

ANALYSIS OF CASUAL CONVERSATION IN SPONTANEITY, INTERACTIVITY, INTERPERSONALLY AND COHERENCE FEATURES

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Abstract: This study was carried out to respectively illustrate the casual conversation features in terms of spontaneity, interactivity, interpersonally, and coherence. The casual conversation analyzed was a conversation of two non-native English speakers who are an English teacher and a student at a convenient situation. The conversation lasted for eighteen minutes was transcribed. Results showed that S1 dominantly used features of spontaneity on the field of repetition, incomplete utterances, and chunks. On the features of interactivity, S2 is more cooperative than S1. In addition, on the feature of interpersonally, both speakers seemed to appeal more agreement. Thus, in terms of coherence, both speakers can run the conversation smoothly. The two speakers were still making conversation in line with the topic although they changed the topic three times.

Keywords: *casual conversation; coherence; discourse features; interactivity; interpersonally; spontaneity.*

INTRODUCTION

Discussing about spoken language, it is one of very famous method for communicating. Spoken language is unique. The unique thing of spoken language is that it has so many features which are different from written language. Spoken language is important in our daily life. As a human, we are as socialized individual who are living together and interact with other human beings.

Spoken is interaction. Interaction is not only a process of mechanical system, but it is also taking turns at constructing sounds and words. As stated by Duncan and Fiske (1979), interacting is a semantic activity, a process of making meanings. When people interact to each other, they also deliver a very wide range of tasks. The tasks consist of meaningful utterances to express feeling, to negotiate meanings as well as to exchange meaning. While people negotiate, express and exchange meanings, they also do the pragmatic tasks, such as buying thing, selling goods, giving and accepting information, passing knowledge, applying for job, etc.

Human can talk to others in a type of conversation or chatting. Both of them are called informal interactions. Gathering with friends or officemates sometimes make them relaxed on making free talk which is familiar as “having a chat”. Chatting here is a kind of casual conversation. As said by Eggins and Slade (1997), casual conversation is concerned with the joint construction of social reality. This is line with Thornbury (2005) who notes that most day to day language use is spoken since our social interaction will be mostly occurred by spoken many various situations.

By this reason, casual conversation is interesting to be analysed in the way of its unique features. Those are on the evidence of spontaneity, interactivity, interpersonality, and coherence. The spontaneity features will involve the performance features, such as filled pauses, repetitions, false starts and backtracking, incomplete utterances, and chunks. In the features of interactivity, the use of taking turns, interrupting, signalling, and back channelling will be analysed in

terms of its percentage of use. Then, the features of interpersonality includes hedges, vague language, like to assertive, to opinionated, to appeal for agreement, and to exaggerate. Last but not least, coherence in this casual conversation is also analysed. Hence, this study elaborates the features in spoken discourse used by two non-native speakers.

METHOD

The unit analysis of the study was discourse features on the aspects of spontaneity, interactivity, interpersonality and coherence (Thornbury, 2005). The data was collected by recording the conversation between an English lecturer named Mrs. Nur (S1) who is 42 years old and an undergraduate student named Ms. Naf (S2) who is 24 years old and has graduated from English language department at Sultan Agung Islamic University. Both of them are from West Java, Indonesia. They had done a conversation in term of casual conversation which was done when S2 giving private course in the lecturer’s course. Then, the free talk had been carried out in free topic, but it was related to condition in which S2 was absent to teach on the lecturer’s course. In this condition, the turns happened for 167 turns and ended in about 18 mi. 02 sec (18:02’).

This study used some stages in analysing the data. Firstly, the researcher transcribed the conversation. After transcribing the conversation, the researcher coded the features of casual conversation and then analysed the coding one by one. After analysing the coding of casual conversation features, the researcher analysed and counted the frequency of casual conversation features used in the conversation. The final step was describing the result of the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis are described following the categories of casual conversation features.

The evidence of spontaneity

Spontaneous conversation is enhanced for human communication, but differs in some

noteworthy ways from the types of speech for which human language technology is often advanced. According to Thornbury (2005), the effect of spontaneity will produce one clause or one phrase construction or sometimes smaller “runs” which is each run representing a unit of meaning. The spontaneity features in this analysis consist of the speaker’s use of filled paused, repetition, false starts/back tracking, incomplete utterances, and chunks.

