

CONVERSATIONAL STYLES AND PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS IN  
WOMEN'S CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS AND ACQUAINTANCE RELATIONSHIPS

by

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B.Sc., University of Northern British Columbia, 1999

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## ABSTRACT

Fourteen women engaged in two separate conversations (one with a close friend and one with an acquaintance) and discussed two topics with different task demands (shared similarities magnified by discussing memories the conversational partners share; differences magnified by discussing revealed differences of opinions between conversational partners). Audio taped conversations were coded for conversational turn-taking behaviors such as overlaps, simultaneous speech and successful interruptions. Speakers used a conversational style that included more overlaps and simultaneous speech when conversational partners' shared similarities were magnified than when conversational partners' differences were magnified. Additionally, compared to the women partners in the conversations with the acquaintances, the conversational style between women partners in the close friend conversations was more similar in terms of fast-paced turn-taking (i.e., overlaps). There was no relationship found between conversational behaviors and personality characteristics (i.e., extraversion).

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
Friendship: Basic Characteristics and Importance to Women	2
Conversation: Central Feature of Women's Friendship	4
Conversational Behavior	5
Social Psychology and Speech Behavior	9
Summary and Hypotheses	11
<b>METHOD</b>	<b>15</b>
Participants and Design	15
Procedure	16
Measures	20
NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R)	20
Coding	22
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>25</b>
Treatment of the Data	25
Multivariate Analyses	26
Univariate Analyses	27
Correlation Analyses	32

DISCUSSION	33
REFERENCES	42
APPENDICES	48
A. Information Letter	48
B. Relationship Closeness Inventory (Acquaintance)	50
C. Relationship Closeness Inventory (Close Friend)	55
D. Informed Consent	60
E. Demographics Form	62
F. Revealed Differences Questionnaire	63
G. Shared Similarities Topic	69
H. Your NEO Summary	70
I. Temporal Conversational Style Coding Manual	71
J. MANOVA 2 (speaker) x 2 (partner) x 2 (topic) x 3 (speech act) Summary Table	78
K. ANOVA 2 (speaker) x 2 (partner) x 2 (topic) Summary Table	79

**LIST OF TABLES**

1.	Means and Standard Deviations for Speakers' Rates of Overlaps as a Function of Partner and Topic	28
2.	Means and Standard Deviations for Speakers' Rates of Simultaneous Speech as Function of Partner and Topic.	29
3.	Means and Standard Deviations for Speakers' Rates of Successful Interruptions as a Function of Partner and Topic.	30
4.	MANOVA 2 (speaker) x 2 (partner) x 2 (topic) x 3 (speech act) Summary Table	78
5.	ANOVA 2 (speaker) x 2 (partner) x 2 (topic) Summary Table	79

**LIST OF FIGURES**

1. Rates of overlaps as a function of speaker and dyad type. 31
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## CONVERSATIONAL STYLES AND PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS IN WOMEN'S CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS AND ACQUAINTANCE RELATIONSHIPS

### INTRODUCTION

The developmental significance of friendship across the life span has been well documented (e.g., Hartup & Stevens, 1997, 1999). Social and developmental psychologists have spent considerable energy studying the processes involved in forming and maintaining healthy friendships. Developmental psychologists have found that children form friendships from a very young age, and the dynamics and importance of those friendships change as children mature (Ginsberg, Gottman, & Parker, 1986; Piaget, 1932; Selman, 1980; Youniss, 1980). Furthermore, friendships become central to one's sense of self and well-being during late adolescence and early adulthood (Ginsberg et al., 1986; Hays, 1988). Friendships are an important factor when adapting to various social roles (e.g., work and parenting) during early to mid-adulthood, and friendships provide social support and companionship during late adulthood (Hartup & Stevens, 1999). Thus, the developmental benefits associated with friendship are important across the life span. Interestingly, friendship is especially important to women because, in addition to the developmental benefits generally associated with friendship, there is evidence that friendship is also a protective factor for women's health and well-being (Berkman & Syme, 1979; Walen & Lachman, 2000).

Conversation is the most salient characteristic of women's friendships (Johnson & Aries, 1983). The conversational topography of women's friendship is primarily 'domestic matters', 'personal issues', 'worldly issues' (Aries & Johnson, 1983) 'people',

and 'health' (Deakins, 1989 as cited in Tannen, 1990). However, few empirical studies have gone beyond investigating conversational topography.

