

## **THE PATTERN OF TOPIC CHANGE IN SINGAPOREAN AND INDONESIAN CONVERSATION**

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### **Abstract**

This research analyzes and discusses the pattern in conversation. Applied pattern of conversation is unpredictable, it is drawn the section and topics which used by participants. The objectives are drawn pattern of topic change, find out clues and describe aspect that influenced pattern of topic change in conversation. The method of this research was qualitative research, the data collected by recording and transcribing. The participants are Singaporean and Indonesian, the data are conversation both director and secretary. Data analyzed through ethnography methodology in communication and conversation analysis. Weather, this condition was quite different to the theory. First is pattern of topic change in formal conversation quite different to the previous study and theory. There found important section in each topic. This conclusion where has not explained before. Second is aspect influencing pattern of topic change are dominant participants, context, relation and time. The emphasis findings are there found several differences of pattern in topic change at the formal context. The important aspect is dominant participants. It was controlling of the conversation also take role in topic change. These results may affect by the background knowledge of the participants and the context of the conversation.

**Keywords:** *Topic changes, pattern in conversation and aspect influencing*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The most commonly done activity in society is communication, in daily life every people always produce it. Communication is divided into written and oral, as the study that analyses language, discourse analysis was suitable approach to analyse and describe the aspect which influence and include in to communication. Discourse analysis as the roof of the linguistic study, according to Morgan (2010) Discourse analysis is generally an umbrella term

for the many traditions by which discourse may be analysed, in the middle of this bound found a model.

Conversation is one of the focuses in the society and discourse analysis subject, by these approaches the conversation can be analysed, support by Johnstone (2010) the exploration and documentation of communicative competence within a speech community is the essence of the ethnography of communication. Conversation refers as the way to express idea, meaning, suggestions, critic, topic and purpose in orally. According to Brennan, S (2010) Conversation is activities which include more than two person or participants who use linguistics form verbal and non-verbal signal to communicate interactively. Support by Maynard (2016) Conversation is often characterized having some topic or several topics. Based on this opinion, conversation is the activity in the social life; this activity includes two or more participants. Based on experts above, the activity can be in the verbal or in the non-verbal. Additionally, Claude, S (2003) said that conversation as the modelling of a transmission channel used to convey ideas between an information source and a destination. Shortly, conversation is a model of transmission channel, the aim of transmission channel is used the convey message between an information and the source of the information itself. Based on the explanation above the definition of conversation is the real model as the impact of the social activity, the aim is to get, to give, to inform and to express ideas with the others.

In conversation there is formed several features, they are topics, code, the dominant person or participant who always be source of information. Burke (1993) states that the most common features are topic switch freely, topic are often provoked by what speakers are doing, by objects in their presence or by some association with what has just been said, speakers comment on each other's statements, topics are only elaborated on briefly after follow-up, comments in response to a topic often include some evaluation, response can be very short, ellipsis is common. Topics have defined the propositional content in the conversation. It is as the labelling what are the important thing or important issue that must be discuss by the participant which used by the participant who talk in the conversations, support by Hurting (1977) he said that a new topic usually labelling only by the introduction of propositional content. Topic refers to the main idea in the conversation and how to the interaction processes define by Brinton and Fujiki (1989). The topic in a conversation is the important aspect, because in this case topic as the signal of many aspect, they are signal of the place of the conversation, the hot issue when the conversation doing and who is the background of the participants of the conversation. The chosen of use topic will describe the relation of the participants between other aspects which construct the conversation.

## **METHODS**

### ***Qualitative Methodology***

This method was one of methodology in the research to investigate and develop the natural settings. Shortly, Qualitative research as the way how to the researcher investigate their problem and explain their data based on the result in the research study by descriptive.

### ***Setting of the Research***

In this study, the research analysed and investigated conversation in formal conversation at office. The speakers in the conversation are the and the secretary both of them in an office. In the daily life and daily activity at office and outside if the context still on the work, both of speakers used English as their language. The aim is to serve detail information for the readers the pattern of changing topic which produces by the participants who use English in office context.

