The use of turn taking in the 2020 US presidential debate: A conversation analysis study

Penggunaan alih giliran bicara dalam debat calon presiden Amerika Serikat tahun 2020: kajian analisis percakapan

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Abstract
The 2020 US presidential debate was a democratic practice held every four years. In the debate, each debater used turn taking strategies. This research focuses on the uses of turn taking strategies and their types dominantly produced by the debaters in the debate. The strategies encompass taking, holding, and yielding the turn. Elaborating the strategy in depth is the aim of this research. Qualitative conversation analysis technique using turn-by-turn consideration was the used method. The utterances of the debaters were the data. The data source was a self-made transcription based on the video recording of the debate. Overlapping, interruption, repair, and other debater selection often occur in the debate through those strategies. Consequently, TRP frequently cannot be reached, and the usage of these strategies affects turn allocation. The results show that turn taking strategies were applied in the debate. Trump used taking the turn and yielding the turn as strategies. Meanwhile, Biden used holding the turn as his strategy. For future research, discussions on turn-taking subcategories in the scope of political debates and conversation analysis are expected to be conducted more.

Abstrak
Debat calon presiden Amerika Serikat 2020 merupakan pesta demokrasi yang diselenggarakan empat tahun sekali. Setiap debater memiliki strategi *turn-taking*. Fokus penelitian ini adalah penggunaan strategi *turn taking* dan jenis strategi *turn-taking* yang paling banyak digunakan para debater. Strategi tersebut meliputi: mengambil, menahan dan menghasilkan giliran bicara. Tujuan penelitian ini menjelaskan tentang *turn-taking* yang digunakan dalam debat tersebut. Metode dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif dengan teknik analisis percakapan berdasarkan *turn-by-turn*. Data yang digunakan berupa ujaran yang ditranskripsikan sendiri berdasarkan pada rekaman video debat calon presiden Amerika Serikat 2020. Sumber data penelitian ini adalah transkripsi. *Overlapping*, interupsi, *repair*, dan penunjukan giliran bicara kepada pihak lawan sering terjadi dalam penggunaan strategi-strategi tersebut, sehingga TRP sering tidak tercapai dan memengaruhi alokasi giliran bicara. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa strategi *turn taking* (*taking the turn*, *holding the turn*, dan *yielding the turn*) digunakan dalam debat calon presiden Amerika Serikat 2020. Trump lebih banyak menggunakan strategi *taking the turn* dan *yielding the turn*, sedangkan Biden lebih banyak menggunakan strategi *holding the turn*. Pembahasan pada sub kategori *turn taking* dalam debat politik dan lingkup analisis percakapan diharapkan akan lebih banyak dilakukan di masa yang akan datang.

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A. Introduction

The 2020 US presidential debate attracted both the international and mainly American public because it showed the democratic practice of America through the general election. In linguistics, this debate shows rich conversational turn taking phenomena: interruptions and overlapping. Meanwhile, the voters' focus was the delivery of campaign messages between two debaters and the voters (Benoit et al., 2003). Following the theory proposed by Stenström (2014) about turn-taking strategies, they will work if speakers use *taking the turn*, *holding the turn,* and *yielding the turn* appropriately. In addition, the theory of turn distribution, proposed by Hayashi (2013), encompasses turn allocation and TRP. These theories were used as the basis of analysis in this research. All participants must follow a set of debate rules so the debate can go properly. However, both debaters violated the rules because they did not wait their turn to speak. Consequently, there were a lot of overlapping and interruptions (Slate in Kinasih, 2020). Therefore, this research focuses on turn taking and offers a deeper analysis of its US presidential debate strategies.

A conversation takes place in a debate. Conversation is a form of cooperative activity in the form of communicative interaction (Gumperz, 1982) is often used in debates. Benoit et al. (2003) identified debate as the primary key to a campaign. This debate is a form of political debate. The debate contested the leading debaters to face each other to discuss more or less similar topics. Next, Benoit (2007) categorizes political debate as an essential message form in modern campaigns and as the most apparent media to display turn-taking. Therefore, this kind of campaign discourse is worthy of academic highlight. In addition, debate watchers also want to see questions, rebuttals, and challenges in the interaction between the debaters (Geoffrey, 2016; Simon-Vandenbergen, 2008). Next, Geoffrey (2016) explains that debate structure exists within the interaction between politicians in a debate. In a debate, a chance to speak needs time, location, and turns. Schubert (2019) explains that one's turns will last as long as the floor is given to him. Turn taking plays an essential role in the opening of a conversation and the duration of conversational distribution. Turn taking occurs when a moderator allocates turns or when the debaters proactively manage to get support as speakers who select themselves to speak by using a response initiator.