In contrast, sociolinguists have studied conversations between friends using ethnographic methods and have proposed that similarity in 'conversational styles' (i.e., habits and assumptions for conversation) is critical as this signals rapport and friendship (e.g., Tannen, 1984). Social psychologists claim "our social lives are built around the symbolic functioning of language; in our language we give life, meaning and value to our relationships...the social conditions that structure these [relationships] find their shape in the language we use" (Giles & Coupland, 1991, p. 199). Giles and Coupland have conducted studies which indicate that language behavior is central to our individual and social identity, and they have proposed that similar speech behaviors between interactants' promote interpersonal affiliation and dissimilar speech behaviors accentuate interpersonal differences. Despite evidence that conversation is central to women's friendships, combined with suggestions from sociolinguists and social psychologists that valuable insight about social relationships can be gained by investigating interpersonal language behavior, no previous study has investigated this assumption using empirical methods to examine individual differences in the context of women's friendships. This study addressed this deficiency by examining the conversational styles of women and their friends using both observational and self-report research methods.

#### *Friendship: Basic Characteristics and Importance to Women*

Hays (1988) defined friendship as the "voluntary interdependence between two

persons that is intended to facilitate the social-emotional goals of the participants and may involve varying types and degrees of companionship, intimacy, affection, and mutual assistance” (p. 395). Furthermore, Hays stated that friends tend to be similar to one another in age, sex, marital status, race, religion, attitudes, interests, personality traits, intelligence, and behavioral preferences. Additionally, a friend is a source of emotional support, a confidant, a resource for information exchange, and also helps in times of need and safeguards an individual’s self-esteem (Hays, 1985, 1988; LaGaipa, 1977).

Friendship is unique compared to other interpersonal relationships as it is voluntary, “transcends legal sanctions, social institutions, and family ties,” and additionally, continues to be an important relationship across the life span (Ginsberg et al., 1986, p. 40). During childhood and adolescence, friendship contributes to the cognitive, social-cognitive, moral, and linguistic development of individuals because friends provide companionship, stimulation, and a source of social comparison (Ginsberg et al.). Additionally, friendships are essential for affirming an individual’s changing societal role across the life span (Hays, 1988; Hartup & Stevens, 1999).

Research shows that friendship contributes to an individual’s well-being, and the absence of friendship has a negative impact to an individual’s overall mental health (Ginsberg et al., 1986). Berkman and Syme (1979) investigated the relationship between marriage, friendship, church membership, and formal or informal group associations on health and well-being. They found that marriage was the strongest protective factor to men’s health and well-being; however, friendship was strongest protective factor to women’s health and well-being. Furthermore, Ginsberg et al. found that, particularly among women, the absence of friends during times of stress has been linked with

increased fatigue, anxiety, depression, irritability, backaches, headaches, and dizziness. Other researchers indicate that a strained relationship with an intimate partner or family member decreased women's well-being and increased their health problems; however, friendship reduced the risk for harmful health effects (Walen & Lachman, 2000).

Clearly, friendship is especially important to women because, in addition to the developmental benefits provided from friendship, friendship provides a protective factor for women's health and well-being. Thus, friendship formation and maintenance is important for women.

### *Women's Friendship and Conversation*

Research evidence has led to the conclusion that there are marked differences between men's friendships and women's friendships. For instance, physical activities tend to be embedded within men's friendships, whereas talking tends to be embedded within the very nature of women's friendship (e.g., Aries & Johnson, 1983; Johnson & Aries, 1983; Rawlins, 1992). Women, more so than men, get together 'just to talk' (Hays, 1988), and women report that conversation is the most common and frequent activity that they engage in with their women friends (Johnson & Aries, 1983). As women's friendships progress, the amount of time spent together becomes less important than the quality of the interaction (Hays, 1985); conversations become less formal, more personal in subject matter, and they change in both structure and style (Duck, 1991). Women view conversation as friendly behavior (Duck, 1994), and women monitor their relationships based on perceptions of the quality of their conversation, and their attitudes, behaviors, thoughts, ideas, and feelings can change as a result of conversations with

friends (Duck, Rutt, Hurst, & Strejc, 1991). Plainly, conversation is an important factor in women's friendships, and it would be reasonable to assume that conversation contributes to the maintenance of women's friendships.