The speaker’s filled pause occurred in conversation

On this term, the filled pause is mostly uttered by S2 and is less spoken by S1. Figure 1 shows the frequency of filled pause used by both speakers in the conversation.

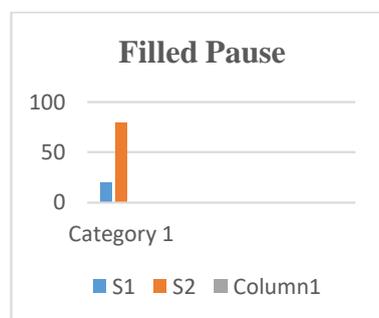


Figure 1. *The filled pause produced in the casual conversation*

The figure shows that S1 made only 20% filled pause in the conversation, while S2 made 80% filled pause. This means that S2 is frequently constructed the filled pause on the utterances. The filled pause on this conversation can be seen from the following sample turns on the transcribed below.

Table 1. *Conversation with filled paused*

Turn	Speaker	Utterances
14	S2	I did many things actually, ah.==I helped my mom, helped my father==
30	S2	e...my mom have e ... some kind like a minimarket.
70	S2	==Yeah. ==In the ...last week...we just spent our time just in e... some kind like dinner together==
103	S1	==Oh...oke the facilities for the air conditioning ==hmmm

Yeah the facilities for the
...**yeah** ==for the seat ...for
the seat

In this sense, S1 as a lecturer created minimal filled pause because this is related to the way students learn a language by imitating pronunciation. Pronunciation cannot be separated from the word fluency, but filled pause was commonly known as hesitancy. By this finding, S2 as a student needed more concepts of using filled pause in conversation. She (S2) produces the word 'e...' in the middle of her utterance frequently. Besides, as it happened in turns 14, S2 spoke the word 'ah...' in the middle of her utterance which means S2 needed to think before she continued her utterance. Hence, as a lecturer, S1 should become a good role model for the students in producing utterances with minimal filled pause on utterances.

The speaker's repetition occurred in conversation

Repetition is made by the speakers when they repeat words or phrases on the same turn. The repetition made by both speakers is presented in Figure 2.

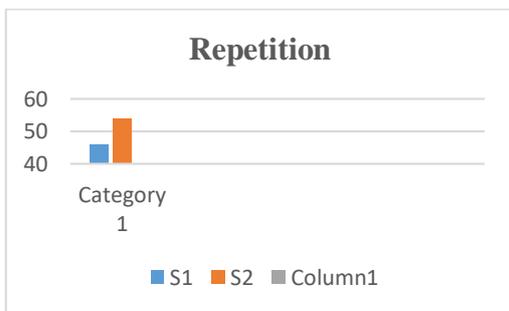


Figure 2. The repetition produced in the casual conversation

S1 and S2 frequently repeated words or phrases on the conversation. S1 produced 54% of repetition and S2 produced 46%. Each turn below involved the speaker's repetition.

Table 2. Conversation with repetition

Turn	Speaker	Utterances
22	S2	Not teaching but for manage manage == the...ah
49	S1	==(laugh)

oke **reunion...the reunion e...reunion...oke**, when we talk about reunion yeah with your friends actually, and then e. Did you meet a boy or a girl?==

69 S1 ==Oke
Now **we we are going to ..we are going to** what is it by the way I just want to know when you went back to Brebes and then e...you met your father, and your mother and also your brother oke. Have you ever got what is it *such kind of* long day just together with him and then did you go somewhere together...==

80 S2 Have you ever done this when you went ==back to your home?

Yeah and also **my brother, my bother** in the weekend sometimes yeah do games

As it can be seen in Table 2, on turn 22, S2 repeated the word 'manage' twice to tell that she was not teaching, but just managing. In this turn the speaker's purpose is to explain clearly by repeating the word. This also happened on turn 80 in which 'my brother' phrase is repeated twice to clarify to that her brother was the only one who played games, while others were cooking. S1 also made the repetition by saying the word "reunion" three times. Finally, both speakers almost made similar frequency of repeating words in the conversation. In this sense, both of them were trying to give stress on special words or phrases to make other understand her intention.

