

**DISCOURSE ANALYSIS:  
ANALYSING ADJACENCY PAIRS OF TEACHER AND STUDENTS**

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**Abstract**

This research aimed at analyzing the kinds of Adjacency Pairs and their function used by a teacher and the students in the classroom. This research employed a descriptive research method with non-participants observer. The sample of this research was teacher and students of ELC Education Makassar. The data collected through the use of audio recording and then it was transcribed to be analyzed. The study shows that there are five types of Adjacency Pairs found in the teaching process. First, degreeting – degreeting pair which functions as an agreement to discontinue the certain conversation. Second, the reasearcher encountered a greeting – greeting pair which also a pair that has similar function as the previous pair, an agreement to discontinue the certain conversation. Furthermore, a question – refusal pair is also found in this research. It functions as questioning and refusing utterance where there is a questions and then it follows with a refusal. Then, an offer – refusal pair can be found during the classroom interaction where there is an offer and the other speaker accepts the related utterance. The last pair is a question – answer pair which also occurs in this reasearch. It functions as questioning and answering to the related remark.

**Keywords:** Discourse analysis, adjacency pairs.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Conversation can be encountered between two or more people who utter their idea in several different contexts. Sacks and Schegloff (1979) stated that people shape or design their speech unconsciously to meet the expected needs of other's in the conversation.

One very common structure that has been identified through conversation analysis is the adjacency pair which is developed predominantly by Sacks and Schegloff (1973). Adjacency pairs are important term used in socio-linguistics. It is a type of utterance used by one speaker which requires a particular type of utterance by another speaker. Generally speaking, adjacency pairs are the utterances in a dialogue which occurs in pairs. Sacks and Schegloff (1973) stated that adjacency pair is the most basic forms of speech that is used to produced conversation. On the other hand, it is an ordered pair of adjacent utterances spoken by two different speakers. Once the first utterance is spoken, the second is required.

The use of adjacency pairs creates different types of very complex conversation. According to McCarthy (1991), pairs of utterance are mutually dependent. For instance, a question predicts an answer and the answer presupposes a question.

The reason of conducting the research is to determine the conversation between the teacher and the students dealing with the types of Adjacency Pairs. Because there are some misunderstanding that can be obtained in the classroom conversation between the teacher and the student referring to some utterances.

### **ADJACENCY PAIRS**

Kermer and Muller break down the definition of Adjacency Pairs into three parts.

- a. discovery that became a starting point for a whole new approach (similar as speech acts to pragmatics)
- b. two subsequent utterances constituting a conversational exchange
- c. distinction between 'first pair part' and 'second pair part'

An adjacency pair, used in conversational analysis, is a pair of conversational turns by two different speakers such that the production of the first turn (called a first-pair part) makes a response (a second-pair part) of a particular kind relevant. For example, a question, such as

"*what's your name?*", requires the addressee to provide an answer in the next conversational turn. A failure to give an immediate response is noticeable and accountable.

Moreover, Heritage in Wooffitt (2005) stated that the term adjacency pair is a sequence of two utterances which are adjacent, produced by different speakers, ordered as a first part and second part and typed, so that a first part requires a particular second, or range of second parts. An invitation, then, would be the first part of an invitation–response pair, a question the first part of a question–answer pair, and a greeting the first part of a greeting–greeting pair. Furthermore, Levinson (1983) stated that an adjacency pair is a unit of conversation that contains an exchange of one turn each by two speakers. The turns are functionally related to each other in such a fashion that the first turn requires a certain type or range of types of second turn.

There is a significant relationship between the turns that constitute paired sequences. In conducting conversation, a speaker's utterance or production of the first part of a pair creates the expectation that an allocated next speaker should produce the appropriate second part. According to Schegloff in Wooffitt (2005), the second part of a pair is said to be conditionally relevant after the production of a first part. On the other hand, if the speaker is selected via the first part of a pair, not only they have to speak, but they will be expected to provide the appropriate second pair part, or an account for its absence.

Due to the fact that adjacency pairs are such an important basic unit of the interaction of speech, it is clear that they are a core building of social interaction. If one doesn't develop the ability to understand and community through using such conversation techniques as questions and answer, it will be difficult to interact normally in the society.

