

Historical Analysis of Turn-Taking and Institutional Interaction in Pakistani English Medium School: A Case Study of Bloomfield Hall School (1962-2019)

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Abstract

This research work investigated into the interaction between instructors and students in a language classroom focusing on the historical analysis of turn-taking. The researcher conducted this research by studying some of the research works related to turn-taking presented between 1962 to 2019. Research data was collected by looking at students' two years' academic record that included tests, homework, subjective evaluation, recorded lessons and the outcome of teachers' interviews and questionnaires. This research was conducted at Bloomfield Hall School situated in the south region of Punjab, Pakistan. The researcher studied turn-taking, in the conversation of students and teachers during the class, conversation analytic (CA) framework was selected to study how turn-taking took place during the classroom interaction between students and instructors. This study analyzed whether the institutional settings hampered the natural style of conversation and whether the universal structures of talk could be adopted to Pakistani academic discourse or not. The researcher selected literature which is beneficial for CA in order to fulfill the requirements of the current research. The importance of this research is established as the majority of previous studies focused on interpreting talk in ordinary conversations for instance 'a systematic overview about the organization of topics in ordinary conversation by Yuening Yang in 2019¹, 'an attempt to clarify the problem of understanding meaning in language use' by Hasni M. El. Dali in 2019², this research work presents

historical analysis of turn-taking in classroom conversation and its impact on language teaching and learning. Findings of this research may contribute to developing a better teaching methodology that may enhance pedagogical and communicational skills of teachers in Pakistan.

Key Words: Historical Analysis, Turn-Taking, Time-Period (1962-2019), Interaction, Classroom, Instructors, Pedagogy

Introduction

In Pakistan, English language is taught at every level of education as the first foreign language. Tuan & Nhu (2010)³ state that turn-taking in classroom interaction is a key in order to attain the important purpose of learning language. In line with Haradasht & Aidinlou (2016)⁴, they mention that the fulfillment of teaching depends mostly on the teacher-student interaction within the actual classroom. As Hall & Walsh (2002)⁵ claim that, it is in the turn-taking technique that the teacher and the students work together to create the intellectual and practical activities that shape both the form and content of the target language. Walsh (2006)⁶ identifies three major areas of investigation: interaction analysis, discourse analysis and conversation analysis.

Aims of this Study

EFL teachers through CA techniques will be able to investigate the turn-taking features that are essential to the classroom interaction. The rationale underlying the study is that an understanding of the dynamics of turn-taking is essential for teachers to establish and maintain good communicative practice and the first step in gaining such an understanding is familiarization with features of classroom interaction. Lazaraton (2004)⁷ mentions that conversation analysis (CA) is an empirical approach to the analysis of oral interaction whose purpose is to discover systematic features present in the sequential organization of talk and is concerned with identifying these features and understanding of its usage in action. This study, therefore, investigates into the historical development of turn-taking in order to extend existing knowledge by focusing on how institutional interaction, as a central concept constructed by

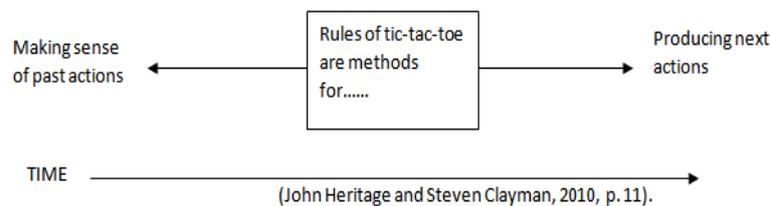
teachers, students and their peers during the course of their talk, is related to the pedagogical purpose in different L2 classroom contexts (Seedhouse, 2004, pp. 290-300)⁸.

