

# Turn Taking Strategy in the 2020's American Presidential Debate

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim of the study was to identify the kinds of turn taking strategies used in the first American Presidential Debate in 2020 between Donald Trump and Joe Biden, as well as to classify the functions of the turn taking that occurred in the first American Presidential Debate in 2020 between Donald Trump and Joe Biden. The researcher employed a descriptive qualitative approach because the data were derived from Donald Trump's and Joe Biden's utterances on YouTube video, which was transcribed and analyzed using Sterntörm's (2014) theory of turn taking strategy; taking the turn strategy, holding the turn strategy, and yielding the turn strategy. The data were analyzed by determining the context, categorizing the data based on the theory, analyzing and interpreting the data, and drawing conclusion based on the findings. The findings revealed 35 data from Donald Trump's utterances, with the most strategy used was alert that occurred twelve times, while he never used hesitant start strategy. On the other hand, 20 data were obtained from Joe Biden's utterances. In fact, Joe Biden also employed alert strategy as the most utilized strategy which was the same as Donald Trump, but the occurrence was only five times. In addition, Joe Biden did not apply four turn taking strategies which were hesitant start, metacomment, silent pause, and appealing. One important point to note was that both candidates utilized alert as the most used strategy, which functioned as interrupting the other speaker by raising the tone of his voice in order to attract the attention of the interlocutor.*

**Keywords:** Turn Taking, Debate, Presidential Election.

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## INTRODUCTION

Whenever somebody talks, the interlocutor must wait and listen. Then, when the speaker has finished speaking, the interlocutor takes the floor. This type of communication is common in regular interactions with people where the participants are free to take control of the conversation. Thus, that condition is closely related to the linguistic phenomenon called turn taking (Stenstör, 2014). According to Stivers et al. (2009), turn



taking is the most significant aspect of the basic structure of a conversation. A good communication occurs when the conversation flows smoothly and the listener understands the message.

According to Liddicoat (2007), conversation analysis is the study of language as a social interaction. Each individual has a different way of conveying their ideas in doing communication, so turn taking is an intriguing topic to discuss. In line with Levinson (2016), in conversation, the turn-taking system has several distinguishing features: turns are brief and responses are extremely quick, but turns vary in duration and are usually of complex structure, indicating that the basic cognition is highly compressed. Therefore, it is impossible to deny that speech changes also occur in formal situations as in the debate, specifically the presidential debate.

To have further discussion on this topic, the researcher analyses the turn taking strategies through the first American presidential election debate in 2020 between Donald Trump as the American president and a nominee of Democratic party and Joe Biden as the Republican nominee in Cleveland. There are several reasons why turn taking in presidential debates are studied. First, turn taking is connected to the word choices used in conversation since it belongs to spoken discourse, which is related to the use of language, referring to how the language is used in communication on a certain context, purpose, or certain person. Second, to convey the arguments about the rising topic discussed in the first presidential debate, both parties should state their ideas clearly and alternately to persuade the voters.

Natalia et al. (2019) studied turn taking strategies in the setting of political debates under the title *Turn Taking Strategies in Political Debates*. In practice, this research was a compared study on communication mechanisms in political discussions. Applying a descriptive qualitative approach, they found that taking the turn and interrupting, which were to be the most frequently implemented by debaters aiming to keep the turn and convey their ideas, thereby dominating the debate.

Whereas, Yunus & Eliastuti (2020) with the title *The Turn Taking Strategy Used by Prabowo and Jokowi in the Presidential Election Debate 2019* conducted research on the turn-taking strategies employed by Prabowo and Jokowi during the 2019 presidential election debate. Using a descriptive qualitative methodology, they found that the strategy of taking the turn in the presidential debate demonstrates the speakers' linguistic abilities in addition to their ability to persuade voters depending on the interaction.

Another study related to the turn taking strategies in the presidential debate has been done by Saputra (2021) under the title *Turn Taking Strategies Used in The Second Presidential Debate Between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump on the second presidential debates*. He found that all of the strategies occurred and the majority of uptakes are delivered by the debaters after analyzing with a descriptive qualitative approach. Moreover, Sriwahyuni (2021) conducted another research on turn-taking techniques based on the video and transcripts of Donald Trump's and Joe Biden's final presidential debate with the title *Turn-Taking Strategies in The Final Presidential Debate Between Donald Trump and Joe Biden*. She discovered that Donald Trump or Joe Biden wanted to keep the turns going at all times.



To reinforce the concept of turn taking strategies, several study objects became the focus of the study by employing the descriptive qualitative method. Setiajid et al. (2020) conducted a study on turn taking strategies in EFL classes as the object of study. They found that each person has a distinct personality that creates a dialogue with a specific pattern. In addition, a study from Amir & Jakob (2020) with the title Male and Female Teachers' Turn Taking Strategies in EFL Classroom Interaction studied the same topic in EFL classrooms focused on the various types of turn taking strategies employed by male and female teachers in EFL classroom communication.

