

Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974)

A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn Taking for Conversation.

The turn-taking system for conversation can be described in terms of two components and a set of rules.

Component I-Turn-Constructional Component

There are various unit-types with which a speaker may set out to construct a turn. Unit-types for English include sentential, clausal, phrasal, and lexical constructions. Instances of the unit-types so usable allow a projection of the unit-type under way, and what, roughly, it will take for an instance of that unit-type to be completed. Unit-types that lack the feature of projectability may not be usable in the same way.

For the unit-types a speaker employs in starting the construction of a turn's talk, the speaker is initially entitled, in having a "turn," to one such unit. The first possible completion of a first such unit constitutes an initial transition-relevance place. Transfer of speakership is coordinated by reference to such transition-relevance places, which any unit-type instance will reach.

Component 2-Turn-Allocational Component

Turn-allocational techniques are distributed into two groups: (a) those in which next turn is allocated-by current speaker selecting a next speaker; and (b) those in which a next turn is allocated by self-selection.

Rules

The following seems to be it 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. For any turn:

1. At initial turn-constructional unit's initial transition-relevance place:
 - (a) If the turn-so-far is so constructed as to involve the use of a "current speaker selects next" technique, then the party so selected has rights, and is obliged, to take next turn to speak, and no others have such rights or obligations, transfer occurring at that place.
 - (b) If the turn-so-far is so constructed as not to involve the use of a "current speaker selects next" technique, self-selection for next speakership may, but need not, be instituted, with first starter acquiring rights to a turn, transfer occurring at that place.
 - (c) If the turn-so-far is so constructed as not to involve the use of a "current speaker selects next" technique, then current speaker may, but need not, continue, unless another self-selects.
2. If, at initial turn-constructional unit's initial transition-relevance place, neither 1(a) nor 1(b) has operated, and, following the provision of 1(c), current speaker has continued, then the Rule-set (a)-(c) reappears at next transition-relevance place, and recursively at each next transition relevance place, until transfer is effected.