Historical analysis

Turn-taking analysis is an approach within the social sciences that aims to describe, analyze and understand talk as a basic and constitutive feature of human social life. Conversation analysis (CA) emerged in the 1960s through the collaboration of Harvy Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. Although, CA may be seen as a fresh start within the social and human sciences, it drew inspiration from two sociologists, Erving Goffman and Harold Garfinkel. By the 1960s there were of course a number of other relevant things happening in anthropology. First, there were various attempts to tap into the “cognitive revolution” which, spurred on by Noam Chomsky's work in *Aspects of a Theory of Syntax* (1965)⁹ and *Syntactic Structures* (1957)¹⁰, was already in full swing within linguistics. CA has significantly proven itself as an established sociological field for discourse analysis since its inception. Similarly, conversation analysis has expanded in multiple ways. The works of Erving Goffman and Harold Garfinkel truly present the origins of sociological conversation analysis. CA by focusing on the naturally-occurring data, adopts recorded corpora in order to investigate how participants interact in the given social and institutional settings. CA contributes in the study of context and meaning; it elaborates how context is built through interaction. Talk is “both context-shaped and context renewing” (Heritage 1984b, p. 242)¹¹. During conversation one turn provides contextual base to the next turn; turn by turn talk renews the context and the evolving context establishes continuation of the talk. In this way every complete utterance the prior turn before giving his or her response in the next turn. These responses than undergo the evaluation process and are registered in case of correct responses and are negated if they are wrong responses; incorrect responses are then corrected with the help of repairs. In other words, the same method organize both action and the understanding of action. We may unpack this complex sentence with the rules of tic-tac-toe elaborated below:

Historical Perspective of Turn-taking

According to an American author Emily Post (1922)¹², the act of turn-taking in conversation exhibits speakers' decency and formal demeanours. Participants who possess good manners always wait for their turn to speak during the conversation, therefore, it is generally believed that turn-taking is the feature of "polite" conversation. The other widely acclaimed perspective is that certain groups of people for instance, West Indians, Jews, and Native Americans ignore turn-taking in their talk. Their interactions are "jumbled" and "chaotic". This highlights that turn-taking phenomenon in conversation is primarily the



invention of human beings; perhaps it relates to the salons of the European bourgeoisie in the eighteenth century, the English aristocracy and coffee drinking customers of Starbucks. So, one way to reform conversation is to disallow the participants whose speech is 'anarchic' or to establish coordination among the interactants during conversation. Turn-taking is an essential speech-exchange system that takes place between learners and instructors. Schegloff (1984)¹³ mentions turn-taking as the phenomenon that disallows overlaps, gaps and ensures that only one speaker clearly articulates an utterance at a given time. In turn-taking, the listeners wait for the speaker to finish speech and then take up their turn. John Heritage, (1998)¹⁴ state that the next speaker may be defined by the nomination made by the previous speaker or through self-selection. Sometimes, a transition of turns does not take place as expected and overlaps may occur where more than one speaker start speaking. For instance, speakers who produce multi-unit turns, display an orientation to

the relevance of speaker transition at possible unit completion by increasing the pace of the talk through such places and in this way foreclosing the possibility of another self-selecting.

According to American Sociologist Harvey Sacks, turn-taking in conversation analysis may be organised by employing various methods. For instance, in classroom setting an instructor may select students for a fixed period of time and within the allotted time students speak on their turns. Such methods of successful conversation are also evident in debates and speeches. But in such given arrangements for conversation, students during the talk shall keep waiting for their turn and may not be able to ask questions or discuss any point until all students finish their turns. Hence, this types of module is not successful for healthy and natural flow of conversation in any organization. Sacks in his work remarked that turn-taking needs a coordinated and self-conscious effort by the participants; pre-allocations would restrict the interaction and the set objectives would hardly be met.

As Sacks (1974)¹⁵ explained that turn-taking in conversation may be regulated, handled collectively and governed by a group using their rationale and common sense. In this regard various research schools proposed models comprising rules and procedures in order to accomplish better turn-taking process. This elaborates the turn-transition point where the other speakers during conversation pre-empt the opportunity and avail their turns.

Turn constructional units (TCUs) are generally related to words, lexical units or sentences. Illustration is given below where in (line-01) Katherine's declaratively formatted question, "You enjoyed movie at cinema", is a sentential TCU, while (line-03), "movie at cinema" is a phrasal TCU. Lexical TCUs are Roger's turns in (lines 02 and 04).

Roger & Katherine (modified from Sidnell Jack, 2010, p. 41¹⁶).

- 1 Katherine: You enjoyed movie at cinema
- 2 Roger: huh?
- 3 Katherine: movie at cinema

4 Roger: ri:ght.

The other technique of transferring turn to the next speaker is called turn-allocation. This method involves a technique of inviting other speakers by the current speaker during conversation. In such turn-allocation, current speaker addresses the next speaker by inviting, requesting or complaining with regard to the subject matter that is currently under discussion. The following dialogue between Usama and Rubina (taken from students' conversation during research) clearly exhibits how a current speaker addresses the next speaker in order to allocate the next turn.