Agustianto et al. (2020) investigated turn taking strategies utilized in Jimmy Fallon's The Tonight Show interviews, which gave another perspective on the turn taking mechanism. They found that all of the turn-taking strategies types were employed productively by the guests and the host. The data show that the strategies are used for a variety of reasons, including Distracting the speaker to set up the time and material of the conversation, clarifying or asking something essential to the speaker, holding the turn and constantly talking, trying to incite the listener to react, and sending a signal the listener to take shifts and start to talk.

Furthermore, Sari et al. (2021) studied the Sunda Empire's turn taking strategies in an Indonesia Lawyer Club (ILC) talk show debate. They found that all the turn taking strategies occurred in the data and the starting up strategy became the most frequently used by the participants. To have a broader knowledge about the topic proposed, identifying the possible causes why they tend to utilize specific types of turn taking strategies should be done.

Additionally, Ashidiq & Sariyati (2022) conducted a study on turn taking strategies during an interview with Warren Edward Buffet on Squawk Box Business News. They discovered that all turn taking strategies appeared, and for turn allocation strategies, the next speaker self-selects was the most commonly applied in the interview.

In another object of study, Aisyah (2021) studied the turn-taking system in the film *Ever After* using descriptive qualitative method. This research was done to determine the type of turn-taking mechanism, each function of it, and how each character creates the mechanism. This gives an additional overview related to character constructions besides the types and the functions of turn taking. Using a descriptive qualitative approach and Stenstörms (2014) theory, this research demonstrated that the characters usually employed yielding the floor strategy and backchannel signals to continue the conversation, implying that the dialogue proceeds smoothly. As a result, it implied that the characters did not breach their turn.

After analyzing relevant earlier studies, the researcher aims to conduct a research on the most recent and intense American presidential debate in 2020, in which the research focuses on the strategies and functions of turn taking used. In addition, the object of this research is debate forum which is different from some studies that have been done on various objects of study, such as on the interview, movie, classroom interaction, and several studies that have the similar object recently.

To support this research, the researcher applies Stenstörms (2014) theory, which proposes three sorts of turn-taking strategies: taking the turn, holding the turn, and yielding the turn. This theory aids in the identification of the phrasing of the question



addressed in this study. However, it can be discovered that there are significant similarities and distinctions between earlier researches and the researcher's study. One of the connections is that the issue, in terms of turn taking strategy, is the same. There is one identical research item. Nonetheless, there is a difference between the actual study and the earlier investigations.

The researcher's object of study is a debate forum, where most of the previous researchers are the interview on a television program, classroom meetings, a movie, and a YouTube channel. The researcher focuses on the strategy and the functions of turn taking technique applied in the debate forum. As a result, this research is likely to broaden understanding regarding turn-taking strategy and fill in gaps that have not been addressed in earlier studies.

The researcher concentrates on analyzing the strategy of turn-taking, as well as analyzing the functions of turn-taking used by Donald Trump and Joe Biden in the first American Presidential Election Debate in 2020. This research is classified as a conversational analysis study since the researcher analyzed the data using Stenstörms (2014) theory on turn-taking strategies, which are classified into three types: taking the turn strategy, holding the turn strategy, and yielding the turn strategy.

The researcher analyzed the utterances that contain turn taking on the subject of Covid-19 in the debate to be discussed and observed in this research. This is due to the fact that Covid-19 is one of the most serious issues confronting the majority of the world's countries, including the United States. This is the basis for researchers to narrow the data to be studied; in this case, the topic of covid-19 in the debate has a longer duration than other proposed topics; thus, the topic can represent the entire utterances that contain elements of turn taking that occurred during the presidential debate between Trump and Biden.

The findings of this research will also be used in academic settings as reference material for teaching about turn-taking strategies and their functions. This research will also benefit for other researchers by enriching the analysis of turn taking strategies.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

For this research, a descriptive qualitative approach was applied. According to Taylor et al. (2015), [WU1] in a descriptive research, the researcher communicates the issue through descriptions of occurrences. In addition, this research requires the researcher to interpret the implications of the data findings (Tavakol, 2012). Hence, since the data are derived from Donald Trump and Joe Biden's utterances during the presidential debate on the YouTube video, the utterances which contain turn taking strategies and the functions of it were analyzed for further analysis in the descriptive form. The researcher employs a qualitative technique since it emphasizes on current social issues through writings and discussions with speakers (Miles et al, 2014). Therefore, it assisted the researcher in obtaining more understanding related to turn taking strategies and their functions in the first American presidential election debate 2020.

The researcher, based on a qualitative research methodology, is the primary research instrument (Miles et al, 2014). According to Maykut & Morehouse (1994), the human instrument is a multifunctional device for disclosing the happening events. The

researcher played an important role in developing, collecting, and analyzing the data from the first American presidential election debate in 2020.

