Beneath the Surface of Turn-Taking and Interruptions in Intergenerational Conversations: The Case of Adult and Adolescent Females

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Abstract

Conversational turns have long snatched the attention of discourse analysts. Despite this fact, and to the best of the researchers' knowledge, intergenerational conversations made by females have never been investigated through the lens of turn-taking and interruptions. Accordingly, this study aimed at scrutinizing the differences between female Persian-speaking adults and adolescents engaged in casual conversations in terms of turn-taking organization, and interruption patterns. To this end, the casual Persian conversations of 5 adult and 5 adolescent females attending a private reunion were analyzed based upon the turn-taking model proposed by Sacks et al. (1974), along with interruption syntactic criteria introduced by West and Zimmerman (1983). The turn-taking model comprises two techniques (self-selection or selection by the next speaker) leading to gaining or allocating turns, and the interruption criteria emphasize deep intrusion of the last two or more syllables of the current speaker. The analysis of the recorded three-hour conversation revealed 1302 uses of the turn-taking techniques and 302 interruptions. The adults used approximately 86.01% of the turn-taking techniques while the counterpart group only used around 13.97%. Moreover, 93.37% of the interruptions were initiated by the adults compared with only 6.62 % initiated by the adolescents. Accordingly, the adult females were far more dominant speakers, adopted a much larger proportion of turn-taking techniques, and were considerably more inclined to use interruptions. The subsequent interview with the adolescents demonstrated that the dramatic between-group differences originated from some paralinguistic elements namely social, psychological, cultural, and power-related factors.

Keywords: casual conversation, conversation analysis, intergenerational conversation, interruption, turn-taking

Introduction

The turn-taking system as an apparatus that allows speakers to aptly manipulate speech turns is an indispensable part of humans' interactions (Duncan, 1972). However, few scholars have claimed that no rational or empirical evidence can substantiate interactions are made up of turns (Cowley, 1998). Nevertheless, myriad investigations have corroborated the irrevocable presence of turn-taking in spoken discourse. Turn-taking mechanism has been in the spotlight for decades concerning turn-shift signals (Duncan & Niederehe, 1974), effect of age and gender on turns (West & Zimmerman, 1975, 1977), pauses between turns (Duez,1982), turn-taking sequence of interviews (Reed et al., 1993), turn-taking of computer-mediated communications (Garcia & Jacobs, 1999), turns of political speeches (Wieczorek, 2015), deceitfully simple-looking turn-taking of service encounter interactions (Echeverri & Salomonson, 2017), and turns of supportive conversations (Bodie et al., 2020).

The conversational turn-taking as an interactive skill appears since early childhood (Casillas et al., 2016). This skillis so significant that it can be easily affected when adopted in L2 setting. In this case, it might result in reduced communication efficacy (Sorensen et al., 2020) originating from poor L2 interactional competence (Doehler & Pochen-Berger, 2015). Turn-taking in multi-party conversations is a highly sophisticated act which could get many times harder in an L2 context due to the underdeveloped language resources of L2 speakers (Garcia, 2021). These notions clearly show the paramount significance of speech turns in daily social interactions regardless of the interlocutors' age, and the spoken native or non-native language.

Furthermore, some researchers have been drawn to disruptions in conversations that lead to interruptions (Okamoto et al., 2002). This could pave the way for understanding the underlying reasons for exercising power, control, and identity (Kollock et al., 1985; Stets & Burke, 1996) while some believe interruptions are a hard and discourteous means to take conversational turns (Gnisci & Bakeman, 2007).

Despite the fact that there have been wide-ranging conversational studies, to the authors' knowledge, no study has examined the differences between participants from various generations but the same gender engaged in casual conversations in terms of turn-taking and interruption patterns. Hence, this study sifted the differences between female Persian-speaking adults and adolescents' informal talks, which are deemed to rule the formal conversations (Sacks et al., 1974), at an amicable and private gathering. Moreover, the current study took a deep dive into the chief reasons contributing to the mentioned differences. These underlying reasons have been barely unfolded by previous relevant studies. The study findings are expected to underscore the rather neglected importance of conversational turns and interruptions in intergenerational conversations, and the hidden factors behind them. The seemingly invisible factors might turn the

conversation flow in the favor of some interlocutors by granting them conversational dominance (Faramarzzadeh & Amini, 2017).

Research Questions

Having established the gap, we formulated the following three research questions:

1. How do female Persian-speaking adults differ from adolescents in terms of turn-taking organization?
2. How do female Persian-speaking adults differ from adolescents in terms of interruption patterns?
3. What are the underlying reasons for the observed differences between the two groups?

Literature Review

Turn-taking is the sequencing of speakers' interactions moves which are dependent on the type of speech systems such as transactions, meetings, rituals, or debates (Sacks et al., 1974). Furthermore, turn-taking organization is perceived as speaking opportunities that underlie our social interactions without which the target of conversations would not be fulfilled (Schegloff, 2000).