Researchers have also found specific characteristics to distinguish a close friend from a casual friend. Companionship, the amount of fun, task assistance and intellectual stimulation are associated with both close and casual friends; however, self-disclosure, help in time of need, a confidant, emotional support, and informational support are characteristics that are associated with close friends (Hays, 1985; Hays, 1988; LaGaipa, 1977). In addition, close friends report more traits in common than casual friends (Deutsch, Sullivan, Sage, & Basile, 1991), and tend to meet in private places, whereas casual friends tend to meet in public places. Furthermore, the interactions of close friends are generally more exclusive (Hays, 1989), and while a positive regard is felt for a casual friend, a deep caring and interpersonal dependence that is comparable to love is felt for a close friend (Hays, 1988). Given that certain characteristics differentiate close friends from casual friends and that women view conversations with close friends as more satisfying, interesting, relaxed, attentive, personal, in-depth, smooth, informal, open, free of conflict, and free of communication breakdowns (Duck et al., 1991), it was reasoned that women may also use different conversational behaviors with their close friends than with their casual friends (acquaintances). Thus, this study investigated individual differences in the conversational behaviors that women use with close friends as compared to acquaintances.

The accumulated knowledge (e.g., subject matter, perceptions of communication quality, etc.) about women's conversations with friends has been primarily collected

through self-report research methods. According to Duck and Pittman (1994), because conversation is part of everyday life and individuals use conversation to monitor and assess their relationships, researchers need to examine ‘conversational mechanisms’ that manage relationships. Observational measurement, a systematic and reliable process for codifying and quantifying human characteristics such as behaviors, cognitions, attitudes and emotions, is an effective method for measuring conversational behaviors during naturally occurring conversations. By codifying and quantifying the structure of conversation, observational techniques examine the *way* in which women friends talk with one another, rather than focusing only on *what* they talk about. There has been little, if any, observational research conducted to examine the conversational mechanisms that occur during conversations between women friends. Thus, the primary goal of the present research was to alleviate this shortcoming in the literature by using observational methods to examine the structure of conversational behavior in women’s friendship conversation.

### *Conversational Behavior*

The primary theoretical foundation for conversational behavior used in the present research comes from the discipline of sociolinguistics (although relevant literature from social psychology also will be reviewed). According to Fasold (1990), “when people use language, they do more than just try to get another person to understand [their] thoughts and feelings. At the same time, both people are using language in subtle ways to define their relationship to each other, to identify themselves as part of a social group” (p. 1). Thus, sociolinguists tend to focus on two main things: (1) the patterns of language used

within identifiable social groups or social relationships; and, (2) what those specific communication behaviors mean to those who use them (how communication signals an aspect of one's self or identity as a member of a particular social group). In other words, investigating interpersonal communication based on the basic elements or patterns of a conversation (i.e., the *structure* of conversation) allows sociolinguists to discover conversational behaviors that communicate *meaning* within social relationships. According to Gumperz and Tannen (1979) individual speakers tend to use specific patterns of structural elements, and these characteristic patterns make up a person's conversational 'strategy' or 'style'. That is, individuals use particular ways of talking (style) during their conversations, and these conversational styles consist of habitual patterns for speech rhythm, pausing, tone, and turn-taking. Although a person's style may vary to some extent depending on the demands of the particular context, Gumperz and Tannen (1979) claim that we should be able to identify the characteristic conversational style that a speaker uses in casual or friendly conversation.

For example, based on ethnographic research on the natural conversation among a small group of friends and acquaintances, Tannen (1983, 1984) has identified two specific types of conversational styles that can occur in casual conversation. The *high involvement style* is characterized by a faster rate of speech, faster turn-taking, an avoidance of inter-turn pauses, and frequent initiations of simultaneous speech. High involvement speakers use simultaneous speech to signal interest and involvement in the conversation. Conversely, slower speech, slower turn-taking, longer pauses between turns, and an avoidance of simultaneous speech characterizes the *high considerateness style*. High considerateness speakers operate from the rule of 'do not impose'; thus, they

avoid simultaneous speech. Therefore, the intention to be considerate or involved gives rise to each individual's style (Tannen 1983, 1984).

Tannen (1983, 1984, 1989) proposed the most successful conversations occur when two speakers use similar conversational styles because both speakers share similar habits with regard to turn-taking pace and simultaneous speech. Moreover, social psychologists show that individuals report that they feel more enjoyment when conversing with people who use similar temporal styles as compare to those with people who use different styles (Welkowitz & Feldstein, 1969). Tannen (1989) explains what happens when people use different styles. She suggests that the speaker who uses a faster turn-taking pace and more simultaneous speech will interrupt his or her partner more frequently; thus, high involvement speakers are more likely to interrupt high considerateness speakers. Interruptions occur when high considerateness speakers pause within their turn, and high involvement speakers perceive this silence as a lack of rapport, and thus begin speaking. However, the high considerateness speaker perceives the high involvement speaker as imposing on his or her speaking turn; and thus, stops talking. Therefore, an interruption occurs when a speaker *stops* talking as the result of the simultaneous speech initiated by another speaker. While high rates of one-sided interruptions indicate a "clash" (or difference) in conversational styles, high rates of mutual interruptions and simultaneous speech indicate that both speakers are using a similar high involvement style (Beaumont, 1995, 2000). Interestingly, conversational characteristics related to the use of a high involvement style (such as fast rates of turn-taking, frequent interruptions, and simultaneous speech) have been observed in conversations between women who are friends (e.g., Beaumont, 1995, 2000; Coates,