### ***Procedure of Collecting Data***

#### **Recording**

In recording the conversation, the writer was not to setting and regulates the condition, it must do in natural. Through record the conversation the research was investigated the recording after that transcribe the conversation into written text, the transcriptions used to generate initial ideas about how people communicate in talk in interaction.

### ***Participant observation***

The participant observation refers as a tool to observe and collect data in qualitative research.

### ***Instrument of Data Analysis***

An observation checklist refers was a list of things that an observer is going to look at when observing a data. Applied Observation Checklist 1 (Appendix III) in this research refers as guide to guide and determining the clue in the word and phrase as signal topic change in the conversation. The observation checklist in this research adapt the listed of clue as signal topic change in conversation by "Sarah Russell and Transitional Words and Phrases".

### ***The Technique of Analysing Data Conversation Analysis***

The approach had been investigating the rule and practice so the interaction activity in daily life and also examine the record of interaction

itself. This role was suitable of the goal in this study. In this study explore and explain the pattern of conversation.

### ***Ethnography in Communication***

According to Brewer (2000) Ethnography is not one particular method of data collection but a style of research that is distinguished by its objectives, which are to understand the social meanings and activities of people in a given 'field' or setting, and its approach, which involves close association with, and often participation in, this setting. The technique to analyse the aspect was defined by Hymes (1972).

*In the speaking model the following aspects of the linguistic situation are considered:*

**S - Setting and Scene** - The setting refers to the time and place while scene describes the environment of the situation.

**P - Participants** - This refers to who is involved in the speech including the speaker and the audience.

**E - Ends** - The purpose and goals of the speech along with any outcomes of the speech.

**A - Act Sequence** - The order of events that took place during the speech.

**K - Key** - The overall tone or manner of the speech.

**I - Instrumentalities** - The form and style of the speech being given.

**N - Norms** - Defines what is socially acceptable at the event.

**G - Genre** - The type of speech that is being given.

*Hymes (1972)*

Shortly, in this research the researcher was combine ethnography and conversation analysis to analyse the data. Support by Maynard (2005) that the combined use of ethnography and CA involves a number of theoretical and methodological issues and that these issues are important to consider when employing the two methodologies together. In particular, if one is examining conversational interaction, a question is whether and how ethnography can provide access to the context in which talk and its constituent utterances reside.

### ***Descriptive Analysis***

In this study, the technique to analyse data was descriptive analyses. According to Dudovskiy (2017) descriptive studies used to describe various aspects of the phenomenon. Shortly, descriptive analysis was the technique to describe the various aspects in phenomena into written form and serve a more detailed explanation. According to experts above argue that the aimed of this technique was making easy the writer to explaining the data and generating the written information. Based on the objectives of this study, this technique was the suitable to explain phenomena data and also the finding.

## **FINDINGS**

### ***Aspect Influencing Topic Change in Conversation***

Based on the Figure V, there found four topics in conversation. The distribution consists of Topic I, Topic II, Topic III and Topic IV but the participants going back to Topic I after they discuss the last topic. There found aspect influences the placement and the distribution.

### ***Aspect Influencing in Topic I***

Topic I is "Document Shipment", this topic become to the first topic because the consultant (Pak Dasmond) was calling the Secretary ask her to finalized all off attachment for shipment and this company want to start loading to November shipment. Based on the PO and Contract they must start loading on second week in November (Appendix 9). According Hymes the following aspects are considered to the ethnography of conversation:

**S-setting and scene.** The setting of Topic I "Document Shipment" above in the office, at November, 2 2017 on 10.00- 10.25 a.m. The address is at PT. Sintaro Bencoolen International Jl. Jl. Kapuas Raya, Ruko Kapuas Grande No. 21-22 Kelurahan Padang Harapan, Kecamatan Gading Cempaka, Kota Bengkulu, and Provinsi Bengkulu. This company is engaged in big trading, they are the exporter coffee beans in Bengkulu. The wheatear is summer. Based on the information above, the participant was taking the formal communication, approved by the topic and several information which constructed this topic. While they were discussing through unformed style of language.