Turn-taking dynamism has been divided into face-to-face and non-face-to-face hints of conversations accentuating verbal, visual, and prosodic properties of talks (Schaffer, 1983). It has been revealed that even people with hearing problems use turn-taking techniques. According to Adami and Swanwick's (2019) study, individuals with impaired hearing adopt semiotic resources to gain or assign turns. This finding can prove that all human beings have to utilize verbal or non-verbal turn-taking techniques to sustain their communications with people. As another non-verbal turn-taking technique, the eyebrow movements and voice frequency can be indicated. Rapid eyebrow movements have been observed to signal gaining or giving turns which can impact the frequency of the speaker's voice as well (Guaitella et al., 2009).

According to Weiss' (2018) research, it was revealed that interlocutors would gaze at each other as a sign for either selecting the next speaker or turning down the offer of accepting the turn given to them. Not only do staring looks give away turn transitions, but phonological patterns of utterances can also lend to unraveling changes in turns. Zellers (2016) has contended that prosodic cues (stress and intonation patterns) serve as indicators leading to transiting conversational turns.

Another remarkable point in the organization of turns is the timing and silence existing between the two consecutive turns. This can be impacted by cognitive and motivational factors such as pragmatic implications, the competitive atmosphere, the interlocutor's self-confidence, and the social status of the speakers (Wilson & Wilson, 2005). In line with the silence observed in conversations whose interlocutors come from various languages and cultures, it was indicated that Japanese students were deemed mostly silent by their Australian peers (Nakane, 2005). Moreover, the study illuminated the negative effect of speaking in place of

Japanese students following their silence, and the lack of response to the questions. This issue was deemed to encourage future silence, confusion, and delayed responses. The study outcomes consolidate the heavy toll which can be taken on foreign students when involved in academic milieu abroad.

Even the different parts of each turn can hold significance. By way of example, the beginning of a turn known as "turn-initial particle" (Garcia, 2021) has been substantiated to have various functions. They tend to vary across different contexts such as institutional, professional, or casual which are conducive to unraveling speakers' stance, and how they form social interactions (Kantara, 2019).

Concerning the "cooperation" factor, Larrue and Trognon (1992) investigated turn-taking organization in a meeting. They concluded that turn-taking is a rule-governed notion and collaborative. In another sense, not only did turn-taking depend on the chair-man, but on every member who was present at the meeting. As a result, they perceived turn-taking as a cooperative concept which should not be deemed as a sole mechanism.

In light of the "culture" factor, it has been postulated that ethnicity and culture could impact the organization of turn-taking. Shimura (1988) corroborated that Chinese ESL learners took more turns, and adopted more self-selected turns when compared to their Japanese counterparts. This issue might be interlocked with cultural differences which are ubiquitous between various nations. These differences might lead to some misconstrues since people tend to retain their first language turn-taking habits in conversations with foreign speakers (Ward & Al Bayyari, 2010).

Regarding the "gender and power" factor, a critical analysis by Fishman (1978) demonstrated that women were ruthlessly suppressed by their male counterparts in workplace interactions since men found themselves superior and more powerful. Fishman observed that women were more active, asked more questions, and provided more support. Nonetheless, women were more rejected and deterred by men who did less work, were less active, and made fewer attempts. Most topics introduced by women were forsaken while the ones proposed by men were welcome. As a consequence, although women took turns and gained the opportunity of exchanging speech, they did far less attain their goals through interactions. In the view of Cannon et al. (2019), gender contributes to conversational inequality in group conversations.

The "predictability" factor has been corroborated to affect the organization of turns. Based upon the relevant culminations, supposing speakers predict their answers to questions, they are better able to take turns and smoothly sustain the conversation (Corps et al., 2018). Another intriguing study on kindergarten-aged children demonstrated that 3 to 5-year-olds are equally capable of regulating their turns by predicting the ending time of the current speaker's turn (Lindsay et al., 2019). It has also been shown that children's turn-taking skill development is longitudinal and gets most likely mastered by middle childhood (Cassillas et al., 2016).

In terms of the "social status and power" factor, one study examined conversations between lawyers and witnesses at courtrooms. Based upon Gnisci and Bakeman's (2007) study, lawyers managed to exert an effect on inhibiting length and content facets of witness's turns. According to the study, the role of lawyers' power influences turn-taking and turn length. The role and power of institutional context should not be overlooked**.** It has been concluded that institutional settings can affect the turn-taking mechanism, fair distribution of turns, and creating opportunities for speakers to take the floor (Heath &Mondada, 2019).

According to Sacks et al. (1974), interlocutors might select themselves as the next speaker which leads to the formation of overlaps and interruptions. Henceforth, interruptions are a subset of the turn-taking construct. Another conversation analysis revealed that the majority of the conversations consisted of overlaps (Webster et al., 2020). Additionally, it has been proven that interlocutors use prosodic and lexical information of the talks to determine when to interrupt other speakers (Seals et al., 2021).