The speaker's false starts occurred in conversation

False start happened in conversation because of the speaker's thought. The false start is the speaker's phenomena in casual conversation in which the speaker feel excited on something, feel intense on specific topic or begin to skip from one topic to another. In this conversation, S1 formed 23% of false start, while S2 created 77%. Although both speakers made false start in different percentage, the conversation was still running pleasantly.

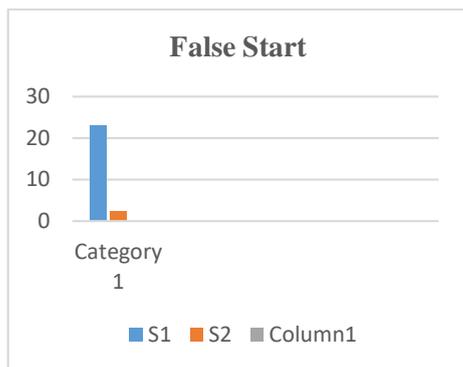


Figure 3. The false starts occurred in conversation

This happened in the conversation as shown in the table below.

Table 3. Conversation with false start

Turn	Speaker	Utterances
54	S2	Much about our chi cat== Much about our chi cat Most of our chi chat is about the flash back== our memory==, yeah because sometimes yeah.
58	S2	So, my friends sometimes, my friends remind me about something bad I forgot yeah and I forgot
120	S2	==The best choice. Right. But sometimes if I lost the time maybe like when the Kali there is no schedule for Kaligung for at that time so I choose Kamandaka. If there is Kamandaka I choose Kamandaka. Kamandaka maybe around from...Kamandaka e...only arrived in Tegal== not pass Brebes.== But Kaligung the last desination is Brebes. But for Kamandaka only for ...Brebes eh...only for Tegal and also Purwokerto==.

Figure 3 shows that S1 produced false start less than S2. On this part, false start happened because the speaker tries to answer the questions excitedly. While she wanted to start her explanation, she did not have enough preparation in what to say. Consequently, she started to speak with some words had to be reconstructed again. As occurred on turn 54, the speaker reconstructs

her phrase until three times. This was done to make sure that her statement was right.

The speaker's incomplete utterances occurred in conversation

After analysing the transcript of the casual conversation, the data shows that the frequency of incomplete utterances between S1 and S2 were almost similar. As it can be seen in Figure 4, S1 produced 44% of incomplete utterances, while S2 produced 56%. The proofs are then presented in Table 4.

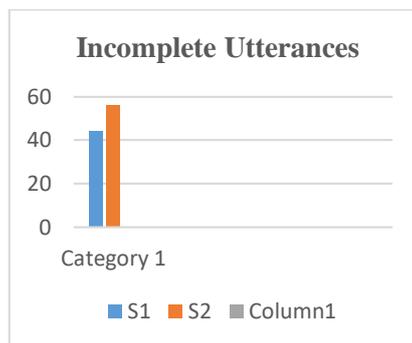


Figure 4. The incomplete utterances produced in casual conversation

Table 4. Conversation with incomplete utterance

Turn	Speaker	Utterances
22	S2	Not teaching but for manage manage== the...ah
39	S1	Oke..besides that, besides you try to be. You tried to do something as a treasurer and then you helped your mother doing what is it such kind of activities ==at home, and then what else,e... you also help you mother try to do what is it, try to count the money to be a cashier so e... when you back, went back last week. Did you go somewhere for example like tourism place maybe, you did you went to such kind of ...==
61	S1	(laugh) something that you say what is it that you did a long time ago, something strange that you did a long time ago. It is ...Is it ...a kind of==

As an English lecturer and an English student, both of them know that utterance is a spoken unit. When the utterance is one unit

of talk, this means that spoken also includes subject and finite. When the finite does not follow the subject, this means that the utterance is incomplete. This occurred in the conversation on turn 22 in which S2 did not tell complete utterance, but she just said a part of it. “*not teaching but for manage manage ==*” In this utterance, S2 did not complete it because S1 interrupted her by saying ‘*oke*’. Thus, in this case, S2 made incomplete utterance because of the listener’s interruption. Yet, although both speakers made incomplete utterances, but the discussion run well without any interference.

The chunks use by both non-native speakers in conversation

The use of chunks in the casual conversation are given here to let readers know the function of chunks in the conversation. S1 produced 57% of chunks and S2 only produced 43%. Chunks has an important function to contribute speakers’ fluency on English words or phrases. Figure 5 shows the percentage of speakers’ production of chunks.