**P-Participants.** The participants at this conversation are Director (Participant D) and Secretary (Participant S). The detail information of Participant D at the time, he wears eyes glass, blue t-shirt, black trouser and dark-brown shoes. Detail information of Participant S at the time, he wears green t-shirt, tribal hijab in colour green, black and grey, black trouser and brown shoes.

**E-Ends.** The purposes of the Topic I above are to finish some document regarding the shipment. They were discussing this topic and as the first topic because this is deadline for this company to finish the document shipment, caused the loading of the shipment in second week of November 2017 approved by (Appendix). While, at that time the entire document still on the process. The ends of this topic are the Director asked the Secretary to prepare the truth document regarding the Document Shipment.

**A-Act Sequence.** This topic was start from Participants S as the first speaker, she was the first because she must finish the document and she needs the director's sign as same time. The Director was given the truth

information regarding the document shipment and asked the Secretary to make the true one.

**K-key.** The director's tone first is low at line 1, 4, and 9. Second is flat at line 6 and 7. Third is flat 13 and 16. Based on this data the Director's manner was using the Sing-lish. Proved by the fillers were come by him. The secretary's tone, first is low at line 14, 15 and 17. Second is flat at line 2, 5, 11 and 12. Third is high at line 8 and 18. Based on this data the Secretary's manner was using the Indonesian-English Regarding manner of the participants, both of participants used formal manner.

**I-Instruments.** The instrument which used in the Topic I is paper, headphone and pen. The paper was used at line 2, 3, 4 and 5 and handphone used at line 9 and 13 conversation are paper, pen and handphone. The form and style of speech of Director is the Singaporean English and the form and speech of Secretary is Indonesian English.

**N-Defines** The social status in this conversation is participants D is director in this company. He has right to ask his employee to do many things regarding their responsibilities in the company. the social status of Participants S is secretaries in this company. She has responsibilities to do many things regarding her responsibilities in the company and also must to do on time. The socialization of this conversation is formal; they were discuss topic regarding the company and business. Meanwhile their style is unformed.

**G-The types of speech** both of participants are Participants D used Singapore-English and Participants S used Indonesia-English. These are proven by the some filler that come out in the conversation and some dialect that used both of participants.

### *Aspect Influencing in Topic II*

Topic II is "Bank Confirmation", this topic become second topic because at last month this company had been receive some money from buyer (Lian Aik) but the amount so different with the contract before, based on their experience with other buyer the amount is same and have not high charge more than before. According to Hymes the following aspects are considered to the ethnography of conversation:

**E-Ends.** The purposes of the Topic II above are getting confirmation regarding the transfer which receive by the customers at last time. They have problem that the amount which receive is not suitable with the contract before. The secretary had been to find the problem and search the solution to resolve it. The focus of this tone is at line 20 and 21, the Director has introduced the new topic and ask secretary to explain what are the information.

**A-Act Sequence.** This topic was taken on seven minutes and twelve seconds. This topic was start from participant D, the director as the head of the secretaries ask her to explain what are information regarding bank confirmation. He was changing the topic in practically, proved in line 20 and 21.

**K-key.** The overall tone or manner of the speech. In this topic, the tone of the both participants have variations. The director's tone, first is low at line 25, 31,33,40,45, 53,78 and 81. Second is flat at line 23,24,26,27,28,32,34,35,36,37,42,42 and 43. Third is high at line 20,21,55,57,58,59,60,61,69 and 72. Based on this data the Director's manner was using the Sing-lish. Proved by the fillers were come by him and most of the tone is flat, it's means that the Director has accept what are the information delivered by the secretary. The secretary's tone, first is low at line 58, 66, 68, 82, 66, and 56. Second is Flat at line 23, 24, 26, 27,28, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 41, 42, 43, 46-52, 59, 60, 62, 63, 70, 71, 73-77 and 79-81. Third is high at line 22. Based on this data the Secretary's manner was using the Indonesian-English Regarding manner of the participants, both of participants used formal manner and most of the tone is flat. It means that the secretary as the source information of this topic.

