

## Turn – Taking Organized by the Host and Guests in “Let Them Speak” Talkshow Broadcast on First Channel Russia TV in 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014

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### Abstract

This paper is aimed at construing the turn-taking system organized by the host and guests in *Let them speak* talkshow which was broadcast on First Channel Russia TV in December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The results indicate that the speakers tend to employ the turns in terms of sentences (114 units). The speakers managed their turns by selecting a different speaker (47 units), continuing one’s own turn (75 units), and selecting the next speaker him/herself (29 units). With respect to turn-taking strategy, the speaker tend to employ clean start (16 units), uptake (33 units), link (11 units), alert (10 units), meta-comment (16 units), and new start (12 units). The analyzed data also reveals that some participants seem to properly organize their turns dominantly in sentences, by employing next speaker self-select technique, and in clean starts, uptakes, and meta-comments.

**Key words:** *turn-taking system, turn, turn-taking strategy, clean start, uptake, meta-comment*

### A. BACKGROUND

Talkshow is a television or radio show in which one person or group of people discusses various topics put forth by a talk show host, or is/are interviewed and often answer(s) questions from viewers or listeners (Wikipedia, 2010). In this type of language interaction people may organize their turns in such a way that the interaction could run smoothly. This can be construed under the theory of turn taking organization.

Turn-taking refers to the process by which people in a conversation decide who is to speak next (Stentrom, 1994: 68). In turn – taking system, a participant who talks first has an exclusive right to select the next participant to take a turn to speak. This indicates that every participant of a conversation takes a turn when he or she is selected by the current speaker. Turn taking is, thus, understood as the changing roles of speaker and listener in a language interaction.

Actually, turn-taking has long been discussed by different people with different data. However, the writers thought that the discussion of turn taking is still interesting. What is more, the study uses different data, a “Let them speak” talk show. The study is, therefore, expected to illustrate how the participants involved in exchanges of speech organize their turns. It then tries to (1) picturize the turn – taking system organized by the participants in “Let them speak” talk show broadcast on First Channel Russia TV in 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

## B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1. Talkshow

Language interaction is realized in many different forms. One of them is talk show, an original and a trustworthy program that involves one or several people to discuss a specific topic which is guided by a host (Wikipedia, 2010). The function of talk show is to share experiences to other people, to inform and educate people on particular issues, to strengthen the relationship with other people, and the true purpose is entertainment and making money for the network.

In this study, the data which were analyzed are "Let them speak" talk show broadcast on First Channnel Russian TV in 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014. It is expected that the data could construe how participants in the talk show organize their turns, thus, the data may explain the turn taking system (turn constructional unit, turn allocation turn, turn taking strategy).

### 2. Turn

Turn can be defined as a part of conversations when someone takes over and the other has stopped. One participant speaks at a time, with one participant's turn begins as the other's ends. Turn taking is, therefore, understood as organizing orderliness in a talk (Sack, et al., 1974). This relates to the organization of turn constructional unit, turn allocation unit, and turn taking strategy.

### 3. Turn constructional unit

People usually speak in different turn constructional components: a single lexical item, a phrase, a clause, and a full sentence (Nofsinger, 1994: 180). Those basic units are known as turn constructional unit. The turn constructional units are displayed in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Turn constructional unit

Syntactic units	Examples
A single lexical item	<i>Now</i>
A phrase	<i>In Moscow</i>
A clause	<i>because he was tired.</i>
A sentence	<i>Katy is going in japan.</i>

A single lexical item is a single word, a part of a word, or a chain of words that forms the basic elements of a language lexicon, such as: *Good, Now*. A phrase may refer to any group of words. In linguistics analysis, a phrase is a group of words or a single word that forms a constituent and by which it functions as a single unit in the syntax of a sentence. In grammatical hierarchy a phrase is lower than the clause, such as: *in Moscow, too slowly, very happy*. A clause is the smallest grammatical unit that can express a complete proposition. A typical clause consists of a subject and a predicate, where the predicate is typically a verb phrase – a verb together with any objects and other modifiers (Wheeler, 1998). The examples are *because he was tired, after we went to the exhibition*. A sentence is a linguistic unit consisting of one or more words that are grammatically linked. A sentence can include words grouped meaningfully to express a statement, question, exclamation, request, command, or suggestion. It is

a set of words that in principle tells a complete thought. Typically, a sentence contains a subject and predicate, such as *Katy is going in japan, It's hot today*.