Based on the explanation above can be drawn a conclusion that adjacency pairs are utterances produced by two speakers in a way that the second utterance is identified as related to the first one and expected to follow up to it.

#### **TYPES OF ADJACENCY PAIRS**

Adjacency pairs allow speakers to allocate and give up turns. Sacks et al (1974) identified adjacency pairs as major turn types. To understand the types of adjacency pairs, the followings are the breaking down of them.

- a. Greeting – Greeting  
*A: Hello.*  
*B: Hi.*
- b. Summons – Answer  
*A: I need help here!*  
*B: I'm coming!*
- c. Complaint – Denial  
*A: The room is a mess!*  
*B: I was out!*
- d. Request – Apology  
*A: It's ten minutes past the hour?*  
*B: My car broke down.*
- e. Request for information – Grant  
*A: When is the bus arriving?*  
*B: After ten minutes.*
- f. Offer – Accept  
*A: Do you need help with that?*  
*B: Definitely!*
- g. Offer – Reject  
*A: Chocolate?*  
*B: I'm on a diet, thanks.*

From the types of adjacency pairs above along with some examples, it can be concluded that some kinds of conversational actions belong with each other intuitively. Greeting, such as 'hello' – 'hi', forms a natural pair. It also seems natural that questions will be followed with acceptance or refusal, and so on. There is a normative relationship between the turns that constitute paired sequences.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research used a descriptive qualitative method which was used to examine the way teacher and student response certain utterances. The population of this research was a teacher and students of ELC Education Makassar, one of the biggest English course institutions in Makassar. The number of the population was about ten students and one teacher considering that they had been studying English for several years. Thus, they were expected to be more relevant as the object of this research.

In determining the sample, the researcher used random sampling technique. The researcher recorded conversation between teacher and students in the classroom and then it was analyzed to break down the the types of adjacency pairs and their functions.

Instruments of the research that was used direct conversational recording. It was conducted to find out the data about the types of adjacency pairs used by the teacher and the students in the classroom.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Findings

Types of adjacency pairs found in the classroom interaction between the teacher and the students are presented in the followings.

#### 1. Degreeting – Degreeting

*The situation below took place when the teacher explained the material in the classroom in the same day but different time of the learning process.*

##### Extract 1

Teacher : Not err the artist that you like.  
So, focus on the topic that we are talking about.  
Don't go other side. **OK!**

Student1 : **Alright, Thank you.**

##### Extract 2

Teacher : Maybe in the next meeting we will talk about writing. **OK.**

Student1 : **OK.**

It can be seen between the above two extracts in the conversation the teacher and the students used one of the types of adjacency pair called **Degreeting – Degreeting**. In extract 1, the teacher ended the explanation by using word **OK** just to emphasize that the student who asked the question agreed with the teacher's explanation. Still in extract 1, the students gave feedback to the teacher's explanation by saying **Alright, Thank you**. While in extract 2, both the teacher and the student used the same words in giving

response to the utterances. The teacher and the student used word **OK** in giving response.

*The situation occurred when the teacher explained the material and then there was one student who came late during the teaching process.*

**Extract 1**

Teacher : Any other question?

Student : **Good morning!**

Student2 : <**@ morning @**>

*The rest of the students were laughing while saying, “Morning” because the class taught at noon.*

**Extract 2**

Teacher : **Hi!**

Students : **Hello!**

In extract 1, there was a student who came late and he greeted the class by using the word **Good morning** and the rest of other students greeted him back with the same utterance. While in extract 2, the teacher started the greeting by saying **Hi** to the students and the students greeted the teacher back with the different words, which was **Hello**. Even though this conversation the teacher and the students use different words in responding the conversation, it is still considered that one type of adjacency pairs is used in this conversation is **Greeting – Greeting**.

