

**A CASE STUDY**  
**ON**  
**TOPIC CHANGES IN CONVERSATIONS**  
**OF HONG KONG TERTIARY STUDENTS**

**by**

**Chan Ling Yin**

**City University of Hong Kong**

**(2007)**

## Abstract

The focus of this case study lies on the placements and techniques of topic changes in Cantonese conversations among Hong Kong tertiary students. Data was collected from video recording. Two groups of tertiary students were invited to take part in the recording. They were asked to have a causal discussion in Cantonese for 15 minutes. They were provided with a topic to start off but they could move on to any other topics after the conversation started.

After transcribing the recorded data, observations and analysis were made, based on theories of conversation analysis (CA). There are quite a number of theories that have already been proposed on topic change in CA. This paper examines if those existing theories are also applicable to Cantonese conversation.

Three types of placements of topic change were observed from the Cantonese data collected in this study. Placements at transition relevance place (TRP) and placements after silence were the two most frequently-used types. This finding is in fact shared among English and Cantonese conversations. One distinctive placement of topic change was observed from the Cantonese data: topic change after laughter. It was found that laughter after discussion demonstrated an agreement among speakers, and hence implied a highly possible topic change as agreements tend to mark an end of a topic.

The study also confirmed two common techniques used for topic change in English and Cantonese conversations: the use of questions and the use of declarative clauses. These two techniques are the simplest and the most straightforward ways to trigger a new topic.

The use of conjunction “但係” was also popular in the Cantonese data. It prepared the hearers for something different from the current topic.

The connective adverb “咁” functioned quite differently from “但係” in the topic introduction turns in Cantonese conversations. From the data, it was found that all the topic changes introduced by the connective adverb “咁” were logically connected and it illustrated relevant, to the prior topic.

Last but not the least, “係喎” was constantly found in the data to initiate a new topic which the speakers found worth-mentioning right there on site of the conversation.

## Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Literature Review	2
2.1 What is “topic”?	2
2.2 What is “topic change”?	3
2.2.1 Placements of topic change	4
2.2.2 Techniques for achieving topic change	6
2.3 Stepwise transition and topic shifts	9
2.4 Summary	10
3. Methodology	11
4. Data Analysis	12
4.1 Placements of topic change (in the data)	12
4.2 Techniques for achieving topic change (in the data)	23
5. Conclusion	31
Bibliography	32
Appendix I: Transcript Notation	34
Appendix II: Transcriptions	36

## **1. Introduction**

Conversations are very important in our daily life. We talk, communicate and socialize with each other everyday. While we are in a conversation, we usually talk from topic to topic “automatically”, “smoothly” and “effortlessly”. However, sometimes we do experience difficulties in establishing a new topic in an ongoing conversation. This fact seems to suggest that there are some “mechanisms” behind topic change, which play a prominent part in keeping continuous talk.

Various scholars have conducted studies on topic management in conversation. They define topic as “what the conversation is ‘about’” (Maynard 1980) and is established from the collaboration of conversationalists (Geluykens 1992, Orletti 1989). Topic changes are common in conversations but not random happenings (Maynard 1980). Studies of the placements and techniques used for topic changes have been carried out mostly based on English data.

Leung (2005) conducted a preliminary study on topic management in Cantonese conversation in which she investigated the topic change after silence. But is this the only suggestion that “fits” into topic changes in Cantonese conversation?

In order to find out the answer, data was collected by video-recording the conversations between tertiary students who are native speakers in Cantonese. Details for the methodology are included in Chapter 3.

Data analysis was then carried out and the focus was on placements and techniques used for topic changes. Extracts of the data are used as examples to illustrate the characteristics of topic changes in Cantonese conversation.

It is hoped that this project will help us better understand the “mechanisms” behind topic change. Besides, we will see the similarities and differences in topic changes between English conversations and Cantonese conversations.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 What is “topic”?

“Topic” is a very common notion. According to the definition provided in the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, topic is “a subject which is discussed, written about or studied”. As this project is concerned with spoken discourse, the focus of attention is placed on topic as “a subject which is talked about”.

For scholars, topic in a conversation has more sophisticated criteria:

- i) it is “what the conversation is ‘about’” (Maynard 1980);
- ii) it is interactional and collaborative (Geluyskens 1992, Orletti 1989).

And if the topic is a new one,

- iii) it has to be “irrecoverable” (Geluyskens 1992) and
- iv) it has to be “persistent” (Geluyskens 1992).

*i) Topic is “what the conversation is ‘about’”*

Maynard (1980: 263) states that conversations are often characterized as having some topic or several topics. And the topic is “what the conversation is ‘about’”.

The conversationalists themselves are aware that they are talking about topics, as suggested by Orletti (1989: 76). When conversationalists are asked to describe their past conversations, they very often say, “We talked about ..., about ..., and so on.” They do realize that they talk about topics in conversation.

*ii) Topic is Interactional and Collaborative*

To successfully develop a topic in a conversation, it requires interaction and collaboration among conversationalists. The conversationalists have to “negotiate” through the turn-taking system (Geluyskens 1992: 181). When a topic is initiated by a speaker, it has to be “accepted and adhered to by at least one other participant” (Orletti 1989:75) to become a conversation topic.

*iii) Topic is Irrecoverable*

When a topic is newly introduced in a conversation, Geluyskens (1992: 181)

suggests that the information has a low degree of recoverability and is not derivable from the preceding context. The “new” referents detach the topic from the preceding context and mark it as an “independent” topic in the conversation.

And, due to this low degree of recoverability, the speaker has to verify the hearers’ background knowledge. He/She also has to provide sufficient information of the “new” referents for the hearers to identify in order to establish a “new” conversation topic (Keenan & Schieffelin 350).

*iv) Topic is Persistent*

Another crucial characteristic of a successfully developed topic is persistence. When the “new” referents are mentioned and identified by the conversationalists, these referents have to recur in the subsequent context (Geluykens 1992: 185). Then a topic is developed.

Persistence can be directly obtained by pronominal pronouns after a referent was first mentioned. Or it can also be indirectly achieved by words or phrases with semantic relations with the original referents. Nevertheless, the continuity of the topic still relies on the cooperation among the conversationalists.

## **2.2 What is “topic change”?**

As discussed above, collaboration among conversationalists is essential in developing a topic in conversation. Conversationalists tend to show understanding and ‘fit’ their current utterance to the utterance of the prior speaker. In that way, the same topic continues.

However, it is not always the case. Sometimes, a current utterance may not ‘fit’ to the prior utterance, which may suggest a topic change.

According to Maynard (1980: 264), topic changes are utterances which:

- a) are unrelated to the talk in prior turns
- b) utilize new referents
- c) implicate and occasion a series of utterances consisting of a different line of talk

Topic change is very common in daily conversation. But it can be face-threatening if disruptions of topic continuity are not handled properly (Orletti 1989: 83). It can be interpreted as being offensive to the prior speaker(s). Therefore, topics should, and in fact usually do, flow from one to another in an orderly and coherent way.

Besides, Maynard (1980) also states that topic changes are not random happenings. Instead, they are found in specific environments and in characterizable ways. The followings are some findings by various scholars concerning the placements of topic changes and techniques used to achieve topic change.

### **2.2.1 Placements of topic change**

#### *i) After silence*

In Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson's turn-taking model (1974), the turn constructional component (TCU) refers to various types of turn units: sentential, clausal, phrasal and lexical. A speaker can employ these turn units to construct his/her turn at talk. And at every possible completion point of these TCUs, a transition relevance place (TRP) is constituted.

TRP is a very sensitive place in turn-taking system. Speaker transitions are highly possible at the TRP. Any of the following three turn-allocational techniques can be applied by the conversationalists:

- a) the current speaker can select next;
- b) the next speaker can self-select; or
- c) the current speaker can continue.

(SSJ 1974:703)

Overlaps occur when more than one speaker apply (b), or (b) and (c) are applied at the same time by different speakers. But, if none of these techniques is applied, silences can develop. And it is observed that topic change regularly appears after silence, as a solution to the failed speaker transitions (Maynard 1980: 265).

The occurrence of topic change after silence can be explained by the tendency of conversationalists to produce continuous talk. When silences develop, conversationalists may first produce a series of on-topic statements in the aim of restoring the conversation. When those statements are not successful, a topic

change will then be employed in order to reinstate continuous talk.

ii) *After closing components*

Button and Casey (1984) consider closing components as signals marking out and approaching termination of prior topic(s). These components may also lead to the end of conversations.

But it is not the only choice. Instead of producing an aligning closing turn, conversationalists can use topic initial elicitors to move out of closings and invite new topic(s). For example, “else” can be used to make a news inquiry like “Anything else?”. The use of “else” here makes a contrast that the preferred newsworthy-event-report is a new topic which is unrelated to the prior topic(s). If the next speaker introduces topicalizable items, a topic change occurs and conversation continues.

iii) *After figurative expressions*

Figurative expressions are some idiomatic expressions. The use of figurative expressions is a more sophisticated way of expressing oneself when compared to simply saying or describing something literally. For example, a speaker may use the figurative expression “he had a good innings”, which is derived from the game of cricket, to imply a man, who was dead, had a long and full life. (Drew & Holt 1998: 495-496)

Drew and Holt (1998) find that figurative expressions occur regularly in topic transition sequences, especially in the turn where a topic is summarized. A pattern is identified:

- a) a speaker produces a figurative expression;
- b) the co-participants briefly agree with one another;
- c) one or the other introduces a new topic of conversation

(Drew & Holt 1998: 499).

The figurative expression in the pattern functions as a closing or a summary assessment of current topic. It detaches the current talk from progressive development. The conversationalists then collaboratively disengage from the current topic and move to a new topic.



*iv) After disagreements*

Topic change is also found after disagreement turns. In such situation, topic change is seen as a means through which conversationalists can re-engage formal turn-by-turn talk when disagreement turns result in failure of speaker transition (Maynard 1980: 279).

Conversationalists do not always agree with each other. It can be face-threatening when disagreements appear in conversations. Therefore, conversationalists tend to minimize the discrepancy with laughter and minimal responses. Eventually conversationalists would withdraw from the disagreement turns and engage in an entirely new conversation topic.

### **2.2.2 Techniques for achieving topic change**

As discussed before, topic change in conversation can be face-threatening if disruptions of topic continuity are not handled properly. To help achieve smooth and successful change of topic, conversationalists often apply the techniques described below.

*i) Use of prefatory discontinuity markers*

Prefatory discontinuity markers include “anyway”, “alright”, “well”, “okay”, either alone or in combination (Drew & Holt 1998: 510). They are all disjunctive expressions which work to disengage the forthcoming turn from being tied or connected to the prior turn. In that case, co-participants of the conversation are “prepared” to an impending new topic.

*ii) Use of expressive particles*

Expressive particles like “hey”, “oh no” and “I forgot” mark the break from the prior topic (Keenan & Schieffelin 374). They also suggest that the subsequent talk is a new topic.