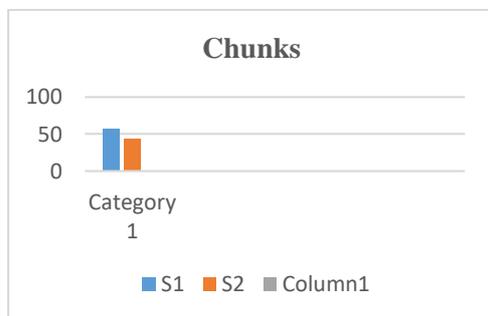


Figure 5. The chunks produced in casual conversation

Table 5 shows the chunks produced by both speakers in the conversation.

Table 5. Conversation with chunks

Turn	Speaker	Utterances
2	S2	Hello , Maam.
6	S2	Fine, How’s life?
9	S1	== Never mind
17	S1	What sorts of foundation? Oh oke?
48	S2	Yeahh, == some kind like reunion (Laugh) ==nice actually mam

The use of chunk in conversation is common because chunk has a specific meaning in utterance. Although chunk is incomplete sentence, but it is a group of words or phrases which have meaning. On this part, chunks give positive effect on listener and others. Chunks will help speaker in creating effective conversation. As made by S1 and S2 at the beginning of their conversation in which they ask “*How’s life?*”. Using chunk in conversation will improve listener’s competence in memorizing and pronouncing it well.

The evidence of interactivity

Interactivity is an activity done by humans in asking and answering questions. As stated by Liddicoat (2007), the interaction had been analysed because it is an instance of social interaction in social phenomena. The analysis on this aspect is described below.

Taking turns

Taking turns can be divided into two categories, namely competitive and cooperative overlaps. Competitive means one speaker’s domination or listener’s power back to interrupt in different ways. Then, cooperative means a listener’s clarification on one point or listener will add further information from the speaker’s point. On this casual conversation, taking turns more happen in cooperative overlaps than in competitive overlaps. Table 6 and 7 show some findings of cooperative and competitive overlaps occurred on the conversation.

Table 6. Cooperative overlaps

Turn	Speaker	Utterances	Taking Turn
8	S2	==Yes. ==Yeah. Yeah, I went to my hometown actually, so sorry before that, I want to say sorry and ==	The conversation on turn 8 till 12 here shows taking turns between both speakers in cooperative overlaps
9	S1	== Never mind	
10	S2	because of my mom told me to go went home, so yeah I go home== in last week.	

11	S1	==Oke. So, what did you do in Brebes== when you went back.
12	S2	==yeah I do many things.

Table 7. *Competitive overlaps*

Turn	Speaker	Utterances	Taking Turn
33	S1	Mm of course you count money, I think. ==That's very interesting ==Because ==in institution you try to count money too and try to make a record (laugh)==	Here, both speakers are eager to dominate the conversation while they utter some utterances together at the same time and they want to show their power back on their different ways of interrupting. That's why this taking turns on this conversation shows <i>competitive overlaps</i> .
34	S2	(Laugh) == yeah ==in...in at home always, ==Yeah I have much money but it is not mine (laugh) yeah (laugh) Your mom's money==	
35	S1		
36	S2	==Not all my mom's money it's e...many people's money. Yeah	
37	S1	mm...oke it should be managed by your mom, oke?==	

The turns above describe the difference between cooperative and competitive overlaps in casual conversation. The cooperative overlap means the speaker wanted to show his/her enthusiastic support and agreement with another. In contrast, competitive overlap was disrupting the conversation. This means that speaker was able to dominate the conversation and handle it into his/her own topic.

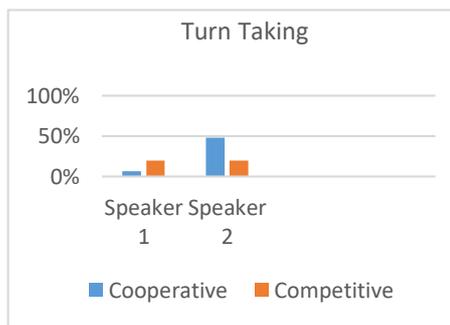


Figure 6. *The turn taking occurred in casual conversation*

The cooperative overlaps in this conversation mostly produced by S2. This means that S2 is more likely to have traits that can work well together. The incidence is different from what happens in competitive overlap. Competitive overlap is more likely to be done by S1. It means that S1 is more likely to dominate the conversation. As shown on turn 33 that S1 did not give S2 chance to interrupt his speech. S2 was more likely to answer in turn 34 to give a laugh and say the word 'yeah' as a sign that he followed and agreed to what was said by S1. The same thing happened to S2 who preferred to be cooperative in conversation. In this case, it proves that the nature of S1 is more dominant and S2 is cooperative.