Culture, gender, age, and power have been proven to play significant roles in shaping conversation interruptions. Despite having been viewed as conversation-rules-defying and relatively discourteous, interruption patterns have been at the core of some studies. In this respect, Okamoto et al. (2002) unveiled that gender differences and cultural variations can influence speakers' perceptions of interruptions either positively or negatively. One study has demonstrated that men hold a more positive attitude toward interruptions than women, and either gender conceives interruptions caused by their same sex more negatively than the ones caused by the opposite sex (Chambliss &Feeny, 1992). Moreover, interruptions can be utilized to unravel power relations, command, and identity (Kollock et al., 1985; Stets & Burke, 1996). West and Zimmerman (1975) realized that gender and age group play important roles in shaping and distributing conversation turns. From their standpoint, females and children are akin to one another in terms of interruption. In the scholars' view, both groups are repeatedly interrupted or overlooked by male counterparts and parents. They perceived the interrupting males and parents who exercise power as "rude" and "authoritative".

Method

Participants

The subjects of the study were 5 adult females aged 40-55 (age mean = 49) in addition to 5 adolescent females aged 12-19 (age mean = 15.8). The participants had been long-time friends and as a result, there was no stranger in their reunion. Three of the adults were working women while two of them were housewives. All the adolescent subjects were school students. The subjects had been chosen based upon volunteer sampling and the fact that their features fit the purpose of the study. They were native Persian-speaking females coming from various ages resulting in two groups with a considerable age gap. All the females had been dwelling in the same city (Tehran, Iran) in which they met up on the reunion day. Moreover, they had been intimate friends and as a consequence, there was no degree of formality among

them which could have affected the communication. Regarding the socioeconomic status, they all belonged to middle social class contributing to creating a homogenous circle of interlocutors. The only remarkable difference amongst the subjects was related to their age dividing them into two groups. Most importantly, the participants had agreed to joining in the study on the condition of keeping their personal information confidential, and having their voices merely used for research purposes. In the case of adolescents, their parents' consent had been taken in advance. The subjects had been assured that the files of their private talks would not be publicly published, or accessed by other individuals other than the researchers of the study.

Instruments

A high-quality audio recorder was implemented to record the three-hour conversations of the participants. The recorder was fixed in someplace close to the subjects to better record their talks. Nevertheless, it was placed among some other objects of the room to get it disguised and not distracting to the participants. Later on, the subjects stated that after a while, they had almost forgotten about the presence of the recorder at the room. In the final stage, a semi-structured interview with the adolescents was carried out to illuminate the root of the observed differences between the two groups.

Procedure

The subjects made the conversations and sustainedthe talks in their own way as they did in everyday communications. The main purpose was to gain natural casual talks of the subjects as much as possible. Accordingly, there was no intervention by the researchers during the participants' conversations. Subsequently, the recorded data were manually analyzed to address the first research question using the turn-taking techniques proposed by Sacks et al. (1974) as follows:

1. Current speaker chooses the next interlocutor
2. The next interlocutor self-selects

According to the model, turns can be simply one word in length, or as long as a full sentence. In the next stage, to answer the second research question, the interruption patterns of the interlocutors were scrutinized using West and Zimmerman's (1983) syntactic criteria positing that concomitant talk by the second speaker who has invaded the last two or more syllables of the current speaker gives rise to an interruption. Providing the next speaker invades the current speaker's speech before they have finished their very last syllable, this act is not judged an interruption but an overlap (West & Zimmerman, 1975). Accordingly, if the new speaker produces a minimal utterance such as "yeah", "mm", and "fine", or the two speakers say the same utterance to show agreement, no intrusion or interruption has occurred (Okamoto et al., 2002).

Supposing the second speaker intrudes the current speaker while the present interlocutor is in the middle of their utterance, this can be deemed as a deep

intrusion since the first speaker is interrupted when they are two or more syllables further from finishing their saying (Okamoto et al., 2002). Four possibilities were taken into consideration preceding the data analysis stage of the interruption patterns:

1. Adult females interrupt one another
2. Adolescent females interrupt one another
3. Adult females interrupt adolescent females
4. Adolescent females interrupt adult females

It should be mentioned that other models and criteria apart from those used by the present study, have been proposed so far. However, the one by Sacks et al. (1974), and by West and Zimmerman (1975) are the most apt for the current study purpose in contrast to others found in the forgone literature. Although the model and the criteria date back to some time ago, they are still deemed as pioneering and robust. Finally, in the last stage of the analysis, to respond to the third research question, an interview with the teenagers was conducted to clarify some obscure points, and shed light on the cause of the differences between the two groups.