Conversation also encompasses the occurring conversation process, required rules, and reached 'order' in giving and receiving turns under turn taking devices fillers, interruptions, overlaps, etc. Hayashi (2013) explains two primary components of the model of turn-taking organization. The first is the process of turn construction through the *turn-constructional component*. It is essential to the turn construction method to clearly show the transition relevance place (TRP) to an interlocutor. The second is 'turn allocation' as a method of choosing someone who has to speak next. The two components must be understood to understand how a speaker forms a turn. Next, Hayashi quotes Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson about two turn allocation methods based on the 'turn taking model.' The first is the '*current-selects-next'* technique. It requires the current speaker to choose another person to speak next. The core of the next-speaker selection technique is combining a first-pair part, for instance, a question or a sequence-initiating action in general, with some specific utterances aimed to the interlocutor. The second is 'self-selection techniques.' This technique is used by a participant in taking the floor to speak to himself or to form a turn independently or without being appointed by the others.

Turn taking has three basic strategies when concerning the turn: taking, holding, and yielding the turn (Stenstrom, 2014). Further, verbal exchanges between debaters cannot be separated from them. On the surface, the strategies worked quite well. The plan works differently and is more complex. Another debater might fail to pay attention as expected, so the conversation stops due to a lack of encouragement. The debater might interrupt without waiting for the first debater to stop talking, causing overlapping and interruption, or the debater might lose the flow of the speech, causing unwanted silence when the second debater is not ready to fill the gap. However, the first and the second debater would probably pay attention to each other, and smooth turn taking occurs more commonly than conflicting ones. Turn taking strategies (taking the turn, holding the turn, and yielding the turn) are mainly studied either in the scope of TV interviews/talk shows (Habibi et al., 2020; Sinaga et al., 2021) or teacher-student classroom interactions (Sari et al., 2023) most of those emphases on interruption rather than other sub-strategies.

The theory proposed by Stenstrom (2014) above illustrates the strategies' usage in daily conversation. We use this theory as the basis to analyze the strategies in the presidential debate. This research offers a more profound explanation related to sub-strategies of turn taking, the interrelation amongst the sub-strategies, and the distribution of turn taking strategies in a presidential debate. The novelty of this research lies in the application of turn taking as a strategy that is abundant in terms of interruptions, overlapping, and repair in presidential debates. We decide to research turn taking strategies and their sub-strategies due to their importance in presidential debates.

Two research questions are formulated for this research: (1) How did turn taking strategies for the debaters work in the 2020 US presidential debate? (2) What kinds of turn taking strategies were dominantly used by the debaters? We applied conversation analysis to answer the questions. This research contributes to completing the sub-strategies of turn taking main strategies, especially in studying political debates from a conversation analysis perspective. This research is vital to enrich knowledge in the scope of conversation analysis and literature on the use of turn taking in a presidential debate. The result of this research is expected to reveal and explain turn taking strategies used by the debaters in the 2020 US presidential debate. In addition, this research is expected to be a basis for preparing for future presidential campaigns.

B.   Method

This descriptive qualitative research used the conversation analysis theory compiled by Have (2007). This research focuses on the past 2020 US presidential debate, yet this research does not pay attention to a particular case in detail and depth. This research studies the debate situation scientifically, and the data collected in this research is limited to the form of conversation in the debate.

This study used data based on the downloaded video of the US presidential debate. The transcription is a self-made one. It refers to Hutchby & Wooffitt's (2008) statement noting that transcription is done by the analyst themselves. It is compiled based on the video recording by referring to Hepburn & Bolden (2013). Later, the self-made transcription was validated by viewing, listening, and observing. The self-made transcription was compiled firstly by listening to the video repetitively from the beginning to the end of the video a few times to understand the overall context of the debate. Secondly, each segment in the recorded video was listened to repetitively and carefully to ensure the data's accuracy and the transcription that would be analyzed. Each segment was marked in a temporal draft of the transcription along with time stamps to indicate the beginning of the segments if there were some parts of the recordings that had not yet been transcribed due to certain factors (e.g: the speedy speech of the debaters, certain mumbling voices or even breathes). Thirdly, some parts of the video had interruptions and overlaps. These parts required adequate repetitions, so the speedy utterances of the debaters could be transcribed. For comparative information, we use secondary data sources in the form of online transcription.

