Adjacency Pairs and Preference Organization of the Main Characters in "The Father" Movie

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
dementia, conversation analysis, adjacency pairs, preference organization	Dementia is a type of neurocognitive disorder. This study looks at how dementia influences people's communication by focusing on the character Anthony, who suffers from dementia disorder in "The Father" movie. The aim of this research is to analyze the conversation between Anthony and Anne, his daughter, by focusing on adjacency pairs and preference organization. This research applied Paltridge's framework (2000). To analyze the data, the researchers used a qualitative descriptive method. The results reveal that Anthony mostly gives unexpected answers. Because Anthony has dementia, he always forgets what happened to him or something in the past. Meanwhile, even though Anne sometimes gives unexpected answers, it is because she avoids Anthony's questions to make sure that he is not hurt by the truth. It can be concluded that although Anthony has dementia, he still can communicate properly with others.

INTRODUCTION

Dementia, also known as major neurocognitive disorder, is defined by the National Institute of Health or NIH as "a decline in cognitive function from a previous level of performance that is severe enough to interfere with independence in daily activities". Memory, language, ability to manage focus, and (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, 2024) problem-solving skills are just a few of the cognitive areas that may be impacted by this decline. Early identification is crucial to manage these symptoms as the illness develops with time. Because of this, problems with communication happen frequently, which makes it more difficult for people with dementia to maintain their social lives and effectively communicate about what they want.

In doing communication, there are strategies that should be considered. Conversation Analysis (CA) is a useful to study the structure and routines of daily communication as it offers a helpful understanding of how people with dementia hold conversations. Conversation analysis has a sequence and structure. According to (Paltridge, 2010:107) those sequences are opening conversation, closing conversation, turn-taking, adjacency pairs, preference organization, feedback, and repair. An important idea in CA is the study of adjacency pairs when a question is asked by one speaker in a conversation and the other speaker consistently responds with an answer. The ability to follow the patterns of adjacency pairs is frequently disrupted in those suffering from dementia. Also, someone who has dementia commonly interferes with the preference organization due to their illness. Preference organization is the term used to describe how responses are expected in daily conversation.

A case of a dementia sufferer is one described in the movie "The Father" by Florian Zeller. The main character in the movie, Anthony, is an old man who used to be an engineer. However, at a late age, he was diagnosed with dementia. At first, he feels like he can handle everything on his own, but his daughter, Anne, is very worried about him. Anne decided to hire a caregiver because she could not look after his father for 24 hours,

but his father did not like it when she hired a caregiver for him. The worst case she has experienced is sometimes, his father does not recognize her. Anthony sees Anne as another person, which means he does not know her. Therefore, in this paper, the researchers would like to discuss the adjacency pairs and preference organization focusing on the dementia character in "The Father" movie by Florian Zeller.

According to (Paltridge, 2000: 91-99) there are various types of adjacency pairs, including requesting agreement, offer/invite, assessment, question, greeting-greeting, compliment-acceptance, and other adjacency pairs. According to Partridge (2008: 115), "Adjacency pairs are utterances produced by two successive speakers in such a way that the second utterance is identified as related to the first one as an expected follow-up." This is also consistent with Yule's (1996) claim that adjacency pairs have two parts and are formed by two different people. The second focus in this paper is preference organization or the second pair part of adjacency pairs. Dispreferred utterances in adjacency pairs are structurally more complicated than unmarked or preferred ones. These complications include delays, prefaces like "well", and accounts of why this utterance is made (Levinson, 1983: 307).

Several researchers have done some previous studies. Waterman (2022) did a study about legal decision making and dementia. The data were collected from 20 dementia interviewers. Using integral as a theory and detailing CA and TDA processes. This research found that legal space that is interrogated by using CA. Another previous study was done by Sotelo & Mac-Kay (2022) who analyzed conversation analysis in Alzheimer's disease. This study focuses on the process rather than on applying results using conversation analysis in repair as a theory. As a result, both older adults from the age scale 66-80+ with and without dementia have frequent self-initiated repairs. Another research study done by Drew, et al. (2000) analyzed the conversation analysis in interactions between patients and health-care professionals. Using CA that is applied for identifying both patient participants and the doctor, the study focuses principally on the medical examination. As a result, using turn design could be applied by the interlocutor (the doctor or the health-care) during the visit with patients. Healthcare outcomes must be important in relating to patient satisfaction. Plug (2008), et al. analyzed conversation analysis that can help to distinguish between epilepsy and non-epileptic seizure disorders, by using conversation analysis from verbalism transcript between patients and neurologists were analyzed by a linguist. As a result, the person with epilepsy is likely to describe the details of the seizure, but the NES patient is more likely to describe the individual seizure episodes and only give detailed seizures after repeated questions during the interview.

Based on those previous studies, a research on conversation analysis that focuses on adjacency pairs and preference organization by a person with dementia in a movie has not been conducted. Therefore, this research attempts to fill in the gap of the previous studies mentioned above.