Results

To answer the first research question concerned with the differences between adult and adolescent females regarding turn-taking, the corpus of the study was analyzed to unveil the turn-taking organization of the participants utilizing the turn-allocating techniques proposed by Sacks et al. (1974). Figure 1 demonstrates the pertinent findings.
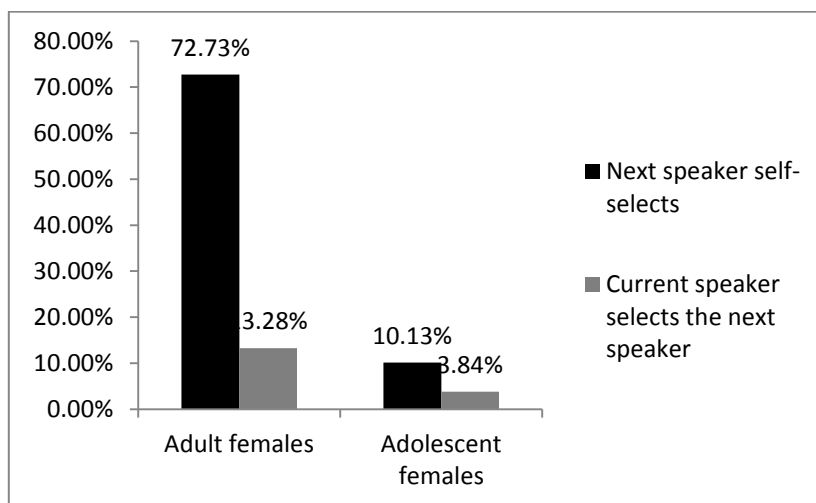
Figure 1

Turn-Allocating Techniques Used by Adult and Adolescent Female

As Figure 1 reveals, 82.86% of the techniques were attributed to self-selection, out of which 72.73% (947 uses) was obtained by the adult females while only 10.13% (132 uses) was achieved by the adolescent females. On the other hand, 17.12% of the turn-assigning techniques were ascribed to the selection of the next speaker by the current speaker. Out of this percentage, 13.28% (173 uses) belonged to the adults whereas 3.84% (50 uses) was utilized by the adolescents. Henceforth, either group was noticeably inclined to adopt self-selection. Nevertheless, the second technique was applied to a much less degree. On the whole, the adults held considerably a higher proportion of turn-allocating techniques which indicated their prominent role in snatching and assigning the turns.

In the next phase, to respond to the second research question pivoting around the between-group differences stemming from interruptions, the interruption patterns were examined using West and Zimmerman's (1983) syntactic criteria. Table 2 provides the pertinent results.

Table 1

Interruption Patterns of Adult and Adolescent Females

Interruption pattern	Adult females interrupt one another	Adolescent females interrupt one another	Adult females interrupt adolescent females	Adolescent females interrupt adult females
Occurrence	82.45%	2.64%	10.92%	3.97%

According to Table 1, the largest interruption occurrence was made by the adult females interrupting one another while the smallest one was gained by the adolescent females interrupting one another. All in all, the adults showed much more interest in using interruptions when compared to their counterparts. In another sense, not only were adults more disposed to implement turn-allocating techniques, but they also made much more intrusive utterances.
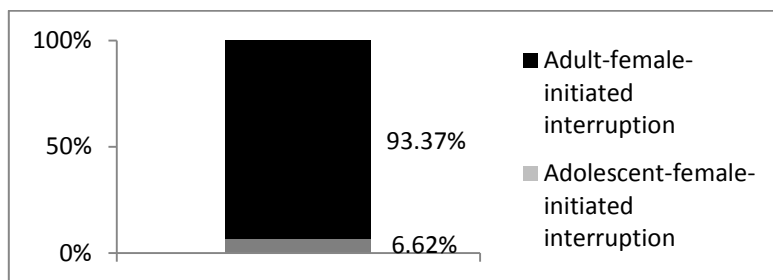
Figure 2

Representation of the Interruptions Initiated by Adult and Adolescent Females

As shown in Figure 2, 93.37% (282 interruptions) of the interruptions were commenced by the adult participants while only 6.62% (20 interruptions) of the interruptions were initiated by the adolescents. Subsequent examples elucidate the interruptions made by the participants.

The sign   represents an interruption. The sign was set by Sacks et al. (1974) as a convention showing interruptions in transcripts. The English equivalents are provided below the dialogues.

Adult Females Interrupt Each Other

Excerpt 1

Speaker2 (adult): Goft X Khanoom? Bale bale Ma roozenamzadimoonbood.

Speaker1 (adult):   Shoma Esfahan boodin.

Speaker2 (adult): Did lady X say so? Yes yes. It was our engagement day.

Speaker1 (adult): You were in Isfahan.

Excerpt 2

Speaker2 (adult): Oonmoghe Mohsen koochikbood.

Speaker1 (adult): Valienghadrsarehalealan.

Speaker2 (adult): Mohsen was a child at that time.

Speaker1 (adult): But he is so energetic now.

