



# The Realization of Spoken Text Features in a Debate of Indonesian Students of World Schools Debating Championship 2017

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### Abstract

Conversation Analysis is a methodology for naturally-occurring spoken interaction analysis. In this case, I use this methodology to understand how social action is accomplished. The objectives of the study are (1) to explain the spontaneity features realized in the debate, (2) to explain the interactivity features realized in the debate, (3) to explain the interpersonal features realized in the debate, and (4) to explain the coherence of the spoken text in the debate achieved. This study is a qualitative research. The data is a debate video performed by Indonesian students in the World Schools Debating Championships 2017. The result revealed four prominences: first, the spontaneity features realized in the debate are: filled pauses, repetition, false starts, tail-slot-filler, vagueness expression, and formulaic language (chunks); second, the interactivity features realized in that debate are: asking and answering of question, asking and answering their own rhetorical question, interruptions, and discourse markers; third, the interpersonality features realized in the debate are: hedges, vague, language, discourse markers, and evaluative language; fourth, the coherence of the spoken text in the debate achieved through the realization of the topic consistency, which includes lexical repetition, lexical chains, referring expressions, substitution, and linkers, and the macrostructure which comprises adjacency pairs and story structure. Theoretically, this research contributes to other researchers as a block for its literature contribution in their review in the case of the sameness and the difference of the research.

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## INTRODUCTION

To speak spontaneously is not easy. In fact, there are a number of obvious features of spoken language that are not less important to be learned by students and those are not usually present in written language, for example, like the spontaneity of the speakers, the interactivity among them, the interpersonal function realized, and the coherence of the text. That is why, to investigate the spoken text of the students, it is needed appropriate media. One of them is a debate.

Debate, according to Wahidin (2017), is an appropriate medium in training students' negotiation and argumentation skills on an international scale. To do debate, students need to master global knowledge, analyze, make judgments, and convince the public. In doing so, students are faced with real problems being faced by the society or nation. Thus, they should be able to position and convince the public that their opinion or argument is right and correct. To achieve excellence in debating and to promote international understanding, this study will be meaningful if the data is obtained from the most prestigious international English-language debating competition for high school level students in the world, which is known as World Schools Debating Championships (WSDC). The realization of the spoken text features in a debate performed by Indonesia students in World Schools Debating Championships can be revealed through a methodology for naturally-occurring spoken interaction which is called Conversation Analysis (Seedhouse, 2014).

There have been numerous researches done in analyzing the features of the spoken text, like the studies about hedges which were conducted by Mahanani (2013); Kusumaningroem, Rukmini, and Yuliasri (2015); Wahyuningsih and Sofwan (2015); Yuliarti and Warsono (2016); Asfina, Kadarisman, and Astuti (2018) which deals with hedges in the "opinion column" of the Jakarta post, hedges used in the United States

presidential speeches, hedges in thesis abstracts of graduate students of Semarang state university, hedges in classroom speeches by English students in graduate program, and hedges used by Indonesian ELT students in written and spoken discourses. There have also been researches about adjacency pairs that were conducted by Isgianto (2016); Permatasari and Listiyanti (2017); Bintana, Rukmini, and Sofwan (2018). Their studies concerned with the adjacency pairs on the 'Six Minutes English' conversation script, the drama script "Teen Angel" by D.M Larson, and the patterns of the adjacency pairs of Trumps' victory interview in '60 minutes'.

Most of the researches above were dealing about one of the features of the spoken text; yet, none of them which dealt with the realization of the spoken text features including its spontaneity, its interactivity, its interpersonality, and its coherence. Besides, none of them also used the debate video as the data of the research.

To fill the gap, this research offered a study of the realization of the spoken text features realized in a debate which purposes are described below: (1) How are the spontaneity features realized in the debate? (2) How are the interactivity features realized in the debate? (3) How are the interpersonal features realized in the debate? (4) How is the coherence of the spoken text in the debate achieved?

Theoretically, this research contributes to explicate the spoken text features which are demonstrated by speakers who are capable and accustomed to speak publicly even without preparation. Practically, it can be used as one of the information source to help researchers get deep insight about spoken text features, so that the study which they are going to conduct is able to reach the reliability. And pedagogically, it helps teachers define to their students the spoken text features that do not exist in the written text, so that the students are able to give best response to the opposite speakers or the interlocutors.

