found

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in such institutional settings, resulting in a more “dialogic approach” to the study of institutional talk (Drew and Sorjonen, p. 95). However, the Birmingham approach is criticized for obscuring social relations as well as extending the general models from classroom interactions to “other institutional domains, such as doctor-patient interaction, but without serious attention being given to how these various settings are differentiated” (Drew and Heritage, p. 15). In more general terms of discourse analysis, much of the research being carried out is applied, although applied discourse analysis [ADA] is not an established field in and of itself (Gunnarsson, 1997, p. 285). Language is a key tool in many professional settings, for both experts and lay people, and as such “the focus within ADA is thus on language and communication in real-life situations, and the goal is to analyse, understand or solve problems relating to practical action in real-life contexts” (Ibid). One such applied approach, discursive psychology, focuses on language use in everyday settings, including institutional interactions, to study how interactants pragmatically construct objects such as attitudes and emotions through conversation (Tuffin and Howard, 2001, p. 196). Within the *ethnography of speaking* in anthropology, studies have consolidated key ideas of how cultural contextualization contributes to the understanding of language use, and the relationship between language and the sociocultural order in general (Drew and Heritage, p. 9. 1992). In other words, the meaning and action of an utterance is firmly rooted in its sociocultural context. Researchers emphasized that membership in a speech community forms part of the speaker’s identity (Drew and Sorjonen:, p. 95). Lastly, we turn to what is probably the most prevalent approach to the study of institutional talk, conversation analysis [CA]. CA has its own assumptions, methodology, and ‘way of theorizing’ (Schiffrin,1994, p. 232). Although CA has roots in sociology, its aim (unlike other branches of this science) is to discover how members of a society produce a sense of social order through language, rather than to analyse social order itself, as “conversation is a source of much of our sense of social order, e.g. it produces many of the typifications underlying our notions of a social role” (Cicourel, 1972 quoted in Schiffrin, 1994, p, 232). The four main concerns of CA are: 1) the problem of social order, 2) how language both creates and is created by social context, 3) human knowledge, and 4) the belief that no detail of an interaction can be neglected a priori as unimportant. The focus of CA is on the sequential organization of talk. While some approaches begin the analysis from the treatment of cultural or social identity and others from linguistic variables, CA “begins from a consideration of the interactional accomplishment of particular social activities...These activities are embodied in specific social actions and sequences of social actions” (Drew and Heritage, 1992, p. 34).

2. Literature Review

Cotemporary research work related to official as well as institutional conversation “continuously extends our knowledge and understanding about linguistic perspectives and interactional categories distinctively connected with what is viewed as basic institutional domains because these are vital places of technologically advanced social life (Drew and Sorjonen, 1997, p. 111). Situations like this comprise of social welfare departments, emergency services, classrooms, media, courtrooms, business organizations and medical discussions (Drew and Sorjonen, 1997, p.111; Hester and Francis, 2001, p. 207). The advancements in the discipline of institutional talk have three basic principles:1) The development of the sociolinguistic concept of ‘context’ to contain the understanding and sensitivity of language to a number of in hand social situations with institutional conditions;2) The occurrence of analytical agendas that distinguish the very nature and type of language as action which ultimately deals with the vibrant characteristics of social action and existing mutual interaction;3) Practically, it is the core analysis of audio and video recordings, taken during the course of natural interactions in a very explicit institutional and occupational setting (Drew and Sorjonen, 1997. p. 96).Hence, the domain of institutional talk is “starting to merge around a collective features of knowledge regarding (a) members’ positioning to their particular institutional characters and features, (b) involved members’ administration of organizational pertinent tasks and, (c) proportional measurements of features related to interactions and language (Ibid: 97).Landa, in his 2000 dissertation *An Analysis of Discourse Strategies in Pharmacy Consultations: Novices and Experts, L1 and L2*, has worked on organizational and structural aspects of pharmacy consultations. During his course of study, he also focused on the social and linguistic knowledge which is direly required of pharmacists in the United States(Landa, 2000).