In brief, conversation analysis techniques encompass "natural" data recording of the debate, participant (debater)-oriented observation, attention to detail, attention to sequences, turns, and extraordinary case analysis (Bilmes, 2014). The transcription convention and symbols developed by Sacks et al. (1974) were used in this research. The data were utterances transcribed based on the 2020 US presidential debate recording. The data is from a channel named C-SPAN on YouTube entitled *First 2020 Presidential Debate between Donald Trump and Joe Biden*. The video lasted 2 hours, 4 minutes 15 seconds. However, the discussion began at 27:50 (C-SPAN, 2020).

The classification of the conversational structure of the US presidential candidates is compiled based on the theory of turn and sequence organization. Therefore, the analysis method in this research was the conversation analysis method compiled by Schegloff (2007). The data analysis technique began by analyzing single cases involving *turn-by-turn* consideration of data related to relevant practice in this crucial organization. The method and the data analysis technique displayed in this research refer to Have (2007). The data analysis result display was conducted by forming narration. The analysis had three criteria: (1) turn-taking strategy: *taking the turn*, *holding the turn,* and *yielding the turn* (Stenstrom, 2014); (2) turn-taking data showing whether or not a turn reached TRP; and (3) Trump and Biden must be featured in the data and show their respective turns.

C.   Results and Discussion

The results of this research show that in the US presidential debate, the three core strategies of turn taking: *taking the turn, holding the turn,* and *yielding the turn* and their sub-strategies used by both debaters varied as follows.

1.   Taking the Turn

This strategy enables speakers to make plans or act spontaneously before talking. This strategy may work neatly and orderly, yet sometimes, it cannot be appropriately applied because debaters are not patient enough to wait for their turn to speak.

Data 1

1	**Wallace**	President Trump, thank you. Same question to you, Vice President Biden.
2→		You have two minutes.
3→	**Biden**	**First** of all, **um**…thank you. For doing this [I-**Uh**-The American people have the=
4→	**Trump**	[Thank you…thank you…Thank you, Joe.
5→	**Biden**	=right to have a say in who the supreme court nominee is **and** that say
6		occurs when **they** vote for US senator **and** when **they** vote for the president of the U.S. **They**
7		are not going to get that chance now **because** we are in the middle of an election already. It's
8		already started. The tens of thousands of people have already voted and so the thing that
9		should happen is we should wait. We should wait **and** see what the outcome of the election is,
10		**because** that is the only way the American people get to express their view is by who **they**
11		elect as president **and** who they elect as vice president.

(DCASP 1, 2020)

Data 1 reveals Trump took a clear start in (line 4). Meanwhile, Biden took a hesitant start (line 3), marked by using a discourse marker *first of all,* followed by fillers as hesitation markers**:** '*um*…. and . Uh. *First of all ,*'was used to initiate a conversation and to allow himself to continue his turn. In addition, Biden also consciously stopped his turn temporarily at the end of line 3, which was later continued at the beginning of his turn (line 5) as indicated by (=). Biden consciously let Trump continue his turn to reach TRP (line 4). In other words, Biden wanted to prevent overlapping between his turn (line 3) and Trump's turn (line 4) from happening in the long run. This overlapping sequence occurred when Biden said, '*I-Uh-The American people have the*=' at the same time as Trump said, '*Thank you…thank you…Thank you, Joe.*'

Biden used links '*and*' to connect reasons about the opinions of the US citizens related to the Supreme Court nominee and their opinion about voting for the US senator (line 5) and *the president of the US* (line 6) to construct the parallelism of the verbs, to form suggestion (line 9) and to explain the background of the president and vice president nominee (line 11). Biden used the link '*so*' to show the effects or results of hundreds of US citizens having given their vote (line 8). Biden used the link '*because*' to explain why US citizens did not have a chance to choose a senator and president (line 7) and how US citizens express their views about the president and vice president nominee (line 10). Biden's turn (line 3) which did not reach TRP, continued in his turn (line 5). Trump's turn (line 4) reached TRP. Trump and Biden selected themselves to take their turns.