*iii) Use of existential “there” construction*

The existential “there” in the beginning of a turn introduces the new referent(s). As illustrated in the example provided by Geluykens (1992: 197), “there’s there was one other man that I wondered about...”, the referent “one other man” is marked as new by means of the existential “there”. By providing sufficient information for the hearers, a new topic can be easily accepted.

iv) *Use of questions*

Geluykens (1992: 199) suggests that asking a question, no matter a yes/no question or a wh-question, is another obvious way to introduce a new referent as a potential topic.

There are various types of yes/no questions: a) inversion questions like “Do you know John?”; b) declarative questions like “You know who John is.”; and c) tag questions like “You know John, don’t you?” (Geluykens 1992: 200).

In wh-questions, the phrase “what about” is very special that it appears to function as a kind of topic-introducing discourse marker which almost explicitly announces a new topic (Geluykens 1992: 203).

And most importantly, due to the turn-taking organization, a question makes an answer the relevant next action. Therefore, the hearers are expected to be cooperative and answer the questions when selected as the next speaker via the question. Through the question-answer sequence, new referents are established and a new topic can be developed (Geluykens 1992: 204).

v) *Use of simple declarative clauses*

Use of simple declarative clauses is said to be the least obtrusive way of introducing a new topic. However, from time to time, requests for further elaboration are made by the hearers after the declarative clause. The speakers must obtain the hearers’ acknowledgment to successfully establish a new topic.

Here is an example from Geluykens (1992: 206):

- 1 A: I spoke to Harry this morning-
- 2 B: Harry.
- 3 A: Yeah my brother.
- 4 B: your brother. and.
- 5 A: and he said that (...)

In line 1, A introduces a topic about his talk with Harry by a simple declarative clause. He has made an assumption that B knows who Harry is. However, it turns out that B doesn’t know Harry and he requests for further elaboration in line 2. A provides the elaboration in line 3. After obtaining B’s acknowledge in line 4, A

finally can establish his topic in line 5.

*vi) Use of explicit topic announcements*

In this case, the new topic is announced by the use of explicit topic-announcing discourse markers. Speakers can directly introduce a new topic by saying “I’ll tell you something else...”, “now switching to...” or “another topic” (Geluykens 1992: 209).

In fact, this technique is rarely found in conversation. It only appears when there is an abrupt, marked shift or switch from the prior topic.

*vii) Use of “post hoc accounting”*

Sometimes, an account is provided later in the turn after a new topic is introduced at the beginning of the same turn. It is regarded by Orletti (1989: 76-77) as “post hoc accounting”.

1    A:    Hmm, Giovanni and Paola even fight over how long  
2           to boil the spaghetti=  
3    B:    = Ah, you know who’s around? (.) Francesca.  
4           Thinking of Giovanni just reminded me of her  
5

(Orletti 1989: 76)

In this example, A and B are originally talking about Giovanni and Paola, as seen in line 1 and 2. B changes the topic to talk about Francesca in line 3 and 4. He does not simply stop after introducing the new topic. In fact, as shown from the second half of line 4 to line 5, B immediately provides a post hoc accounting for the new topic.

As illustrated in the above example, post hoc accounting aims to explain the associative link which evokes the new topic in the speaker’s mind. It reduces the awkwardness of disruption of prior ongoing topic.

*viii) Others*

Apart from verbal devices, some non-verbal devices also help in marking a new topic. For example, an audible inbreath and a raised amplitude are signals provided by speakers to notify others that they are about to introduce a new topic.

And, self-editing and hesitance can also hint forthcoming new topic(s) (Drew & Holt 1998: 510).

### 2.3 Stepwise transition and topic shift

Sacks (1972: 15-16) suggests a stepwise fashion in conversation. He proposes that the movement from topic to topic is “not by a topic-close followed by a topic beginning, but by a stepwise move, which involves linking up whatever is being introduced to what has just been talked about”. In general, conversationalists have to gradually disengage from one topic and move to a new, but still “connected” one.

Maynard (1980: 271-274) also proposes a similar notion: topic shifts. Conversationalists shift from “one aspect of a topic to another in order to occasion a different set of mentionables”. They can do topic shifting by using alternate formulations of an object. Or, they can use Sacks’ co-class membership to achieve a topic shift, as demonstrated in the following example:

- 1 J: It’s really pressur[ing ]
- 2 L: [They] move so: fast=
- 3 J: =Um hmm=
- 4 L: =You jus’- you kno:w GAWhD [you jus ] res’fer
- 5 a DA::Y an’
- 6 J: [Oh ye::ah]
- 7 L: You’re w- way- hunh buh hh hind [’t seems like]
- 8 J: [Oh ye::ah ] An I been PLAY:in aroun’ too much
- 9
- 10 L: Ri:lly?
- 11 J: Cuz I’m USE ta PLAY:in’...

(Maynard 1980:271-272)

“Resting for a day” in lines 4-5 and “playing around” in line 9 are considered members of a class of activities which involve a person in getting behind. Therefore, the topic shift in lines 8-9 is done on the co-class membership mechanism.

No matter the conversationalists use a stepwise transition, or a topic shift, one common point is that though the conversation has gone far from whatever it begins with, a new topic has not been started. Any next topic is still in some way

linked with the prior one. In other words, there are not always clear-cut boundaries between topics.

## **2.4 Summary**

This chapter has covered some basic ideas about topic and topic changes in conversation through reviewing several scholars' work. However, one thing should be born in mind is that the above observations and findings are based on English conversation data. Some of them may be applicable in Cantonese conversations but some may not. The similarities and differences are revealed in chapter 4 in which the collected Cantonese data is analyzed.

### 3. Methodology

Data was collected through video-recording to observe the placement and techniques of topic changes in Cantonese conversations.

Two groups of tertiary students were invited to take part in the recording. Group 1 contained three female students: Lan (L), Stephy (S), and Eva (E). Group 2 consisted of one male and three female students: Joe (J), Haby (H), Lam (L) and Faye (F). They were all native speakers of Cantonese and they knew each other well as they have been classmates for three years in the City University of Hong Kong.

The students were asked to have a causal Cantonese discussion for about 15 minutes. They were told beforehand that the recording was for case study of Cantonese conversation. But they did not know which aspects of the conversation were observed. In order to help the smooth start of the conversation, the students were given a topic, “拍拖? 結婚? 生子?” (“Dating? Getting married? Having children?”). It was suggested to them that they could start with this topic if they did not have a topic of their own. But they should not feel tied to the topic, and should feel free to move on to any other topics after the conversation had started. .

The two pieces of 15-minute-video-recording were then transcribed, following the transcription notation developed by Gail Jefferson (1984). The whole transcriptions were attached in Appendix II.

Observations and analysis were based on theories in conversation analysis (CA). CA refers to the systematic study of talk-in-interaction. It originated from sociology and the three pioneers in CA, Harvey Sacks, Emanuel A. Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, are all sociologists. CA aims to explicate the procedures on which speakers rely to produce utterances and by which they make sense of other speakers' talk (Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998).

Topic change is one of the interests in CA. Various theories have been proposed on this aspect, as introduced in the previous chapter. In the following chapter, the collected Cantonese data will be analyzed to see if those theories are also applicable to Cantonese data.

## 4. Data Analysis

Topic change in Cantonese conversation is as common as in conversation conducted in any other languages. The following part is an analysis on the data collected from video-recording of conversations between university students in Hong Kong.

The focus of analysis is on:

- the placements of topic change, and
- the techniques for achieving topic change.

### 4.1 Placements of topic change (in the data)

Placements of topic change are identified and categorized into three main types:

- Topic change at transition relevance place (TRP)
- Topic change after silence
- Topic change after laughter

#### *i) Topic change at transition relevance place (TRP)*

TRP occurs at possible completion point of turn constructional components. It is a sensitive place where speaker change may take place. Apart from potential change of speakership, change of topic frequently occurs at TRP. And this phenomenon is also found in the Cantonese data. Here is an obvious example:

Extract 1 (from Group 1)

- 1 E: 唔係即係講係長久啲嘅呢 [即係由中學開始呢  
→ 2 L: [我有 friend 拍咗八年(.)form  
3 two 開始  
4 E: 咁都真係幾 [犀利  
5 S: [都係同一個呀=

The three girls in Group 1 were discussing the ideal age to get married. They all agreed that it depended on when they started dating. Eva then suggested that it was possible to have a long dating period, as shown in the first half of line 1 “唔係即係講係長久啲嘅呢”.

The sentence-final particle “呢” in this utterance suggested a possible completion

point. This TRP was taken up by Lan who self-selected as the next speaker in line 2, introducing a new topic concerning her friend's experience. However, Eva, as the current speaker, continued to talk on the current topic and extended her turn in line 1. An overlap occurred as indicated by the left hand brackets in lines 1 and 2. And, its onset is clearly at the TRP.

Eva soon finished her turn in line 1 and her assessment in line 4 displayed her acceptance of the topic change proposed by Lan in lines 2-3. Another group member, Stephy, also showed her acceptance through the request for further elaboration in line 5. Lan's new topic, which was introduced at a TRP, was successfully established.

Later in their discussion, a similar case appeared. But this time the overlap was solved very quickly.

#### Extract 2 (from Group 1)

- |     |    |                           |
|-----|----|---------------------------|
| 1   | S: | [佢佢會考嗰個咩國家語委嗰個[ 嘛吓嘛       |
| 2   | E: | [係囉                       |
| → 3 | L: | 又又又又又又[ 跟住                |
| → 4 | S: | [係嗰同埋呢我想問吓呢你地識唔識人你 em(. ) |
| 5   |    | em 大學畢業                   |
| 6   | E: | 噃                         |
| 7   | S: | 跟住又考咗國家語委或者[係 er          |
| 8   | L: | [To fa 囉                  |

Lines 1-3 in this extract was the continuation of the topic about the courses Lan took in the semester. Notice the overlap happened in lines 3-4. Lan was explaining her courses in line 3. “又又又又又又” is used to refer to certain course codes in an unspecified way and it could be regarded as an independent lexical turn unit. In other words, “又又又又又又” was a TCU and thus a TRP was constituted after its completion.

Lan intended to extend her turn in line 3 as evidenced by “跟住”. At the same time, in lines 4-5, Stephy started introducing a new topic at this TRP where Lan's turn is taken to be possibly complete. She was asking for a potential candidate for a job as a substitute teacher. Overlap began at the TRP and was solved soon when Lan gave up her turn in line 3. Stephy's new topic was then established as both Eva (in line 6) and Lan (in line 8) responded to her question.



Sometimes, more than one speaker self-select simultaneously as the next speaker at a TRP in current speaker's turn which also results in overlaps. And, there is a tendency that if two or more speakers are competing for the next turn, the one introducing a new topic is more likely to be followed up by other speakers. Let's take extract 3 as an example.

Extract 3 (from Group 2)

- 1 L: 呀我哋-係咪唔可以咁樣 side discussion 架  
2 H: 我哋要繼續[講  
→ 3 L: [最好最好  
→ 4 F: [講咩(.)有無睇突圍行動呀  
5 L: Er[呢 er 間唔中睇吓啦  
6 H: [heh

The “competition” for the next turn was between Lam and Faye in lines 3 and 4 after Haby's turn in line 2. Lam in line 3 was responding to Haby's comment in line 2, staying on the same topic as the previous lines. Faye, on the other hand, raised a new topic about a television programme, which had never been talked about in the previous part of the conversation, in line 4. Faye's turn caught the others' attention as other speakers (from line 5 onwards) responded to her rather than to Lam.