In this research article “Reshaping Lives: Constitutive Identity Work in Geriatric Medical Consultations”, Coupland and Coupland (1998) offered a particular discourse analysis of socially accommodating interactions in a UK elderly therapeutic context” (p. 159). Three studies were associated with interactions in ‘emergency services ‘conditions based on911 calls and the police. The initial research study related to “Interactional Trouble in Emergency Service Request: A Problem of Frames” was carried out by Tracy (1997) who analyzed those emergency calls made to 911. The sets of information received from such calls are transferred to correspondents of certain various emergency services: Paramedics, fire, or police (p. 315). As Tracy observes that normally emergency calls are managed well but many times they are not responded and acted upon

seriously. It is also observed that calls made by both stakeholders sometimes, become very complicated matter blended with frustration and annoyance.

In the year 2000 thesis named Practices of Pedagogy in ESL Writing Conferences: A Conversational Analytic Study of Turns and Sequences that Assist Student Revision; Irene Koshik, conducts a research study of elicitation that helps pupils in their revision during face-to-face teaching and learning sessions on writing skills for the ESL post-secondary pupils. Koshik's research analysis is comprised of the communicational analytic approach and involves meeting between ESL tutors and pupils in writing conferences at the post-secondary rank. Her outcomes indicate that the conversational type of known answer tutor turns is in fact more complicated than previously conducted research has guided us to accept. She further observes that the DIU is a change on a fundamental method conceived from communicational repair (Ibid). Koshik's (1999) outcomes link with basic imaginary ideas of organizational discourse in which they link academic discourse to a routine communication, hence revealing the sequenced disparities between these two aspects. According to Francis and Hester, common communication fulfills the purpose as the core systematic organizational features, while on the other hand systems of utterances and speech alter this fundamental system of OC ; organizational talk is a more complicated way of communication than OC and much that is an exposed sequencing in OC is structured initially in organizational communication. Nilholm and Adelsward construct these three questions: 1) how is the conversation related to identity is handled? 2) How is Cindy's identity presented in the conference? 3) In what styles do the organizational facets of the conversation impact identity handling? In Saunton's (2007) research work, "Girls and Boys Use of Acknowledging Moves in Pupil Group Classroom Discussions", she observes the utilization of 'Acknowledging Moves' in one of the gender group conversational discussions of 12-13 years old boys and girls in their 'Design and Technology' lessons, using a structural-functional technique in discourse analytic context (Saunton, 2007). Davies (2003) brings discourse analytic method in practice to investigate acquisition and learning through the tasks on talk and the ways in which students respond to gender.

This research on gender linguistics, for the western and Pakistani linguistics, has presently become a research focus (Mills, 1999bVii). The Language Institute of the Academy of Sciences was published by Zemskaja et al. (1993). Since the beginning of 1970s, in collecting and analysing of "naturally occurring spoken Pakistani", Zemskaja was greatly involved to contribute to research of colloquial Pakistani and codified Literary Language, as the second Language, for instance: Zemskaja (1973) and Zemskaja (1983) (Mills 1999b:vii). In Austria and Germany, Pakistani Gender studies, for example collecting the papers in Leeuwen-Turnovova et al, have been also published (2002) and in Van Leenwen - Turnovcova et al (2003). There was also good contribution of Igor' Sharonov to the book of Mills (1999) entitled the chapter, "Speaker, gender and the choice of communicative" in contemporary Pakistani culture". It was noticed that "with the speaker, to speak about the indications of the speaker's psychological and mental state, communicative were at once connected" (Sharanov, 1999, p, 155). Grenoble further added to Mill's research book (1999) with a unit titled 'Gender and Conversational Management'. She worked on the structure of conversational exchange, or more significantly how turn-exchange features are discussed between female and male participants via an analysis of observed natural and understandable communications (Grenoble, 1999, p. 113).

Sacks first started to work out the organization of turn-taking in the conversation he wrote: "For conversation, preservation of 'one party talking at a time' is organizationally primary" (Sacks, 2004, p, 37). By this Sacks meant that the machinery of turn-taking is organized so as to minimize both gaps in which no one is talking and overlaps in which more than one person is talking at the same time. But there are exceptions too as says (Schegloff, 2000a) that if I enter the room and many guest sitting there are chances that they will greet me in chorus here, there will be overlapping, similarly as says (Goodwin, 1986b) that there are choral occasions as in case of assessments these are produced in overlapping with other talk.