Data 2

38→	**Biden**	And (if) there is 100 million people with pre-existing conditions, and they will be
39		taken away as well. hh.
40		Those pre-existing conditions, insurance-insurance companies are going
41		to love this. And so it's not appropriate to do this before this election.
42		If he wins the election and of the senate of Democrate.
43		The senate is Democrate or Republicant, then he goes forward. If not,
44→		we should wait until February. All right.=
45→	**Trump**	=There aren't 100 million with pre-existing conditions,
46→		As far as-**Let's say**-I concern the people already have their. **Say. Okay**.
47		Justice Ginsburg said very powerfully **and** very strongly at some points.
48		10 years ago or **so**, she said a president in the senate is elected for a period of time,
49→		but the president is selected for four years. We are not elected for 3 years. I am not elected for
50→		three years,so we have the the senate. We have a president =[
51→	**Biden**	[He's elected for the next section]
52→	**Trump**	[=during the period of time….during the period of time we have an opening
53→		I'm not elected for three years. I am elected for four years. [
54→	**Biden**	[And the election has already started….
55→	**Trump**	And 100 million people, Joe, 100 million people I don't know where you got that number.
56→		At the bigger problem that you have is you are going to extinguish 180 million people (.) 180
57→		million people with their private healthcare that they are very[
58→	**Biden**	[And that's simply not true [
59→	**Trump**	[Well, you should =[
60→	**Biden**	[That's not right, he (.) Hhhhh….
61→	**Trump**	[=know it..That's (inaudible) you are going to be a socialist. [
62→	**Biden**	[Go ahead
63→	**Trump**	That's (inaudible) [
64→	**Biden**	[I (.) hhhh (inaudible)
65→	**Trump**	Joe (inaudible)

(DCASP 1, 2020)

Data 2 shows Trump (line 45) and Biden (line 38) selected themselves (*self-select*) to take their turns. Turn taking from Biden (line 44) to Trump (line 45) occurred smoothly. Biden's turn reached TRP and was indicated by (=), meaning there was a direct link between Biden's and Trump's. Trump's *taking the turn* was included in taking over or uptake from Biden. It was marked by using (=), filler, *let's say, say,* and *okay*, indicating plans before forming statements about people with pre-existing conditions and using the link '*and*' and *so*. Trump used *and* to connect adverbial phrases: *very powerfully* and *very strongly* to introduce his view about Justice Ginsburg and used *so* to inform the duration about Justice Ginsburg's statement mentioning the first procedure of presidential nominee by the Senate. Trump's repair (*other initiated other repairs*) (line 45) was in the form of a statement and was aimed at Biden's statement (line 38). Biden used repair while explaining about 100 million people with a pre-existing condition and their rights under the Affordable Care Act, which would be taken away. Biden presumed that it was inappropriate to take away the policy of the Care Act before the election. By applying this repair, Biden offered new information (Koivisto, 2019). Trump later acknowledged this repair, which can be seen in his responses, saying "*Okay*" before giving his view. *Repair* also often occurs in other topics.

Taking the turn by Trump and Biden was marked by *linking*, filler, the use of (=), and metacommentary. In taking the turn, Trump (line 52) used (=) to continue his turn (lines 50, 59, and 61), linking '*and*' (line 55) and filler *well* (line 59). Linking *and* (line 55) was used to form *denial* about the number of the citizens who would lose *private health care* (*I don't know where you got that number*). Filler *well* was used to advise Biden to accept the number of citizens who would lose *private health care* (line 59). Trump's turn (baris 55, 57, 59, and 61) were *uptakes* towards *taking the turn* conducted by Biden. Trump formed a metacommentary by creating an *assessment* to correct the number of citizens who would lose *private health care* (lines 56—57) and to state his view about Biden's political tendency (line 61).