The data sources of this research are the video on the CNBC News YouTube channel and the transcript of Donald Trump and Joe Biden's statements in the first American presidential election debate 2020 which were obtained from [www.debates.org](http://www.debates.org). The debate was held on September 29, 2020 that took place in the Health Education Campus of Case Western Reserve University, and the Cleveland Clinic became the host of the event. However, the debate was broadcasted by ABC News on September 30, 2020. The candidates were Donald Trump as the American president and Democratic nominee as well as Joe Biden as the Republican nominee. The debate topics were about supreme court, Covid-19, economy, race and violence in the cities, Donald Trump and Joe Biden record, and also the election integrity.

The data for this research are Donald Trump's and Joe Biden's utterances in the first American presidential election debate 2020 containing turn taking strategies. The video performance of Donald Trump and Joe Biden in the first American Presidential debate election in 2020, which was broadcasted on ABC News, were used to generate the data for this research. The video was obtained from [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). In this research, it additionally employs supporting data sources in the form of transcriptions of debates that exclusively focus on the Covid-19 issue in minutes 18:40.

To collect data for this study, the following actions were taken. First, the researcher viewed the CNBC Television YouTube channel's footage of the first American presidential election debate in 2020. Second, the researcher obtained the script of Donald Trump and Joe Biden's first debate. Third, the researcher re-watched the video while simultaneously reading the script. Fourth, depending on the chosen discussion subject concerning Covid-19, the researcher identified and categorized the interactions that comprise adopting the turn strategies from Stenstöröm's theory (2014).

To analyze the data, the following procedures were taken. Firstly, determining the context in order to comprehend the condition of the debate. Secondly, categorizing the data into three categories based on Stenstöröm 's theory (2014), which include turn taking strategies (starting up, taking over, interrupting, and overlap), holding the turn (verbal filler and filled pause, lexical repetition, starting all over again), and yielding the turn (prompting, appealing, and giving up). Thirdly, analyzing and interpreting the data in order to address the research questions of the types of the turn taking strategies, as well as the functions of turn-taking strategies employed based on the context in the debate. Lastly, drawing a conclusion based on the research findings.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This research finds types of turn taking strategies applied by the participants: taking the turn, holding the turn, and yielding the turn.

### ***Taking the turn strategies***

The data for taking the turn strategy is separated into four categories: starting up, taking over, interrupting, and overlapping. Starting-up data is divided into two categories: hesitant start and clear start; taking over data is classified into two parts: uptakes and



links; and interrupting data is categorized into two: alert and metacomment. To have a better understanding of the types of taking-the-turn strategies and the functions of each type, the researcher provides representative data from each candidate. In the taking the turn strategy, it was found that there are 39 data from both candidates. These data are presented and discussed further below.

Table 1. Types of taking the turn strategies

Taking the turn strategies	Data	
	Trump	Biden
<b>Starting Up</b>		
- Hesitant start	-	-
- Clear start	1	2
<b>Taking Over</b>		
- Uptakes	6	4
- Links	7	1
<b>Interrupting</b>		
- Alert	12	5
- Metacomment	1	-
<b>Total</b>	27	12
		<b>39</b>

### *Starting up*

This strategy, as previously mentioned, consists of a hesitant and clear start. The researcher does not find the hesitant, and two data for a clear start are identified.

### *Clear start (datum 95 and 119)*

#### *Datum (95)*

(94) Wallace: Vice President Biden, go ahead, Sir.

(95) Biden: **Look**, the way to open businesses is give them the wherewithal to be able to open. We provided money, the-

This expression occurred when the candidates discussed the efficacy of masks, which was questioned by Chris Wallace, and both Trump and Biden responded. The situation was not as favourable as it had been at the beginning of the debate. However, in this case, Joe Biden used the starting up strategy, which includes a clear start expression. It was shown by Biden's use of the word "look" at the opening of his remark. Once he knew Wallace had completed his statement, he took the moderator's (Wallace's) turn. Biden's reaction was classified as a clear start since he began his statement immediately after the moderator gave him permission to respond. Furthermore, Biden took his turn with a concise response, indicating that he was ready to undertake the discussion with a straightforward response. As a result of his reliance on "look" utterances, Biden used one of the turn-taking strategies, clear start, as part of his starting up strategy.

*Datum (17)*

*(16) Biden: Oh really?*

**(17) Trump: Go take a look.** *The Governors said I did a phenomenal job. Most of them said that. In fact, people that would not be necessarily on my side said that, "President Trump did a phenomenal job." We did. We got the gowns. We got the masks. We made the ventilators. You wouldn't have made ventilators. And now we're weeks away from a vaccine. We're doing therapeutics already. Fewer people are dying when they get sick. Far fewer people are dying. We've done a great job.*

In this datum, the situation happened when both of the candidates discussed about closing down the country. The tension was a bit heating up, and the participants were still eager to continue the discussion. Trump used a starting up strategy in this situation, which implies a clear start. It is demonstrated by Trump's use of the words "go take a look" at the beginning of his comment. This is a definite start expression since Trump knew Biden had completed his remarks. As a consequence, Trump began his statement directly following Biden's. Trump addressed Biden's comments with a clear statement indicating his willingness for further dialogue. As a result, the phrase "go take a look" denotes a clear start as part of a starting up strategy.