1989, 1996). Tannen (1984) speculates that friendship is fostered when two individuals use the same conversational style. In fact, she has shown that when friends talk about a shared experience, their conversational styles actually become more similar (their styles converge). However, these assumptions about the processes involved in friend's conversations have not been empirically examined.

Nevertheless, Tannen's (1983, 1984) high involvement and high considerateness conversational styles can be measured empirically. Beaumont (1995, 2000) transcribed verbatim, on a turn-by-turn basis, audio taped conversations between mother's and their daughters, adolescent girls who were friends, preadolescent girls who were friends, and women who were friends. A coding scheme that measured *overlaps between turns*, *simultaneous speech*, and *successful interruptions* was used to identify and compare speakers' conversational styles (as described by Tannen). Overlaps between turns occurred when the second speaker cut off only one word (or less) of the first speaker's utterance, or when the two speakers began speaking at the same time after a pause. Simultaneous speech occurred when the second speaker began talking before the first speaker finished her utterance and both speakers continued talking and completed their utterances. Successful interruptions occurred when the second speaker cut off the first speaker by more than the last word of the utterance before the first speaker finished a complete utterance. Beaumont (1995, 2000) found that overlaps between turns, simultaneous speech, and successful interruptions were correlated. That is, some speakers used frequent rates across all the three speech behaviors (i.e., used a high involvement style), whereas others used less frequent rates (i.e., a high considerateness

style). Thus, there is empirical evidence to support the construct validity of the concept of “conversational style” as conceptualized by Tannen (1983, 1984).

Furthermore, the use of the high involvement style appears to be common among girls and women and is related to both age and social roles (Beaumont, 1995, 2000). For example, adolescent girls tend to use a high involvement style with both their mothers and their close friends (Beaumont, 1995; Beaumont & Cheyne, 1998). Similarly, mothers used a high involvement conversational style when they talked with their adult female friends; but, they used a high considerateness style when they talk with their daughters (even though both adolescent daughters and the mothers’ friends used a similar high involvement style; Beaumont, 2000). Beaumont’s findings confirm those found by other researchers who showed that women tend to use a fast-paced, overlapping conversational style (e.g., Coates, 1989). Beaumont (2000) suggests that high involvement style is a style that women use with their friends; but, women switch to a more high considerateness style when talking with their children (i.e., it is a “child-directed conversational style”). Therefore, based on Tannen’s (1983) theory and Beaumont’s (1995, 2000) empirical research, it is assumed that conversational style is related to, and changes, as a result of social context.

### *Social Psychology and Speech Behavior*

The preceding review focused on studies related to conversational behavior as viewed by sociolinguists. In the discipline of psychology, it is social psychologists who have tended to study interpersonal communication. Social psychologists, however, tend to investigate individual differences in speakers’ speech characteristics rather than

conversation per se. Social psychologists investigate the qualities of individuals' styles of speech behaviors in varying contexts (e.g., in formal or structured settings, with strangers), rather than focusing on the dynamics of conversation itself. The most comprehensive theoretical perspective that has emerged from this approach is '*communication accommodation theory*', which was initially developed by Giles and Coupland approximately 30 years ago (it was originally called "speech accommodation theory", but has recently been renamed as communication accommodation theory, or CAT; Giles & Coupland, 1991).

The main thrust of CAT is that certain intrapersonal and interpersonal social-cognitive factors lead interactants to adjust their speech behaviors to either converge (become similar) or diverge (become dissimilar) with each other. Individuals converge their speech styles when they want to facilitate social interaction; however, if they want to disassociate from their partners, they adjust their speech behaviors such that their speech styles end up diverging (e.g., Street & Giles, 1982). When individuals' speech styles converge, speakers adapt to each other's speech rates, pauses, and speech length; however, when individuals' speech styles diverge, they behave in ways that accentuate speech differences. Speakers who use similar speech styles also perceive each other as more likeable, trustworthy, warm, and friendly than those who use different styles (Giles, 1979). One of the primary factors that appear to predict speech convergence is whether the interactants perceive each other as having similar personalities, and speakers who perceive that they have dissimilar personalities are more likely to use different speech styles (Welkowitz & Feldstein, 1969). Therefore, the findings of social psychologists and sociolinguists on factors that influence speech or conversational behaviors appear to

be similar, and provide parallel findings which suggest that similarities in personalities and feelings of intimacy or liking may be related to similarities in friends' conversational styles.