A similar case is shown in extract 4.

Extract 4 (from Group 2)

- 1 L: 哦即係郭可盈做嗰個  
2 H: 係啦係啦  
3 L: 哦  
→ 4 H: [十兄弟  
→ 5 J: [我果然唔係太過了解呢一方面(.)因為我唔睇劇集  
6 F: 啊唔緊要  
7 L: 唔睇劇集但係你會睇咩廣告

After Lam's turn in line 3, both Haby and Joe started to self-select as the next speaker and an overlap occurred. Haby continued the topic about the new television programme in line 4 whereas Joe started a new topic about his preferences on watching television in line 5. As seen from lines 6-7, the

conversation was then changed to Joe's new topic.

Another interesting thing is observed. If two new topics are raised at the same time, silence may appear due to the hesitation among speakers on which topic to go on with, as is the case in extract 5.

Extract 5 (from Group 2)

- 1 H: 我哋其實無無無第一[步吓嘛  
2 L: [係直情唔要有[同居呢一步[就結婚囉  
3 J: [唔會  
4 H: [就結婚係喇  
→ 5 (.)[咁你會唔會同居先結婚  
→ 6 F: [咁點解謝安琪:會同居既  
→ 7 (1.0)  
→ 8 F: 謝安琪點解可以  
9 J: 佢[唔係好-  
10 H: [佢天主教架嘛吓嘛=

In line 4, Haby was responding to the previous topic about the religious view on cohabitation. In line 5, she extended her turn by asking for Faye's opinion about cohabitation. In the meantime, Faye treated Haby's turn up to "就結婚係喇" as completed and raised her question concerning an actress. Both Haby and Faye proposed a new topic, or to be more precise, a topic shift concerning the matter of cohabitation.

Their turns were followed by a one-second silence. Conversation was restored when Faye repeated her question in line 8 and other speakers accepted it as the new topic and responded to it.

The examples above all involve overlaps. However, it is not necessary to have overlaps whenever there is topic change. The overlaps in the previous examples are only used to show a clear marker of TRP at which topic changes take place.

In extracts 6-8 below, topic changes all happen at TRP, without involving overlaps. The arrows show the turns at which new topics were initiated.

Extract 6 (from Group 1)

- 1 S: 哦過去又一城囉

- 2 L: 無時間  
 → 3 S: 嘅係喎你上乜嘢呀  
 4 (1.0)  
 5 L: 咩中日文化交流喎

Extract 7 (from Group 2)

- 1 J: 咁跟住到個市你覺得即係一個好既機會同埋你你可能或者係生  
 2 咗仔咁你先再買=  
 → 3 F: =咁你諗住租邊區呀 [heh  
 4 H: [heh  
 5 L: [heh  
 6 J: 呢個真係 [菲姐真係遲啲先諗啦  
 7 L: [又住返咁遠呀  
 8 F: 租番錦繡啦梗係

Extract 8 (from Group 2)

- 1 J: 當然不會啦 (普通話)  
 → 2 L: 呀係喎其實都無問過 [你會做咩喎  
 3 H: [係囉你會做咩  
 4 J: 乜嘢呀我咪-我直家好大機會跟我爸囉=

In extract 6, immediately after the completion of Lan's turn in line 2, Stephy proposed another topic in the next turn (line 3). The conversation topic was then changed from what to eat for lunch to what course Lan was going to attend.

In extract 7, Faye started the topic on where to rent a flat (line 3) as soon as Joe had finished his opinion on buying flats in lines 1-2. Haby and Lam responded to Faye with laughter (lines 4-5) and Joe's response in line 6 showed that he also followed Faye's topic.

In extract 8, again, right after Joe had finished his turn in line 1, Lam raised another topic concerning what Joe's career plan would be. And Haby's repetition of Lam's question in line 3 displayed her interest in the new topic and also helped "enforcing" the new topic.

Extracts 1-8 have provided evidence that topic changes in Cantonese conversation are not random happenings. TRP is frequently taken as relevant for topic changes while the speakers observe the normal practice of turn-taking.

ii) *Topic change after silence*

At TRP, if none of the turn-taking rules is applied, which means no one has been selected as next speaker, no one has self-selected to be the next speaker, and the current speaker has not extended his/her turn, the conversation is “paralyzed” and silence appears. Maynard (1980: 265) points out that topic change regularly appears after this kind of silence as a solution to the failed speaker transition. This phenomenon is also found in the Cantonese conversation.

For example, a new topic was introduced after the 3-second silence in extract 9.

Extract 9 (Group 1)

- |   |    |                           |
|---|----|---------------------------|
| 1 | L: | 唔會既炒我囉                    |
| 2 |    | (3.0)                     |
| 3 | E: | 咁你有無諗過幾 em 拍拖幾年結婚呢        |
| 4 | S: | 無(.)但係一定唔會好快囉(.)即係起碼應該兩三年 |

The topic prior to extract 9 was about Lan’s experience on punishing a student she tutored. In line 1, Lan commented on the possible consequence of punishing that student. However, neither Stephy nor Eva responded to Lan. A silence held for 3 seconds as shown in line 2 until Eva self-selected as the next speaker in line 3. She started another topic by asking Stephy’s view on when to get married after starting dating with someone and Stephy responded to it without any delay (line 4). The topic of the conversation was then changed.

The occurrence of silence, like the one in extract 9, can be suggesting an end of a topic that none of the conversationalists have the intention to further develop on. It can even lead to a possible end of the conversation. If the conversationalists do not mean to end the conversation, they will try to reinstate continuous talk by, for example, introducing a new topic, just like what Eva did in extract 9.

There are many examples of topic changes after silence found from the data. It is noticeable that there seems to be a relation between the length of the silence and the relevance of topics. Let’s have a comparison between extract 10 and extract 11.

Extract 10 (Group 1)

- |   |    |       |
|---|----|-------|
| 1 | L: | 搵到啱為止 |
|---|----|-------|

- 2 (4.0)
- 3 E: 係咪可以轉 topic 架
- 4 S: 可以
- 5 (2.0)
- 6 E: 你因問駛唔駛上堂
- 7 S: 要(.)我上點半
- 8 E: 哦:啱同你一樣喎

The topic prior to extract 10 was about Eva's dating status. The topic stopped after Lan giving her suggestion to Eva in line 1. A 4-second silence appeared in line 2 as no one picked up the next turn. A couple of request of clarification turns occurred next (lines 3-4) which marked the first topic change. Then again a silence appeared (line 5) which lasted for 2 seconds. Continuous talk was finally restored after Eva raised another new topic in line 6 and other participants responded quickly to her.

#### Extract 11 (Group 1)

- 1 L: =聽咗幾日就覺得真係唔想再聽
- 2 E: 係囉
- 3 L: 就聽歌
- 4 (1.0)
- 5 S: 咁個個 cd 係讀啲乜嘢讀詞語定係個啲[ 篇章
- 6 L: [全部囉

Formatted: Indent: First line:  
16.5 ch

In extract 11, the topic was originally about Lan's experience on preparing for a Putonghua test, including listening to a CD for this particular test (lines 1-3). A silence of one second appeared in line 4 but was soon dissolved by the introduction of a new topic in line 5 by Stephy.

In extract 10 the prior topic and the new topic show little relevance when comparing with the two topics in extract 11. In extract 10, the prior topic, Eva's dating status, had no linkage to the new topic which was about the lessons the speakers had to attend after the recording. However, in extract 11, the prior topic and the new topic were linked by a common element – the CD. In other words, the change was only in the different aspects of the same topic. It should be defined as a topic shift according to the definition of Maynard (1980: 271-274).

The prior topic and the new topic in extract 10 did not have any relevance. The

end of the prior topic (line 1) and the start of another topic (line 3) were separated by silence as long as four seconds; the new topic in extract 11 was highly relevant to the prior topic and the silence in between only lasted for one second. From these, a tendency can be observed: the longer the length of the silence, the higher the possibility for a less relevant new topic to be raised.

Extracts 12 and 13 confirm this tendency.

#### Extract 12 (Group 1)

- |   |    |                |
|---|----|----------------|
| 1 | L: | 真係唔錯我都想去       |
| 2 | E: | 係呀             |
| 3 |    | (0.5)          |
| 4 | S: | 但係聽聞話好難考[囉國家語委 |
| 5 | L: | [係呀係呀          |

The girls were previously talking about the requirements of a job as a substitute teacher. In lines 1 and 2, Lan and Eva expressed their interests in the job. A short silence occurred in line 3 and the conversation soon continued with the new topic introduced by Stephy in line 4.

#### Extract 13 (Group 1)

- |   |    |                                  |
|---|----|----------------------------------|
| 1 | L: | 佢忍得我姐                            |
| 2 | E: | heh                              |
| 3 | S: | 真係好                              |
| 4 |    | (5.0)                            |
| 5 | S: | 你依家呢個識咗幾耐 heh                    |
| 6 | E: | 嘩 heh 無咩(1.0)拍 er 拍拍就兩個月囉(.)好短之嘛 |

The prior topic here was about arguments among lovers. After the positive assessment given by Stephy in line 3, a 5-second silence appeared. In line 5, Stephy changed the topic to Eva's dating status.

The two topics in extract 12 were more relevant as the test conducted by “國家語委” was the linkage between them. This test was mentioned in the prior topic (not shown in the extract) as a qualification to be obtained in order to become a Putonghua teacher. In the new topic, the test became the focus of discussion.

In contrast, the linkage between the two topics in extract 13 is less straightforward.

The only little linkage between arguments among lovers (the prior topic) and Eva's dating status (the new topic) was that perhaps they were both about lovers' relationship. The two topics were rather distant from each other.

Extract 12 had more relevant topics and involved a short silence whereas extract 13 had distant topics and a long silence occurred. This again shows the relation between the length of the silence and the relevance of topics: the longer the length of the silence, the higher the possibility for a less relevant new topic to be raised.

### *iii) Topic change after laughter*

Another common placement of topic change found from the data is after laughter. And the laughter usually involves not just a single speaker, but the whole group of speakers. This is often the case after the acceptance of an assessment, like the one in extract 14.

#### Extract 14 (Group 2)

- |   |    |                             |
|---|----|-----------------------------|
| 1 | F: | [唔係佢阿爸阿爸阿媽都住嗰度吓嘛咁你[食飯       |
| 2 |    | 直行過去咪得囉幾方便                  |
| 3 | J: | [係呀                         |
| 4 |    | (.)的而且確係幾方便                 |
| 5 |    | (1.0 all laughing)          |
| 6 | J: | 但係但係我想講嗰即係你哋係咁問我啫但係但係我聽有一啲女 |
| 7 |    | 仔講呢[通常都唔鍾意生仔架喎              |

The group was talking about where Joe should live if he got married. Faye commented that Joe should live near his parents as it would be convenient to go back for meals (lines 1-2). Joe agreed with an exaggerated tone and repeated Faye's assessment (lines 3-4). After his turn, the whole group laughed (line 5). Then Joe started another topic on having babies (lines 6-7). The pattern of this kind of topic change would be:

- |       |                          |
|-------|--------------------------|
| 1st : | Assessment               |
| 2nd : | Acceptance of Assessment |
| 3rd : | Laughter                 |
| 4th : | New Topic Introduced     |

Extracts 15, 16 and 17 also follow this pattern.