Types of Adjacency Pairs	Extract	Utterance	Function
Greeting-Greeting	Extract 1	<b>Good morning!</b> < <b>@ morning @</b> >	Agreement to discontinue the certain conversation
	Extract 2	<b>Hi!</b> <b>Hello!</b>	

## 2. Question – Refusal

*The situation given below was taken when the teacher explained the material and then there was a student who asked question.*

### Extract 1

Student : *What about “like”?*  
 Teacher : *ee--, we will discuss it later.*

### Extract 2

Student 1 : *So, I have to explain Bon Jovi is err blah blah blah...?*  
 Teacher : *No. Actually we are talking about your type of music that you like...*

In extract 1, there was a student who asked question and the teacher did answer the question but he refused to give information related to the student’s question. In extract 2, still the same in extract 1 where the teacher refused to answer the student’s question by saying *No*. It is interesting to note that types of adjacency pair **Question-Refusal** took place in the classroom between the communication of the teacher and the students.

Types of Adjacency Pairs	Extract	Utterance	Function
Question-Refusal	Extract 1	<i>What about “like”?</i> <i>ee--, we will discuss it later.</i>	Questioning and refusing utterance
	Extract 2	<i>So, I have to explain Bon Jovi is err blah blah blah...?</i> <i>No.</i>	

## 3. Offer – Acceptance

*The situation given below was taken when the teacher explained the material while the teacher offered the students some questions.*

### Extract 1

Teacher : For example....

OK..

*Nah, what else?*

*Apa lagi?*

Tanya... Tanya (*Ask me*)

Student : *Kenapa kalo di keterangan tempat kalo misalnya in class,*

Kenapa bukan in the Class?

*(Why can't we use in the class instead of in class)*

Maksudnya yang dibelakangnya itu.

*(I meant behind the word class)*

Misalnya yang menunjukkan tempat itu ada kata "the"

atau ya gak usah....?

*(for example, to describe name of place, should we use "the" or not?)*

### Extract 2

Teacher : *OK, ada lagi? (Is there any more questions?)*

Student : *Sir, mungkin "does" itu menjelaskan kind of animal.*

*(Sir, maybe "does" is used to describe the kind of animal)*

Teacher : OK, "does" menjelaskan kind of animal (*"does" is used to describe the kind of animal*)

In extract 1, the teacher offered the students to ask more questions. The teacher offered by saying *what else?* and the students replied the offer by asking a question which referred to the material. In extract 2, the teacher still gave the students a chance to ask more questions by saying *OK, ada lagi? (Is there any more questions?)* and the



student accepted the offer from the teacher by emphasizing the teacher’s explanation. Based on the two extracts above it can be concluded that between the teacher and the student use different utterance in offering and accepting to each statement.

Types of Adjacency Pairs	Extract	Utterance	Function
Offer – Acceptance	Extract 1  Extract 2	<i>Nah, what else? Why can't we use in the class instead of in class Is there any question?) Sir, maybe "does" is used to describe the kind of animal</i>	Offering and accepting related utterance

#### 4. Question – Answer

*The situation given below was taken when the teacher explained the material while the teacher asked the students some questions related to the given material.*

##### Extract 1

Teacher 1 : OK..OK.. very good question!

If you say “I go to the campus and I go to campus

I go to school and I go to the school, what is the different?

I...go to the school....and I go to school

(while writing on the whiteboard)

***What is the difference?***

Student : ***“Go to school” itu sudah diketahui sekolahnya yang mana***

***Yang “go to school itu ditambahkan “the”***

***Karena tidak diketahui sekolahnya yang mana***

***(“Go to school” it already known***

***which school...”go to school” added “the”***

***because it’s unknown school)***

**Extract 2**

Teacher : *Starving, you starving?*  
Okay, you can have your lunch now

Student : *Yeah*, Thank you sir!

Extract 1 given above shows that the teacher used *What is the difference?* as a question to ask the student about the material and the student answered the teacher's question by answering the related question from the teacher. In extract 2, the teacher uttered *Starving, you starving?* and the student replied it by saying *Yeah*. It can be noted from both extracts above that in this situation types of adjacency pairs which is *Question – Answer* applied in the classroom both teacher and the student.

Types of Adjacency Pairs	Extract	Utterance	Function
Question – Answer	Extract 1	<i>What is the difference? Go to school” it already known which school...” go to school” added “the” because it’s unknown school</i>	Questioning and answering related utterance
	Extract 2	<i>Starving, you starving Yeah</i>	

**B. Discussion**

Findings which are taken from every extract above show us that there are several types of adjacency pair used in the classroom both teacher and the students. Most of the types of adjacency pairs can be found in several phases in the process of learning.