## METHODS

Since the data were in the form of qualitative data, this study utilizes the following methods in collecting data: searching, selecting, and transcribing. The descriptions are like the following:

1. Searching deals with hunting the English debate videos which speakers have well English speaking, clear accent and voice, good competence in delivering their ideas and arguments, and active to respond the opponent's argument in the debate,
2. Selecting deals with choosing one debate video which is assumed to be the appropriate data to be used as the object of this study,
3. Transcribing deals with the process of recording the sound data which is then it is poured to the written data through the text transcriber which is available on the YouTube.

After the data is collected, the following methods are utilized to analyze the data: copying, organizing, punctuating, segmenting, analyzing, describing, explaining, and making conclusions and suggestions.

1. Copying deals with the process of moving the transcription result on the text transcriber column to Ms. Word in order to ease organizing the transcription result,
2. Organizing deals with arranging the transcription result which has been copied to Ms. Word, like, deleting unused time frame, naming the turns and speakers to make the transcription result proper, readable, and understandable,
3. Punctuating deals with the transcript notation. I punctuate the transcript notation proposed by J. M. Atkinson and

J. Heritage (1999) and adapt it in accordance with the objectives of the research,

4. Segmenting deals with classifying the sub-features found in the transcription and putting into tables accord with the feature related,
5. Analyzing deals with identifying the features of the spoken text which include its spontaneity, its interactivity, its interpersonality, and its coherence proposed by Thornbury (2005),
6. Describing deals with announcing the findings by giving an example and spelling out how or why the speakers were doing so,
7. Explaining deals with clarifying or making interpretation of the findings with related theory and other studies supported,
8. Making conclusions and suggestions deals with the summary of this study which is in-line with the objective of the research and the advice or direction to which this research significantly contributes to.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part gives the explanation and the interpretation of the findings related to the theory and other supported researches. The findings include four prominent results: spontaneity features realized in the debate, interactivity features realized in the debate, interpersonality features realized in the debate, and coherence features achieved in the debate. The result and discussion are on the following.

### Spontaneity Features Realized in the Debate

This discussion provides the interpretation of the data from the finding to answer the first research question. In accord with the theory of Thornbury (2005), most of

speech is produced 'online', that is to say in real time and with little or no time for planning. That is why; there must be characteristic features that make it different from the written. In this study, some of the characteristic features that have been found from the analysis to show the spontaneity of the Indonesian students are six: filled pauses (49x), repetitions (11x), false starts (19x), tail-slot-filler (7x), vagueness expressions (2x), and formulaic language (52x). The example can be seen below.

**Example:**

Turn 54	speaker B	whether they said that Germany will get <i>aa..</i> will be able to get <i>aa.. mm</i> to get their time."
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The example above showed the realization of filled pauses *aa* and *mm* by speaker B in turn 54. In that matter, the speakers B accidentally post their argument by inserting some filler like *aa* and *mm* in order to give the opponent signal that their argument is still going on. It is in line with that of proposed by Fraundorf (2014) and Watson (2011) which argued that filled pauses could be produced within a statement or at the end of a statement. And their presence indicated that the speaker was actively searching for information, or was deciding how to continue.

The example above also showed the realization of repetition in the debate. As Weeda's point of view (2017) stated that falls start in speech might have meant someone started speaking before they were ready or quiet knew where they were going with a sentence. Like in the example that has been presented, in turn 54, the speaker B started her speech with an out-of-turn point *will get a.. will be able to get a..*, and they forced to retract it, then she began with a new start that was actually became her point, yet it was still false. Finally, she incidentally inserted a filler *mm* and she was able to get the appropriateness and deliver her opinion well.

**Interactivity Features Realized in the Debate**

This discussion provides the interpretation of the data from the finding to answer the second research question. As Thornbury's perspective (2005), the conversation would be interactive if the speakers interacted by taking turns to speak, keeping silent when others are speaking, interrupting at times and signaling their argument or amusement by grunts, laughs and chuckles. From the findings, Indonesian students realized interactivity features which include: asking and answering of question (5x), asking and answering their own rhetorical question (11x), interruptions (11x), and discourse markers (153x). The examples can be seen below.