*Taking over*

This strategy consists of two categories, they are uptakes and links.

*Uptakes (datum 29 and 97)*

*Datum (29)*

*(28) Wallace: Okay, gentlemen, gentlemen. Let me move on to questions about the future because you both have touched on two of the questions I'm going to ask. Focusing on the future first, President Trump, you have repeatedly either contradicted or been at odds with some of your governments own top scientists. The week before last, the Head of the Centers for Disease Control, Dr. Redfield said it would be summer before the vaccine would become generally available to the public. You said that he was confused and mistaken. Those were your two words. But Dr. Slaoui, the head of your Operation Warp Speed, has said exactly the same thing. Are they both wrong?*

**(29) Trump: Well,** *I've spoken to the companies and we can have it a lot sooner. It's a very political thing because people like this would rather make it political than save lives.*

In this situation, Wallace, the moderator, questioned Trump about the development of a vaccine that should be widely available to the public by the summer. This was also the start of Trump's response to the vaccination distribution. The situation remained conducive, and the candidates were in a good frame of mind to continue the debate. Trump used the taking over strategy, which implies an uptakes expression, by opening his statement with the phrase "well." Because he realized Wallace had completed his question, Trump took the moderator's chance to respond. Trump declared that the vaccination distribution has been confirmed to the firms that will be distributed soon. Although Trump used the word "well" at the opening of his statements, it was not considered a starting up strategy since he continued to address the preceding subject, which Wallace questioned. Furthermore, Trump declared his response or took over the moderator's turn after the moderator ended his speaking turn. As a result, it was classified as a taking over strategy, which pertains to uptakes expression.

*Datum (97)*

(96) Wallace: *But I was asking you, sir, about masks.*

(97) Biden: **Well**, masks make a big difference. His own head of the CDC said if we just wore masks between now, if everybody wore a mask and social distanced between now and January, we'd probably save up to 100,000 lives. It matters.

This datum occurred when the candidates were discussing masks. After hearing Donald Trump's opinion, the moderator, Wallace, asked Joe Biden a question. The situation was still a bit conducive, because before the question was raised for Biden the situation was not conducive. However, both participants were eager to continue the discussion. Joe Biden was caught using the word "well" at the beginning of his remarks. He took the moderator's seat since he considered Wallace had accomplished his statement. Although Biden began his statements with the term "well," this cannot be classified as a start-up strategy because Biden continued the earlier subject, which was questioned by the moderator, Wallace. Biden, on the other hand, addressed the question or took his turn to speak after Wallace finished speaking, not during the pause. As a result, Biden's use of "well" in that datum is part of the uptakes strategy in the taking over strategy.

*Links (datum (35 and 42))**Datum (35)*

(34) Wallace: *He talked about the summer, sir, before it's generally available, just like Dr. Redfield.*

(35) Trump: **Because** he said it's a possibility that we'll have the answer before November 1<sup>st</sup>. \*It could also be after that.

In this datum, the discussion was about the distribution of vaccines that would be ready in the summer before generally available for the public. For this case, Donald Trump used the expression of links strategy as part of the taking over strategy in this case. Trump began his statement using the conjunction "because" to express his point of view. The links strategy aims at perceiving or disagreeing with the previous remarks. Meanwhile, the usage of "because" in Trump's answer refers to the moderator, Wallace's statement. Trump explained the moderator's statements about the vaccine's preparation, which he expected to be ready by summer. As a result, the statement "because" is classified as a taking over strategy in the context of links strategy.

*Datum (42)*

(41) Trump: *That was said sarcastically, and you know that. That was said sarcastically.*

(42) Biden: **So**, here's the deal. This man is talking about a vaccine. Every serious company is talking about maybe having a vaccine done by the end of the year, but the distribution of that vaccine will not occur until sometime beginning of the middle of next year to get it out, if we get the vaccine. And pray God we will. Pray God we will.

This datum occurred when the candidates talked about the vaccine distribution, which should have dispensed fairly soon, but the government had yet to distribute them by the time they set the date. At this point, the situation was out of control since both parties wanted to speak up. Biden employed the expression which is contained in taking over strategy, especially in links strategy, in this datum. He opened his response with the



word “so,” indicating his disagreement with what Trump stated. Furthermore, once Trump ended his remarks, Biden took over Trump’s speaking turn to continue the preceding speaker’s comments. As a result, pointing to Biden’s use of the expression “so” is considered as taking over strategy in the context of links strategy.

### *Interrupting*

There are two types in this strategy that involve in interrupting strategy. There are two of them: alert strategy and metacomment strategy.