### Extract 15 (Group 2)

- 1 L: 無所謂無所謂子女我都咁鍾意  
2 F: 哦好呀好  
3 (1.0 all laugh)  
4 L: 咁你呢[阿菲姐  
5 F: [我唔想生囑

In extract 15, Lam shared her own preference on the sex of children in line 1. Faye accepted her assessment by providing another positive assessment in line 2. All the group members laughed. And then Lam changed the topic and asked Faye for her opinion on having children.

### Extract 16 (Group 2)

- 1 L: [即係唔想  
2 負責任啦  
3 F: 係囉(.)係囉係囉  
4 (. all laugh)  
5 L: 阿 haby 呢 haby 點睇呀

After Faye shared her view on having children (not shown in the extract), Lam produced a formulation which summarized Faye's view as shown in lines 1-2. Faye agreed with her formulation in line 3 and again the whole group laughed. In line 5, Lam shifted the focus onto Haby and asked for her view.

### Extract 17 (Group 2)

- 1 J: 哦大嘢嚟既  
2 F: 係呀  
3 L: (unclear)  
4 F: heh  
5 (1.0 all laugh)  
6 J: [好型囑  
7 L: [唔係講行車-唔係[er er 考車呢我我講個笑話俾你哋知

In extract 17, the group talked about a friend's extra-curricular activity and they assessed her post as a leader in lines 1-2. Faye started laughing in line 4 which triggered the laughter of the whole group in line 5. Then in line 7, Lam changed the topic and started telling a joke about her friend who learnt to drive.



Sometimes, a short additional assessment occurs after the laughter. And the pattern of topic change would become:

- 1st : Assessment
- 2nd : Acceptance of Assessment
- 3rd : Laughter
- 4th : Additional assessment
- 5th : New Topic Introduced

However, these additional assessments are usually neglected and the participants simply focus on the new topic introduced in the next turn, like what happened in extract 18.

#### Extract 18 (Group 2)

- 1 L: 吓::嘩你好[了解[ (.) 娛樂圈呀:果然係菲姐吓阿王菲呀
- 2 J: [好熟喎
- 3 F: [梗係啦(unclear)
- 4 (1.0 laughing)
- 5 J: 呢啲專家
- 6 L: 你問我乜嘢呀唔係[我問你佢老公其實係咪奸架

- Lines 1-2 : Assessments
- Line 3 : Acceptance of Assessments
- Line 4: Laughter
- Line 5: Additional assessment
- Line 6: New Topic Introduced

There are various possible causes of the laughter. It could be the content or the way of delivering the assessments, as illustrated in lines 1-2 of extract 14 and line 1 in extract 18.

Or it could be the way of acceptance of the assessments. For example, in extract 16, Faye's repetition of the agreeing expression “係囉” in line 3 and her behavior as giving up defense against Lam made the whole group laugh.

In fact, laughter shows speakers' participation in a conversation. It acts as an aligning device. Speakers laugh in order to show alignment to the preceding turns.

When the whole group of speakers laugh at the same time, all of them become the current speakers of this alignment turn. And if the laughter also implies agreement among speakers, topic change is highly possible in the next turn as agreements usually mark an end of a topic (Drew & Holt 1998).

## 4.2 Techniques for achieving topic change (in the data)

Speakers have a variety of ways to achieve topic change, as discussed in chapter 2. Speakers can explicitly declare a change by saying, “Hey, let’s change the topic...”. Or they can change the topic without any obvious notice to other speakers.

From the data, five types of techniques used by the students can be identified:

- i) Use of questions
- ii) Use of declarative clauses
- iii) Use of conjunction “但係”
- iv) Use of connective adverb “咁”
- v) Use of “係啲”

### *i) Use of questions*

Questions are most frequently used to change topics in the data. Questions are asked and addressed to different people or different concerns. And by asking questions, speakers provide the first part of a question-answer adjacency pair. Answers to the questions are expected and preferred. Therefore, the orientation of conversations can easily be changed and also topic changes can be easily obtained.

Examples can easily be picked out from the extracts in 4.1, like:

#### Extract 2 (from Group 1)

- |     |    |                           |
|-----|----|---------------------------|
| 1   | S: | [佢佢會考嗰個咩國家語委嗰個[嘛吓嘛        |
| 2   | E: | [係囉                       |
| 3   | L: | 叉叉叉叉叉叉[跟住                 |
| → 4 | S: | [係啲同埋呢我想問吓呢你地識唔識人你 em(. ) |
| 5   |    | em 大學畢業                   |
| 6   | E: | 噃                         |
| 7   | S: | 跟住又考咗國家語委或者[係 er          |
| 8   | L: | [Tofa 囉                   |

As discussed before, lines 1-3 were on the topic of the courses that Lan took. In lines 4-5, Stephy asked the other speakers a question. The topic was then changed to potential candidates for a job as a substitute teacher.

Extract 7 (from Group 2)

- 1 J: 咁跟住到個市你覺得即係一個好既機會同埋你你可能或者係生  
 2 咗仔咁你先再買=  
 → 3 F: =咁你諗住租邊區呀 [ heh  
 4 H: [ heh  
 5 L: [ heh  
 6 J: 呢個真係 [ 菲姐真係遲啲先諗啦  
 7 L: [ 又住返咁遠呀  
 8 F: 租番錦繡啦梗係

The prior topic of extract 7 was buying flats. The question raised by Faye in line 3 changed the topic to where to rent a flat.

Extract 16 (Group 2)

- 1 L: [ 即係唔想  
 2 負責任啦  
 3 F: 係囉 (.) 係囉係囉  
 4 (. all laugh)  
 → 5 L: 阿 haby 呢 haby 點睇呀

The topic focus was originally on Faye's view on having children. Lam's question in line 5 shifted the focus to Haby's opinion.

ii) *Use of declarative clauses*

Another common sentence type used to change topic is declarative clauses. Speakers simply make a statement or comment to introduce a new topic.

However, the topics changed by declarative clauses are usually of greater relevance with the prior topic. Otherwise, more explanation is needed in order to direct other speakers to the new topic, as illustrated in extract 14.

Extract 14 (Group 2)

- 1 F: [ 唔係佢阿爸阿爸阿媽都住嗰度咁嘛咁你 [ 食飯

- 2 直行過去咪得囉幾方便
- 3 J: [係呀
- 4 (. )的而且確係幾方便
- 5 (1.0 all laughing)
- 6 J: 但係但係我想講嘢即係你哋係咁問我啫但係但係我聽有一啲女  
7 仔講呢[通常都唔鍾意生仔架嘢

The prior topic was about where Joe should live after getting married. Joe wanted to change the topic and turned the focus of the conversation to the girls. He first got others' attention by stating that he wanted to say something (“我想講嘢” in line 6). Then he provided the background for the change by saying “但係但係我聽有一啲女仔講呢...”. After all these preparations, he finally introduced the topic concerning having babies in line 7.

The same thing happened when Lam tried to change the topic from a friend's extra-curricular activity to a joke about taking the driving test in extract 18.

#### Extract 18 (Group 2)

- 1 J: 哦大嘢嚟既
- 2 F: 係呀
- 3 L: (unclear)
- 4 F: Heh
- 5 (1.0 all laugh)
- 6 J: [好型嘢
- 7 L: [唔係講行車-唔係[er er 考車呢我我講個笑話俾你哋知

In line 7, Lam had to get the attention and provide the reason (“唔係講行車-唔係[er er 考車呢”) for the shift of topics before she announced her new topic, “我講個笑話俾你哋知”.

Things would be much simpler if the prior topic and the new topic are of higher degree of relevance. The declarative clauses used would be simple and direct as shown in the following example:

#### Extract 4 (from Group 2)

- 1 L: 哦即係郭可盈做嗰個
- 2 H: 係啦係啦
- 3 L: 哦

- 4 H: [十兄弟  
 → 5 J: [我果然唔係太過了解呢一方面(.)因為我唔睇劇集  
 6 F: 啊唔緊要  
 7 L: 唔睇劇集但係你會睇咩廣告

Lines 1-3 were about a new television programme. In line 5, Joe made a statement on his own preference on television programme. And this straightforward statement was immediately responded to and a new topic was established.

iii) Use of conjunction “但係”

Apart from sentence types, there are some components that speakers often use when they want to change topic. The conjunction “但係” is one which has the corresponding meaning of “but” in English. By using “但係”, the current speaker provides a signal to other participants that he/she has something different to say. It creates a path for the introduction of a new topic.

Extract 12 (Group 1)

- 1 L: 真係唔錯我都想去  
 2 E: 係呀  
 3 (0.5)  
 → 4 S: 但係聽聞話好難考[囉國家語委  
 5 L: [係呀係呀

At the start of the extract, two of them, Lan and Eva, were still engaged in the prior topic about the job as a substitute teacher (lines 1-2). Stephy in line 4 grabbed their attention by using “但係” to start off. “但係” implied that the topic followed would be different from the prior topic. Other speakers were prepared for a new topic and so they could quickly respond to Stephy.

Extract 19 (Group 1)

- 1 L: 我無試過聽一次喎[唔知 heh  
 2 S: [heh  
 3 E: [heh 好呢個好難既  
 → 4 S: 喎: :但係點樣報架同埋  
 5 (1.0)  
 6 L: 點樣報呀好似城大都係其中一個考場嚟既

In extract 19, lines 1-3 were about the content of the CD which was for the

preparation of a Putonghua test. In line 4, again, Stephy used “但係” at the beginning of her topic-introducing turn.

#### Extract 20 (Group 2)

- 1 J: 嘩同警察無乜分別  
2 H: 好緊張呀  
3 L: 嘩喂要呀喂喂喂  
→ 4 H: 但係我其實想做公共關係科嗰邊  
5 L: 唔緊要啦[入去先

Haby used the same technique in extract 20. Before her turn in line 4, the group was talking about the requirement of a job in a government department which includes having a driving license. Haby used “但係” in her turn in line 4 and made a topic shift to her preference on the job nature. It was accepted by other speakers quickly and they all followed the change.

#### iv) Use of connective adverb “咁”

The connective adverb “咁” has the corresponding meaning of “then” in English. It is frequently used, especially at the beginning of interrogative clauses:

#### Extract 5 (from Group 2)

- 1 H: 我哋其實無無無第一[步吓嘛  
2 L: [係直情唔要有[同居呢一步[就結婚囉  
3 J: [唔會  
4 H: [就結婚係喇  
→ 5 (.)[咁你會唔會同居先結婚  
→ 6 F: [咁點解謝安琪:會同居既  
7 (1.0)  
8 F: 謝安琪點解可以  
9 J: 佢[唔係好-  
10 H: [佢天主教架嘛吓嘛=

In extract 5, both Haby and Faye used “咁” to initiate their questions (lines 5-6), in the aim of changing to a new topic.