In the above examples from the corpus of the study, speaker1 who was an adult female interrupted the current speaker who was an adult, as well.

Adolescent Females Interrupt Each Other

Excerpt 3

Speaker8 (adolescent): Gorga nakhoranet?

Speaker10 (adolescent):   Na. Sag daran.

Speaker8 (adolescent): Will wolves eat you?

Speaker10 (adolescent): No. They've got a dog.

Excerpt 4

Speaker10 (adolescent): Bebinaslan ye vazibood man behetmigam.

Speaker8 (adolescent):   Pas chera man hichvaghtnadidam?

Speaker10 (adolescent): It was a mess I'm telling you.

Speaker8 (adolescent): Why have I never seen it?

According to the example above, speaker10 who was an adolescent participant interrupted speakr8 who was another adolescent. However, in the latter example, speaker8 interrupted speaker10.

Adult Females Interrupt Adolescent Females

Excerpt 5

Speaker8 (adolescent): Man Dooghkheili doostdaram.

Speaker3 (adult):   Ye labaniati hast sarekhoone ma.

Speaker8 (adolescent): I like Doogh too much.

Speaker3 (adult): There's a dairy store near our place.

Excerpt 6

Speaker6 (adolescent): Vali miganaslannakhorin.

Speaker3 (adult):   Rastmige. Too radio goft.

Speaker6 (adolescent): It's said not to eat it at all.

Speaker3 (adult): She's right. It was said on radio.

The two provided extracts are instances displaying that not only did the adults interrupt one another, but they also interrupted the adolescents, as well. In the first instance, speaker3 who was one of the adult members of the group interrupted speaker8 (an adolescent) in the middle of her speech. The same pattern occurred to speaker6 (another adolescent) when she got interrupted by speaker3 who was one of the adult females.

Adolescent Females Interrupt Adult Females

Excerpt 7

Speaker4 (adult): Ye khanoomi oomadeboodneshasteboodoonja.

Speaker6 (adolescent):   Valirastmige, migannakhorin.

Speaker4 (adult): A lady came in and sat there.

Speaker6 (adolescent): But she's right, it's said not to eat it.

Speaker5 (adult): Ye kisegozashteboodjoloshenghadkisebood, ye pirzane.

Speaker8 (adolescent):   Mastekiseyiboode.

Speaker5 (adult): An old lady put a bag in front of her it was this size.

Speaker8 (adolescent): It was strained yogurt.

Through analyzing the study corpus, it was unveiled that a limited proportion (3.97%) of the interruptions were attributed to the adolescents interrupting the adults. Based upon the preceding extracts, speaker6 (an adolescent)

interrupted speaker4 who was an adult. Next, the same pattern was observed for speaker8 (an adolescent) who interrupted speaker5 (an adult).

Other Interruption Patterns

Via analyzing the conversations, we noticed that in some cases, the current speakers got interrupted in the middle of their speech, and due to having been interrupted, they left their utterance unfinished. This issue was merely observed in adult-adult interactions. The following example sheds light on the mentioned issue.

Excerpt 8

Speaker1 (adult): Vagheanmajlesgarmkoneharja kemiribahasho…

Speaker4 (adult):   Ham zanesh ham khodesh.

sarehalo shade.

Speaker1 (adult): Wherever you go with him, he is the life and soul of the party and…

Speaker4 (adult): He and his wife are full of beans.

In the above example, when speaker4 invaded speaker1's utterance, the current speaker (speaker1) abandoned her speech and left it unfinished while the interrupter finished her remarks.

Excerpt 9

Speaker2 (adult): Oonofahmidam. Oonke…

Speaker1 (adult):   Ahsant. Oonamboodesh.

Speaker2 (adult): I understood that. That…

Speaker1 (adult): Good job! She was there, too.

The same pattern can be observed in the preceding example in which speaker2 quit the conversation, and her utterance was left incomplete since she had been interrupted by speaker1 who was another adult.

Moreover, it was disclosed that there were instances in which the second speaker interrupted the current speaker, stopped after saying few words, let the current speaker finish her turn, and subsequently continued her previously unfinished utterance. It should be pointed out that the mentioned issue was solely recorded in adult-adult communication. The below example clarifies the indicated pattern.

Excerpt 10

Speaker1 (adult): Oonamkhoob boode. Shomaaz bas ziaditamizin.

Speaker3 (adult):   Khoobboodeziadi….

Speaker3 (adult): Kamnamakmikhorim.

Speaker1 (adult): That was fine, too. You are meticulous about hygiene.

Speaker3 (adult): It was good we overly…

Speaker3 (adult): We eat low-salt food.

In the provided example, speaker3 intended to interrupt the current speaker (speaker1) and after saying few words, she stopped and allowed the current speaker to finish her turn. Subsequently, speaker3 got back on the track to complete her abandoned utterance.