Trump called Biden (*other speaker select*) by using his name directly (line 65) to get his attention; as stated by Auer (2021), a signal of the next speaker select is by using the name or other kinds of addresses. Trump selected himself (*self-select*) (lines 59, 61, and 65) to interrupt because he wanted to respond to Biden's statement (line 58), to complete his statement from line 59, and to get Biden's attention by addressing him directly by using his name. Trump directly selected Biden as the next speaker by using the subject *you* when forming an *assessment* (line 56) and by repeating an incomplete sentence *That's* (line 63). In some of his lines, Trump clarified that he wanted to keep talking by repeating sentence structures, complex verbal phrases, adverbial phrases, and noun phrases, and using an incomplete sentence structure: *that's*. It did not occur once but three times. In the end, Trump finally finished the sentence that had been initiated by repetition. Trump directly selected Biden (next-speaker selection) (lines 59 and 61). Trump's turn (line 61) continued his turn in line 59 (*Well, you should = know it*). Trump performed self-initiated *self-repairs* (line 53). *Repair* occurred when Trump responded to Biden's interruption, as indicated by (/). Trump conducted prolonged self-initiated self-repair because his effort to offer his first solution (line 52) did not succeed due to the use of lexical repetition in his turn. In addition, this repair showed Trump's emphasis on the duration of his presidential status. This follows Koivisto (2019) explanation indicating that the escalated pressure for an explicit sign of problem resolution may be caused by an initial failure or failure to repair the problem.

To practice taking the turn, Biden used non-cooperative interruption by forming statements to inform the beginning of the general election (line 54), to form denial to refute the number of US citizens who would lose *private health care* in accordance to Trump's viewpoint (line 58; line 60) and to manage to keep the number of the citizen who would lose *private health care* based on the data he had. It was indicated using single-subject *he* and respiration *Hhhhh* (line 60) and single subject *I* followed by the aspiration *hhhh..* (line 64). In addition, Biden also practiced *holding the turn* as a strategy using lexical repetition: that's…. + *not* + *adj* to show similar aim to that of non-cooperative interruption.

Biden used *linking* to begin his turn to initiate a response to Trump's turn by giving new information about the general election (line 54) and to start his turn to interrupt Trump (line 58). Biden selected himself (*self-select*) to inform (line 54), to deny a specific claim from Trump and sustain his claim (line 58 and line 60), and to deny Trump's assessment (line 57 and line 59). Biden (line 60) selected Trump directly as the next speaker or his interlocutor by uttering *he* clearly and directly referred to Trump.

Generally, Trump and Biden used *links* '*and*' and *so* to combine their ideas within their respective turns. Trump showed a *hesitant start* by using filler, *let say* and *say* (data 2, line 46) and *well* (line 59). Pauses (both filled and non-filled) were accompanied by (filler) *well* usually functioned as a "response" marker. This practice is reflected in Trump's turn (data 2, line 59). Trump used *well* to fill the pause and connect it with his turn and Biden's. Biden used filler *um* and *uh* (data 1, line 3). At the beginning of his turn, Biden used a discourse marker and *turn initiator*, '*First of all*' (data 1, line 3).

Taking over consists of *uptake and links.* Uptake introduces an answer, usually in the form of *all right*. In his turn, Biden used all right (data 2, line 44) as an uptake signal. However, this triggers Trump to respond to his statement immediately. Trump used *Okay* (data 2, line 46) as an uptake signal in his turn to mark the reservation.

Interruptions strategies include alert and metacommentary. In this research, alert is represented by *listen*. *Listen* forces debaters to stop talking even though there are a lot of messages they want to tell. Despite of this fact, there is a situation where alerts give unexpected effects or even has zero effect on the interlocutor. In the debate, Trump began to announce that he needed to say something and did not pay attention to Biden's efforts to convey his opinions about packing the court by saying, 'Listen… listen…. who is o*n your list, Joe? This is… Listen, you. Why didn't you give your list?'* (data 7 line 155). However, Trump's efforts to get Biden's attention through an alert did not get the expected response because Biden did not respond to him by saying, '*This is so impractical.*' Trump interruption is included in the intrusive one (Li, 2001). There is a difference between the interruption aimed by Trump and Biden. Trump used interruption, leading to overlapping. Meanwhile, Biden interrupted Trump strategically and only used interruption a few times, even if overlaps occurred many times. This is close to what Carbó (1992) once stated: when the current speaker stops talking despite of the 'overlap' and implicitly let an interruption occur, the interrupter takes the floor and the expressed utterances within the interruption may expand for a lot of sentences.