#### Extract 11 (Group 1)

- 1 L: =聽咗幾日就覺得真係唔想再聽  
2 E: 係囉

- 3 L: 就聽歌  
 4 (1.0)  
 → 5 S: 咁個 cd 係讀啲乜嘢讀詞語定係啲啲[ 篇章  
 6 L: [全部囉

To shift from Lan's experience on listening to the CD, Stephy asked a question started with “咁” to change the topic to the content of the CD.

Extract 15 (Group 2)

- 1 L: 無所謂無所謂子女我都咁鍾意  
 2 F: 哦好呀好  
 3 (1.0 all laugh)  
 → 4 L: 咁你呢[阿菲姐  
 5 F: [我唔想生嗰

By using the question beginning with “咁” in line 4, Lam successfully shifted the focus from herself to Faye.

As seen from the above examples, instead of implying something different, the connective adverb “咁” shows a logical relationship between the following utterances with the prior content of the conversations. For example, both the prior and the new topic of extract 5 were about cohabitation.

Also, in extract 15, Lam simply asked “咁你呢” without explicitly stating what she was asking about. However, Faye was able to interpret her question by referring back to the previous topic, which was about having babies, and provided the corresponding answers in line 5. All the topic changes introduced by the connective adverb “咁” had a logical relation with the prior topic.

v) Use of “係嗰”

Sometimes, some parts of a speaker's turn may be marked by other speakers as newsworthy. Or, some parts of a speaker's turn may remind other speakers of something worth-mentioning. In that case, speakers may disengage from the current topic and introduce a new topic on that part. In the data, these turns usually started with “係嗰”, to show a sudden realization for topic change. It functions like the “oh” in English, with the intention of getting others' attention and signaling that there is something newsworthy and worth-mentioning to talk about .

Extract 6 (from Group 1)

- 1 S: 哦過去又一城囉  
2 L: 無時間  
→ 3 S: 咦係喎你上乜嘢呀  
4 (1.0)  
5 L: 咩中日文化交流喎

Stephy suggested going to the shopping mall for lunch in line 1 but Lan disagreed in line 2 by saying that she did not have enough time. Stephy already had the background knowledge that Lan had to attend a lesson after the recording. Lan's utterance in line 2 reminded Stephy of Lan's lesson as marked by the use of “咦係喎” before she shifted the topic to what lesson Lan took.

Extract 8 (from Group 2)

- 1 J: 當然不會啦(普通話)  
→ 2 L: 呀係喎其實都無問過[你會做咩  
3 H: [係囉你會做咩  
4 J: 乜嘢呀我咪-我宜家好大機會跟我爸囉=

The students were talking about who would stay in the linguistic field for future career. Joe's denial in line 1 reminded Lam that Joe had never talked about his plan for career. She then started her turn with “呀係喎” in line 2 and then followed by a request for information from Joe.

Extract 21 (from Group 2)

- 1 J: [係啱無錯無錯 heh  
2 F: 好講完啦依家食飯 heh  
3 H: Heh  
4 J: Heh  
→ 5 L: em 係喎食咗飯未呀  
6 H: 未呀-食咗食咗食咗食咗

The group was previously discussing about cohabitation. Faye produced a pre-closing turn to the conversation, saying that they could then go for lunch (line 2). However, that reminded Lam who found it worthwhile to talk about and started a new topic by asking if others had had lunch or not in line 5. Again, “係喎” was used at the beginning of the turn.



## 5. Conclusion

The aim of this case study is to examine topic change in Cantonese conversation. Observations and analysis on the two pieces of video-recording are done according to the conversation analysis approach.

Three types of placements of topic change are observed from the Cantonese data. Placements at TRP and placements after silence are the two most frequently used types in the data. And this phenomenon is in fact shared among English and Cantonese conversations.

However, one distinctive placement of topic change is spotted from the Cantonese data: topic change after laughter. It is found that laughter after assessment shows agreement among speakers. That makes topic change highly possible in the next turn as agreements tend to mark an end of a topic.

The analysis confirmed two common techniques used for topic change in English and Cantonese conversations: the use of questions and the use of declarative clauses. These two techniques are the simplest and the most straightforward ways to trigger a new topic.

The use of conjunction “但係” is also popular in the Cantonese data. It prepares the hearers that something different from the current topic is going to be raised.

The connective adverb “咁” functions quite differently from “但係” in the topic introduction turns in Cantonese conversations. From the data, it is noticed that all the topic changes introduced by the connective adverb “咁” are logically connected, and show relevance, to the prior topic.

Last but not the least, “係啱” is constantly used in the data to initiate a new topic which the speaker finds it worth-mentioning right there on site of topic change.

The above list of placements and techniques for topic change is by no means exhaustive. Further research and study would be definitely beneficial to our understanding of topic changes in Cantonese conversations.

## **Bibliography**

Button, G., Casey, N. (1984). *Generating topic: the use of topic initial elicitors*. Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 167-190.

Drew, P., Holt, E. (1998) *Figures of speech: Figurative expressions and the management of topic transition in conversation*. Language in Society, 27(4), 495-522.

Geluykens, R. (1992). *Topic introduction in English conversation*. Transactions of the Philological Society, 91(2), 181-214.

Hutchby, I. and Wooffitt, R. (1998) *Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Jefferson, G. (1984). *On stepwise transition from talk about a trouble to inappropriately next-positioned matters*. Atkinson, J.M., Heritage, eds. In Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 191-222.

Jefferson, G. (1984). Transcript notation in Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Keenan, E. O., Schieffelin, B. B. (1976). *Topic as a Discourse Notion: A Study of Topic in the Conversations of Children and Adults (1)*

Leung K. Y. (2005). *Topic Management in Cantonese Conversations*. The University of Hong Kong

Maynard, D.W. (1980). *Placement of topic changes in conversation*. Semiotica, 30(3/4), 263-290.

Orletti, F. (1989). *Topic organization in conversation*. International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 76, 75-85.

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. A. & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language*, 50:696-735.

Sacks, H. (1992). *Lectures on Conversation*. Vol. 2. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Zhang, W. (2006). *Lecture notes on Conversation Analysis for the course CTL4216 Advanced Topics in Linguistics*. City University of Hong Kong.

## **Appendix I: Transcript Notation**

The transcription symbols used generally follow the notation developed by Gail Jefferson which is commonly accepted by conversation analysts.

A: xxxx= The equal sign indicates latching between two speakers when there is

B: =yyyy no interval between the change of speakership.

A: xx[xxx Square brackets are used to indicate simultaneous or overlapping

B: [yyy speech. A left hand square bracket indicates the onset of simultaneous or overlapping utterances.

(.) A dot within parentheses indicates a very short pause (0.1 second or less)

(n) n in the parentheses indicates the length of the pause in seconds, e.g. (1.0) indicates a pause of one second.

. A dot indicates falling intonation, not necessarily at the end of a sentence.

, A comma indicates level intonation, not necessarily in the middle of a sentence.

? A question mark indicates rising intonation, not necessarily after a question.

↑ An upward arrow indicates a noticeable rising or falling shift in intonation.

- : A colon indicates lengthening of the prior sound. The more colons, the longer a lengthening is.
- A dash indicates an abrupt cut-off of the prior word or sound.
- ° xxxx° A pair of degree signs indicates a stretch of quieter talk in contrast to its surrounding utterances.
- xxxx Emphasised or stressed parts of an utterance is underlined.
- (( )) Double parentheses are used to enclose a description of the non-verbal aspects of the talk, e.g. ((laugh))
- () Empty single parentheses indicate an inaudible utterance which has been said but cannot be transcribed.

## Appendix II: Transcriptions

### **Group 1:**

00:07 – 14:35

Lan (L), Stephy (S), Eva (E)

[ 02:08-02:45 ]

- 02:08 S: 我唔鍾意細路女 heh 我(.)無乜耐性架(.)對細路(.)即係無  
乜方法教佢所以:
- 02:20 (1.0)
- L: 我睇到細路仔都係覺得佢哋好得意=  
E: =係呀:好難得嗰你成日教住嗰班有啲曳既都(.)仲有呢個[感  
覺  
L: [咁  
又係=  
E: =係囉
- 02:30 L: 佢哋真係'lau'打架嗰 heh  
( (2.0 all laugh) )
- S: 但係你會唔會出手  
L: 唔會啦梗係=  
E: =咁你點應付佢哋通常  
L: 睇吓幾多歲(.)細啲啲咪鬧佢=  
02:40 E: =吓嘛(.)會唔會喊架  
L: 有次真係整喊咗一個=  
E: =係囉=  
02:44 S: =跟住呢跟住會點

[ 03:34-04:34 ]

- 03:34 L: 唔會既炒我囉  
(3.0)
- E: 咁你有無諗過幾 em 拍拖幾年結婚呢
- 03:40 S: 無(.)但係一定唔會好快囉(.)即係起碼應該兩三年  
(2.0)
- E: 年齡呢(.)年齡大約幾多幾幾(.)幾歲到
- 03:50 S: 好難講嗰(.)依家都未有拖拍既話呢咁即係:如果好似你哋咁  
計呢拍四年先:[結婚呢咁就死啦 heh  
E: [佢呀 heh

04:00 ((1.0 all laugh))  
 S: [咁可能都  
 E: [所以可能要睇吓我哋究竟起步嗰個年齡幾多歲=  
 S: =係啦=  
 L: =睇情[況  
 04:10 E: [如果中學開始咁可能閒閒地都七年八年先結架嗰  
 ...  
 04:20 E: 唔係即係講係長久嗰啲呢[即係由中學開始呢  
 L: [我有 friend 拍咗八年(.)form  
 two 開始  
 E: 咁都真係幾[犀利  
 S: [都係同一個呀=  
 L: =係呀到依家  
 E: 咁細個開始都可以咁[長  
 04:30 L: [但係經常鬧分手  
 E: 吓嘛  
 L: 經常都[係咁  
 04:32 S: [但係鬧得多就真係會分囉 heh

[05:17-05:33]

05:17 L: 唔係(.)佢哋佢哋需要人哋幫呀咁所以(.)嗰女子同我好熟咁  
 就幫佢哋囉  
 E: 哦  
 (2.0)  
 E: 你有無試過鬧分手(.)咁耐以嚟=  
 05:30 L: =無啱(.)嗰交都比較少

[05:36-05:55]

05:36 L: 佢忍得我姐  
 E: Heh  
 05:40 S: 真係好  
 (5.0)  
 S: 你依家呢個識咗幾耐 heh  
 05:46 E: 嘩 heh 無咩(1.0)拍 er 拍拍就快兩個月囉(.)好短之嘛

[06:11-08:21]

06:11 L: 搵到啱為止  
(4.0)