METHOD

In this paper, the researchers used a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the data. According to Sukmadinata (2006), descriptive qualitative is a type of research for describing the phenomena that existed, from both natural phenomena and man-made phenomena. The data in the form of movie transcript were downloaded from https://deadline.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/thefather-screenplay.pdf. The utterances in the movie were then coded. After that, the utterances that contain CA of adjacency pairs and preference organization were identified. The next step, the utterances that have been identified were categorized and explained. Last, the conclusion was drawn based on the analysis.

Kresnanti, M. & Setyaningsih, N., (2024). Adjacency Pairs and Preference Organization of the Main Characters in "The Father" Movie . *STRUKTURAL (Seminar on Translation, Applied Linguistics, Literature, and Cultural Studies). 2* (01), 203–209.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The focus of observation in this paper is to analyze the adjacency pairs and preference organization from the main characters in the movie "The Father". By using Paltridge's theory, the adjacency pairs and preference organization would be discussed. The result and the analysis of the data is presented in the following section.

Result

After the data were analyzed, a result can be generated. Table 1 presents the result of the analysis.

Table 1 Adjacency pairs and Preference organization

No	Adjacency Pairs		Preference Organization		Number of Occurrences	%
			Preferred	Dispreferred		
1.	Greeting	Greeting	7	-	7	7
2.	Leave taking	Leave taking	-	-	0	0
3.	Complaint	Apology	6	-	6	6
4.	Question	Answer	27	-	50	47.1
		Non-answer	-	23		
5.	Request	Acceptance	-	-	4	3.7
		Refusal	-	4		
6.	Offer	Acceptance	5	-	15	14.15
		Refusal	-	10		
7.	Blame	Denial	5	-	7	6.6
		Admission	-	2		
8.	Assessment	Agreement	11	-	17	16.03
		Disagreement	-	6		
Total			**61**	**45**	**106**	**100**

Based on Table 1, there are 106 total of types of adjacency pairs and preference organization in the data. Leave taking and request-acceptance were not found in the data. In the movie, there is no closing conversation, therefore, there is no leave taking. Request-acceptance was also not found because Anthony's requests are not accepted by Anne, and vice versa. Question-answer dominates the findings because Anthony has dementia so he has a lot of question as he forgets many things. The following section will discuss the findings and the examples of conversation.

Discussion

1. Greeting-Greeting

Greeting-Greeting is used when Anthony and Anne open the conversation or to announce their presence in some place.

Excerpt 1

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1. Anne: Ah Dad! Dinner'll be ready in five minutes. That suit you?

2. Anthony: Very good, dear. Suits me fine. Suits me... But... Hello.

(Scene 31 In the kitchen)
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In the first excerpt, Anne was serving the dinner for his father, she said to Anthony that the dinner would be ready soon. Then, Anthony, who just arrived, answered the greeting from Anne. In here Anthony and Anne do the function of adjacency pairs and preference organization of greeting-greeting.

2. Question-Answer

Question-Answer is the most common interaction in conversation. The second pair part must fulfill the expectation or question from the first pair part.

Excerpt 2

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3. Anne: What painting?

4. Anthony: Lucy's.

(Scene 50 In the living room 3)
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In the second excerpt, Anthony and Anne was in the living room. Anthony, who just woke up asked Anne, where the painting was. However, Anne was confused because there was no painting in her flat. Anne was asking Anthony what painting and he answered it the expectation of Anne's question. He asked about Lucy's painting. Lucy is Anthony's other daughter. Anne thought that Anthony might be mixing up the memory with his flat. In that excerpt, Anne and Anthony fulfilled the criteria of adjacency pairs and preference organization of question-answer.

3. Question-Unexpected Answer

The function of question-unexpected answer is almost the same as question-answer. However, the difference is on the second pair part who is not fulfill the expectation of the answer from the first pair part.

Excerpt 3

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1. Anthony: But… who's this?

2. Anne: Here we are. We're just getting dressed...

(Scene 62 In the kitchen 4)
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In the third excerpt, Anthony and Anne was waiting for the new caregiver that Anthony seems to like. However, when the caregiver arrived, Anthony was shocked, because he did not know who arrived. Apparently, the caregiver who arrived and the one he remembered are different. After that, Anthony asked Anne, who that was. Then, Anne did not answer his question. She ignored his question instead. From this excerpt, it can be seen that Anne did not fulfill the question given by Anthony.

4. Request-Refusal

This type occurs when Anthony and Anne make a request and the other one's respond is refusing that request.

Excerpt 4

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5. Anthony: I don't want her. Where's the one I like? Where is she?

6. Anne: But, Dad... what are you talking about? Say hello to Laura.
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(Scene 63 In the bedroom)

In Excerpt 4, the new caregiver for Anthony just came, and it seems a different person from the one who is Anthony's favorite. He refused to meet her and requested Anne to meet him with the one who is his favorite. However, Anne does not understand his meaning, she thought that Anthony liked Laura. Therefore, she refused his request. Anthony's favorite caregiver in his mind and in Anne's mind was different person.