### *Alert (datum 16 and 27)*

#### *Datum (16)*

*(15) Trump: You didn’t think we should have closed our country because you thought it was terrible. You wouldn’t have closed it for another two months. By my doing it early, in fact, Dr. Fauci said, “President Trump saved thousands of lives.” Many of your Democrat Governors said, “President Trump did a phenomenal job.” We worked with the Governor*

*(16) Biden: Oh really?*

The researcher regarded this datum to be in a conducive situation because both participants were still in the early stages of the debate and there were not many interruptions during the debates. However, the subject presented is critical to their image as future presidential candidates. They discussed why Americans should trust one of the contenders more than another in handling the health situation, particularly the Covid-19. In this datum, Biden felt a bit annoyed because Trump interrupted him first and said things that mostly praised himself in relation to coping with the crisis of Covid-19, so Biden decided to interrupt Trump. Biden depicted one of the interrupting styles by utilizing a louder intonation to attract the attention of Donald Trump while he was speaking. Biden began his raising intonation by stating “oh really?” which means that Trump said too much about himself and Biden did not believe in him.

As a consequence, Joe Biden became irritated and raised his voice to interrupt Donald Trump, but Biden was unable to stop Trump from speaking. Biden used an improper phrase to interrupt someone with increasing intonation in order to attract his opponent’s attention. As a result, Biden’s interruption of Trump’s speech with “oh really?” in a rising intonation is the same type of turn taking strategy as the interrupting strategy in the area of alert.

#### *Datum (27)*

*(26) Biden: How many people? His own his own CDC Director says we could lose as many as another 200,000 people between now and the end of the year. And he said, if we just just wear a mask, we can save half those numbers. Just a mask. And by the way, in terms of the whole notion of a vaccine, we’re for a vaccine, but I don’t trust him at all. Nor do you. I know you don’t. What we trust is a scientist. You trust a scientist by the way, and then*

*(27) Trump: You don’t trust Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer?*

For this point, the situation began to heat up because the issue of the discussion was vaccine distribution, which the government had not yet distributed. According to



what Biden mentioned on the data above, rather than disseminating the vaccine sooner, merely wearing a mask may rescue more people from the epidemic, although what Biden felt was not the reality. As a result, Biden argued that he did not trust Trump since the vaccination was not distributed quickly. Considering Trump was displeased with what Biden stated, he chose to interrupt him by stating in a rising tone, "you don't trust Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer?" Trump's interruption caused Biden to pause, and the turn was given to Trump because he employed a high intonation and did not want to end his argument. As a result, interrupting Biden's speech with the phrase "you don't trust Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer?" is considered one of the turn-taking strategies in the interrupting strategy, particularly the alert strategy.

### Metacomment (77)

#### *Datum (77)*

(76) Biden : *You just admitted you'd shut it down.*

(77) **Trump: *Wait a minute, Joe. Let me shut you down for a second, Joe, just for one second. He wants to shut down the country. We just went through it. We had to, because we didn't know anything about the disease. Now we've found that elderly people with heart problems and diabetes and different problems are very, very vulnerable. We learned a lot. Young children aren't, even younger people aren't. We've learned a lot, but he wants to shut it down. More people will be hurt by continuing. If you look at Pennsylvania, if you look at certain states that have been shut down, they have Democrat governors, all, one of the reasons they shut down is because they want to keep it shut down until after the election on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.***

The tension of the conversation was rising since the topic of discussion was the country's planned shutdown due to the Covid-19 outbreak. Here, Trump discovered a remark that should be corrected and considered no longer necessary to proceed. In the data, Trump used a metacomment phrase by stating, "Wait a minute, Joe. Let me shut you down for a minute, just for a minute," he said at the beginning of his remarks, provoking Biden to stop speaking and giving away the speaking turn. Trump implemented this strategy to emphasize that continuing the program of shutting down the country will have a detrimental impact on the people. It would be wiser to interrupt the interlocutor with a respectful comment, and the opponent would feel respected. As in Trump's remark, by saying "just a minute, Joe. Let me to shut you down for a minute, just a minute," he used the turn taking strategy as part of the interrupting strategy, which is metacomment strategy.

### ***Holding the turn strategy***

There are generally four types of holding the turn strategies: filled pause, silent pause, lexical repetition, and new start. There are 11 data identified for this strategy. The data for these strategy categories are depicted and analyzed more below and each category is represented by each candidate:

Table 2. Types of holding the turn strategies

Holding the turn strategies	Data	
	Trump	Biden
• Filled pause	-	-
• Silent pause	1	-
• Lexical Repetition	5	3
• New start	1	1
<b>Total</b>	7	4
	<b>11</b>	

### Silent pause (datum 114)

Datum (114)

(113) Wallace: All right. In any case, why you holding the big rallies? Why you not? You go first, sir.

**(114) Trump:** Because people want to hear what I have to say. **I mean —**

(115) Wallace: But are not worried about us spreading disease?

**(116) Trump:** — **I've done a great job as a president, and I'll have 25, 35,000 people show up at airports. We use airports and hangers and we have a lot of people.**

This datum's condition was boosted because Trump and the moderator were actively responding to each other's statements. The preceding argument was about Trump, who was hosting a large rally in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. When the moderator asked Trump a question, he stopped for a second before continuing to answer it. He stopped his speaking for a longer period of time than usual not long after addressing the issue. As a consequence, the moderator took Trump's time, but Trump did not pay attention to the second question, instead continuing his earlier comments. It was demonstrated by stating the sentence "I mean—" and then continuing "—I've done a.." to demonstrate that he had not finished his remarks but the moderator was eager to ask a question. Therefore, in the above datum, this circumstance is classified as holding the turn strategy as part of the silent pause.

