



Conversation

Turn taking, greeting, and farewells



Conversations

- Rules that govern conversations are complex and ubiquitous
- Especially with regard to greetings and leave takings
- Once your conversation has got started, you need to observe the rules for turn taking in that culture
- Turn taking means...
 - One party talks at a time
 - Transitions are finely coordinated for speaker change
 - Utterances are constructed to show coordination of turn transfer and speakership
 - Usually analyzed in terms of “adjacency pairs”



Adjacency pairs

offer-acceptance/rejection

greeting-greeting

complaint-excuse/remedy

request-acceptance/denial

- Consist of pair of utterances, spoken in turn by 2 speakers, that clearly show which utterance is first and which second;
- Second part is conditionally relevant to first
- Can contain multiple strands
- Will be punctuated with Turn Relevance Place markers—cues about when to change speakers

Story telling/anecdotes

- Longer turns in a conversation are usually signaled by a story preface
 - “Something funny happened to me on the way to work this morning...”
 - The speaker is asking permission to tell a story (which interrupts the turn taking of conversation)
 - The story preface should elicit the response from the hearer, “What?”

Story telling

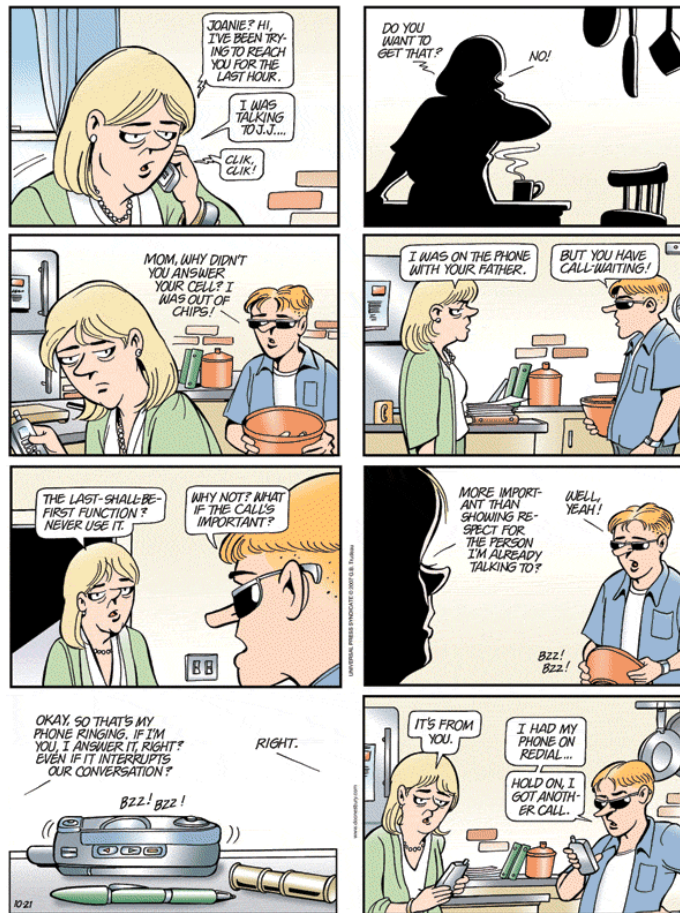
Context is everything...





Intercultural differences

In content based cultures you can speak faster, louder, simultaneously, to indicate that you want to say all that you need to say, NOW!!!



Turn taking... and cell phones...

Intergenerational differences...





We can talk about that later.

In form based cultures

Turn taking is deeply respected...



Back channeling

Signals that you are listening to the speaker

- Signaled through:
 - Repetition
 - Agreement
 - Assent
 - Affirmation
 - Acknowledgment
 - Passive reception
 - “m-hm, yeah, right”
 - Sentence completions
 - Requests for clarification
 - Repetition (fact checking)
 - Head nods and shakes...

Greeting and leave taking

Hi! What's up?

How's it going?

Hello?

Hey!

- Greetings in English are usually followed by another exchange...
- A question regarding health
- A question about the weather
- A comment on how long it has been since you have had contact
- A question about activities
- In some cultures, greeting rituals can be very drawn out... best to cross the road if you see a friend in Kenya!



Leave taking

See you later!

Au revoir!

Auf Wiedersehen!

Do svidanie!

Hasta la vista!

- Summarizes the content of the contact you have just had
- Justifies ending contact at this time
- Expresses pleasure about each other
- Indicates continuity of relationship by planning the next meeting
- Wishes each other well



Laughter!

Responsive laughter is initiated by the hearer

Self-initiated laughter serves the speaker

Joking can be a sign of positive politeness
(minimizes the threat to positive face)

- Responsive laughter
 - Acknowledges wit
 - Support
 - Minimizes disagreement
 - Shows politeness
 - Can ridicule
- Self-initiated laughter
 - Invites others into the conversation
 - Encourages and supports others
 - Frames an utterance
- Indicates irony, humor, modesty, uncertainty, anxiety
- Laughter can mitigate disappointment

Cultural differences

➤ In Anglo cultures the question, “Did you have a good break?” would be interpreted as a sign of what?

➤ In France, the question “Did you have a god break?” would be interpreted as a sign of what?

Review

- Key terms: Conversational routine; turn-taking; topic termination; leave-taking; contact termination; turn change; back-channeling; conversation openings; preferred and dispreferred turn structure
- Now read Focus Questions, p. 76
 - A. i) and ii)
 - Research exercise, p. 78, adjacency pairs