Laughs are also made in chorus as mentioned by (Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1987) that it would look real bizarre if people, in responding to a joke for instance, laughed one after another. Turn-taking system is "locally managed" and party-administered" described by (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974). It is worth noting that that there are forms of talk that are not organized in this way. In formal debate for instance, the order of the speakers and the length of the turn is decided, to some extent at least, in advance. In classroom discussion, the order of the speakers is decided, in part, by the teacher who selects students to speak next. Such systems provide a useful contrast since a moment's observation will reveal that conversation is simply not organized in this way (Greatbatch, 1988).

3. Research Methodology

The design of study consisted of four typical phases of CA research projects i.e. recordings of natural interaction, transcription of the recordings, analysis of selected episodes, and reporting of the research (Ten Have, 2000, p. 8). In order to do the research on the topics mentioned above, we joined a private Language School in the South Region of Pakistan and spent almost four months there as an English Instructor. The students attended three to five classes in a week and English Language was taught as a second language in this school. Students were very interactive and were full of thirst to attend five lessons a week; we had a wonderful interactive session throughout the period. Being an instructor of English as a second language, we were allowed to videotape lessons as well. As we didn't have much number of classes due to target age range, so my research was limited to only six classes. Total number of lessons was thirty out of which five lessons were videotaped for each class. Duration of each lesson was 45 to 50 minutes. The main purpose of recording the lesson was to determine "natural interaction" with full of devotion i.e. the interaction was not by force or insisting by the researcher (Ten Have, 2000, p. 8). The video camera was installed at the rear side of the room so that the instructor of the student could observe keenly. Video recording was far more helpful than that of audio recording as it was full of healthy information, where more than few speakers and students attended the session. This video not only provided visual information about the whole proceedings whether it was silence, body language or the interaction of students, but also provided the layout (seating arrangement) of the classroom. Through this videotape lessons, I was able to fulfil my transcript with better identification of speaker direction of the instructor's gaze and description of the movement around the classroom. In order to capture the front side of the classroom, it would have been better to have another camera, but due to insufficient funding, that rear camera was the only source of recording the interaction. CA research of recordings of talk-in-interaction required "core-data" & collection of other data for analysis.

The use of additional data depended on the researcher's theoretical-methodological outlook, and kind of activities conducted in the classroom. For CA, the analysis was based on the recorded talk and they did not need any further information. For "Applied CA", instructor needed background information to understand 'what was going on'. The core purpose was to collect recorded data, as well as supplementary data e.g. (copies of students, public school report cards). The instructor also checked the physical and emotional levels of the students and filled that information on the form. The instructor also gathered the information of pedagogical training and their backgrounds. Through this process, a bundle of information was kept which helped the instructor to select the lessons to transcribe. To develop a constructive analysis i.e. (language use Vs interviews) the researchers used data from student's questionnaires and interviews.

Based on my experience in Pakistan about the interpretation of interactions from an interactant's perspective, I had a strong level of understanding of interactions to inform the analysis. This classroom situation was normal and standardized and it was not necessary to mention about the specific institutional procedure and protocol. They were recognized here as (SF, EM, AM, MG, NJ, SF, SA, UD). SF delivered two of the target classes, which shall be recognized as SF:2a., SA:3a and NJ: 4b, UD conducted lessons of five target classes, SA took the lessons of three suggested classes, UD: 5c, AM: 7e, EM: 5d, and MG: 4f. A particular reference to the special conducted lessons will be highlighted by various letter and numbers.