### Lexical repetition (datum 26 and 64)

Datum (26)

(25) Trump: We would have lost far more people, far more people. You would have been months late. You're months behind me, Joe.

**(26) Biden:** How many people? **His own his own** CDC Director says we could lose as many as another 200,000 people between now and the end of the year. And he said, if we just wear a mask, we can save half those numbers. Just a mask. And by the way, in terms of the whole notion of a vaccine, we're for a vaccine, but I don't trust him at all. Nor do you. I know you don't. What we trust is a scientist. You trust a scientist by the way, and then.

This datum happened still in the opening of the debate under the topic of Covid-19. Thus, the situation was still favourable because both parties had enough energy to continue the argument. At the time, they addressed how the upcoming shutdown would have a detrimental impact on the economy. Trump stated that extending the shutdown was a bad idea for Americans. However, Joe Biden had a different viewpoint on the situation, so he stopped Trump to prevent him from continuing. By repeating the words

"his own" twice, Biden demonstrated his desire to continue and reinforced his remark regarding Trump's CDC Director, who stated that wearing masks was sufficient to save other people's lives. In this case, repeating "his own" twice suggested that Biden intended to keep the topic going, and repeated words are characterized as holding the turn strategy in the aspect of lexical repetition.

*Datum (64)*

(62) *Trump:* *Because you know what? There's nothing smart about you, Joe. 47 years you've done nothing.*

(63) *Biden:* *Well, let's have this debate-*

(64) *Trump:* ***If you would have had*** *Let me just tell you something, Joe. **If you would have had** the charge of what I was put through, I had to close the greatest economy in the history of our country. And by the way, now it's being built again and it's going up fast.*

The condition of this datum was still heating up because the two candidates were debating the flaws of their respective opponents and the vibe of the debate was still in tense. The debate on the topic occurred because of Trump's emotional reaction to one of Biden's statements. As a consequence, Trump made fun of Biden, but after being insulted, Biden still wanted to return to the topic of the previous debate. However, Trump remained to continue his statement by comparing himself to Biden. This is indicated by the repetition of the clause "if you would have had" twice. Thus, it can be considered that Trump applied one of the turn-taking strategies, it is holding the turn specifically the lexical repetition because Trump wanted to hold the discussion by employing the repeated clause "if you would have had".

*A New start (datum 52 and 89)*

*Datum (52)*

(51) *Wallace:* *She said that public health experts quote, "Will be muzzled, will be suppressed."*

(52) *Biden:* *Yes. Well, that's what he's going to try to do, but there's thousands of scientists out there, like here at this great hospital that don't work for him. Their job doesn't depend on him. **They're the people... And by the way-***

The debate was flowing in such a way that the speaking turn was not interrupted. The data above shows that the speaking turn went quite well, with no interruptions, and Biden responding to Wallace after he completed his speech. Wallace affirmed to Biden that they will be restrained and suppressed, stating the public health department. However, Biden emphasized the point so that listeners did not really misinterpret the information they receive from the public health. In the case above, towards the end of Biden's statement, he immediately retracted his statement and did not finish his sentence. By repeating the part of "They're the people... and by the way," he indicates that he repeated his speech from the start to avoid losing the topic completely. This characteristic is part of the holding the turn strategy since Biden aimed to hold the speaking and because Biden restated the notion from the beginning, it is classified as a new start strategy.

*Datum (89)*

(88) Wallace: *President Trump, you have begun to increasingly question the effectiveness of masks as a disease preventer. And in fact, recently you have cited the issue of waiters touching their masks and touching plates. Are you questioning the efficacy of masks?*

(89) Trump: *No, I think masks are okay. You have to understand, if you look... I mean, I have a mask right here. I put a mask on when I think I need it. Tonight, as an example, everybody's had a test and you've had social distancing and all of the things that you have to, but I wear masks-*

This datum occurred in situations that should have been or ideally should have been, that is, speaking alternately and not interrupting one another. The moderator and Trump were addressing the efficacy of masks during the debate session. This was mentioned because in one example, a mask was used to prevent diseases, but a waiter touched the mask he was wearing and then touched the dish. As a result, the mask's efficacy was placed into doubt since it contradicted Trump's claim about the maid. As a result, in order to prevent misunderstanding the argument he raised, he repeated his statement in the middle of his explanation and did not finish what he had stated previously. According to this, Trump employs a new start strategy in the form of a holding the tour strategy to one of the turn-taking strategies.

