Research Day

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West Chester University
Turn Taking: Self-Selection Techniques in Workplace Meetings

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Introduction

- TESOL = Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
Literature Review (Turn Taking)

- Basic feature of speech
- Main form of conversational organization (Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, 1974)
- Challenging interactional skill for English Language Learners (ELLs) (Krug, 2011)
There are two ways to allocate turns:
  
  • “current selects next”
  • “self-selection”

(Sacks et. al, 1947)

Turn allocation employs both verbal and non-verbal communication
  
  • Paralinguistic features (i.e., body language, gestures, facial expressions, tone and pitch)

(Mondada, 2007)
Literature Review (Workplace Interaction)

Turn taking in meeting interaction vs. ordinary interaction

- Ordinary interaction - permission is not needed to self-select
- Meeting interaction - turn allocation is monitored by the Chairperson
  - Non-chair personnel orient themselves and speech to authority
    (Rawclaw and Ford, 2013)
Research Question

1. How do people take turns in meeting interactions?
   
   *Specifically, how do people self-select turns during workplace meetings?*
Methodology

• **Conversation Analysis (CA)**
  • systematic exploration of social interaction
    • Founded by Harvey Sacks
  • Naturalistic social interaction
Methods and Procedures

• Data collection
  • Audio and video recordings
  • ESL department meetings
    • Quantity: 4 meetings
    • Duration: 3 hours
    • Location: Local school district
    • Participants: 9 ESL teachers of varying grade levels and 1 superintendent

• Conversation Analysis
  • Transcription (Jefferson system of notation conventions)
  • Qualitative data coding
    • self-selected turns
Data Extract 1
S: So (0.5) it’s almost like we need to say to teachers, before the conference >it’s too late now< but we need to say to the teachers, if you have a (0.5) child that needs translation, and you probably do, um, these are the times that we are offering (0.5) translations.

T: But they all want

A: (((whispers to J))) "I found a way to download it"

J: ((stands up and walks towards A))

C: ((nods)) Right, that’s what we did at the middle school,

S: Yeah,

C: [to be sure that we had] [to have them available.

T: But it’s in the- yea:h I did-

S: [(So: I<don’t know it’s probably too late, ((gazes at K))) for you to do it now,]

T: because [(the teachers-]

K: [Mm-hmm,

T: but even so- I- here’s the- sorry to interrupt,

A: (((talks to J))) "I think so, I made it as big as I could"

J: ((nods))

L: I would put it on the- because there’s so many at Candle Brooke,

L: [I would just put up and I’m like, these are the times]

S: [Right,

L: you know, first come first serve, put it in whoever doesn’t fit is gonna have to use the AT&T line,
Data Extract 2
S: =The score is zero to thirty,
A: Okay, [so and I thought that might-
K: [Mm-hmm,
A: that's what it was, but make sure we go ba:\ck, [and then
L: [I always put it
in the note section,
S: =[So do I.
A: =[Yeah, [me too.
A: [Okay,
S: [So do I.
A: [Alright, so hopefully that will take care of
[that,
S: -> [And [actually I do too, ((looks at K)) I’m sorry,
K: [((So we have to-))
((shakes head))
S: I actually kinda take zero to thirty, and divide it (.)
across six,
A: Okay,
S: and wherever it (.) does it make- ah I know I’m like
((gestures)) haha
All: ((laughter))
A: Right, [so you use your base thirty,
S: [like you know what I’m saying,
A: [So I take the thirty,
A: [Yes, I do.
Data Extract 3
01 Si: so you’re saying, and and you can chime in from
02 the other schools as well, that your parents may not
03 come to open house?
04 S: Mm-hmm,
05 Si: so they don’t even come.
06 S: -> ((nods)) Mm-hmm, [Mm-hmm, [but- ((.touches J’s arm)) I’m sorry,
07 J: [((raises hand)) .hh U::m
08 Si: [((It’s a shame.)
09 J: [((hand gestures towards S)) "Yea:h"
10 S: [that’s- it’s- that’s not just our ELL families, [It’s-
11 Si: [I know.
12 A: [It’s in general.
13 S: [it- it’s: in general.
Findings

• Adds to literature in meeting interaction
• Self-selectors use both verbal (i.e., explicit apology) and non-verbal resources to obtain turn at talk
  • “Interrupting” the current speaker
  • “Competing” with another self-selector
Discussion

• Self-selection in meeting interactions
  • Teach English Language Learners effective turn-taking strategies
    • Prepare students to advance professionally
References


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Questions?