Additionally, in some parts of the conversations, back-to-back interruptions by the adults were observed. In other words, more than two adult speakers got involved in a number of connected interruptions taking place in a row. The following example depicts the successive interruptions.

Excerpt 11

Speaker1 (adult): Gooshtetazeeste fademikonan.

Speaker4 (adult):   *Vaghtikeyfiyateghazabalabashesholoogh mishedige.*

Speaker3 (adult): Sholooghbood.

Speaker1 (adult): They use fresh meat.

Speaker4 (adult): When the quality of food is high, it gets crowded.

Speaker3 (adult): It was crowded.

Regarding the instance derived from the corpus, speaker 4 interrupted the current speaker who was speaker1. Subsequent to this first interruption, speaker3 interrupted speaker4 which resulted in two interruptions in succession.

In the following and ultimate phase of the data analysis, the interview with the five adolescents was analyzed so that the chief reasons for the prominent differences between the two groups in terms of turn-taking techniques and interruption patterns could be unraveled. In other words, the interview interpretations paved the way for discerning the points which were rather latent in the participants' recorded conversations. Overall, the interview results demonstrated that the main reasons for the adolescent females' low level of engagement in the conversations leading to much fewer turns and initiated interruptions could be summarized as uninteresting conversation topics mostly raised by the adults, the considerable age gap between the two groups, and the parenting technique which constantly highlights the fact that younger people should mostly stay silent when they are in the company of older individuals as a sign of politeness.

Discussion

Following the analysis of the conversations, the differences between adult and adolescent females in terms of turn-taking and interruptions got unfolded. It was

revealed that how conversations made by participants with remarkable age gaps can yield dramatic differences. In other words, intergenerational conversations can lead to different turn-taking organizations and interruption patterns. It turned out that the adult females possessed the largest proportion of the turns to the extent that 72.73% of the turn-assigning techniques were seized by the adults through selecting themselves as the next speaker. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that the adult group members were a great deal more talkative than adolescents, and they took the floor to a considerable degree chiefly by self-selection technique. Accordingly, not only were the adult females remarkably chattier, but they also adopted a much huger percentage of the used turn-assigning techniques. Moreover, it was observed that the speakers selected the next turn holder by asking questions to elicit information leading to signaling who the next speaker would be. The same occurrence was recorded by Sacks et al. (1974), as well.

Considering turn transitions (where one turn ends and the next one starts), it was observed that the transitions ended in overlaps (when another speaker intrudes the very last syllable of the current speaker), interruptions (when the second speaker invades the current speaker's talk while they are two or more syllables away from finishing their turn), or one of the two mentioned turn-allocating techniques (either the next speaker self-selects or the current speaker selects the next speaker). Overlaps were observed in Sacks et al. (1974) study on conversational turns, as well. Based upon the scholars' culminations, conversation overlaps constitute a large proportion of turn transitions.

In consonance with Schegloff's (2000) inquiry, overlaps and interruptions comprise a large proportion of talks. In the present study, the overlaps observed in the middle of the current speaker's speech were made as short feedbacks displaying agreement and upholding the current speaker's sayings. Furthermore, according to the upshots of the current investigation, the interruptions and overlaps stemmed from a self-selection pattern pertinent to turn-allocating techniques. On the whole, the self-selection pattern of the turn-taking model comprises overlaps, interruptions, and pure self-selections devoid of any overlaps or interruptions.

To put it another way, the notion of turn-taking organization and the techniques employed by the interlocutors were observed to be interlocked with the ensuing overlaps and interruptions which altogether constitute the smooth flow of conversations. Regarding interruptions, the adult females comprised a tremendous fraction of the interruptions in the sense that 93.37% of the interruptions were initiated by the adults.

In some cases, when an adult interlocutor faced an interruption caused by the second adult speaker, the current interlocutor paused, and stopped sustaining and finishing their speech so that the second speaker could finish their utterances. Apart from that, there were occurrences in which the second speaker interrupted the current speaker, stopped after saying few words or even a single word, allowed the current speaker to finish their saying and then, got back on the speaking track, and continued completing their abandoned utterances.

Sacks et al. (1974) observed the same cases, too. According to the mentioned researchers, if one speaker finds themselves interrupting another speaker or even being interrupted, either interrupter or interrupted interlocutor might stop to repair the conversational inconvenience caused during the interaction. The same repair mechanism was called peremptory by Wilson and Wilson's study (2005) in which interruptions are viewed as conversation violations that need to be remedied via implementing a repair mechanism.

Additionally, it was easily spotted that the adolescent females seemed subordinate to the adult ones. The former group owned much fewer turns, implemented a much smaller number of turn-allocating techniques, and initiated much fewer interruptions. During the interview, the adolescent females were asked about the main reasons for their considerably low level of participation in the talks which led toa much smaller number of turns and interruptions. It was unveiled that one of the reasons was tied to the fact that the adolescents did not find the topics of the conversations mainly raised by the adults fascinating and relevant enough to their personal lives.