### *Conversational Behavior and Topic*

Tannen (1984) suggests that the conversational topic may influence conversational style when she observed that friends used more of a high involvement conversational style when they discussed past experiences that they shared together. McLachlan's (1991) findings also indicate that the discussion topic is related to conversational behavior. MacLachlan found that during a debate there were no gender differences in the amount of overlaps and back-channels used by men and women. It was found, however, that while women used fewer overlaps and back-channels during disagreements, as the discussion moved toward agreement, women used more overlaps and back-channels. Mclachlan's findings suggest that shifts in women's turn-taking pace may signal a shift in rapport between the conversational partners. Based on McLachlan's and Tannen's findings, it was reasoned that conversational topics that emphasize shared similarities between conversational partners (e.g., past shared experiences) generates rapport between conversational partners, which would lead to higher use of high involvement conversational style among women than when women discuss disagreements (e.g., differences of opinions) with their conversational partners.

*Speech Behavior and Personality*

There is evidence to suggest that specific speech behaviors are associated with personality characteristics. For example, vocal attributes (i.e., loudness, voice contrast) and talkativeness are correlated with perceptions of emotional stability (Campbell & Rushton, 1978; Scherer, 1979). Furthermore, speech variables such as accelerations of temporal pacing of speech, pitch, and intonation correlate with scores on measures of extraversion (e.g., Scherer, 1979). Moreover, extraverts (i.e., in terms of sociability) are more talkative than introverts, and this is particularly true for women (Campbell & Rushton, 1978; Smolensky, Carmody, & Halcomb, 1990). Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that personality characteristics (i.e., extraversion) could be associated with characteristics related to the high involvement conversational style as conceptualized by Tannen and Beaumont (i.e., higher rates of overlaps between turns, simultaneous speech, and successful interruptions).

*Summary and Hypotheses*

Friendship plays an important role in people's lives right across the life span (e.g., Hartup & Stevens, 1999); however, friendship plays a particularly vital role in the lives of women because this relationship has been identified as an important protective factor to a woman's overall health and well-being (e.g., Walen & Lachman, 2000). Conversation is central to women's friendships; women view conversation as friendly behavior (e.g., Duck, 1994), and conversation is the most frequent activity between women friends (e.g., Johnson & Aries, 1983). Although research shows that friendship is important to women's well-being and health, and conversation is at the core of women's friendships,

individual differences in the conversational mechanisms used by women with their friends, which may contribute to the maintenance of women's friendships, has not been empirically investigated.

Tannen (1983, 1984) presents via ethnographic research that individual speakers use particular conversational styles (i.e., high involvement style, high considerateness style). Research by Beaumont (1995, 2000) provides evidence that conversational style can be empirically measured; and, that individuals use different conversational styles in different social contexts (e.g., as a function of age group, social role, or type of partner). Moreover, social psychologists shows that individual differences can mediate the way individuals' accommodate their speech styles (i.e., convergence, divergence), which accentuate either interpersonal affiliation or interpersonal distance (e.g., Giles, 1973; Giles, Mulac, Bradac, & Johnson, 1987; Giles & Coupland, 1991). Additionally, individual personality characteristics have been linked with speech styles (e.g., a fast rate of speech is related to extraversion; Street & Giles, 1982). Both sociolinguists and social psychologists agree that an individual's conversational style emerges as a function of social experiences and idiosyncratic differences in personality or character. The problem, however, is that sociolinguists have focused on social experiences, and psychologists have focused on idiosyncratic differences. The broad goal of this thesis was to link the sociolinguistic and psychological perspectives by systematically investigating conversational behavior and personality characteristics in the context of women's friendships.

The primary goal of this study was to examine the conversational style used by women with their same-sex close friends versus their same-sex acquaintances by using

similar observational research methods as used in Beaumont's (1995, 2000) studies. Moreover, to investigate Tannen's (1984) idea that discussion of shared experience promotes the use of high involvement style, and evidence that disagreement during a debate leads to the use of high considerateness style (McLachlan, 1991), the present study used two different types of conversational topics: one that highlighted shared similarities and one that highlighted revealed differences. Thus, women engaged in two separate conversations (close friend, acquaintance) and discussed two topics with different task demands (shared similarities, revealed differences).