Interrupting

There are three ways of interrupting someone in better ways. *Firstly*, interrupting can be done when the other speakers are still pausing their breath. *Secondly*, it can be occurred when the other speakers finished their phrase or sentence. *Thirdly*, this can be happened when speakers have a good point to make that would contribute positively to the sharing but they must be sure to measure the timing carefully. Thus, the interruptions do not appear rude. Table 8 shows the examples of interrupting in the conversation.

Table 8. *Interrupting in the conversation*

Turn	Speaker	Utterances
7	S1	You didn't teach in my eh in my in my institution==.
8	S2	==Yeah, I went to my hometown actually, so sorry before that, I want to say sorry and ==

145	S1	Had lunch or brunch? Breakfast and lunch together ==
146	S2	== You know . I cooked by myself. WOW..
66	S2	it's ...some kind like yeah monkey love yeah when we are still in junior high school... but it just also alright
67	S1	Yeah ...just fun (laugh)

Interrupting on the three categories above happened in the frequency shown in Table 9.

Table 9. *Frequency of interrupting*

No	DMs	Purpose	Frequency
1	Yeah	To provide a response to what has just been said	17
2	You know	To appeal to the shared knowledge of the other speaker's as a new topic is introduced	1
3	Sorry	To ask for apologizing	1
4	Yeah	To provide a fairly non-committal response to what has been said	14

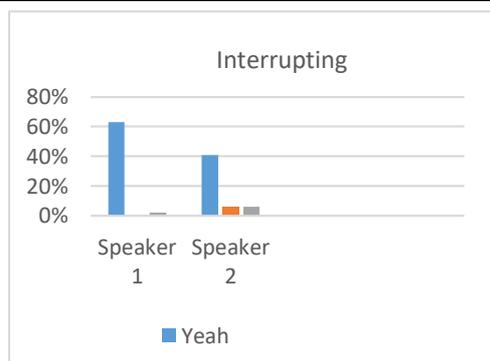


Figure 7. *Interrupting occurred in casual conversation*

Interrupting produced by the speakers in this conversation had been occurred by saying 'yeah, you know, sorry and yeah'. "yeah". The first function of 'yeah' is to provide a response to what has just been said and the second 'yeah' functions to provide a fairly non-committal response to what has been said. S1 on turn 7 produced a proof of giving utterance in terms of interrupting. In contrast, S2 made an interruption when S1 tried to elaborate her utterance, but S2 continued to provide a response to interrupt S1. Then, on the chart, the most commonly interrupting is on 'yeah' which provides a response to what has just been said and

'yeah' provides a fairly non-committal response to what has been said. This means that both speakers are trying to interrupt to make sure that the listener understood about what the speaker said on the conversation.

Signalling

Signalling allows the speakers to make a smooth transition from one speaker to the other, but the speakers must be aware of these signals. As stated by Thornbury (2005), signalling is a way to show *amusement* in terms of *grunts*, *laughs* and *chuckles*. The use of grunts, laughs and chuckles on the conversation is presented in Figure 8.

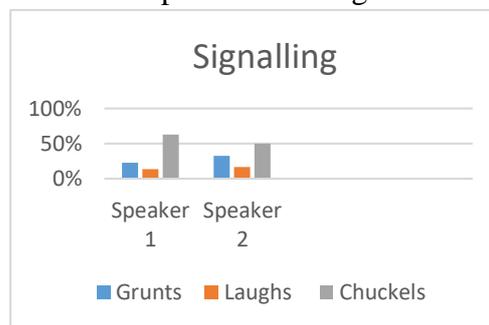


Figure 8. *The signalling occurred in casual conversation*

The chuckle signals in this situation show that both speakers were glad in discussing the topic on the conversation. The chuckle used by both speakers in this conversation showed that each of them can show their amusement in understanding the speaker's utterances.