Getting back to the content of the conversations, it turned out that the adults who mentioned a vast number of the conversation topics were mostly inclined to speak of cooking recipes, knitting, sewing, the youth's future, rejuvenating esthetic procedures, healthy diets, house chores, financial issues, and distant sweet memories. Nevertheless, according to the interview findings, the adolescent counterpart was eager to have conversations about fashion, makeup, school studies, job prospects, university admissions, entertainment, intimate friends, social media, and their future goals.

Moreover, the adolescents unfolded: "we did not feel happy and excited being in adults' company. They were on average 20 years older than us, and we preferred to be around individuals of our own age group". Their desire to spend time with other teenagers could be justified by the fact that adolescents need more peers' approval than adults' approval (Scales, 2010) which fosters them to be more drawn to other teenagers. In other words, this issue can be traced back to the undeniable psychological differences between the two groups with a considerable age gap.

Another attention-grabbing issue mentioned by the adolescent females was intertwined with the upbringing matter. Based upon their remarks: "our parents would normally remind us of being an elegant courteous girl who does not appear garrulous or interruptive when she is in a circle of much older individuals". In another sense, their parents always urged them to be polite in adults' and older individuals' company, and their uncommunicativenesspartly resulted from politeness.

According to former investigations and relevant literature, there could be a relationship between politeness and silence. Regarding Sifianou's (1995) study, individuals would rather be talkative or silent under different circumstances, and the degree of volubility or reticence is differently labeled in various situations and across various cultures. By way of example, in Persian culture, if a young person is

considerably loud-mouthed and interruptive when he or she is in much older people's company, the speaker is branded as somewhat cheeky or impolite. Moreover, Sifianou (1995) asserted that uncommunicativeness and silence might sometimes indicate psychological factors. This statement endorses our study adolescents' claims concerned with their lack of interest in getting engaged in conversation topics brought up by the adults, and their preference to spend time with girls of their own age range. The interviewees' sayings accentuate the irrevocable psychological differences between people from various age groups. This fact stopped teenagers from enjoying much older adults' company.

As a result, it can be concluded that the story behind the adolescent girls'considerable reticence boiled down to the irrelevant insipid conversation topics, the significant age gap between the two groups, and the nurturing technique applied by their parents. The traditional upbringing technique underscores the fact that good girls ought not to be loud-mouthed and interruptive when they are in adults' company so that they can be judged well-behaved, well-bred, and polite. It should be noted that people acquire politeness and polite behavior through socialization (SalmaniNodoushan, 2019). Evidently, this socialization process is tremendously shaped and impacted by parents. The present study illuminated how adolescent girls were influenced by their parents regarding socially appropriate behavior.

The mentioned upbringing issue accentuates the undeniable role of culture and society norms in shaping and steering people's attitudes which irrefutably manifest through their discourse. The function of culture, the framework imposed by society, and their huge impact on discursive structure have been studied and corroborated by a large number of forgone inquiries. Such studies mostly concentrate on cultural misperceptions observed in interactions between individuals coming from various cultural backgrounds. To give an instance, the study by Nakane (2005) clearly revealed how East Asian students were misjudged as taciturn by Western students while their uncommunicativeness stemmed from the cultural differences related to classroom conduct.

Based upon the previous relevant studies, conversational interactionscan display the interconnectedness between language, dominance, and power (Farina & Holzberg, 1968; Hadley & Jacob, 1973; Mishler & Waxler, 1968; Obeng, 2020). From a critical perspective, significantly more adult-initiated-interruptions in comparison to those of the adolescents would be justified by power relations and power exercising as many researchers have meshed interruptions with wielding power (Okamoto et al., 2002). In Persian culture, older individuals possess a much higher social status. Self-evidently, higher social status brings about greater power. As a result, dominating the conversation floor by the adult participantsmust have had underlying power relation reason. The older the speakers, the more they are given the right of taking the conversation floor through interruptions or other means by which one can snatch the conversation turns. From a dominance perspective, greater power and higher social status can affect conversational control, and result in taking more speech turns and using more interruptions (Faramarzzadeh & Amini, 2017).

The power relations and dominance in face-to-face communication have been observed in adults-children interactions (West & Zimmerman, 1977), as well. As a consequence, it can be inferred that the same power relation and hegemony could be generalized to adults-adolescents interactions as corroborated by the current inquiry. In a word, conversation turns and interruptions would be shaped and impacted by the topic of conversations, the status of speakers in groups (Burns & Joyce, 1997), and the fact that discourse could be mirrored and reconstructed by power relations existing between interlocutors (Paltridge, 2012). "Deal dialogue" which is not influenced by wielding power is far from reality, and the power factor is hidden in casual conversations (Wang, 2006).