Following other researchers who found that women tend to use a high involvement style and the use of this style varies as a function of social context, it was expected that women would use higher rates of overlaps, simultaneous speech, and interruptions in conversations with close friends than in conversations with acquaintances, and that the conversational styles would be more similar between partners in the close friend conversations than between partners in the acquaintance conversations (i.e., more convergence in the "friend" relationship). It was also hypothesized that women would use higher rates of overlaps, simultaneous speech, and interruptions in the shared similarities topic than in the revealed differences topic, reflecting a convergence of styles during the recounting of a shared experience (as is hypothesized by Tannen, 1984).

The secondary goal of this study was to investigate the possible relationships between personality characteristics and speech style characteristics (i.e., rates of overlaps, simultaneous speech, and successful interruptions). It was expected that extraversion would be related to the use of high involvement characteristics (i.e., higher rates of overlaps between turns, simultaneous speech, and successful interruptions).

## METHOD

*Participants and Design*

*Participants.* A total of 19 women were recruited from the undergraduate subject pool at the University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, BC and referrals from members in the community of the Prince George area. Each participant was asked to self-select a same-sex close friend and a same-sex acquaintance to partake in the project with her. The data for 5 women were excluded from the study because one participant did not complete the second session of the study, and technical problems with the recording device resulted in poor taping quality of four conversations. This resulted in a total of 14 women and their two self-selected partners participated in the study; thus, there were 42 participants in total.

The women's ages ranged from 21 to 41 years ( $M = 26.90$ ,  $SD = 5.51$ ), with no significant differences between the mean ages for target women ( $M = 27.71$ ,  $SD = 6.17$ ), close friends ( $M = 27.43$ ,  $SD = 5.84$ ), and acquaintances ( $M = 25.57$ ,  $SD = 4.54$ ). Participants responses to a demographic questionnaire indicate that, overall, the majority of women (83.4%) reported their ethnicity as Caucasian, 9.5% reported their ethnicity as Aboriginal, and 7.1% reported their ethnicity as Asian. Additionally, 54.8% reported their marital status as single, 38.1% indicated they were married, and 7.1% reported they were separated/divorced. Based on the occupation information provided (where applicable), 52.4% of the women were middle class (as determined by the socioeconomic index formulated by Blishen, Carroll, and Moore, 1987), the mean socioeconomic status (SES) scores were ( $M = 43.76$ ,  $SD = 8.94$ ). Additionally, 9 of the target women and 8 partners reported they were students; and, 3 partners reported they were unemployed.



*Design.* This study is a 2 (partner: close friend, acquaintance) x 2 (topic: shared similarities, revealed differences) within-dyad design with conversational style behaviors (i.e., overlaps, simultaneous speech, and successful interruptions) as dependent variables.

### *Procedure*

Individuals interested in the study were provided with a letter detailing the nature of the study and their involvement (see Appendix A). Participants interested in taking part the study were asked to self-select a close friend and an acquaintance to partake in the study with them. After the target participants selected both partners, the target participants went through a screening procedure to ensure that her self-selected partners met the criteria for a close friend and acquaintance. The Relationship Closeness Inventory (RCI; Berscheid, Snyder, & Omoto, 1989; see Appendices B and C) was used to determine if the selected partner(s) met the relationship type criteria.

The RCI was developed to measure relationship closeness in terms of the amount of time spent together, types of activities done together, and the degree one feels the other individual influences him/her. The target participant filled out two RCI, one focused on her relationship with her close friend and the other focused on her relationship with her acquaintance partner (order counterbalanced). The scores obtained from the two RCI were used determine if the partner selected met the criteria for close friend or acquaintance. Berscheid et al. (1987) reported a mean RCI score of 13.10 for close friend and 8.91 for not close friend; however, the standard deviations for these means were not reported. Thus, for this study, it was decided that because there was limited evidence for the reliability and validity of the RCI, along with the fact that Berscheid et al. only

reported the mean scores for close and not close friends, it would be prudent to allow for some variability for the scores obtained via the RCI. Thus, scores above 10 were considered close friends and scores below 10 were considered acquaintances (not close friends). Furthermore, given that the two RCI scores obtained could potentially overlap around a score of 10, it was decided that, in these cases, there had to be at least a 3 point spread between the two scores obtained. In four instances, the scores obtained did not meet the criteria. In these cases, the participant was free to select another close friend and/or acquaintance to participate in the study with her. In all cases, the RCI scores for the newly selected partner(s) met the criteria. The mean RCI scores obtained for close friend ( $M = 15.42$ ,  $SD = 3.23$ ) and acquaintance ( $M = 8.07$ ,  $SD = 2.69$ ) were similar to the RCI scores obtained by Berscheid et al. (1987) close friend and not close friend categories (13.10 and 8.91).