Back-channelling

Back-channelling functions to register that the other speaker is following the other speaker's drift. Back-channelling often happens through interjections. Back-channelling produced in the conversation is presented in Figure 9.

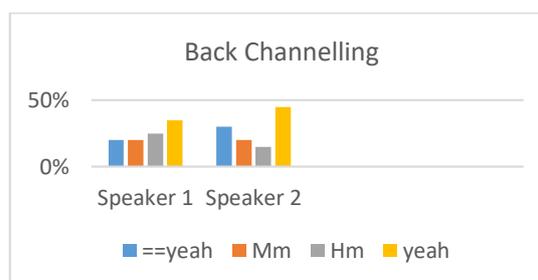


Figure 9. *Back channelling occurred in casual conversation*

Table 10 shows the examples of back-channelling on the conversation.

Table 10. *Back channelling in the conversation*

74	S2	We are cooking together with my mom ==, and after that, my mom sometimes need me to help her ==, my mom asked me to slice the onion== and some kind like that others== and my father told me that e... sometimes I have a message for me when we are together== in the...in the kitchen==
75	S1	==mm.. ==mm ==yeah. ==yeah ==hm ==in the kitchen hm

Table 10 presents back channelling produced by both speakers on the conversation which showed agreement on what the speaker said. Listener tried to pay attention by saying "mm, hm, yeah and ==yeah". As it can be seen on turn 75 that the speaker tried to elaborate her sentences and the other speaker just back-channelled to show that she was still interested in the speaker's utterances.

The evidence of interpersonality

The conversation is not just a simple thing of giving information to others, but it also has interpersonal function. The interpersonality involves the negotiation meaning in conversation in terms of interpersonal meaning and logico-semantic meaning. Both interpersonal meaning and logico-semantic meaning can be found Table 11. Moreover, the percentage of those features is presented in Figure 10.

Table 11. *The features of interpersonality in conversation*

No	Interpersonal Aspects	Function	S1	S2
1	Laughter	To maintain group solidarity	3	3
2	Chuckles	To save face	14	9
3	Hedges	To blunt the	4	8

4	Vague Language	force of disagreement Not to sound too assertive and opinionated	6	4
5	Markers	To appeal for agreement	20	16
6	Exaggeration	To harmonize the joint construction of talk	2	1
7	Swearing Words	To demonstrate 'high involvement' not to appear 'cold' or 'hostile'	3	1

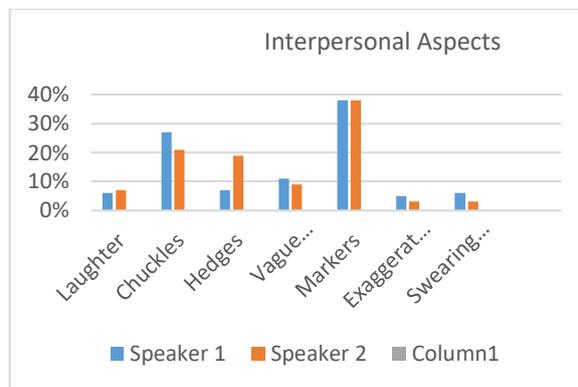


Figure 10. *The interpersonal aspect occurred in casual conversation*

From the aspects shown on Figure 10, interpersonal aspects can be categorized into two negotiation meanings, namely interpersonal meaning and logico-semantic meaning. From the analysis, it was found that there are 25 turns categorized as logico-semantic and 40 turns categorized as interpersonal. The examples of both negotiation meaning in the conversation are presented in Table 12 and Table 13.

Table 12. *The sample of speaker's turns in logico-semantic meaning*

Turn	Speaker	Utterances
17	S1	What sorts of foundation? Oh, oke?
18	S2	==Islamic Foundation Education foundation for kindergarten ==especially

Table 13. *The sample of speaker's turns in interpersonal meaning*

Turn	Speaker	Utterances
137	S1	Oke, Nafisa thank you so much == for your for your ideas for your experience when you went back to Brebes==.
138	S2	==Yes ==Thank you.
137	S1	that's very nice experience I think==
138	S2	==anytime.