**Example 1:**

Turn 25	Speaker c	...the Germany's troops, can reach the Russian border faster than the EFP can?
Turn 26	Speaker A	ladies and gentlemen. you need to understand, it takes 14 days, to deploy Nato troops from its origin country, to entry, the border, ladies and gentlemen. Well. only makes 36 hours for Rusia for actually annex these Baltic states, this time sensitivity is what we need to check in further,...

The example above showed the realization of asking and answering of question by speaker c in turn 25 and speaker B in turn 26. In that excerpt, the speaker c confirmed to speaker A of what speaker A has been delivered. And speaker A responded the speaker c's question indirectly, by greeting first the audience to make them listen carefully and give attention to the speaker A's argument. Then, she gave actual fact to ensure what she has been delivered. Another example can be seen below.

**Example 2:**

Turn speaker 8 A *What we mean by this is that obviously Nato will be the one who will be conducting the tailored program, any way*

The example above is the evidence of the realization of asking and answering ones' own (rhetorical) question proposed by Thornbury (2005). Turn 8 showed that speaker A actually did not mean to ask a question to the opponent, yet she only made the point of what she is going to deliver. So her question did not need an answer from the opposition team.

**Interpersonality Features Realized in the Debate**

This discussion provides the interpretation of the data from the finding to answer the third research question. Thornbury (2005) stated that conversation was not simply the exchange of information, but had a strong interpersonal function. That was, it served to establish and maintain group solidarity. Casual conversation was often punctuated by laughter, or at least chuckles. From the findings, it resulted four features of interpersonality: hedges (26x), vague languages (2x), discourse markers (153x), and evaluative languages (14x). The examples can be seen below.

**Example 1:**

Turn speaker 24 A *we don't think that point stand, to very end of the debate. But, before i go to the next argument.*

The example above is the evidence of the realization of hedges by speaker A in turn 24. Thornbury's perspective (2005) stated that speakers used hedges, such as *yeah but*, in order to blunt the force of a disagreement. From the findings, the speaker A realized hedges *we don't think that...but* in order to make her argument not sound really strong when they do not disagree with the opponent's arguments. Another example is about vague language.

**Example:**

Turn speaker 12 A *and actually, congress any kind of diplomatic thought...*

The example above is the realization of vague language by speaker A in turn12. As proposed by Thornbury (2005), speakers use vague language in order not to sound too assertive and opinionated. From the finding, in turn 12, speaker A used vague language *any kind of...* in order to make her argument not to sound too assertive and opinionated when she minded or disagreed to the opponent's ideas.

**Coherence Features Realized in the Debate**

This discussion provides the interpretation of the data from the finding to answer the fourth research question. As Thorbury (2005) stated that even when the spoken text were stripped of the characteristic features of spoken language, and the text made sense, that text was coherent. From the findings, it showed two broad categories of the coherence features realized in the debate. They are topic consistency and macrostructure.

According to Thornbury (2005), topic is a theme of the sentence or clause. It is typically-but not always- realized by a noun phrase (the grammatical subject of the sentence). Topic is what you as reader or listener needs to pay attention to as given information. The realization of the topic consistency can be seen by the realization of sub-features, like lexical repetition, lexical chains, referring expressions, substitution, and linkers. The example can be seen below.

**Example:**

*Putin → Russia → president*

The example above is the realization of lexical chain which words are thematically related. The word *Putin* has a chain with the word *Rusia*. And the word *Russia* has a chain with a word *president*. Thus, in that text, thematically, the relation of that words form a meaning which is coherent; meaning, *Putin* is the *president* of *Russia* or *Putin* is a *Russia President*.

Thornbury (2005) stated that researchers had identified several organizational features of casual conversation that suggested that it did in fact have predictable macrostructures. One of those features was the regular occurrence of the story sequences, story being defined very generally as to include: a temporal location, specification of participants, a sequence of events, and evaluation. From the findings, the temporal location of the text is simple present. The specification of participants includes speaker A, B, C (as the proposing reply speakers), the speaker a, b, c (as the opposing reply speaker), and a chairperson (as a man who note the timing and informing who will take the next turn). The sequence of events begins with a motion. It is followed by the opposing reply speech. After the opposing reply speech, the proposing reply speech is following. Then, it is closed by concluding speech from both the proposition and opposition team. At last, the evaluation includes the aim of the text, that is to persuade the audience that something should or not should do, false or right, and good or harm.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

There are four conclusions that can be drawn after describing, and interpreting the data. Those conclusions are made in accordance with the objectives of this study.