Once the screening procedure was completed, participants arranged to come for two separate sessions: one with a close friend and one with an acquaintance (order was counter-balanced). The sessions were scheduled at least one week apart and were conducted in a psychology lab at the University of Northern British Columbia. A portion of the lab was converted into a cozy sitting room furnished with comfortable living room furniture and décor. Each session lasted about an hour and a half to two hours.

At the beginning of each session, participants were given both oral and written information about the purpose and procedures related to the study; and, each participant provided signed informed consent (see Appendix D). The participants, then, completed a demographic form (see Appendix E). Following this, the participants completed Mishler and Waxler's (1968) Revealed Differences Questionnaire (RDQ, see Appendix F). The

RDQ has been used for the purpose of generating discussion topics in previous studies of family and friendship interactions (e.g., Beaumont, 1995, 2000; Beaumont & Cheyne, 1998; Hill, 1988; Papini, Datan & McCluskey-Fawcett, 1988). The RDQ consists of 35 hypothetical issues about interpersonal problems and morals. For each hypothetical issue, the participant selected one of two possible answers. Once participants completed the RDQ, the researcher compared the responses from one partner's RDQ to the responses of the other partner's RDQ and noted the items disagreed upon by the dyad members.

While the researcher compared the participant's answers to the RDQ, each focus participant and her partner completed Costa and McCrae's (1992) NEO PI-R Form S self-report or NEO PI-R Form R observer-report (see Measures Section for further details) personality inventory (order counterbalanced). After completing the NEO PI-R, the participants engaged in a 24-minute audio taped conversation. The conversation consisted of a discussion of three revealed differences topics (i.e., selected from the RDQ) and one shared experiences/memories topic (order counterbalanced). The shared experiences/memories topic related to the development of the participants' relationship (see Appendix G). That is, they were asked to discuss how they met and became friends and memories they share. The three revealed differences topics were hypothetical social situations selected by the researcher from the RDQ items where the partners selected different answers. To ensure that participants from all groups talked about similar sets of RDQ items the discussion items were matched (where possible) across dyad types (i.e., close friend or acquaintance). The procedure for matching the discussion items consisted of: (a) noting the item numbers that each dyad disagreed on, (b) selecting items according

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to the rank ordering used in previous studies (Beaumont, 1995, 2000, Beaumont & Wagner, 2004)), and (c) matching (where possible) between the two dyad types (close friend and acquaintance) across both session.

Each dyad discussed three RDQ items for about four-minutes each (for a total of approximately 12 minutes of conversation); and, the shared experience/memories topic for about 12-minutes. The researcher left the room during the conversations with the exception of returning three times to provide participants a new topic to discuss. The conversations were audio taped via two lapel microphones feeding into separate channels of a stereo tape recorder. Following the conversation, participants completed the second NEO PI-R (self-report if observer-report was completed before the conversation, and vice versa).

*Feedback to Participants.* A 'Your NEO Summary' sheet (see Appendix H) was designed by the test-makers and researchers of the NEO PI-R, and has been used successfully in previous research projects as part of the debriefing process. According to Costa and McCrae (1992), Your NEO Summary sheets have been 'favorably received' by both students and research participants. The information on the Your NEO Summary sheets were rated by 48% of the recipients as 'very accurate', 52% as 'fairly accurate' (none reported that they thought the summary was 'not very accurate' or 'inaccurate'). Furthermore, 61% stated that the information on Your NEO Summary 'confirmed their self-image' and 39% stated they learned 'something new about themselves' (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p.54). Costa and McCrae also claim that this type of feedback provides incentive for continued participation in their research projects. Because participation in this project required considerable time and energy on the part of the participants, and

because the Your NEO Summary was been used successfully and without harm in previous research, Your NEO Summary was provided as feedback during a debriefing procedure.

The summary was only provided to participants who signed a requisition for the summary in the Feedback section of the Informed Consent sheet (see Appendix A). The summary sheet provided was based on the responses the individual provided on her own self-report NEO PI-R (no summary sheets were provided for the observer-report NEO PI-R completed by the partner). The Your NEO Summary described what the NEO inventory measures and associated limitations. To ensure that the summary was well received, a debriefing appointment was made with each participant requesting a summary. No other feedback was provided at the individual level. However, results from the study were made available to interested participants.