Teaching techniques and Methodology of instructors were similar but delivery of lesson may vary at individual level. Classroom interaction activity was based on the instructor's conversation with students, to introduce new material and to evaluate student's turn. Instructor's biggest tool to engage students talk is Question/Answer session. Textbook is another exercise to engage one's learning skills. Success of student is graded according to their achievement and homework is also assigned. Age group of the students participating classes between 10 to 12 years old. Some of them were 13 to 14. Students were labelled by girl or boy or male and female and by their names. All of the students already attended local school as well as private language school. Before participating in the study module, both instructor and students filled the consent form. Form filled by them clearly indicated the purpose of the research as well as the indication of video-recording would be used for research purposes. And that the research findings will be published in part on the whole. Participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any reason. In order to keep the participants' secrecy, school will conceal the original identity. In CA research work, the assortment of research data for its critical analysis is less innovative by substantial hypothetical and organizational preferences. The good message for innovative scholars is that, in a sense, they will get proof of socially structured sequence wherever they tend to view. As the researcher Sacks elaborate it: attributed the opportunity there was prodigious sequenced structure, it would really be hard not to search it, no matter where and how we pondered upon (Sacks 1894:23, Silverman 1998:59).

4. Data Analysis

Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) indicated that the turn-taking system for conversation is the basic form of speech-exchange system. Interactants display, or listen for, features of conversation that indicate that the current speaker's turn is coming to an end and speaker change can occur (Sacks, 1992, p.33) as referred to in (Silverman, 1998, p. 104).

The selection of next speaker can occur in various ways: the current speaker can select the next speaker; the current speaker can select a next action, for example ask a question and therefore require an answer from a next speaker; or the next speaker can self-select him- or herself (Ibid: 104-105). These three ways speaker change can occur are also sequentially ordered. "(2) only applies if (1) does not occur. And (3) can happen only if (1) and (2) are absent." (Ibid: 105). This system repeats itself at every possible completion point, making the turn-taking system locally and internationally managed by the interactants (Ten Have, 2000, p. 111). I note again that these rules of interaction are guidelines for interactional behaviour, not hard and fast laws of conversation. When there are glitches in speaker change, such as an overlap of speech, "the rule is that the first speaker is allowed to continue" (Ibid: 104). In a traditional classroom setting, however, the rules of speaker change are more constrained; for example, "when a teacher has asked a question, students simply raise their hands and the teacher selects one of them to be the next speaker" (Ibid). The teacher can also simply select the next speaker without any indication on the student's part that they want to answer the question. Following is given the analysis of the typical sequences of turn transition (i.e. speaker change) in the classroom. The first segment for analysis is from the beginning of a lesson taught by NJ (Nida Javed). There are eight students in attendance, and the topic of this excerpt is how to ask, and respond to, the question "how are you?" The method of interaction is primarily question - answer sequences led by the instructor.

Excerpt

- 1 NJ: Please sit down. (0.5)
Please sit down. (0.5) Children, every lesson we begin with the
2
question how are things, how are you. (.) Right? and let's
3,
recall how in English you can pose the question, how are things?
4
how are you? Asho, ((Ayesha))
5: How are the things?
6 NJ: How are the things
How are the things is possible. Tahir, how else can you answer?
7 Tahir: How are you?
8 NJ: How are you:
How are you;, yes. Fatima?
9 Fatima: How are you doing?
10 NJ: How are you doing.
How are you doing. And to all these questions we can answer (.)
11 *okay, how else can we answer if everything is good?*
12 ((several students speak at once))
13 Bari: Thank you, fine.
14 NJ: Fine?,
15 ((several students speak at once))
16 Ayesha: All right
17 Tahir: All right, I am fine
18 NJ: Fine,
Fine, that's the same as okay. Fine, what other words do you know?
19 ((several students speak at once))
20 ((NJ waves hand to stop the students))
21
If everything is good;, if everything is good
22 Eeshal: Alright
23 NJ: Alright.
Alri:ght. Good, what else?
24 (0.5)
25 NJ: [Okay,] alright, (.) [fine]
26 Ali: [so so] [so so]

- 27 NJ: .
That's if everything is good, I'm saying, if everything is good.
- 28 (1.0)
- 29 NJ:
[[It is possible]]
- 30 Akram: [[I am]] bad
- 31 NJ:
M- no, if everything is good. (.)
- 32 ((listing the answers already given))
- 33 Okay, alright, fine, (.)
- 34
you can sa y very well, right? Very well. Very well. And if things aren't
- 35
going very well,
- 36 Akram: Very bad=
- 37 Ali: =so-so
- 38 NJ: So-so, all right. (.)
So-so, all right. (.) If things are going badly [Ali]
- 39 Ali: [Bad]
- 40 Sajeel: Bad
- 41 NJ: Bad.
- 42 Ali': Bad
- 43 NJ:
Well then, now let's pose this question to each other. Uh
- 44
please, you can use any form of the question that you like, either
- 45 *how are you?, Ali how are the things?, Ali how are you doing. Laila*
how are you?, or how are the things?, or how are you doing. Any
- 46
question. (0.5)
- 47 ((Ali raises her hand))
- 48 Well Ali, how are you doing?