Speakers can project where they will end and where a particular turn might possibly be complete in each of these turn constructional units.

#### **4. Turn allocation unit**

The turn allocation unit describes how turn are allocated among participants in a conversation. According to sack, *et al.* (1974), there are three techniques by which participants determine who get the next turn and propose a set of rules fixing the rights and responsibilities of these participants. They are:

- a. Current speaker select next speaker
- b. Next speaker self-select turn
- c. Speaker continuation

A participant may practice for allocating the next turn. He or she can choose the next speaker. The next selected speaker has the rights to and is obligated to take the turn at the first transition of the relevant place. It can be identified in various ways, such as using the person's name, making eye contact, and so forth. See the following examples (Nofsinger, 1994: 82):

A : *John, do you want some coffe ?*

B(John) : *Well, all right, I'll have some.*

The current speaker (line 1) selected speaker B as the next speaker by directing a question to B. In other words, allocating the turn to speaker B by addressing the word 'John' followed by a question. Then, speaker B (line 2) took the next turn at the first transition by giving an answer to the prior question.

If current speaker does not select the next speaker, then any listener may begin a turn in a transition of the relevant place. More precisely, self-selection means that the speaker when selecting the next speaker must achieve before the transition because the listener will probably get the next turn (Nofsinger, 1994: 84). Consider the following examples:

A: *Just like I did yesterday*

:(0.3)

A: *I might as well have my dark glasses on under my goggles.*

B: *Yeah.*

The current speaker, A (line 1), did not nominate a particular speaker for the next turn. He (line 3), then continued to speak after a three second interval (line 2). He did not select a particular speaker in the conversation. Any participant might take the next turn. Then, speaker B selected himself at the end of A's turn (line 4).

Current speaker may not select the next speaker, and no person self-selects, then at the transition, the current speaker may continue. In other words, speaker constinuation depends on the other two options not being used. The occurence of the option normally preceded with a significant interval, as indicated in the following examples:

A: *Just like I did yesterday*

: (0:3)

A: *I might as well have my dark glasses on under my goggles.*

*B: Yeah*

This is an instance of current speaker A continues holding the floor in line 1 and 3. This is also a technique where a single participant may take an extended turn. The existence of the speaker's continuation is another reason for listeners to self select quickly.

## **5. Turn taking strategy**

Turn taking strategy deals with how interlocutors change and manage their roles whether they become the speakers or the listeners in a conversation (Strentrom, 1994). They are taking the turn, holding the turn, and yielding the turn.

### **a. Taking the turn**

In taking the turn, a speaker may employ starting up (clean start, hesitant start), taking over (uptake, link), Interrupting (alert, meta-comment). When a speaker has no preparation at the beginning of the conversation, he or she may initiate the talk with a clean start or a hesitant start. This may give a little bit time for the speaker to prepare what she/he is going to speak (Schegloff, et al., 1977). When the second speaker tries to take the position of the first speaker, he or she may employ uptake or link to take over the turn.

During the conversation, the first speaker does not always finish with her/his talk. Sometimes the second speaker interrupts at the beginning or middle of the previous talk. Interruption is a violation of turn taking rules of conversation, that is the next speaker begins to speak while current speaker is speaking at the point in current speaker's turn in which it could not be defined as the last word (Strentrom, 1994). However, this strategy is impolite because the current speaker has not finished his/her speeches, and then somebody has taken the turn.