The spontaneity features realized in the debate are: filled pauses, repetition, false starts, tail-slot-filler, vagueness expression, and formulaic language (chunks). In filled pauses, there are four varieties of filled pauses *aa*, *mm*, *th*, *ff* produced by Indonesian students. And the functions which are found are as a signal of searching information or to decide how to continue. It is also as a signal of delay and followed by repair. In repetition, Indonesian students realized repetition as a word search and as a word replacement. In false starts, the realization of them is valued as corrections which are made by Indonesia students themselves. In tail-slot-filler, there are six tail-slot-fillers which function is to announce the

topic of the utterance that follows. The vagueness expressions realized by Indonesian students reserved for some kind of comment on or qualification of what had been said by speakers. The formulaic language (chunks) realized by Indonesian students are functioned to make their conversation 'native like' and even easier.

The interactivity features realized in that debate are: asking and answering of question, asking and answering their own rhetorical question, interruptions, and discourse markers. In asking and answering of question, Indonesian students realized this feature as a confirmation-clarification to what has been presented before. In asking and answering ones' own rhetorical question, the Indonesian students realized this in order to acknowledge the audience. The Indonesian students realized interruption as an indicator for disagreement, agreement, and confirmation. Lastly, the realization of the discourse markers is to signal the speaker's intentions to what have been stated by the opposition. They also are as a topic closure to what speaker's argument has delivered. Furthermore, they are realized in order to show that the speaker has not finished delivering her ideas. In other words, she wants to show what she is going to say is connected to what she has delivered before.

There interpersonality features realized in the debate are: hedges, vague language, discourse markers, and evaluative language. In hedges, the Indonesian students realized them in order to make their argument not sound really strong when they do not disagree with the opponent's arguments. Indonesian students also realized vague language to show their interpersonality in the debate. That is for some kind of comment on or qualification of what had been said by speakers. Besides, discourse markers are also found to shoe their interpersonality in the debate. That is to signal the speaker's intentions to what have been stated by the opposition. And the evaluative languages are realized for flagging the speaker A's attitude to respond the argument which has been delivered by the opponent.

The coherence features realized in the debate are: topic consistency and macrostructure. The realization of the topic consistency can be seen by the realization of its sub-features: lexical repetition, lexical chains, referring expressions, substitution, and linkers. The most repeated lexicon is Russia, meaning that the debate is something about Russia. The lexical chains include words which thematically related, words which shares common root, synonyms, and antonyms. The referring expressions found are *I, you, it, we, they, his, my, their, us, and them*. The substitution occurred only *that* and *this*. The linkers which are realized by Indonesian students include *and, but, because, even, although/though, then*. The conjunct *and* and *but* are used to connect two parts of sentences which are similar in grammatical status. The linker *and* is for adding information. The linker *but* is for connecting ideas that contrast, are unexpected or have different information. The linker *because* is stated one's reason which underlies his or her argument. The linker *even* is for showing one's contrast which is stronger than the linker *although/though* is. The last is the linker *then*. It is used to connect one or more independent clauses which means 'next'. The realization of the macrostructure can be seen from the realization of the adjacency pairs and the story structure. In adjacency pairs, Indonesian students realized two forms: request-reject accept adjacency pairs and question-unexpected answer adjacency pairs. The temporal location of this debate text is simple present. The specification of participants include speaker A, B, C (as the proposing reply speakers), the speaker a, b, c (as the opposing reply speaker), and a chairperson (as a man who note the timing and informing who will take the next turn). The sequence of events is begun with a motion. It is followed by the opposing reply speech. After the opposing reply speech, the proposing reply speech is following. Then, it is closed by concluding speech from both the proposition and opposition team. At last, the evaluation includes the aim of the text. It is to persuade the audience that something

should or not should do, false or right, and good or harm.

Based on the findings, I suggest further researchers to take an advance study by comparing the spoken text features performed by Indonesian students with the spoken text features performed by USA team in the debate of World Schools Debating Championship 2017.

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