**I-Instruments.** The form and style of the speech being given. The instrument which used in the Topic II is paper. The paper was used at line 46 until 52.

### ***Aspect Influencing of Topic III***

Topic III is "Things want to sell". This topic become third topic because the Director before ask secretary to come, the account (Fitri) come and give some citation about draft of something will buy who and list of the price. His account person cannot use English as well because of that the director ask his secretary and ask them to explain for the buyer (almost buyer is staff AAK). According Hymes the following aspects are considered to the ethnography of conversation:

**E-Ends.** The purposes of the Topic III above are finalized the description and status of the things want to sell. The Director was asking Secretary to finalized the all of status with the buyer and finalized the description of them. The focus of this tone is at line 83, 84 and 85, the Director has introduced the new topic and ask secretary to finalized the status and description of the things that want to sell.

**A-Act Sequence.** The order of events that took place during the speech. This topic was taken on seven minutes. This topic was start from participant D, the director as the head of the secretaries ask her to finalized the status and description of the things want to buy through the buyer. He was changing the topic in practically, proved in line 83, 84 and 85.

**K-key.** The overall tone or manner of the speech. In this topic, the tone of the both participants have variations. The director's tone first is low at line 92 and 94. Second is flat at 87, 90, 101, 106 and 113. Third is high at line 83-85, 88, 89, 91 – 99, 103, 108 and 111. Based on this data the Director's manner was using the Sing-lish. Proved by the fillers were come by him and most of the tone is high, it means that the Director was ask the secretary to do the task as soon as possible. The secretary's tone, first is low at line 93, 100, 102, 109, 110 and 112. Second is flat at line 89, 98, 104, 106 and 107. Third is high at line 86, 95 and 96. Based on this data the Secretary's manner was using the Indonesian-English Regarding manner of the participants, both of participants used formal manner and most of the tone is low. It means that the secretary was accept the task from Director.

**I-Instruments.** The form and style of the speech being given. The instrument which used in the Topic III were paper and monitor stand. The paper was used at line 87 and 88, monitor stand was used at line 95 until 97.

#### *Aspect Influenced in Topic IV*

Topic IV is about "Go to Dinas Perindustrian". This topic become fourth topic because the secretary get task from consultant to finished document shipment (From B and Form D) for next shipment to port in Poti, Georgia. At that time the office car is not available because used by other employee and secretary must go to Dinas as same time because of that she asks permission to used Director's car. After this topic finished the participant back to the first Topic. According Hymes the following aspects are considered to the ethnography of conversation:

**E-Ends.** The purpose and goals of the speech along with any outcomes of the speech. The purposes of the Topic IV above are Secretary need permeation to used Director's car to go to Dinas Perindustrian because the need faster arrive in there and issued some document for shipment. The focus of this tone is at line 120, the Director has the intensify for secretary to get the document shipment first before she is going to Dinas Perindustrian.

**A-Act Sequence.** The order of events that took place during the speech. This topic was taken on seven minutes. This topic was start from participant S, the secretary was introducing new topic but it just in a moment. The Director give the strength intensify that he needs her to finished the document shipment first before she is going to the Dinas Perindustrian.