1	Usama:	Ruby can you – can you ↓ write my essay. ↓
2		(0.5)
3	Rubina:	Do your own writing (h)'n(h)n(h) n'

The procedures discussed above clearly show how turn-taking is accomplished in an ordinary conversation. This also helps us to see why (and foresee where) a lot of similar cases occur.

Guest & Manager (modified from Sidnell Jack, 2010, p. 39¹⁷).

1	Guest:	Has the hotel cha: nged much?
2	Manager:	Oh:: ye:s,
3		(3.0)
4	Guest:	Th'New year changed it'n [ahful lot [didn'tit.
5	Manager:	[Th- [That-
6	Manager:	That changed it,

Here, it is noticeable that the next speaker (manager) responded properly knowing the turn-transition point. Manager does not nominate the next speaker; however, the guest self-selects himself after some delay and further expands the information given by the manager. In (line-06) manager successfully initiates his turn without any overlaps and justifies the remarks given by the guest. This example clearly illustrates that the guest self-selects twice pre-empting the possible turn-completion and the manager precisely replies at the exact turn-transition points.

This example (modified from Sidnell Jack, 2010, p. 39)¹⁸ offers strong proof that Manager is in a position to parse the talk as it unfolds to project points of potential completion within it and thus be prepared to start his own turn at only those locations. Overlap of the type produced here provides further proof of the projectability of possible turn completion.

Historical Study of participants' institutional identities

In CA studies, institutional interaction has become the ever growing field over the last three decades. Drew and Heritage (1992)¹⁹ states that institutional interaction is constrained as participants in such interaction are bound to achieve set objective (e.g. assistance in emergency call, class instructor, doctor treating patient, and by narrowing down the interactional practices found in ordinary conversation. Hence, institutional talk is the consideration of how persons practice language to administer those pragmatic assignments and their performance in the context based activities at the very institution such as interviewing, inquiring, teaching, examining and negotiating. So, conversation analyses of institutional interaction investigates into the lexical, syntactic, prosodic and sequential linguistic features of talk in action. Duranti (1992)²⁰ state that there is presumably no articulate exposition which would demarcate the range of the discipline of institutional discussion. I may study the complexities involved in the excerpt given below in order to explore what might be and what might not be institutional. This excerpt is modified from the research work of (Drew, P., & Sorjonen, 1997, p.93)²¹.

1	Sara:	Hello John?
2	John	How are you Sara Lawrence
3	Sara:	How are you doin'
4	John:	Well I'm doin' good [thank you very [much
5	Sara:	[we- well goo:d
6	John:	And a perfect day it is.
7	Sara:	Ya: isn't it love[ly=
8	John:	[Yes
9	Sara:	= I went out at library
10		it's [really [difficult to come [back
11	John:	[.hhh [You (h)oo
12		It's not good
13	Sara:	And from here going to sho[pping
14	John:	[hm. so. Enjoying
15	Sara:	My fri[end coming to pick me up
16	John:	[um hum
17	John:	That's it [what else
18	Sara:	[Well-
19	Sara:	Well, could you please take my lesson in 8 th <u>grade</u> as I won't be back today

Lines (17-19) of the excerpt taken from Drew and Sorjonen (1997)²² clearly state that Sara and John are colleagues in a school and she makes him a call that completely shows an institutional interaction. But they start a call with greetings that reflects they are being sociable (lines 1-16). Thus, within a single

encounter participants may engage in, and move between ‘sociable’ and ‘institutional’ talk. Though, the beginning lines (1-16) present informal talk based on weather, shopping and library, however, institutional setting of being a colleague in the school is present. Abbreviated greetings in (line-4) act as linguistic and sequential features that blend it into an institutional interaction. In (lines 6-7) John uses word ‘perfect’ to describe weather and Sara replies ‘isn’t lovely’ shows sociable advancements. So within interaction we confront quick shifts from one discourse to another (such as sociable and institutional). Hence, the major area that is focused here is to elaborate how participants orient themselves to the institutional distinctiveness by using different linguistic features in their speech. Linguistic resources like personal pronoun, lexical choice, grammatical construction and institutionally specific inferences are used by the participants to show their institutional orientation.