The uses of metacommentary by Trump (Data 2) as an interruption strategy were aimed at forming assessment and evaluative correction towards the number of citizens who would lose private healthcare, to state his view of Biden's political tendency and to show Trump's dissatisfaction towards resistance in Biden's response. In data 2 (lines 56—57) above, Trump was impolite and totally acted out of place if he did not let Biden be in. This follows the idea stated by Caldwell & Raclaw (2023), explaining that the uses of explicit metacommentary are to guide the interlocutor to return to an agenda of the first question, offering more specific direction of adequate responses and perceiving certain dissatisfaction of the question poser towards the resistance in his interlocutor's responses.

2. Holding the Turn

Holding the turn shows the replanning steps of the debaters to keep moving in the middle of their turns. The plans used to enable them to keep talking is called stalling. This technique includes strategically placed silent pauses, filled pauses and/or verbal (fillers), lexical repetition (e.g.: in the form of a word, parts of clauses or combination) and a new start to their turn to aid the debaters in avoiding damage and taking over.

Data 3

118→	**Biden**	[=Now here's the deal. The deal is that it's going to wipe out pre-existing condition.
119		By the way, the twenty …. the 200,000 people that have died on his watch, how many of
120		those have survived? Over 7 million people have contracted covid. What does it mean
121→		for them going forward if you strike down the affordable Care Act?
122→	**Trump**	Joe, you (said) 308,000 military people died because you couldn't
123→		provide proper health care in the military, so don't tell me about it=[
124→	**Biden**	[Here is the deal[I am happy to talk about this[
125→	**Trump**	[=and if you were here it would be 2 million people [because you were very late.
126→		On the draw. [You (inaudible)
127→	**Biden**	[Ahahahh. Late on the draw
(DCASP 1, 2020)		

Data 3 reveals Biden held his turn by using lexical repetition by using noun phrases *the deal* (line 118 and line 119), the expression *here is the deal* (line 118 and line 124) and article *the* (line 119). The r*epair* (line 119) is categorized as *self-repair*. *Repair* occurred when Biden revised the number of the late COVID victims in his response. Biden used the lexical repetitions to ensure the audience, Trump and the moderator.

Trump held his turn by using lexical repetition and silent pauses (.) to maintain his turn (line 126). Trump used lexical repetition *because* of having the turn strategy to emphasize the cause of the death of the military (line 122). *Repairs* in Trump's turn (line 122) and in Biden's turn (line 119) were in the form of statements. In the data above, *topic shifting* occurs frequently. Biden first discussed how to give proper treatment to the victims of COVID-19. The topic was later moved to the problem of the death of the military posed by Trump because Trump presumed Biden had failed in providing healthcare. Topic shifting shows domination, so Trump shows his domination by adding new information (Tannen, 1994), indicating Trump's ambitious and eager nature through his competition-oriented strategy to offer his thoughts (Rohmah & Suwandi, 2021). Trump intended to take over the turn by shifting topics to refute Biden's previous

statements. It causes confrontative overlapping because both debaters hold their turns (*holding the turn*) and refute each other. This circumstance is in line with an explanation by Ibrahim et al. (2018), stating that confrontative overlapping occurs in a conversation because there is an attempt to take over the conversation (the turn) to refute previous statements. However, there is a situation where overlapping occurs unintentionally due to a lack of planning, allowing both debaters to begin a new turn (data 1, line 3).

Data 4

109→	**Trump**	[But **you are**--[Joe, **you're** the liar.
110→	**Biden**	[**Hush-I…I…I want to make sure I** am….**I**….Aha..ha..ha...
111→	**Trump**	[You did the least **(.)** for instance
112→	**Biden**	[**I want to make sure** [

(DCASP 1, 2020)

Data 4 reveals Trump held his turn by using lexical repetition *you are* (line 109) and silent pauses (.) (line 111). According to the data, Trump constantly tried to switch the topic of the conversation he considered irrelevant instead of giving enough information to Biden. Trump showed lexical repetition *you* two times (line 109) to highlight his negative attitude towards Biden. Biden used a filler *hush* to prevent Trump from commenting, and a *backchannel* laughed (*Aha…ha…ha…*) (line 110) to hide his annoyance towards Trump's statement. Both debaters held their respective turns.