NJ starts the class with a review of asking how someone is, both the possible questions and answers. If we recall the turn-taking rules of one-speaker at a time, no gaps, and no overlaps, in this short segment we see instances of speaker selection, several gaps, and three overlaps. I will go through each in detail below to exemplify the transcriptions and conventions used. NJ calls the class to order by telling the students to sit down (line 1). In this way she indicates she is orienting to the institutional context of the classroom. One of the main goals, the function, of a school is to impart subject matter knowledge from the instructor to the students. In traditional classrooms as this, students sit at their desks and the instructor at the front of the room has control of the turn-taking system, especially at the beginning of the lesson. (Depending on the activity, however, the instructor can choose to give up this control while maintaining the right to reclaim it at any time.) NJ's utterance here is a command, using the imperative. Despite the use of *please*, the students do not have a choice whether to sit down or not. In ordinary conversation, on the other hand, a speaker might say "please have a seat" as an invitation, or offer of comfort, to the recipient. In such a case, even if the speaker used the same phrase "please sit down," it is not a command; the recipient could refuse such an invitation. There is a 0.5 second pause after NJ has told the students to sit down (line 1). This can be seen as a pause belonging to NJ. Again, in a classroom setting the instructor has control of the first turn and until they indicate a change in speaker selection, they have the floor. In an informal setting, any speaker could self-select during such a pause - to offer an acceptance or refusal to the suggestion to sit down. Because none of the students self-select as next speaker during this gap, and by sitting down, they are also showing their orientations to the classroom setting. This acceptance allows NJ to begin the lesson with a review. In later lines (24, 28, 47) the pauses belong to the students. In line 23, as current speaker, NJ has selected the next action: by asking a question she requires an answer from a next speaker. Here she has posed a question to the entire class, asking for more ways to answer "well" to the question "how are you?" She does not select the required next speaker, therefore giving the students the opportunity to self-select. In line 24, there is a 0.5 second pause that belongs to the students collectively; none of them self-selects even though NJ has nominated someone to do so (thereby signaling a required speaker change). In lines 25 and 26, however, we see an overlap between NJ(25), listing the answers already given, and Ali (26), self-selecting to answer the question from NJ's previous turn in line 23. There are several actions occurring in these overlapping turns. NJ is resuming her turn because no one had self-selected in the 0.5 second gap. She lists the