**K-key.** The overall tone or manner of the speech. In this topic, the tone of the both participants have variations. The director's tone, first is low at line 118 and 119. Second is high at line 120. Based on this data the Director's manner was using the Sing-lish. The secretary's tone, first is low at line 117. Second is Flat at line 115 and 121. Third is high at line 116. Based



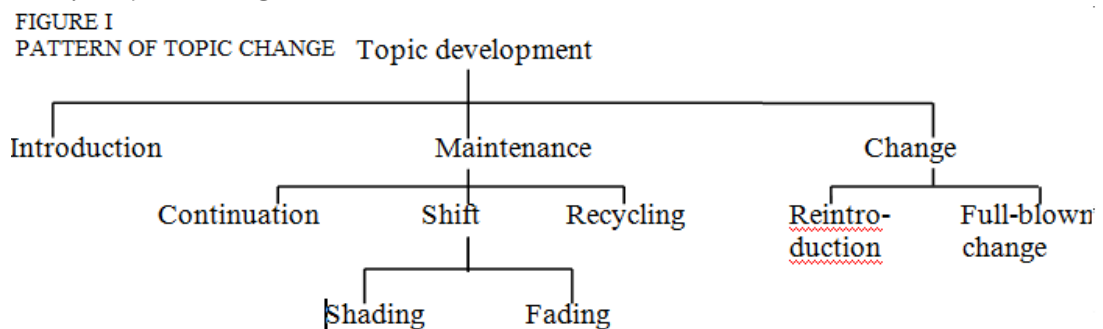
on this data the Secretary's manner was using the Indonesian-English. Regarding the manner of the participants, in this topic they were use formal manner but there found intensify that the Director ask Secretary to finish document shipment first. It means that the Topic I the are important topic.

N-Defines what is socially acceptable at the event. The social status in this conversation are participants D is director in this company. He has right to ask his employee to do many things regarding their responsibilities in the company. the social status of Participants S is secretaries in this company. She Has responsibilities to do many things regarding her responsibilities in the company and also must to do on time. The socialization of this conversation is formal, they were discussing topic regarding the company and business. Meanwhile their style is informal.

The aspect influence why the participant back Topic I cussed by it is the important topic based on the context and time of the conversation was taken. Both of participants have task to finish the document shipment first. Because it is deadline of the participants. The conversation record on the first week in November where the attachment document has not ready while the loading start on second week in November, shortly it is deadline for this company. Shortly, this conversation was constructed by several aspects they are: social event, social status, social environment, setting, dominant participants, context, event, relation and time. Meanwhile the major aspect which influenced is dominant participant, context, relation and time.

## DISCUSSIONS

### *Pattern of Topic Change*



*Schneider (1988)*

As shown in Figure I, Shcinder was explain that topic develop into three major aspects. They are introduction, maintained and change, also found several subsections in maintaince are continua, shiftt and recycling. The last section change, there found sub section they are reintroduction and full-blown change. These explanations were not complete.

As shown in Figure II "Pattern of Topic Change" Conversation is an activity as the result of socialization. There found interactive in the social life, this activity to express, show and accept other ideas. Maynard (1980) conversation as the way to expressing idea, the main character of conversation is having some topics or several topics. The several topics will change automatically, practically, smoothly and unpractically. Each of the movement, serve different pattern. This theory is suitable with the result above. As "Extract 1" until "Extract 4" show that the conversation has been several topics, they are "Document Shipment", "Bank Confirmation", "Things want to Sell", "Go to Dinas Perindustrian" and last conversation both participants back to topic "Document Shipment".

Additionally, the comparison of pattern of topic development in conversation take from participants Australian and Indonesian was analysed by Erlenawati (1996) is suitable to Schneider (1988). The researcher was taken the conversation in unformal context and the participants is different. These conditions encounter that the pattern was same pattern to the theory.

### *Aspect influenced Pattern of Topic Change*

Conversation is a whole like an organization. There found several aspects was contracted, they are participants, dominance participants, relation, context, time and topics. Support by Brennan (2010) Conversation is activities that include more than two person or participants who use linguistics form verbal and non-verbal signal to communicate interactively. In this case, participants were the actor. The process to develop a conversation, the participants was producing several topics; one or some of them was controlling the topic change.