### **b. Holding the turn**

Holding the turn means to carry on talking. This kind of situation occurs when the speaker cannot control or hold the turn all the time because it is quite difficult to plan what to say at the same time. There are some ways for holding the turn: filled pause, lexical repetition, and new start.

Filled pauses and verbal fillers are employed to think of what the speaker is going to say. Lexical repetition means that the first speaker holds the turn by repeating her/his speech because he/she wants to go on speaking. In order to prevent from losing a turn, the speaker can use the best solution - making a new start and bringing a new idea or topic to be discussed while the speaker is holding the turn. In the other words, the current speaker makes a topic shift.

### **c. Yielding the turn**

Sometimes the speaker has to give away the turn by yielding, thus, the speaker may make a prompt in order to invite, greet, offer, question, request and apologize, so it turns current speaker automatically into turn yielder. A speaker may yield the turn by appealing, giving an explicit signal for the listener to make some kind of feedback. Giving up is the last strategy in yielding the turn, the current speaker is considered to have no more to say or this is the exact time for the listener to give a response. This strategy usually happens when the speaker cannot share the information that she/he has in her/his minds, as a result there will be a pause and the longer the pause, the stronger the pressure on the listener to say something.

### C. METHODOLOGY

The study is descriptive qualitative in nature, therefore, the data – “Let them speak” talk show broadcast on First Channel Russia TV in 5<sup>th</sup> Desember 2014 are transcribed, analyzed in a categorical technique, and construed on the bases of turn organization theory.

### D. DISCUSSION

The data of the study are explained in terms of turn constructional unit, turn allocation unit, and turn taking strategy organized by the participants of the talk show. Additional information as to the domination of the participants in organizing their turns would also be explained to provide more description of the talk show.

The turn constructional unit organized by the participants of the talk show is presented in table 1.

**Table 1: Turn constructional unit**

No	S	Turn Constructional Unit				
		Single Lexical Item	Phrase	Clause	Sentence	
1	Andrey Malakhov	-	1	-	26	27
2	Nikolay Troitsky	3	4	3	10	20
3	Anton Sergey	-	1	1	24	26
4	Sarcastic Guy	-	2	2	3	7
5	Alexander	-	-	-	9	9
6	Zhanna	1	-	2	10	13
7	Leonid	-	-	1	14	15
8	Igor	-	-	-	6	6
9	Nicksih	-	-	1	3	4
10	Valery	-	2	-	9	11
		4	10	10	114	138

Table 1 indicates that the turn constructional unit is mostly organized by the participants in the talk show at the level of sentence (114 units). The participants insignificantly used single lexical items, phrases, and clauses in their turns. Two out of the participants dominate the use of sentences: Andrey Malakhov (26 units) as in *In Moscow, it's Let Them Speak where we discuss about true stories that have the whole world talk* and Anton Sergey (24 units) as in *I came to defend my friend, Nikolay, I have been reading his blog for a long time*. Some other participants also manage their turns in sentences. They are Leonid (14 units), Nikolay Troitsky (10 units), Zhanna (10 units), Alexander (9 units), and Valery (9 units).

Most of the participants seem to participate in the language interaction by using sentences rather than using single items, phrases, or clauses. The participants may need clear expressions that they organize their turns in sentences.

The turn allocation unit organized by the participants of the talk show, on the other hand, is summarized in table 2 below.

**Table 2: Turn allocation unit**

No	S	Turn allocation unit			
		Current speaker select next speaker	Next speaker self-select	Speaker continuation	
1	Andrey Malakhov	29	3	-	32
2	Nikolay Troitsky	1	9	10	20
3	Anton Sergey	6	25	4	35
4	Sarcastic Guy	3	2	2	7
5	Alexander	2	7	-	9
6	Zhanna	1	7	3	11
7	Leonid	-	1	3	4
8	Igor	1	12	2	15
9	Nicksih	1	3	2	6
10	Valery	3	6	3	12
		47	75	29	151