06:16 E: 係咪可以轉 topic 架  
S: 可以  
(2.0)  
E: 你因間駛唔駛上堂  
S: 要(.)我上點半  
E: 哦:啖同你一樣啎  
(1.0)  
S: 你呢你今日特登番嚟架  
E: 唔係既我係番工吖嘛(.)咁咪(.)即係順-當-都係順路既九龍  
塘[咁(.)係囉  
S: [都係既(.)轉地鐵=  
E: =橫掂都要[經過九龍塘  
06:37 S: [番幾點呀但係你  
E: 兩點囉  
S: 噢都趕住啎(.)有少[少  
E: [都趕得切既可以食埋嘢食埋嘢先  
S: 得唔得呀  
06:45 E: 最多打番去話遲少少囉 heh  
L: [hehheh  
S: [哦 hehheh 原來係咁  
06:50 L: 食咩呀  
E: 食咩?canteen 囉近近地  
L: 噃:  
06:55 S: 你會唔會食=  
E: =好熱呀呢度  
06:57 L: 都可以啎(.)唔係我飽啦啎=  
E: =係呀你食咗嘢咩  
L: 噃  
S: 早餐  
L: 但係我都想食  
E: [哦  
07:04 S: [吓:(0.5)食咩  
(1.0)  
L: Tea



S: Heh 唔好玩啦一點鐘食 tea[heh  
 E: [Heh  
 L: 咁呀(.)等我諗吓先  
 07:13 E: 你呢你你係咪食咗嘢番嚟  
 S: 食咗早餐  
 E: 即係都唔肚餓喇  
 S: 可以食既可以食既  
 L: 噃  
 07:22 S: 兩個 lunch share 食囉  
 L: [噃  
 E: [噃  
 S: Heh 如果啱既話  
 07:27 L: 我想食拉雜嘢  
 E: 點拉雜法(.)即[係  
 L: [雞翼薯條啲=  
 E: =哦:  
 S: 哦過去又一城囉  
 L: 無時間  
 07:37 S: 嘅係嗰你上乜嘢呀  
 (1.0)  
 L: 咩中日文化交流嗰  
 07:42 E: 啊你 take 咁多啲啲中文啲啲科既[今個 sem  
 L: [係呀  
 S: 但係你呢科係咩嚟架  
 L: 咪 ct1 又又又囉  
 S: 邊個教架小林呀  
 L: 唔係嗰個叫乜嘢唔知佢叫乜名乜嘢城[囉好似唔知乜嘢城 heh  
 S: [hehheh  
 L: 唔[知叫乜名  
 07:57 E: [咁你仲 take(.)嘅你除咗呢個仲 take 嗰個咩呀(.)咩 com  
 咩中文即九點半上[啲班呢  
 L: [Chinese for commence  
 E: 呢個又係咩嚟架又係又又又咩  
 L: 噃  
 E: 咁多[個又又又既  
 L: [我爭兩個又又又  
 S: 嗰個係普通話嚟架 Chinese for commence  
 08:12 L: 噃唔係(.)教中文既(.)跟住:我仲 take 咗普通話

08:17 S: 噃  
L: 嗰個就係(.)講咩呢我唔記得啦總之係砌到啱啱好啦我唔記得  
係咩嚟

[08:38-09:00]

08:38 S: 你係咪為[你考試鋪路呀  
E: [多咗呀  
L: 唔係唔係唔係  
E: [heh  
S: [佢佢會考嗰個咩國家語委嗰個[嘛吓嘛  
E: [係囉  
L: 叉叉叉叉叉[跟住  
08:47 S: [係嗰同埋呢我想問吓呢你地識唔識人你 em(.)  
em 大學畢業  
E: 噃  
S: 跟住又考咗國家語委或者[係 er  
L: [tofa 囉  
S: 呀係呀  
E: To(h)fa [heh  
S: [考咗架啦  
08:59 L: 三月考丫嘛

[09:39-10:43]

09:39 L: 咁又唔錯  
E: 係囉  
L: 真係唔錯我都想去  
E: 係呀  
(0.5)  
09:43 S: 但係聽聞話好難考[囉國家語委  
L: [係呀係呀  
S: 我又[想考  
09:48 E: [但係其實-  
L: [好嚴  
E: 點分架即係 em 分 grade 咁樣呀=  
L: =一級(.)唔係唔係一級甲(1.0)[跟住一級乙

E: [咁考到咩咩級先至先至[達  
標

S: [係  
咪一級

09:58 L: 一乙就已經係好 top 架啦一甲基本上無無乜咁既人

E: [哦

S: [噏

L: 做樣架咋無架即係好似一百分咁無人囉一百分

S: 噏

L: 一乙就已經好好架啦(.)跟住可能係二甲咁樣囉

E: 哦:

10:10 S: 但係好似依家出面請通常都係二:乙 or above[咁樣(.)係咪  
呀

E: [二乙已經得  
架啦

L: 係呀係呀[係呀

10:17 S: [因為嗰次聽 apple 講話(1.0)二乙

E: [噏

L: [噏

S: 都已經可以做[(.)教書

L: [係呀

S: 教中學添呀

L: 噏[係囉

S: [係囉

L: Apple 咪係教中學囉(.)[教普通話

E: [哦:  
(1.0)

10:28 E: 咁有無啲咩(.)咩 moc-即係 ex-即係 past paper 啲啲  
re-(.)知唔知道形式點考

L: 形式係好清楚架

S: 佢有本書[讀架直情

L: [係呀(.)[本書好似本小字典咁(.)佢裏面有好多好  
多嘢讀讀熟讀熟佢就得架喇

10:39 E: [哦:

[10:54-11:31]

10:54 E: 就全部都係出嚟嘅裏便=

L: =一定係啲咋=  
E: =哦  
L: 跟住篇章有幾十篇  
(0.5)  
11:00 S: 但係話好難架喎: 啲啲篇章呢你讀曬仲要計埋好似人地朗誦啲  
啲咁呢又要計埋有無[感情呀  
L: [有感情  
E: 哦  
S: 咬字準唔準確呀咁樣  
11:11 L: 少少都叫做唔準(.)逐個[逐個字計  
S: [好[難:  
E: [所以難考囉咁樣  
11:15 S: 係呀  
(1.5)  
11:18 S: 我都想考但係:  
L: 試吓囉  
S: 有排讀囉要  
L: 未開始溫但係我( )  
11:24 S: 但係麻麻喎-即係我平時既普通話水平已經係麻麻地  
L: 佢有餅 cd 架念口簧跟住佢念就得架啦

[12:00-14:21]

12:00 E: 咁會唔會係心散囉我諗=  
L: =heh=  
E: =即係譬如你無啦啦囉出嚟聽可能心散囉  
L: 真係[喎  
E: [無唔會專心去聽=  
L: =聽咗幾日就覺得真係唔想再聽  
E: 係囉  
12:09 L: 就聽歌  
(1.0)  
12:11 S: 咁啲個 cd 係讀啲乜嘢讀詞語定係啲啲[篇章  
L: [全部囉  
S: 嘩  
L: 篇章詞語(.)係呀  
S: 幾耐先聽囉  
L: 咁佢你可以揀塞啲咩落去 mp three 度架嘛佢有-[分咗

S: [我知呀但  
係即係佢成隻碟咁計要聽幾耐先聽得囉

L: 我無試過聽一次喎[唔知 heh

S: [heh

E: [heh 好呢個好難既

12:31 S: 噃::但係點樣報架同埋  
(1.0)

L: 點樣報呀好似城大都係其中一個考場嚟既

S: 但係(.)如果我畢咗業之後先[報

12:42 L: [咁就唔知啦

E: 得架

L: [中大都有

S: [得?得得

L: 但係就-就唔知-我唔記得城大係淨係 for 教職員同埋學生定係  
for for [嗰個畢咗業嗰個唔知

S: [(考埋)哦哦

12:55 S: 噃::但係你係(.)依家報定下年呀定係[點

L: [唔係呀出年先至報

S: 哦:即係呢啲嘢都係到時先諗啦[點樣報

L: [係囉係囉

13:04 S: 哦:  
(1.0)

13:06 L: 有錢就報  
(1.0)

13:08 S: [係既

E: [喂你考咗 IELTS 未呀

L: 三-三月尾咁嘛=

S: =[我考咗啦

E: =[係咩我記得你係十二-點呀

S: Ok 呀

E: Em

S: 唔難囉

13:16 E: 係呀=  
S: =係呀(.)[放心啲去考  
E: [出咗出咗 grade 未呀  
S: 出咗好快出啦=  
E: =係呀=  
S: =兩個禮拜之後就出架啦

E: 點呀個 grade  
S: 七點五  
E: 幾好啲  
S: Ok: 啦  
13:25 E: 七點五真係幾好啲  
L: ° 我都唔放心°  
13:28 S: 但係有份卷考得麻麻  
E: 邊份呀  
(1.0)  
S: Er:::諗吓先呀(2.0)唔係 listening 呀 writing 呀  
writing(.)[writing  
E: [ 噏  
L: [ 噏  
13:41 S: Writing 因為個腦太亂啦[ 嗰陣=  
E: [ 噏  
L: [ 噏  
S: =唔係好耐時間(.)諗得好 systematic 咁樣寫呢  
L: 噏  
S: 變咗成篇嘢唔係幾好囉(.)即係我寫嗰陣已經覺得[ 係咁樣  
13:53 E: [ 係咪成篇  
(.)即係作一篇文呀  
L: 唔係:睇嚟[ 你都未開始[ 準備 hehheh  
S: [ 作兩篇文呀係 hehheh  
E: [ 未呀 heh 係呀咁又點呢 heh  
14:00 S: 但係唔好報學校 scope 嗰啲 course 囉  
E: 噏:  
S: 完全無用囉  
L: [ 無錯  
E: [ 係呀  
S: 係[ 呀  
14:05 E: [ 你咪俾咗錢報囉嗰時候  
L: 咪撞咗星期四 text ling 囉  
E: [ 哦  
14:09 S: [ 咁點呀  
L: 無上啦晨早開始無[ 上啦  
14:11 S: 四百蚊啲:  
L: 無呀[ 上咗  
S: [ 唔心痛咩

L: 我想咗三堂到就開始無上啦  
E: [ ( )  
14:17 S: [嘩呢個( . )啱既係呢個選擇係啱既就算你去咗上你都會覺得  
    咗錢

**Group 2:**

14:48 – 28:36

Joe (J), Haby (H), Lam (L), Faye (F)

[ 15:07-24:34 ]

J: em: 廿五六歲啦  
15:10 H: 嘩  
L: 嘩咁早呀  
J: 係呀  
F: 蓄咗錢未呀 仲仲有幾年咋嘞  
J: 係呀真架  
H: 蓄咗未呀  
F: 蓄咗錢未呀  
J: 蓄緊啦  
H: 嘩  
L: 嘩  
F: 可以俾首期啦吓嘛  
J: 唔可以呀  
F: 唔可以  
J: 吓唔係嘞我我無諗過無諗過買樓嘞  
15:20 L: 你會住咩  
H: 咁住咩租  
F: 咁住即係都係住錦繡  
L: 咁即咁  
J: 唔係囉即係我覺得應該租樓  
F: 呀[係嘞好平-抵啲嘞  
15:30 L: [但係咁流動會唔會好煩(.) 你會唔會生仔先  
J: 我會生仔呀  
L: 如果生 BB[你(.) 租嚟租去麻煩架嘞  
J: [我覺得好似 interview 緊我  
F: 我哋係陳志雲吖嘛  
L: 咁我哋對你有興趣嘛  
15:40 H: [過呢邊先  
J: [係嘛  
L: 但係(.) 你會(.) 結咗婚(.) 隔幾年生定點樣先  
J: 隔: 幾年啦  
15:50 L: 噃(1.0) 我唔係我自己就會覺得呢如果生咗仔女呢就最好定死  
咗喺嗰度住就喺嗰度住