The findings of this study can be rewarding for people monitoring group conversations such as classroom teachers, meeting chairmen,or individuals supervising group therapy sessions. Monitoring conversations made in groups whose participants have significant age differences are of paramount importance. These mentioned conversations are different from group conversations whose members are of the same age group. When group members come from various age ranges, then psychological, social, cultural, and power-related factors will come into play. Providing we are aware of these factors, we will be better able to manage and steer intergenerational conversations, and have a higher chance of gaining advantageous results out of group conversations. As a consequence, such conversations will bring about far more fulfilling outcomes fortheir group members. Another point that should not be discounted is the notion of dominance in group interactions. This issue gets better manifested when interlocutors have different social status and power. According to the foregone literature and our study, interlocutors, who have higher social status and greater power, enjoy more dominance over other speakers. Accordingly, it is up to people monitoring group conversations to neutralize this dominance. Regarding cross-cultural institutional contexts, specifically classrooms and workplaces, individuals should consider cultural differences among students or employees. By way of example, at classrooms in which there are Persian and Western students, teachers should not ascribe Persian students' low engagement to their uncommunicativeness. Their reticence might arise from the respect that they hold for much older students leading them to give the floor to the older ones.

While the current study put the spotlight on mixed-groups in terms of age, future studies can consider mixed-groups in terms of gender. Moreover, further studies are needed to investigate speech turns and interruptions of other types of discourse such as the classroom or institutional discourse. Interestingly, non-verbal aspects of communications giving way to earning or assigning turns can be taken into account.

Conclusion

The current study unraveled the hidden casual conversation differencesbetween speakers from various age groups and generations, but from the same gender. To the best of our knowledge, no discourse analysis has filled this gap. In light of casual communications, it has been postulated that despite their seemingly trifling content,

casual talks are highly structured activitiesthat serve as a critical site to discuss crucial facets of life (Eggins & Slade, 1997). Moreover, the turn-taking systems of different settings such as meetings, interviews, and ceremonies differ from one another, and turn-taking system of informal conversations governs that of formal conversations (Sacks et al., 1974). This fact undoubtedly endorses the importance of casual talks.

How conversation turns are organized can affect the smooth flow of talks. This can contribute to successful interactions between interlocutors to the extent that failures in sustaining successful communications would be attributed to poor turn-taking procedure (Cutler & Pearson, 1985). Accordingly, it can be deduced that turn-taking is an integral part of humans' daily interactions (Duncan, 1972). Interestingly, it has been bolstered that the study of turn-taking is the potential to illuminate the process of linguistic and cognitive development of human beings (Lindsay et al., 2019). This can reinforce the eminence of investigating conversation turns.

From another standpoint, allocating and seizing turns might lead to conversation disruptions or in other words, conversation interruptions. This has grabbed some scholars' attention in the field (Okamoto et al., 2002). Nonetheless, some skeptics have deemed interruptions as impolite (Gnisci & Bakeman, 2007), and necessitated repair mechanisms by the parties involved (Sacks et al., 1974).

Having established the gap, the current scrutiny determined to disclose the probable differences between adult and adolescent females in terms of turn-allocating techniques accentuating how conversation turns are managed and assigned, and the interruption patterns embedded in turn-taking system. More importantly, the study hoped to demonstrate the root of the mentioned differences through scratching beneath the surface, and transcending what is obvious regarding individuals' casual talks.

Based upon the outcomes, it was unveiled that the adult females were a great deal more dominant speakers and could dwarf the adolescent ones through gaining a huge part of the turn-allocating techniques including self-selection which led to interruptions. To put it another way, the adult females were observed to be far more talkative, own much more turns, and be more interruptive speakers.

The follow-up interview with the teenagers revealed that theoverpowering feature of the adult interlocutors could be traced back to the fact that most of the conversation topics largely brought up by the adults, seemed tedious and unrelated to the teenagers' tastes and lives. Additionally, the adolescents preferred to spend time with girls of their own age with whom they had much more in common.

From another angle, the adolescents posited that the acceptable social frame of a cultured girl is someone who barely talks when she is in the company of a group of adults who are much older than her. In other words, they had always been reminded not to be loud-mouthed and not to interrupt adults. As a consequence, the upbringing style which is deeply rooted in the cultural norms and society was another main reason why the adolescent females appeared to be significantly

uncommunicative and detached from the adults. Apart from that, in Persian society, older people are given higher social status which brings them more power. Through gaining the advantage of this power, they earn this right to take the conversation floor by utilizing turn-taking techniques, and interruptions originating from self-selection.

It can be explicitly inferred that how people take turns, and how they intend to co-construct their communication can all be affected by some underpinning factors which might be unperceivable from the surface. The ulterior factors might be pertinent to exercising power, control, identity, and conversational dominance which can be substantiated through sifting conversation turns and interruptions (Faramarzzadeh & Amini, 2017; Kollock et al., 1985; Stets & Burke, 1996).

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