***Yielding the turn strategy***

There are three types of yielding the turn: prompting, appealing, and giving up. For this strategy, 7 data have been found. The data for these strategy classifications is presented and discussed further in detail below as well as for each classification is presented in each candidate:

Table 3. Types of yielding the turn strategies

Yielding the turn strategies	Data	
	Trump	Biden
· Prompting	2	4
· Appealing	1	-
· Giving up	-	-
<b>Total</b>	3	4
	<b>7</b>	

***Prompting (datum 69 and 76)****Datum (69)*

(68) Biden : *Because he doesn't have a plan. If I were running it, I'd know what the plan is. You've got to provide these businesses the ability to have the money to be able to reopen with the PPE, as well as with the sanitation they need. You have to provide them classic-*

(69) Trump: **Tell that to Nancy Pelosi.**

(70) Biden : *Will he just shush for a minute?*

According to the data above, the candidates were debating how to reopen the economy and schools, which had been closed for over two years due to the outbreak. Biden assumed that Trump did not have a plan to reopen the case, and he compared himself to Trump in that regard. As a result, the situation during the argument was



uncomfortable because they insulted and interrupted each other. Biden stated that he had done more and had a plan to reopen the country, but Trump did not. Furthermore, Biden made several suggestions to Trump for the reopening, but Trump opposed the idea. Instead, while Biden was delivering his point, Trump interrupted him by stating, "Tell that to Nancy Pelosi," indicating that Trump expected Biden to reply firmly to him for not asking him what to do and that he should inform Nancy Pelosi, the House of Representatives, about it. As a result, once Trump made his comments, Biden reacted by urging him to be quiet. As a result, it can be observed from Trump's response to Biden, which persuades him to speak aggressively in order to learn Biden's reaction by stating "Tell that to Nancy Pelosi," that he is employing a prompting strategy as part of yielding the turn.

*Datum (76)*

*(75) Trump: Well, he wants to shut down this country and I want to keep it open, and we did a great thing by shutting it down-*

***(76) Biden : You just admitted you'd shut it down.***

*(77) Trump: Wait a minute, Joe. Let me shut you down for a second, Joe, just for one second. He wants to shut down the country. We just went through it. We had to, because we didn't know anything about the disease. Now we've found that elderly people with heart problems and diabetes and different problems are very, very vulnerable. We learned a lot. Young children aren't, even younger people aren't. We've learned a lot, but he wants to shut it down. More people will be hurt by continuing. If you look at Pennsylvania, if you look at certain states that have been shut down, they have Democrat governors, all, one of the reasons they shut down is because they want to keep it shut down until after the election on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

This phenomenon occurred when the participants were debating the efficacy of shutting down the country. Trump was delivering his words nicely at first, until Biden interrupted him when Trump came to declare that shutting down the country was a fantastic idea. His prior speech, however, stated that he wished to keep the country open, therefore his stance was contradictory. As a result of Trump's argument, Biden stated, "you just admitted you'd shut it down." This caused a heated discussion between the two candidates during the debate, and Trump sought to clarify more about his previous statements about shutting down and reopening. As Biden permitted Trump to reply to his welcome sign by stating "you just stated you'd shut it down" and persuading him in desiring to know his reaction, Biden's tactic is categorized as prompting in yielding the turn.

### *Appealing (datum 108)*

*Datum (108)*

*(107) Wallace: I want to ask you both about one last subject because your different approaches has even affected the way that you have campaigned. President Trump, you're holding large rallies with crowds packed together, thousands of people.*

***(108) Trump : Outside.***

*(109) Wallace: **Outside. Yes, sir. Agreed.** Vice President Biden, you are holding much smaller events with-*



When the candidates were asked about their campaign strategy, the condition of this datum was under control. Their unique approach of campaigning became the last topic of discussion in regard to the Covid-19 pandemic. The difference was that Trump held large rallies in front of enormous audiences, whereas Biden mainly had smaller events with individuals wearing masks. When the moderator questioned why they were campaigning in different ways in this epidemic, Trump told the moderator that he was campaigning outside. As can be seen, Trump remarked "outside," and the moderator agreed with him by replying "outside, yes, sir agreed." Trump employed this approach by sending a signal in the form of additional information in order to elicit the same response from the moderator, which is known as the appealing strategy as part of the yielding the turn strategy.

Based on the findings of the study, the turn taking strategies employed by presidential debate contestants were seen in all categories. However, there were many strategies that did not meet the need for Donald Trump and Joe Biden during the presidential debate. For Donald Trump, those categories were hesitant start, overlap, filled pause, and giving up strategy. Since he was eager to win the debate, Thus, the type of hesitant start and filled pause were not used because Trump did not have hesitation at all during his speaking in the debate and he did not show any verbal filler to fill the gap when he was thinking about what to say next, which is in line with Stenström (2014). In addition, Trump did not indicate an overlap to Biden by predicting Biden's response to an issue raised. When he wanted to interrupt Biden, he just interrupted him without waiting for Biden's response. According to Stenström (2014), this strategy is called overlap. Besides that, Trump did not portray a situation when he gave up speaking since he always had an idea to rebut the opponent's remark. Thus, it was not necessary for him to use the strategy of giving up speaking (Stenström, 2014).