F: 唔係咁你租唔一定要搬架嘛大佬=  
 J: 唔係所以開頭係租囉即係蓄錢因為因為點講呢其實係我阿爸同我講即係即係係香港買樓係一個好好愚蠢既投資  
 L: 咁又係  
 J: 即係即係你真係為左住先好買囉[即係  
 16:10 H: [但係好多人炒樓可以賺錢架  
 嗶  
 J: 係:睇吓你睇吓你炒唔炒到囉  
 H: 噏  
 J: 但係我就覺得即係(1.0)即係我唔會買樓住囉一定  
 H: 噏  
 J: 即係開頭係租樓  
 16:20 H: [噏  
 L: [噏  
 F: [哦  
 J: 咁跟住到個市你覺得即係一個好既機會同埋你你可能或者係生  
 咗仔咁你先再買=  
 F: =咁你諗住租邊區呀[heh  
 H: [heh  
 L: [heh  
 J: 呢個真係[菲姐真係遲啲先諗啦  
 16:30 L: [又住返咁遠呀  
 F: 租番錦繡啦梗係  
 L: [港島區啦  
 H: [咁遠:  
 J: [我我其實係鍾意錦繡既  
 F: 係囉  
 H: 但係好遠呀(.)[唔方便呀  
 F: [唔係佢阿爸阿爸阿媽都住嗰度咁嘛咁你[食飯  
 直行過去咪得囉幾方便  
 16:40 J: [係呀  
 (. )的而且確係幾方便  
 ((1.0 all laugh))  
 J: 但係但係我想講嗶即係你哋係咁問我啫但係但係我聽有一啲女  
 仔講呢[通常都唔鍾意生仔架嗶  
 16:52 F: [即係你女朋友呀  
 J: 唔係唔係[一般啫  
 L: [唔鍾意生仔呀

J: 即係又會驚痛呀  
H: [哦  
L: [哦  
J: 跟住又又  
L: 我唔驚喎  
((all "wow" and laugh))  
17:03 L: [唔係唔生呀  
J: [即係你會生仔架你想生仔既  
L: 要梗係要啦(.)[即係如果搵到個好既話  
F: [幾時呀(.)幾時呀(.)幾時呀  
L: 吓幾時唔知呀出現咗話你知  
17:11 F: 咁你[想生仔定想生女  
L: [咁你呢阿阿菲姐  
J: 痴線  
L: 無所謂無所謂仔女我都咁鍾意  
F: 哦好呀好  
((1.0 all laugh))  
L: 咁你呢[阿菲姐  
F: [我唔想生喎  
L: [點解呢  
H: [你想唔想結婚先  
17:20 F: em 都想既(.)但係生仔真係  
J: 你想結婚呀菲姐  
F: 想:咩唔想個個都想係咪先  
J: 咁啱既唔係有啲人唔想結婚架[齋拍拖  
H: [有啲真係唔想(.)同居咁樣  
17:30 F: 唔係唔係即係啲劇集呢咪[唔係 TVB 嗰啲  
L: [咩劇集呀  
J: 即係咩  
F: 唔係 TVB 嗰啲出邊嗰啲生仔真係好恐怖架喎:成抽血咁抽出嚟  
J: [咁又唔會成抽既  
L: [咁你(.)你唔好諗到咁誇張先得架你都係咁樣俾阿媽生出嚟  
咋嘛  
17:43 F: 我知=  
J: =即你就唔想生仔  
F: 係呀  
J: 但係你又想[結婚  
F: [唔係咁玩人地嗰個緊係好玩架啦自己[如果自己湊

L: [即係唔想  
負責任啦

17:51 F: 係囉(.)係囉係囉  
(all laugh)

L: 阿 haby 呢 haby 點睇呀

H: 要:咩都要囉結婚[要 heh 生子都要

F: [要要咩啫 heh 買樓都要

L: [你即係要同居結婚生子

18:00 H: 同居唔同居(.)結婚=  
L: =即係--[哦:  
F: [哦:  
H: [要結婚  
J: [同居梗係唔同居啦=  
H: =唔同居  
J: 呢個信仰嚟=  
H: =係啦(.)信仰問題  
L: [哦  
F: [哦係架咩=  
L: =唔係:我都支持呢個睇法架=  
H: =係呀=  
L: 我都覺得唔應該(.)[咩都試咗先-

18:10 F: [哦原來咁  
J: 我覺得同居會令到啲關係好複雜  
H: 唔係不過的確同居有同居好處:  
F: 咁例如呢  
H: 例如:即係一齊住-

18:20 F: 咁咪同結婚無分別囉  
H: 係架其實一齊住同結婚既分別只係爭咗張紙囉可以咁講  
F: 哦  
L: 噃  
H: 咁同居又可以:即係由朝到晚:即係所有嘢都可以知道曬對方既  
嘢咁樣就係一個好[好既機會去:heh

18:32 J: [好坦蕩蕩  
L: 啲人就話係一個[去試驗囉噃  
H: [去試:係啦(1.0)呢度有但既道理不過我覺得  
em 結婚好啲  
L: 噃  
H: 結婚好啲

18:40 L: 係啦  
(1.0)  
F: 先後次序宜依家吓嘛(.)依家講緊  
H: 唔[係唔係  
L: [唔:係囉  
H: 我哋其實無無無第一[步吓嘛  
L: [係直情唔要有[同居呢一步[就結婚囉  
J: [唔會  
H: [就結婚係喇  
(.)[咁你會唔會同居先結婚

18:50 F: [咁點解謝安琪:會同居既  
(1.0)  
F: 謝安琪點解可以  
J: 佢[唔係好-  
H: [佢天主教架嘛吓嘛=  
J: =吓係呀[唔知嗎  
L: [邊有同居呀  
F: [謝安琪同張繼聰  
H: [天主教定基督教天主教吓嘛  
L: [哦  
J: [我聽人講好似都唔( )  
L: [天主教可以同居呀  
H: [唔同架嘛

19:00 F: [係咪唔可以有咗先結婚架  
(.)  
H: 基本上係唔應該有咗囉 heh  
J: [作為一個人  
L: [唔係根本上[係唔係宗教信仰[都唔應該有咗先結婚講囉囉  
H: [係唔應該有呢個過程囉  
J: [係喇就算你中國你都係架[浸  
豬籠架嘛

19:10 F: [唔  
係係咪唔可以婚前性行[為  
H: [係 heh  
L: 係[係係你啱你啱 heh  
F: [hehheh  
H: [係係 heh  
J: [係啱無錯無錯 heh

F: 好講完啦依家食飯 heh  
H: heh  
J: heh  
L: em 係啱食咗飯未呀  
19:21 H: 未呀-食咗食咗食咗食咗  
L: 食咗[啦:吓  
F: [食咗啦:(嘔)  
J: 搞錯呀宜家幾點呀  
L: 想食[飯呀  
H: [食咗啲啦食咗啲啦  
J: 我早餐都未食  
L: Me too  
F: 我都係呀好慘呀啱啱起身無耐[咋嘛  
19:31 L: [哈我又係呀好眼[瞓呀  
J: [你陣間有咩  
做呀  
L: 陣[間食食吓飯囉  
F: [噢已經轉咗啦噃 Minty O 唔 OK 架  
L: 食[飯囉 em  
H: [ok 呀啊咁快架  
19:40 L: 係呀你準備咗啲咩(.)今日講吓  
F: 係囉我哋[都(.)係呀  
L: 我哋個個準備好曬架啦我哋要講既嘢[已經講囉  
F: [之前已經錄咗架啦[你嚟  
之前每人兩分鐘  
H: [我唔  
信我剩係知我要坐响度囉  
19:50 J: 唔係( )發表吓意見  
L: 咁又係咁嘛咁我哋無咩講啦噃  
(1.0)  
H: 係[咪完架啦  
J: [無呀睇吓你哋一陣間有咩做  
L: 咁呀新年有咩搞呀  
F: 無呀( )經濟啦即係  
20:00 L: 呀:搞錯呀你呀  
H: ( )一路拎住[架啦噃  
F: [電話佢[架  
L: [係呀佢拎住我電話

J: [新年去行山吓嘛  
L: 噃  
J: 你去唔去行山=  
H: =去  
L: [係喎  
F: [初七喎  
H: 初七(.)人[日  
L: [好呀好呀  
F: 你去唔去[呀  
H: [人[人生日  
J: [我唔去  
L: [你唔會番[大陸咩  
F: [去唔到咩真係  
J: 我[去咗 camp  
20:10 H: [我初四番嚟啦  
J: 我都想去  
L: 點解你琴日又係[澳門呢  
J: [你哋次次都禮拜六日[我禮拜六日番教會  
H: [係澳門我琴日去咗澳門  
L: [點解呢你係咪[heh  
heh 好不滿好不滿  
F: [成日架  
咩  
J: [唔係因為我入 camp(.)即係咁啲嗰日入咗 camp  
20:19 H: [唔係因為我澳洲朋友番咗嚟 heh 所以同咗佢去玩  
L: 呀我哋-係咪唔可以咁樣 side discussion 架  
H: 我哋要繼續[講  
L: [最好最好  
F: [講咩(.)有無睇突圍行動呀  
L: Er[呢 er 問唔中睇吓啦  
H: [heh  
20:30 J: [突圍行動(.)唔係大咗結局啦[咩  
L: [呀呀馬-  
F: [係呀係呀嘩  
L: 咩呀  
F: 米雪真係做得好好  
H: 唔係呀唔係呀  
J: 米雪 heh

L: 老戲骨咁嘛  
 F: 係呀正到爆  
 20:40 L: 呀但係佢老老公[係係咪其實都係[奸架  
 F: ( )  
 J: [乜佢結咗[婚咩米雪  
 F: [係呀  
 H: [突圍行動入面呀  
 L: [咩呀咩呀你講咩先  
 F: [突圍行動入面呀  
 J: 我講真嗰個米雪即係[唔係戲入面  
 20:50 F: [結咗婚都唔知啦  
 L: ( )  
 J: [咩呀[話佢話佢同居嘛  
 H: [無呀同居之嘛  
 L: 係咩=  
 H: =即係依家係好多人都係咁樣[剩係同居唔結婚囉  
 F: [尹志強咁嘛  
 L: Er 踢波嗰個呀  
 F: 係呀  
 21:00 H: 係守龍[嗰個  
 F: [阿林文龍舅父嚟架  
 L: 吓::嘩你好[了解[(. )娛樂圈呀:果然係菲姐吓阿王菲呀  
 J: [好熟嗎  
 F: [梗係啦( )  
 ((1.0 all laugh))  
 J: 呢啲專家  
 21:11 L: 你問我乜嘢呀唔係[我問你佢老公其實係咪奸架  
 J: [有無睇( )  
 F: 係呀係呀  
 L: [咁即係無人係忠  
 J: [唔係你宜家講乜[我好混亂嗎  
 L: [啱套戲裏面  
 J: 吓  
 L: 米雪嗰老[公  
 F: [吳卓羲囉係忠囉  
 21:20 L: 係咩[竟然  
 F: [馬仔呀廖碧兒呀[咪都忠囉  
 H: [都係忠係呀