previous answers so that the students are reminded of what has been said, and therefore is seen as encouraging them to provide new responses. Listing the responses is more than just encouragement, however; NJ is again requiring an answer, the next action, to her question posed in line 23. As an instructor in a classroom setting, she can repeatedly require an answer until she gets one. Ali overlaps her turn twice by providing the answer “so so” in line 26. With the overlaps, Ali is in effect showing his institutional orientation as well. He is not trying to overlap NJ’s talk, but rather he is showing his understanding that NJ, as instructor, requires an answer of the students. When none of his classmates self-selects for the required answer, Ali sees the pause as ‘theirs’ and answers, resulting in the first overlap. NJ continues her turn; as instructor she exercises her control of turn-taking. There is a small pause in the list, at which point Ali provides his answer again, resulting in the second overlap. In line 27 NJ acknowledges Ali’s answer but indicates that it is wrong by emphasizing she is looking for answers that mean “well.” Again, NJ is requiring an answer to her question from line 23. In line 28 there is a 1.0 second pause, again the students’, as none of them self-selects. NJ waits longer this time before selecting herself as next speaker, in this case not to require an answer of the students but to provide one for them in its absence, by starting to say “you can say” (literally “it is possible”). In line 30 we see that Akram overlaps with NJ. Similar to Ali, he recognizes that a student is required to provide an answer to the instructor’s question, and answers “I am bad.” In this overlap, NJ stops and allows Akram to finish his utterance. Although as instructor she can retain control of the overlapped turn, here she allows the action (an answer) that she has been requiring over multiple turns to take precedence. Lastly, I turn to other examples of speaker selection from this short excerpt. At the beginning of the excerpt, also the beginning of the class, the turn-taking is controlled by the instructor’s speaker selection. NJ is establishing that she has this control before she allows any self-selection. When she starts reviewing possible ways to ask “how are you?” NJ directs her questions to specific students: to Ayesha (here addressed as Asho) in line 4, Tahir in line 6, and Fatima in line 8. The students also show orientation to NJ’s control of turns. Those addressed take turns, and those not addressed do not speak. In line 11, however, NJ asks the entire class (by not selecting next speaker) for possible answers to the various “how are you?” questions, and several students speak at once in overlapping turns (12). In line 13, when the class is quiet again, Bari self-selects and provides the answer “thank you, fine.” In line 14, NJ repeats Bari’s answer “fine” with a continuing intonation, indicating she requires other answers and a student should self-select as next speaker. In line 15, several students again speak at once. Ayesha self-selects in the next line and says “All right.” The turn-taking continues, and in line 19 several students again overlap each other’s turns. To regain control, NJ waves her hand to stop the students and in a louder tone indicates she only wants answers that mean, “everything is well.” (By this utterance I believe that students are likely calling out all possible answers, for example “bad,” in their overlapped turns.) In lines 34 and 35 NJ changes the line of questioning to ask for answers that mean “not very well.” As we saw above, Ali had provided the wrong answer “so so” in line 26. Because his answer would be correct in this context, NJ resumes control of speaker selection (not used since line 8), and poses the question to him (35). In line 36, however, Akram ignores NJ’s speaker selection and self-selects. Ali latches on to the end of Akram’s utterance and takes control of the turn he rightfully owns. In line 38 NJ acknowledges the correctness of Ali’s turn and only then selects Akram as next speaker, first by gaze and then Akram correctly interprets the gaze directed at him as speaker selection, and his turn overlaps with NJ’s verbal selection of him as next speaker. After they have reviewed the “how are you?” questions and answers, NJ states that the students will now practice by posing them to one another in any form of the question (43 to 46). In line 47 there is a 1.0 second pause. This pause belongs to the students as NJ is waiting for a volunteer to self-select; if she had wanted to start off the questioning with a specific speaker, NJ would have selected one. Ali raises her hand to indicate her willingness to answer (48), and NJ poses the first question to her: “Well Ali, how are you doing?” (49). In line 48 Ali has shown she is oriented to the classroom setting by raising her hand rather than speaking. In ordinary conversation, speakers do not usually raise their hands to indicate they will answer a question. In this short excerpt I have closely analyzed many examples of the turn-taking system at work: gaps, speaker selection, and overlaps. I have also shown how at various points in the excerpt the participants are oriented to the institutional nature of the classroom setting.

5. Conclusion

This research is the first ever study of classroom interaction in Pakistan, and in fact the first study of institutional interaction in its entirety in Pakistan, from a Conversation Analytic standpoint. The analysis of turn-taking in a Pakistani classroom showed that the underlying *rules* or guidelines of interaction are the same as those found in studies of other languages: one speaker at a time, no gaps, no overlaps. Discipline plays an obvious role in this kind of language-teaching methodology. Presumably, if the instructor does not have control of the class and therefore of the turn-taking system, there will be more instances of ‘broken rules,’ e.g., more overlaps and more repairs as a result of behavioural lapses. The sequences in the data, such as greetings or questions - answers, also have the same structures as found in other languages, and repairs are achieved through similar fashions. Therefore, the organisation of talk in this data can be seen to follow potentially universal underlying *rules*. The result is a dynamic and highly sensitive system that confers upon conversation a

distinctive temporal signature: it provides a metric within which a silence may be heard as resulting from some particular not speaking. With this established we can now turn to consider how participants use the opportunities to speak- distributed within the system just described- to get things done.

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