Table 2 indicates that the turns allocated for the participants fall in three different techniques: current speaker select next speaker (47 units) as in *Nikolay, can I ask you a question? When you deleted your blog, what happened then?*, next speaker self-select (75 units) as in *So shut up, hide yourself, and keep everything secret*, and speaker continuation (29 units) as in *Sure it happens.... Usually Nikolay delete those things, but it is absolutely normal to write things like that because it is his personal blog space*. The participants seem to master the techniques in allocating the turns for all the participants. However, out of the ten participants, four participants dominate in allocating their turns. Andrey Malakhov dominates in using current speaker select next speaker (29 units), Nikolay Troitsky dominates in using next speaker self-select (9 units), and speaker continuation (10 units). Anton Sergey dominates in allocating next speaker self-select (25 units). Igor dominates in allocating next speaker self-select (12 units).

The turn taking strategy organized by the participants of the talk show is summarized in table 3 below.

**Table 3: Turn taking strategy**

No	S	Turn taking strategy	

		Taking turn						Holding turn			Yielding turn	
		Starting up		Taking over		Interrupting		Fp	Lr	Ns		
		Cs	Hs	Ut	L	Al	Mc					
1	Andrey Malakhov	4	3	1	1	0	5	0	0	2	4	20
2	Nikolay Troitsky	1	0	11	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	16
3	Anton Sergey	3	0	4	2	4	7	0	1	2	1	24
4	Sarcastic Guy	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	4
5	Alexander	0	0	2	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	7
6	Zhanna	2	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	8
7	Leonid	1	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	12
8	Igor	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	4
9	Nicksih	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
10	Valery	2	0	5	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	11
		16	3	33	11	10	16	1	1	12	6	109

Table 3 shows that almost all the participants involved in the talk show could employ the turn taking strategy properly. The turn taking strategies mostly employed are clean start (16 units) as in *In Moscow, it's Let Them Speak where we discuss about true stories that have the whole world talk*, uptake (33 units) *why Arkhangelskaya Oblast? No, I just don't think that we should divide people based on their orientation*, link (11 units) *but did you change your convictions or what?*, alert (10 units) as in *So shut up, hide yourself, keep everything secret*, meta-comment (16 units) as in *Nikolay, can I ask you a question*, and new start (12 units) as in *They banned all statements about homosexuality, period, well, it was better than making a big scene, we'd be having the same conversation because for us, it wasn't the context that was important but the form of expression*. Five out of the ten participants dominate the employment of turn taking strategies. Andrey Malakhov dominates in the employment of meta-comment (5 units). Nikolay Troitsky dominates in the employment of uptake (11 units). Anton Sergey dominates in the employment of meta-comment (7). Leonid dominates in the employment of uptake (6 units). Valery dominates in the employment of uptake (5 units). Thus, those speakers may master turn taking strategies that they could participate in any language interaction properly.

## E. CONCLUSION

Turn taking is a system that manages who speaks, when, and for how long. The data used in order to construe how the turns are organized were taken from "Let them speak" talkshow broadcast on first channel russia TV in 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014. In details the data portray how the turns are organized in terms of turn constructional units, turn allocation units, and turn taking strategies.

The results indicate that the turns are mostly organized in terms of turn constructional unit in the form of sentences (114 units). Two out of the participants dominate the use of sentences: Andrey Malakhov (26 units) and Anton Sergey (24 units). This may conclude that the speakers tend to provide complete explanations or information as is indicated in the dominant use of sentences.

The turns are also organized by allocating units of turns evenly in the three techniques of allocating who is going to speak or to take the turn. They are current speaker select next speaker (47 units), next speaker self-select (75 units), and speaker continuation (29 units). The speakers seem to master the techniques in allocating the turns for all the participants

In taking the turns, the participants mostly employed such turn taking strategies as: clean start (16 units), uptake (33 units), link (11 units), alert (10 units), meta-comment (16 units), and new start (12 units). The employment of those strategies implies the participants' ability in taking their turns properly.

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