J: 宜家未做完咩  
F: [做完啦  
H: [做完啦  
J: 係[囉  
L: [做完啦  
F: 就係做完先[講咁嘛  
L: [阿爭霸呢  
F: [做完啦  
H: [做完啦  
L: 阿劉松仁擺[番未呀  
J: [宜家做[緊咩劇呀  
H: [擺番啦  
21:30 F: 十兄弟[同埋咩迎妻接福  
H: [十兄弟  
F: 無睇過( )電視  
H: [都唔好睇架啦  
L: 哦即係郭可盈做嗰個  
H: 係啦係啦  
L: 哦  
H: [十兄弟  
J: [我果然唔係太過了解呢一方面(.)因為我唔睇劇集  
21:40 F: 啊唔緊要  
L: 唔睇劇集但係你會睇咩廣告  
H: 係啦[heh  
F: [heh  
L: 新聞  
H: [咁( )剩係睇廣告  
J: [即即係一做 show 我就熄電視(.)即即係播[劇集我就熄電  
視然後然後之後我就睇廣告  
21:50 L: [哦原來你有呢  
個喜好架  
J: 唔好講笑啦  
((2.0 all laugh))  
L: 點知你啫  
(1.0)  
J: 我係禮拜六日睇吓波架咋  
F: 無無無架啦=  
J: =睇新聞[囉跟住



22:00 F: [咁你平時做咩呀  
 H: 係囉  
 J: 平時呀[唔係咁夜晚要去補習架嘛  
 F: [全部-  
 L: [睇吓聖經  
 F: 全部都係學業上既嘢嚟架  
 J: 咁禮拜三四又要上堂啦夜晚  
 L: 噃  
 F: 哦  
 J: 咁跟住(.)其他日子基本上即係你嗰啲黃金時段我唔係屋企  
 既  
 22:14 L: [嘩:::  
 F: [好 busy 呀  
 L: 係囉  
 F: 成日出街食飯唔好[架  
 L: [成日拍拖呢  
 J: 唔係出街食飯呀(.)係上堂同埋去補習  
 22:22 F: 咁[好悶  
 J: [即係食完飯我就八點鐘去補習  
 L: 嘩咁夜先補呀一補[咪補到好夜  
 J: [因為我揸 BUBU 車[去去附近加州  
 22:30 L: [揸車去補習呀  
 H: [嘩:揸車去補習  
 F: [乜你乜你考咗車牌啦咩  
 H: 咩話  
 J: 考咗一年[幾啦  
 F: [吓你都無講過我唔知啫(.)咁你  
 L: 我知[呀我知呀  
 J: [咁唔會無神神講話喂各位 BAL[既同學考咗車牌咁樣唔會  
 L: [我考咗車牌啦  
 22:41 F: 幾[時遊車河  
 L: [你考咗未  
 F: 無呀(.)幾時遊車河  
 J: 幾時遊車河=  
 F: =去錦繡[燒嘢食呀  
 L: [我講個笑話㗎  
 J: 係呀嗰陣時我咪同佢講  
 H: 係咩可以去架

F: 梗係可以啦  
 J: 我果度唔係好封閉既  
 22:52 F: 係呀  
 ((all laugh))  
 L: 無無佢果度咁封閉 heh  
 H: [咁不如嗰日行完山去啦  
 F: [咁不如嗰日搞啦喂(.)去啦  
 L: 揸車行山[揸車上山頂  
 J: [行完山嗰日我就唔喺到:第二日就可以  
 23:02 H: 星期日(.)[得呀  
 L: [er 好似係  
 J: 星:[期  
 F: [星期日唔得嗰阿 claudia 已經  
 H: [點解呀  
 L: [你 family day 呀  
 F: 唔係呀 claudia 唔得呀星期日  
 L: 哦佢要揸飛機呀好似  
 F: [係呀類似  
 J: [吓咩揸飛機  
 23:10 L: 唔係佢唔-[咩航空  
 F: [唔係 cada 嗰啲嘢啦總之  
 J: 哦即係去 in 咁嘛  
 F: [唔知喎  
 L: [唔係佢係不撈都係嗰啲(.)嗰類航空  
 F: 係囉好煩架好多嘢做架佢又要操兵呀行[山呀行[幾日幾夜知唔  
 知呀  
 23:20 J: [操兵 heh  
 L: [Red Cross  
 F: [行幾日幾夜呀要  
 J: [操兵佢操咩兵呀  
 L: Red Cross 呀吓嘛  
 F: 唔係[呀  
 L: [唔係咩  
 F: Emily 至係架嘛佢本來都係 cada 嗰[啲嘢呀 Claudia  
 H: [呀係呀係呀  
 23:30 J: Cada[哦  
 L: [嗰啲都嗰啲都要行唔係 train 架  
 F: 係呀佢仲要捉人哋邊個行得唔好呀唔直呀好呀[好大嘢

H: [即係勁架喎]

F: [係呀]

L: [佢係大呀]

J: 哦大嘢嚟既

F: 係呀

L: ( )

F: heh  
(1.0 all laugh))

J: [好型喎]

23:41 L: [唔係講行車-唔係[er er 考車呢我我講個笑話俾你哋知  
J: [行車  
F: 哦[好無笑  
L: [咁呢  
J: [好無笑既先  
L: 好笑[好笑我我我  
J: [我真係老實啲講句佢講嗰啲真係要問吓先  
23:50 L: 我我個 friend 呢咁佢嗰次考車牌啦咁大家都知馬路上面咁譬  
如你 em 雙線既話咁中間會有條白色線咁樣啦  
J: 係呀  
L: 咁咁咁我咁樣啦扮啦咁呢呀咁樣啦=  
24:00 F: =扮[呀  
L: [咁跟住呢條線啦咁跟住呢佢第一 em 步落地呢一開車呢佢  
就咁樣行啦架車  
(1.0)  
J: 即係乜住响中[問  
24:10 L: [佢係踩住嗰條行車線嚟行=  
J: =即係要要要維持[係嗰個  
H: [即係踩住條白色線  
L: [唔知呀係啦踩住[囉  
J: [佢第一次學車呀  
L: Er[第一次上堂呀應該係上路[試 er 係囉上-=  
F: [第一次學車  
24:20 J: [痴線 heh  
L: =跟住佢就咁樣嚟行囉  
J: 佢個佢個佢個佢個佢個阿 sir 係咪有啲問題  
L: 唔係唔係佢[唔知架 em em  
F: [個阿 sir 睇唔到架吓佢以為係咁樣行呀  
24:31 L: 佢以為係咁樣行佢真係[以為咁樣行

J: [佢有無搭過車架

[ 24:47-25:04 ]

24:47 F: 咁你會唔會學呀  
L: 吓我唔學[啦好驚  
H: [我要學呀  
J: [你學呀  
L: [你學呀  
H: 因為我報咗 ICAC 呀  
J: [呀:  
L: [哦:  
J: [係嗎我記得  
L: [係嗎:你咁你要操體能啦  
H: [咁識揸車有分架嘛(.)體能我又覺得應該 ok 掛  
L: 好難[架嗎  
25:00 F: [好難架  
L: [唔係  
F: [( )海關嗰啲都好難架  
H: [但係佢到宜家都仲未肯話俾我知要做啲咩囉  
F: 你上網 check 囉

[ 25:20-26:36 ]

25:20 J: 嘩同警察無乜分別  
H: 好緊張呀  
L: 嘩喂要呀喂喂喂  
H: 但係我其實想做公共關係科嗰邊  
L: 唔緊要啦[入去先  
H: [教吓書啲啲  
J: [唔係嗎我覺得你既形態似係(.)((嘖))  
25:30 H: 唔係嘛 heh  
J: 咪郁[啲啲  
L: [揸槍好呀  
H: 我想講吓書教吓 ICAC heh  
F: 咁教中學通識啲啲啦  
H: [唔得(.)爭好遠

J: [邊個估到讀 BAL 會 end up in ICAC 仲要係[督察  
 25:41 L: [吓邊個會  
 end up in Linguistics 先  
 H: [係啦  
 F: [係囉  
 L: 完全[無::  
 F: [你呀[你呀[普通話]  
 H: [你呀  
 J: 當然不會啦[普通話]  
 L: 呀係嗰其實都無問過[你會做咩嗰  
 H: [係囉你會做咩  
 25:50 J: 乜嘢呀我咪-我宜家好大機會跟我爸囉=  
 F: =做咩呀=  
 J: =即係做 em 呢一個 er 保險同埋金融[囉  
 L: [呀::係嗰你講過  
 H: 你阿爸係[做緊呢啲嘢  
 26:00 F: [大嘢嚟架  
 J: er 但唔係咩大嘢-但可以做大嘢可以唔做大嘢[但宜家自己做  
 囉  
 H: [heh  
 F: [哦:::  
 L: [哦:::  
 H: [哦:::  
 J: 但係但係佢就同我講即係即係如果係呢一行做呢咁就會係  
 team building 即係呢我呢都係第時都係要 recruit  
 26:15 H: 咁梗係啦[梗係啦  
 J: [re- 咁樣咁樣嘅呢個嘅呢個呢個[industry 就會  
 好好玩  
 26:21 L: [咁你就係老細啦  
 H: 第時囉係囉[好好呀好幸福呀  
 L: [加油呀(.) ICAC 保險從業員[你呢[你呢菲姐  
 H: [你呢  
 F: [校工校工校  
 工=  
 L: =無可能[既  
 26:30 F: [清潔員清潔員  
 L: 做咩啫講嚟聽吓[分享吓  
 F: [唔知呀(.)未諗到呀

L: 你想[搵咩呀  
H: [搵吓睇吓有咩興趣

[ 26:50-27:04 ]

26:50 F: 嗰啲容易啲嘛  
H: 易啲咩[海關先難呀  
L: [唔係架  
F: 即係體能呀[嗰啲嘢  
H: [海關同警察先至最難  
L: 佢覺得體能容易啲唔係佢覺得自己  
F: [唔係唔係  
J: [海關都難架  
H: [ICAC 係最低嗰 ICAC 係最低  
F: [唔係我覺得我哥得我都得囉因為我阿哥考咗啦嘛  
27:03 H: 你考咗啦

[ 27:15-27:30 ]

27:15 F: 佢得我都應該得架啦  
L: 我阿哥都以前考過消防員體能(.)都過咗但係 interview 唔  
得囉[所以佢要求高架  
27:21 F: [係呀佢 in 咗就等通知咋嘛(.)如果通知 ok 咗就可以 body  
check 啦嘛(.)不過佢可能過唔到近視嗰關