Meanwhile, Biden uttered the subject *I* (line 110) three times (lexical repetition) and a sentence *I want to make sure* (line 110 and line 112). He later uttered that he wished to limit the discourse's direction and essence and explain it. Further, both debaters also seemed not to be able to complete their turns. However, the incomplete utterances in Trump's and Biden's turns syntactically showed that they had fully achieved their acts in delivering critical evaluations to each other. This situation can be referred to a case examined by Li & Jiang (2023) and is also in line with an opinion stated by Park & Kline (2020), highlighting that even if utterances in common evaluative activities are not completed syntactically, the utterances show very complete acts in delivering critical evaluation to the others.

Trump applied strategically placed *silent pause* (.) as a turn holder strategy to prolong his turns. This indicates that Trump had been maintaining his floor, parallel to a case analyzed by Putra (2024), which portrays that a source person used silent pauses several times to hold his turn. Trump also seemed to correct himself (*self-repair*) by replacing the subject *we* with the subject *I* (line 49). '*We*' refers to Trump and the Republican Party he led. Meanwhile, '*I*' refers to Trump as a person. Trump held his turn (*holding the turn*) to give Biden an assessment and suggestion to accept the number of US citizens who would lose *private health care* (line 59).

The sentence *I want to make sure…* in Biden's turn is included in lexical repetition (lines 110 and 112) and a *verbal filler* because Biden used the syntactic structure of a sentence which had similar a semantic meaning two times indicating repairs (Taboada, 2022): self-initiated self-repair. In addition, Biden also used verbal filler *hush* and laughter (data 4, line 110). Without filled pauses, Biden got the impression that Trump had finished relying on his messages, did not have anything else to verbalize, and was ready to rely on his messages (data 2, *Taking the turn* line 51). The staller *You know* is used by Trump (data 5, line 141). A long pause after using the staller will cause speaker-switching if this pause occurs in different positions. Trump's statements often seemed obvious to Biden in the debate, so he interrupted quickly.

A new start as a device was used to begin a new part to avoid obscurity (data 2 line 46). It was evident that Trump had not yet decided to verbalize his thoughts to show his rejection because he had difficulty expressing them through repetitions, pauses and *filled verbal* before he finally realized that starting from the beginning was the only way out of this challenging situation. The lexical repetition (produced by Trump and Biden) was to give emphasis or to strengthen their statements (Sinaga et al., 2021) and specifically to ensure their audience about his words (Habibi et al., 2020).

Trump (data 4) and Biden (data 3) managed to utilize holding the turn as a strategy by relying on turn allocation *self-select* and the completion of TRP in their turns to control the focus (topic) of debates. This situation has a resemblance to a situation described by Phuong & Tho (2020): 'KH's strategies of turn-taking such as 'signaling the end of turn', 'holding a turn', 'asking a question', 'self-selection' and 'prosodic features' seem to play a significant part in controlling the focus of the interview.'

3. Yielding the Turn

Yielding the turn shows a speaker needs to hand over his turn to another speaker. Its sub-strategies are *prompting*, *appealing*, and *giving up*. Regarding giving turns, a speaker intends to encourage another speaker to speak or does it assertively to his interlocutor. This is described in data 5 and data 6.

Data 5

136	**Biden**	You are talking about 2 million people. We will talk about this in the next segment. Let me finish…
137		The point is that <u>The president</u> is also opposed to Roe V Wade. That is on the ballot and
138→		on the court. On the court and so that' s also at stake right now so the election all [is in the ballot
139→	**Trump**	[You have already done. Why isn't it in the ballot?
140→	**Biden**	Because= [
141→	**Trump**	[You know [
142→	**Biden**	[=it is in the ballot in the court
143→	**Trump**	[I don't think so---

(DCASP 1, 2020)

Data 5 reveals *yielding the turn* was practiced through *adjacency pairs*. *Yielding the turn* conducted by Biden was marked by forming statements as complete responses (lines 136—138 and 142) and *incomplete responses* (line 140). Trump responded to Biden by asking him a negative-interrogative question (line 139), which was considered an interruption intended to ask for clarification (Li & Jiang, 2024). Next, they responded to each other's lines in which Biden constantly struggled to complete his turn and occasionally got interrupted by Trump. Trump interrupted him using a turn initiator and an up taker '*you know*' (line 141). It was used to give Biden an assessment and to show Trump's acknowledgement of Biden's precious turns and the relation between his attitude towards Biden as an addressee (Schubert, 2019). The expression '*I don't think so*' (line 143) was a statement to refute Biden's statement.