Personal pronoun

Participants in an institutional setting use personal pronoun that highlights their institution rather than their individual identity. Personal pronoun (‘we’) is used instead of (‘I’) while communicating with each other or with the third parties. Following example would illustrate it further.

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1.Reception: | Bloomfield Hall School |
| 2.Reception: | Hello, How can we help? |
| 3.Caller: | Hi. I am from <u>paramount books</u> . |
| 4.Caller: | We have dispatched your books. |
| 5.Reception: | Okay. Thanks. We shall receive the dispatch. |

In this excerpt both caller and a reception officer orienting themselves to the institutional setting. Throughout the conversation both participants are using personal pronoun ('we') and upholding the institutional identity of their organization.

Lexical choice

Participants in the institutional interaction choose specific linguistic notions in order to describe people, objects and events. These linguistic notions are situationally appropriate registers, codes, styles or specific-settings. This comprises 'depictive sufficiency' of lexical preference with regard to the kind of established frame of reference involved. (Judicial, Educational, Medical, etc.). The following excerpt illustrates this in more detail.

1	Registrar:	Hello this is Dr Asad from University College
2		Lahore calling
3	Father	Uh, yes
4	Registrar:	Did Usama reach home sick today?
5		(0.5)
6	Father	.hhhh
7		(2)
8	Father	((inquiring from wife)) Usama reached home sick today?
9		Was he?
10		(0.5)
11	Wife	<u>Not</u> at all.

12	Father	No:.
13		(.)
14	Registrar:	N[o?
15	Father	[No he <u>wasn</u> 't
16	Registrar:	→.hhh (.) Well <u>he</u> was reported absent
17		→ after break today
18	Father	Ah ha:h,
19	Registrar:	.hhh A:n' he needs to see me sharp at 8:am for clarification

Reported absent in (line-16) manifests that registrar oriented himself to the institutional setting, he did not use simple 'absent', the verb 'reported' in collocation with absent is cautious or equivocal, as it avoids directly accusing the boy from absenteeism, instead leaves message for subsequent investigation on his possible non-attendance. The word 'reported' is not strictly an institutional word but the registrar used this in an institutional framework (Drew and Heritage, 1992b, pp. 45-46)²³ However, the selected word 'absent' shows institutionality as this word is not used for the one who misses a party.

Issues of lexical choices carry greater importance as compared to the technical vocabularies in institutional interaction as such choices of words must correlate with the tasks and actions, performed by the participants at the institution. Preference related to lexicology is associated with extensive concerns regarding turn design, and especially how specific types of enterprises contrived in turns at talk are planned; and also with the practical representations (Drew and Heritage, 1992b, pp. (29-32)²⁴. Danet (1980)²⁵; Duranti²⁶ (1992); He (1993) ²⁷claim that

cognitive stand point is demonstrated through modal expressions, stylistic innovation and register.

Grammatical forms

Historical review of different studies suggests that variety of grammatical forms may be used in a diversified setting; such as courts, classrooms, news interviews, medical discourse, help line services and in formal meetings. In the interaction between doctor and patient, doctor may choose a verb 'obligation' (you should use less sugar) in his advice or (I 'would recommend.....) or an imperative (Put less salt in food) or a hypothetical (If I were you....)

Certain grammatical forms are used in routine in different institutional settings, for instance, grammatical patterns for giving advice are used in medical institutions and grammatical patterns exerting authority are used by the lawyers during cross examination.

WH- questions and yes/no questions used by the attorneys may have distinctive powers when posed to the witness in courts. WH-cleft construction such as (What I want to suggest is) is more often used by university lecturers, radio call-in talk shows and group therapy sessions.

Institutionally specific inferences

The talk in interaction is established and continued when participants are able to infer the meanings of prior turns; this relates to the knowledge and understanding with regards to institutional setting. Many studies have been conducted that focus and analyse the inferences made by the participants during the institutional conversation; such comprehensions depend upon the prescriptive assumptions relating to the nature of the occasion and common participation in the activities.