There are five types of adjacency pairs which are taken from the extract found by the researcher. They are, *Degreeting – Degreeting, Greeting – Greeting, Question – Refusal, Offer – Acceptance, and Question – Answer*. Those types of adjacency pair found by the researcher in the different sections of the process of learning in the classroom is explained deeply by the researcher in these followings.

**Degreeting-Degreeting** refers to the conversation procedure by which two participants of a conversation agree to discontinue the certain conversation. It is so named because a degreeting concludes a conversation in a similar way that a greeting engages one. This type of adjacency pair can be found by identifying the utterances both teacher and students. The utterance such as **“OK”** and **“Thank you”** can be considered as **Degreeting-Degreeting** pair.

**Greeting – Greeting** is another one of the most common adjacency pairs to include reciprocal exchange of the same word or phrase: **“Good morning”** answered **“Good Morning”** or **“Hello”** answered **“Hi”**. This type of adjacency pair can be found in the second finding above even though between the first pair participant which is the teacher and the second pair participant used different utterance in responding the greeting, but the words such as **Hello, Hi** and **Good Morning** can be considered as Greeting- Greeting pair. According to Schegloff (2007: 16), although there may be a variety of greeting forms with which to respond (**“Hello,” “Hi,” “Hiya,” “Howyadoin,”** etc.), and a responder may have a favorite or signature, or aim to return the same as was received (or different), these are not alternative types of response; they all reciprocate the greeting.

**Question-Refusal** refers to pair that one of the participants of the conversation using dispreferred part in answering the question. Such as the first participant asks **“What about “like”?”** and the second participant answers **“We will discuss it later”**.

Based on the finding found by the researcher that the second participant has a tendency to refuse to answer the first participant’s question hesitantly and in a soften way. McCarthy (1991: 120) observes characteristic of dispreferred responses is that they tend to require some sort of linguistic *‘softener’*. Linguistic softeners are elements of informal but polite conversations that are usually used to smooth over potentially embarrassing situations. They help people *‘save face’* in responses and are often necessary for speakers not to appear impolite or rude. Cook (1989) also points out that in an adjacency pair any response that is not a preferred or dispreferred could be interpreted as rudeness or a lack of attention.

*Offer-Acceptance* refers to the utterance that the first participant offers something to the second participant and the second participant accepts the given offer. Based on the extract given in findings shows that the teacher gives the students a chance to ask question by asking question “*What else?*”, and the second pair participant which is a student accept the teacher offer by asking question “*Why can’t we use in the class instead of in class?*”. The adjacency pairs above show that different utterances are likely to be followed by particular responses. An offer is followed by acceptance and so on. Although both participants of conversation using the same type of sentence that is a question, it can be pointed out that short of above utterances can be considered as *Offer-Acceptance* pair. As Cook (1989: 53) identifies further patterns that in an adjacency pair there is often a choice of two likely responses. A request is most likely to be followed by an acceptance or a refusal.

And the last is *Answer-Question* pair. This type of adjacency pair is considered also as the most common pair that can be often found in our daily interaction with other people. For example, “*Are you starving?*” answered “*Yes*”. The original utterance of the teacher is *Starving, you starving?*, the teacher eliminates the word *are* in his utterance just to make the conversation more informal, even though the utterance is not grammatically correct, but it is acceptable for spoken language which can be found in our daily interaction. After asking that question, the students answer it with “*Yeah*”.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Every conversational action of speech occurs in a sequence of utterances between two or more people that shape what they say around what has already been said and what they predict might be said later on in the conversation.

There are several kinds of adjacency pairs found in every conversational situation, including between teacher and students in the class, as the finding above the researcher found

five kinds of adjacency pairs. They are, *Degreeting – Degreeting, Greeting – Greeting, Question – Refusal, Offer – Acceptance, and Question – Answer.*

Considering the result of this research, the researcher suggest to the reader to know some kinds of adjacency pairs that occurs in situational conversation and to know the adjacency pairs used between teacher and students in a context of classroom conversation. Even though this research has been done well, it still has many weaknesses because of the limited time. So, the next researchers are suggested to spend more time in observing types of adjacency pair to get more detail information.

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