5. Offer-Acceptance

When Anthony or Anne offers something to one another. Then, the one who get the offer accept it.

Excerpt 5

1. Anne: Let me…

2. Anthony: What's the matter?

(Scene 41F In the corridor2 / bedroom 2)

In Excerpt 5, Anne offered Anthony that she would arrange the plate for dinner. After that, Anthony asked her why she wanted to help him, he thought that there was something or she wanted to say something. She just only wanted to help him, and he accepted it.

6. Offer-Refusal

It is almost the same as offer-acceptance, but in offer-refusal the second pair part refuses the offer of first pair part.

Excerpt 6

11. Anne: She's here to help you.

12. Anthony: To help me do what? I don't need her. I don't need anyone.

(Scene 4 Office Day)

In Excerpt 6, Anthony in his flat felt that he was doing fine, but Anne was worried about him. Anthony did not like that other people might be in his flat, but Anne needed the new caregiver to take care of him. Anne always offered Anthony the new caregiver. However, Anthony always refused it.

7. Blame-Admission

When Anthony or Anne tries to points out another's mistake and the other person blamed admit it.

Excerpt 7

5. Anthony: What do you mean, "No, it hasn't"? The watch must be somewhere! It can't have flown away!

6. Anne: You want me to go and look?

(Scene 33 In the dining room)

In Excerpt 7, Anthony was looking for his watch, but he could not find it and no one helped him to find it. He also assumed that maybe someone stole it, because there was another people in that dining room, who was Anne's husband. Because he said that maybe someone has stolen it, Anne replied no. However, Anthony blamed her because she was not helping at all. Then, Anne offered herself to search for the watch and because of that, she admitted that she was not really helping and wanted to help him.

8. Blame-Denial

This type of pairs is used to express someone's mistake, but the second pair part denies the first pair part.

Excerpt 8

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31. Anthony: But, Anne... it's not her.

32. Anne: Dad. Would you like something to drink? Coffee?

(Scene 62 In the kitchen 4)
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In Excerpt 8, Anthony thought that the new caregiver was his favorite caregiver. It turned out that she was a different person. Anthony tried to explain to Anne that she was a different person, and he blamed her for bringing the wrong caregiver. However, Anne was tired of him and ignored what he said by saying irrelevant answer.

9. Assessment-Agreement

When Anthony or Anne asks each other's opinion or agreement.

Excerpt 9

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27. Anthony: Hidden talents.

28. Anne: Apparently, yes.

(Scene 61 In the kitchen)
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In Excerpt 9, Anthony was convinced that his new caregiver did a tap dance. He also claimed himself that he was a tap dancer and made the new caregiver laugh a lot. Then, in the morning, Anne told him that he was funny last night, because he was able to make the new caregiver laugh, she also explained why. Then, he assessed himself that it was a hidden talent. Then, Anne agreed with him.

10. Assessment-Disagreement

It is almost the same of assessment-agreement, the difference is assessment-disagreement, the second pair part disagrees with the first pair part.

Excerpt 10

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14. Anthony: Yes. There's a resemblance.

15. Anne: Maybe.

(Scene 27 pt.4 In the living room)
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In Excerpt 10, Anthony, who had the new caregiver, assessed her that she looked like his other daughter, Lucy. He said that there was a resemblance between the new caregiver and Lucy. He asked Anne's opinion about it. However, Anne seemed not to agree with him, but she is not said it plainly to Anthony, because it might hurt his feelings and she did not want to do that. Therefore, she only said maybe.

Based on the analysis, it can be seen that Anthony often makes unexpected answers. It is possibly because Anthony has dementia; therefore, Anthony is frequently confused about the questions given by Anne. Sometimes Anthony just lies, but most of the time he does not lie, he is just confused and does not remember what happened at that time. Anne also gives unexpected answer several times, because she just casually avoids the question from Anthony. Sometimes Anthony's questions do not make sense or she just does not want to make Anthony sad of the truth from the question.

CONCLUSION

This research was conducted to find out the adjacency pairs and preference organization used by Anthony and his daughter in the movie "The Father". Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that seven types of adjacency pairs and preference organization used by Anthony and Anne. These include greeting, leave taking, question, request, offer, blame, assessment. Question is mostly used by Anthony and Anne because it is the most common interaction in conversation. Anthony mostly gives unexpected answer to Anne's questions. On the other hand, Anne always asks Anthony about what happened to him or asks him about the past. Because Anthony has dementia, he always forgets to what happened to him or something in the past. Therefore, he usually responds the questions with unexpected answers. Meanwhile, Anne always gives honest answers to Anthony's questions. Even though sometimes she gives unexpected answers, it is not because she is confused or forgets, but because she avoids Anthony's question to make sure that he does not get hurt about the truth. Furthermore, with the preferred responds outnumbers the dispreffered ones in this research, it can be said that a person who has dementia can still communicate properly with others.

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