On the other hand, Joe Biden had more types of strategy. Those strategies were hesitant start, metacomment, overlap, filled pause, silent pause, giving up, and appealing strategy. According to the data obtained from Joe Biden, he always expressed his thoughts openly without hesitation. Because he was not at a loss for words, he spoke without any hesitation and continued to express his point to the end. Therefore, according to Stenström (2014), these types of strategy, hesitant start, filled pause and silent pause, were not necessarily used. Additionally, when Biden wanted to interrupt his opponent, he would do it right away without considering how his opponent would respond. As a result, as Stenström (2014) contended, Biden did not need to employ metacomment and overlap technique during the debate as he interrupted his opponent without permission and without anticipating for his opponent's reaction. Also, Biden frequently demonstrated that he never showed signs of offering respond to his opponent during the discussion and he never revealed that he was out of words to say. As Stenström (2014) argued, Biden did not need to implement appealing and giving up strategies.

In spite of that, there was only one category mostly used by both candidates during the debate. It was alert strategy in the type of interrupting section. They used this strategy to interrupt each other's arguments by speaking loudly to catch the attention of the interlocutor. This strategy is used so that the speaker explicitly states his idea without offending the preceding speaker. Furthermore, Biden interrupted Trump by speaking with

a stronger intonation. Biden's intention to interrupt Trump with ambiguous terms and a rising accent was to get his attention, although he failed to do so most of the times. This strategy is categorized as interrupting strategy, particularly alert strategy, argued Stenström (2014).

In addition, based on the findings, Trump and Biden applied all of the turn taking approaches in their presidential debate. According to the findings from the two previous studies of turn-taking strategy study conducted by Sriwahyuni (2021) and Saputra (2021), it could be concluded that all varieties of turn-taking occurred or were used by both the presidential candidates. However, they did not go into great depth on the three primary categories' sub-types (taking the turn, holding the turn, and yielding the turn). By analyzing in detail the sub-types of the turn-taking strategies used by Trump and Biden in the first 2020 presidential debate, the researcher in this study tried to fill the gap. The findings of this research and of the two prior studies were identical, where they demonstrated that all significant forms of turn-taking were used by the presidential candidates. However, this research investigated the findings in more detail by exploring the sub-types of turn-taking strategies that were categorized into three main types (taking the turn, holding the turn, and yielding the turn). This study revealed that both Trump and Biden shared the tendency of employing alert strategy during the presidential debate. Nevertheless, Biden employed more neglected subtypes than Trump, such as hesitant start, metacomment, overlap, filled pause, silent pause, giving up, and appealing strategy. Trump, however, did not use four sub-types including hesitant start, overlap, filled pause, and giving up strategy.

## **CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION**

The exchange of the speaking turn between numerous people demonstrates turn taking in spoken communication. According to Stenström (2014), there are three types of turn-taking strategies that build a rather clear and tidy communication system. They are taking the turn, holding the turn, and yielding the turn. This study discovered 57 data in the video and transcripts of the first American presidential debate between Donald Trump and Joe Biden. The findings revealed 39 data in the type of taking the turn strategy. Three data were selected as a clear start (one found in Trump's utterances and 2 data discovered from Biden's utterances), with no hesitant findings in the section of the starting up strategy. The taking over strategy generated 17 data, which include 10 data for uptakes (6 data obtained from Trump's statements and 4 data found in Biden's statements). Meanwhile, links strategy was represented in 7 data of Trump's utterances and only one datum from Biden's utterance. The interrupting strategy identified 18 data, including 17 data for alert which consist of 12 data presented in Trump's statements and 5 data for Biden's utterances. In the meantime, only one data for metacomment was found in Trump's remark, while Biden never used this strategy. Furthermore, in the kind of holding the turn strategy, the study observed 11 data: one datum of silent pause found in Trump's utterances while Biden did not utilize this strategy, lexical repetitions were discovered five times from Trump and three times from Biden, while new start was only found once for each candidate (Trump and Biden). In the yielding strategy, Biden used prompting strategy four times while Trump only utilized this strategy twice. Appealing strategy was



only employed by Trump for once yet Biden never used it. As a result, after doing this research, it can be seen that not all of the turn taking strategies are employed in the first American presidential debate 2020 between Donald Trump and Joe Biden.

The type of hesitant, filled pause and giving up are not identified there. The functions of employing the strategies are obtained after analyzing the types of turn taking strategies adopted in the first American presidential debate 2020 between Donald Trump and Joe Biden. When it comes to discussing the new issue, the candidates use taking the turns strategies to start the debate. During the discussion, participants may hold their arguments for a variety of reasons, including interruption and overlapping. Thus, the speaker will pause and be silent for a moment before repeating his remarks numerous times, or he may begin again from the beginning to communicate his perspective. It is the result of employing the holding the turn strategy. While yielding the turn, there is a point at which the speaker will let the interlocutor take the turn without that much remark in order to elicit the interlocutor's answer without objection.

The researcher hopes that the next academician who is attracted to this topic would conduct the same field of study and provide a detailed explanation for each category discovered using the latest version of theory which discusses about turn taking strategy. This is because it is highly intriguing to explore the underlying meaning and aim of political language itself to reach their goals and disrupt their partner.

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