From the features of interpersonality, the use of 'chuckles' mostly occurred in the conversation because of the speakers' amusement. As the table shows that both speakers used laughter in the same frequency. S2 uttered more hedges than S1 because S2 just wanted to give empathy to S1 for what she said. Then, on the utterance of appealing for agreement, S1 gave more agreement to S2. Based on Table 13, S1 and S2 created more interpersonality aspects. In addition, in term of negotiation meaning, the utterances were identified by interpersonal and logico-semantic. As identified on the transcript, the researcher counted the percentage of logico-semantic meaning and interpersonal meaning. The percentage of producing logico-semantic was 38% and 62% for interpersonal meaning. Therefore, interpersonal negotiation meaning dominated the conversation and the conversation run quite smoothly.

Coherence

Coherence can be done in writing and spoken language. This means that the features of questions and answers on the conversations should make senses. Thus, the conversation must be coherence and cooperative each other. The coherence on the spoken language must follow the Maxim theory of Grice in term of cooperative principles. Grice (1975) mentioned the theory of Maxim consists of Maxim of Quantity, Maxim of Quality, Maxim of Manner and Maxim of Relevance.

The Grice's theory on the spoken language is used to identify the production of the language and its contribution on the conversation which should be relevant and

orderly. Besides, the casual conversation must be predictable two-way exchange and be organized on the top-down approach structures. The two way exchange here is commonly called as *adjacency pair* in conversation.

Table 14. *Non-native speakers in a matter of coherence*

Turn	Speaker	Utterances
111	S1	What is the name of the train ?
112	S2	Kaligung, Kamandaka, many trains. == Tawangjaya
113	S1	==Oke. Is this an executive train ? Kaligung, is the executive train?==
114	S2	==No..no no.. no Kaligung is for the economic train but for
115	S1	O... the economic class train. Hmmm
116	S2	Kamandaka is the executive train , but I don't know for Tawangjaya. It is an executive class or not but e...I ever used Tawangjaya but ee yeah only for the economic class
117	S1	But How much is the different cost between== executive and the economic?
118	S2	==Yeah for the Kaligung is the cheapest train for fifty. But I comfortable more comfortable used this train because It's the newest the newest train and also the cheapest and the newest train.

Sacks and Schegloff (1978) divide the utterances into types of turn taking, named *adjacency pairs*. This always happens in terms of two utterances in which each pair was spoken by a different speaker.

Table 15. *The adjacency pairs made in this casual conversation*

T	S	Utterances	Adjacency Pairs
11	S1	==Oke. So, <i>what did you do in Brebes</i> == when you went back.	Question
12	S2	==yeah <i>I do many</i>	>> Answer

things.

139	S1	Waiting for dinner maybe?==	Request ><
		Never mind I pay you==	Refuse
140	S2	==No I have eaten. ==I have eaten.	

The coherence aspects related to the questions which the lecturer and the student understood about the way or what should be answered. Besides, coherence here can also be seen from the topic of conversation used by both speakers. If the topic is relevant and the responses from the questions are relevant too, subsequently the conversation was coherence. Beside the relevance topic, the consistency features, such as lexical repetition, lexical chain, referring expression, substitution and linkers are also considered. In conclusion, the conversation was done by both non-native speakers on the conversation was coherence because of logically connecting ideas on the sentence.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the objectives of this study, it is revealed that various features relating to spontaneity, interactivity, interpersonality and coherence, are found in the conversation.

On the feature of spontaneity, both speakers produced filled pause, repetition, false starts, incomplete utterances, and chunks. Here, both speakers used all aspects in spontaneity with different frequency. S1 as a lecturer created filled pause less than S2. On the use of repetition and false starts, S2 made more than S1, but on the use of incomplete utterances S1 did more than S2. This happened because on the feature of interactivity, S2 produced more interruption to provide a fairly non-committal response to what has been said.

By looking at interactivity features which consist of taking turns, interrupting, signalling and back-channelling, both speakers produced taking turns on terms of cooperative overlaps. This showed that the conversation between both speakers run well. By the cooperative overlaps, it can be concluded that the conversation also coherence because they can contribute each other in a positive point of discussion.

In brief, both speakers had made good interaction although S1 should give more good model to S2 in using chunks and minimize the use of filled pause and false starts in making good conversation. S2 as a student should learn more about how to manage the occurrence of fill pause and false starts. In addition, the use of incomplete utterances which had been produced by S1 should be minimized.

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