Data 6

149→	**Trump**	[You pack the court? When did you pack the court?
150→	**Biden**	[Now, make sure you let people know.[
151→	**Trump**	[Why won't you answer the question who is on your list? He is
152		not answering the question.
153→	**Biden**	[I'm not going to answer the question because the question is[
154→	**Trump**	[You're in radical left.[
155→	**Biden**	[Will you shut up?
156→	**Trump**	[= Listen…listen….who is in your list, Joe? This is…Listen,
157		You…Why didn't you give your list?[
158→	**Biden**	[This is so impractical.

(DCASP 1, 2020)

Data 6 reveals that Trump prompted various questions (lines 149, 151, 154, 155, and 156) consecutively to Biden, yet Biden never gave favorable responses (lines 150, 153, and 158). In other words, Biden gave equivocal responses that were considered acceptable in political debates (Simon-Vandenbergen, 2008). All questions in interruptions are used to demand clarification (Li & Jiang, 2023). Trump's statements (lines 151—152 and line 154) were very assertive, conveying that Trump instructed Biden to answer his questions through those statements (Wu & Yang, 2022). On the other hand, Biden formed a *yes/no question* with modal auxiliary *will* (line 155) to ask Trump directly to stay quiet.

Prompting is an encouraging discourse act used to give suggestions. Some discourse acts (e.g. instances, apologize, ask, invite, object, offer, greet, question and request) encourage others to provide stronger responses. A rhetorical question used by Biden was a form of yielding the turns to answer Trump's interruption and was an effective turn taker. Biden responded due to the urgency responding to a question. It can be seen in *prompting* offered by Trump to Biden (data 6 line 151, 156—157) or Biden formed a rhetorical question, but it was answered by himself (data 3 *Holding the turn*, line 118—120). Trump yielded his turn through prompting (questions) because he had initiated an adjacency pair requiring a second part (responses) to be produced by Biden as an addressee (Taboada, 2022).

Appealing is indicated by an appealer. The example of the strongest appealer was uttered by Trump (data 5 line 141), that is, *you know*. It was immediately produced to interrupt Biden and got feedback from Biden (Rivai, 2019). Giving up signifies the realization of the speaker to give the listener a time to verbalize his thought. Biden used giving up in data 2, line 62. Both Trump and Biden utilized more than one turn-taking strategy within their turns because both were the main (predominant) speakers in and during the debate and managed their-turns to build effective communication (Sari et al., 2023).

D. Conclusion

Biden majors hold the turns better than Trump, while Trump majors take the turns with his interruption strategy and yield the turns. Trump used *Okay* as an uptake signal, alert *listen,* and metacommentary (taking the turn), used *strategically placed silent pause* to prolong his turns, used *self-initiated self-repair* to correct himself and a new start to reinitiate his unprepared turn (holding the turn) and produced strongest appealer *you know* to interrupt Biden (yielding the turn). Biden used *all right* as an uptake signal in his turn (taking the turn), used verbal filler *hush,* laughter, lexical repetition and a very long pause (holding the turn) and addressed himself or the audience to show prompting and used *giving up* as yielding the turn strategy to indicate his turn is over. Trump may take over (yielding the turn). Regarding yielding the turn strategy, both debaters generally take an adjacency-pairs-like form to show prompting.

Trump and Biden managed to utilize holding the turn as a strategy by relying on turn allocation of speaker *self-select* and the completion of TRP in their turns to control the focus (topic) in the debate. The turn allocation '*current-selects-next'* occurs when Trump appoints Biden to speak and vice versa. Both Trump and Biden utilize multiple turn-taking strategies within their respective produced turns. This is incredibly possible because both are the main speakers in the debate and can manage their turns to build effective communication. The implication of this research is to enrich knowledge related to turn-taking strategies: taking the floor, holding the floor and yielding the floor and their strategies (linguistics perspective), to aid lecturers in introducing material and new concepts of turn-taking in Politics to students of linguistics, students and lecturer in general and especially linguistic lecturers (pedagogical perspective and interdisciplinary perspective).

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