Inferences made by the participants are closely related to the institutional constraints; and are graded as the influential contributions to the activities and actions that take place in an

institutional setting. Inferential questions demand critical thinking and context based knowledge from the answerer, for instance, if a doctor poses a question to the patient 'How are you' the respondent must infer the question and return back the information to doctor what he is looking for. On the contrary, if a friend poses the same question over the phone it would be quite easy to reply at once, but the inferential basis for participants' recognition of what the other means or is doing in an utterance is rather broader than such constraints on allowable contribution: this refers to high expectations on the part of participants who must exhibit their relevant institutional norms and activities. This may be further illustrated with an example of health visitor's (HV) visit to a mother. In the excerpt given below health visitor's comment in (line-1) that 'baby is enjoying sucking' is inferred by the mother that health visitor is perhaps mentioning that baby is hungry, so in (line-2) she responds that baby is not hungry and had taken the bottle. Mother orients herself from her motherhood institution and gives explanation in institutional way. On the other hand, mother who inferred that a health visitor also oriented to the institutional setting and remarked in (line-1) by showing care for the child; this shows participants' institutional inferences (Drew & Heritage, 1992, p. 33)²⁸.

1. HV: → He's enjoying that isn't he? =
2. M: → = He's not hungry 'because(h) he ju(h)st
3. → (h) had 'his bo:ttle.hhh

All these restrictions discussed above convert an ordinary talk to the institutional interaction.

Methodology

I employed universal conversation analytic framework for minute analysis of turn-taking in institutional interaction and adopted descriptive qualitative research methodology. I used techniques of data condensation, data display and conclusion

drawing and verification for data analysis. In order to conduct my research, I joined Bloomfield Hall School Multan and spent almost four months in that school. The number of students who attended classes was thirty-eight. I recorded natural classroom interaction of the students and teachers. The selected excerpts related to turn-taking were arranged in a written form to perform the exhaustive historical analysis of turn-taking technique. The recorded interactions were transcribed on Jefferson's notation system. The number of students who attended classes was thirty-eight and it was an English medium school that catered English as a second language. I selected O-level classes and video-taped thirty lessons in total, duration of each lesson was 40 minutes. The main purpose of recording the lesson was to determine "natural interaction" full of devotion which means the routine based classroom talk was recorded and the participants were not restrained to any specific topic or content. These videotaped lessons provided me an opportunity to clearly determine the body language of students in terms of their hesitation, promptness, inconfidence etc. Gail Jefferson (2004)²⁹ promoted method of describing symbols in transcription form; this process was used to record the sequential settings related to communication. Gail Jefferson initially worked as the research assistant to Harvy Sacks but as per the statement of Ten Have, after sometime, she became one of the most significant research contributors to conversation analysis in her own style and direction. The CA transcribed symbols are used for the following conversational features: latched dialogues, utterances, overlaps, timed out breaks, volume, pitch, intonation, emphatic tone, cut-offs, exhalations and audible inhalations, laughs, coughs, ellipses, counted lines etc (Psathas, 1995, pp. 71-78)³⁰. While utilizing this method, the research analyst considerably pen down the time frame of the interactional flow and keep each speaker's participation in connection to those of other participants (Ten Have, 2000, p.33)³¹.

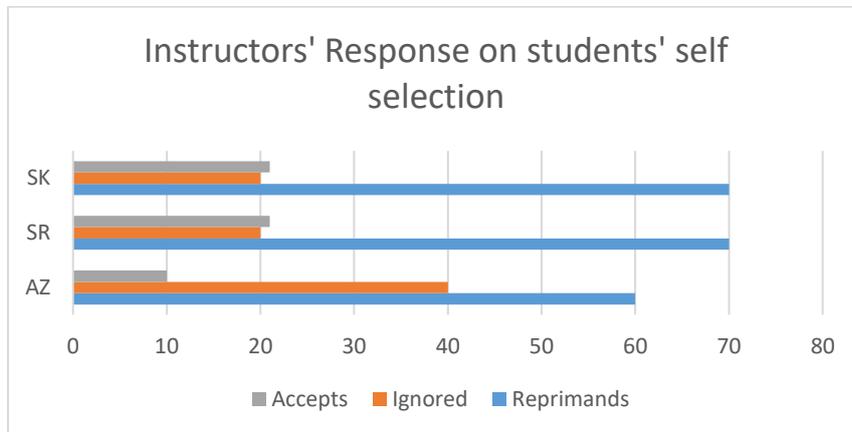
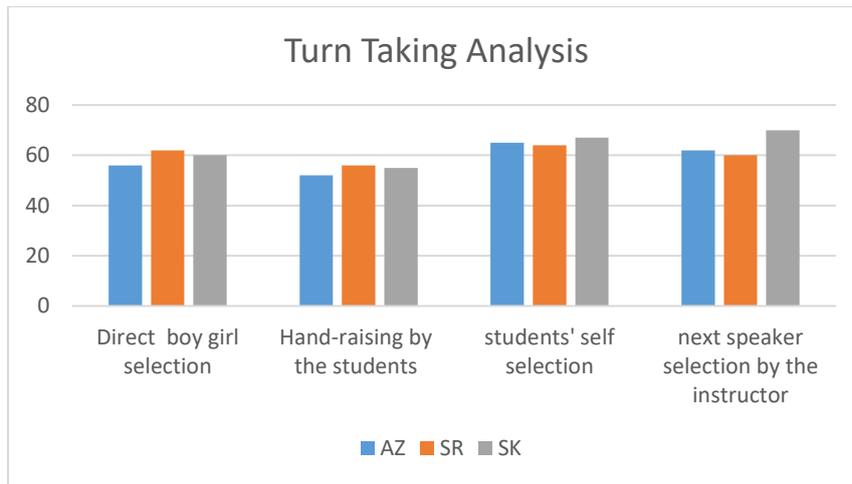
Data Analysis