Based on the analyse above, the conversation was controlled by Participant D, it means that he has the power in role and control the conversation, proved by he always introduces new topic by clues as signal topic change, give shift information and always make a conclusion in each topic. This explanation was suitable to the research finding. Figure V shows that found four topics in the conversation. Regarding topic, the topic start to document shipment, bank Confirmation, things want to sell and Go to Dinas Perindustrian and back to document Shipment

The focus of this conversation is after they were discussed last topic, they were back to the Document shipment, it means that this topic is must be finished by them as soon as possible. It is means that the relation both participants was drawn that the Participants D is higher status than Participants S. Shortly, aspect that influenced in conversation are dominant participant, timing, context and relation.

However, Pridham (2001) argue that conversation is obviously far more than words. Communication can take place through body language,

through prosodic features such as intonation, speed, stress, and volume and even through silence or laughter. Opposite of this explanation, based on the result finding and theory, there found several differences.

Based on the result above, the aspect was influenced conversation are dominant participants, context, relation and timing. These are the major aspect influenced the conversation and constructed conversation. Meanwhile, the dominant participants were taking role in conversation, especially in the pattern of topic change. These aspects were discussed as bellow.

First is Dominant Participants. According to Clarck (2001) argue that in conversation the participants take particular roles Conversation 1 (Appendix 1) the dominant participants is Director. Ha was taken role in conversation. Approved by the clues was come out in the conversation, Director always introduce new topic to secretary, he chosen the topic and controlled what are the topic will discuss. This happen cause of he is the head of the office and he has higher social status than secretary does.

Second is Context, Liddicoat (2003) argue that conversation is prescriptive in nature and deals with the idea of what makes a 'good conversationalist'. The conversation was taken at office. Practically, the context is formal. This aspect was influenced the conversation. The participant just produce topic regarding their job. The participants were used these several topics in this context means that they have to do many things and must doing as soon as possible, context influenced the conversation regarding their style and their manner.

Third is Relation both participants. Liddicoat (2003) argue that Conversation is the way in which people socialize and develop and sustain their relationships with each other the relation both of participants are co-works (secretary and director) cause of that the groove of the conversation is formal however them discuss in the way unformed.

Fourth is Timing Maynard (2016) argue that Conversation is often characterized having some topic or several topics the conversation was produce four topics. These topics were discuss regarding their work. According to the time when the conversation was taking on November 2 2017. The timing of the conversation above influenced the participants to discuss the topics, with the distribution drawn at Figure II. The dominant topic is Topic I "Document Shipment". After they was discussed three topics before they were come back to Topic I. This is the focused both of participant at that time.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study attempts to find out: the pattern of topic change in formal conversation, the clues as signal topic change in formal, the aspect

influencing pattern of topic change are dominant participant, context, relation and time. The major finding are there found important sectionj in conversation and there found participants as controlled in conversation.

Based on the findings the conclusion is drawn as follows: first the pattern of topic change employed by the speakers in the office context is different from the informal context. Pattern was the description of the placement topic change. The findings concluding that the patterns of topic change in the context formal there were constructed by three major sections. They are introduction, maintained, and conclusion, while the subsection in maintained are continua and shift. This is quite different to the related study and theory. This may result from encourage of position context the participants. The pattern is the unpredictable, they were drawn based on the context and setting of the conversation was taken.

The common informations are clues in conversation. Most of clues were fillers, words or phrase, aimed as signal in conversation. The clue as signal topic change, signal order or sequence, signal to show the result, signal for intensifies. Based on the finding of this research the almost clue was come in filler form. The forms of clues were come according to the style, dialect and mother tongue of the participants in conversation. Shortly, this happen caused the background knowledge of the participants.

The result findings explained that found several differences of pattern and clues in conversation. These findings are quite different to the theory above. Developing conversation, there found several aspects. The several aspects influenced pattern of topic change are dominant participants, context, relation of participant and timing. Dominant participants are the controlled in conversation. Context in conversation was determined the role and topic used in conversation. Relation participant was describing the social status both in conversation. The last aspect is timing, this aspect was influenced the placement and distribution of topic used in conversation.

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