The analysis of turn-taking in the classroom comprises 30 selected excerpts. The analysis of these excerpts is based on CA analytic framework.

Findings

In this section, I have elaborated findings of this research through graphical representation on turn-taking analysis by studying the following in the recorded interaction:

1. Direct boy girl selection
2. Hand-raising by the students
3. Students' self-selection
4. Next speaker selection by the instructor
5. Instructors' response on students' self-selection (reprimand, ignore, accept)



Results Summary

Three teachers took part in this study namely Asim Zafar (AZ) Sajeel Khan (SK) and Shahid Ruban (SR). Thirty eight students took part in this study and analysis of the chosen excerpts focused on the following areas; hand-raising by the students during class interaction, students 'self-selection, next speaker selection by the instructor, direct boy/girl selection and instructors' response on students 'hand-raising. Data analysis revealed that (SK) oriented to the institutional setting and selected next speaker by himself for 70 time while AZ selected students 62 time and SR selected next speaker on 60 occasions. In the category of hand-raising by the students the analysis showed that students tried to follow the interactional norms and sought permission for their speaking turns. In SR's classes students raised their hands for 56 time, in SK' lessons for 55 time and on 52 occasions in AZ's class. Data regarding students' self-selection showed irregularity in almost all classes. Data also revealed that all instructors made direct boy/girl selection at maximum occasions. I also analysed teachers' response on students' self-selection and the analysis showed that SK and SR reprimanded students on their deviations during classroom interaction while AZ showed leniency by ignoring students' self-selection. Data also presented that SK and SR accepted students' self-selection on more occasions than AZ.

Conclusion

To conclude we may say that historical review of researches conducted on turn-taking may be quite useful for better classroom communication. Findings of this research showed deviations in turn-taking practice in all three classes. Data also showed many overlaps and pauses which were owned by the students. Such pauses and overlaps result in self-selections that need repairs from the instructor; hence, create problem for the entire class. Some self-selections are contributive for instance, if a student quietly provides repair, it contributes in classroom teaching and the instructor may ignore it. Therefore, the instructor appreciates the self-selector who provides correction that enhances learning process. This study highlighted the importance of turn-taking rules towards better teaching and

learning practices. In Pakistan English Language is treated as the second language and students learn reading skill, writing skill, listening skill and speaking skill in language classrooms from the basic education level. These language skills cannot be attained in indisciplined, noisy classroom interaction. Distinction between ordinary conversation and other speech exchange systems is an important factor in SLA studies. Therefore, it is important to examine the lexical features quite carefully in order to differentiate ordinary conversation from institutional talk with respect to turn-taking technique. CA-for-SLA has the potential to offer applied linguists and SLA researchers a novel and provocative insights into how second language users and learners organize their significant worlds. CA clearly provides a platform to understand language use and language learning in important ways. This study presents an opportunity to all EFL teachers in Pakistan; to follow the international rules, lesson planning and content selection in order to adopt better teaching strategies for students' better language learning, specially the speaking skills of students at the school level.

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