### *Measures*

*NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R).* The NEO PI-R is a 240-item, standardized, self-report questionnaire that measures personality of individuals 17 years of age and older (due to item confidentiality and copyright matters, a copy of the NEO PI-R was not provided as an appendix). The NEO PI-R measures personality based on the Five Factor Model, derived psychometrically through factor analyses. The items on the questionnaire are statements about the respondent's typical attitude, emotional response, and motivation response to various everyday situations, as well as interpersonal habits. Based on respondent's agreement or disagreement with the statement, respondents circled (on a self-carbonated answer sheet) one of the following: SD, D, N,

A, or SA where SD is strongly disagree, N is neutral, and SA is strongly agree. There are different NEO PI-R profile forms for gender and age, this study used profile forms for females 21 years of age and older. Additionally, two different types of NEO PI-R reports were used in this study: Form R is an observer-report, where the items are written in third person and designed to measure perceptions of peer or spouse personality characteristics (each participant rated her perception of her partner's personality). Form S is a self-report, where the items are written in first person and designed to measure the respondent's own personality (each participant rated her own personality characteristics).

Once the respondents completed the NEO PI-R, the perforated edges from the answer form were removed to reveal the second page of the self-carbonated NEO PI-R answer sheet. The second page of the answer forms were coded with a numeric value, ranging from 0 to 4, that corresponded with the SD to SA responses on the first sheet. These numeric values were entered into the NEO Software System (NEOSS), a computer program provided by the test developers. NEOSS was used to compute the standardized T scores (which were used for analyses related to personality characteristics) associated with each domain and facet. The scores obtained from the NEO PI-R describe personality in terms of five central domains (i.e., broad personality structures) and 30 facets (i.e., six traits associated with each domain). The specific domains and the associated facets for each domain are namely: (1) Neuroticism (N) and facets of anxiety, angry hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, and vulnerability, (2) Extraversion (E), and facets of warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement-seeking, and positive emotions, (3) Openness (O), and facets of fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas and values, (4) Acceptance (A), and facets of trust,

straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, and tender-mindedness, and (5) Conscientiousness (C), and facets of competence, order, dutifulness, achievement striving, self-discipline, and deliberation.

The psychometric properties (i.e., reliability, content validity, construct validity, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and criterion-related validity) of the NEO PI-R appear to be adequate for research purposes for measuring personality. For example, the reliability coefficients for the scales, which were used in this study, range from .86 to .95 for the domain scales (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

### *Coding*

The audio taped conversations were transcribed verbatim, on a turn-by-turn basis. All incidences when both speakers talked at the same time were recorded into the transcripts by typing overlapping words within slashes and aligning the lines of text so that the overlapping words of one speaker corresponded with the overlapping words of the other speaker. Using the transcripts and audio tapes, the researcher, as a trained observer, coded the conversations on a turn-by-turn basis. The coder was free to change the transcripts whenever the coder disagreed with the original transcript; thus, ensuring transcribing accuracy. To further ensure transcribing reliability and ensure coding reliability, another trained researcher coded 18% of the conversations.

The coding scheme used to determine conversational styles in previous studies (e.g., Beaumont, 1995, 2000) was also used in this study (see Appendix I). As described by Beaumont (2000), each of the following categories for turn-taking were coded for each speaker. In the descriptions, “the first speaker refers to the person who currently

holds the conversational floor, and the second speaker is the person who intrudes upon the first speaker's speaking turn" (p.127).

*Overlaps between turns (O)* were defined as instances where the second speaker cut off only one word (or less) of the first speaker's complete utterance, or when the two speakers begin speaking at the same time after a pause. An overlap was credited to the speaker who initiated it (i.e., the speaker who was not currently holding the floor).

Overlaps were included as a measure of speakers' pace of turn-taking. That is, one would expect a faster-paced (high involvement) speaker to use overlaps more frequently than a slower-paced (high considerateness) speaker.

*Simultaneous speech (SS)* are instances in which the second speaker begins talking before the first speaker has finished her utterance and both speakers continue talking and complete their utterances. Simultaneous speech, then, demonstrates a type of unsuccessful interruption (i.e., the second speaker is not successful in getting the first speaker to stop talking). An instance of simultaneous speech is credited to the speaker who initiates it (i.e., the "interrupter").

*Successful interruptions (SI)* are instances when the second speaker cut the first speaker off before she has finished a complete utterance (i.e., more than the last word of the utterance). Success is determined by examining whether the first speaker abruptly stopped talking before her idea was completed, in contrast to continuing to speak simultaneously with the interrupter's speech. A successful interruption is credited to the person who initiated it (i.e., the interrupter).

Listener responses (short remarks that encourage the speaker to continue; e.g., 'mhmm') and unsuccessful interruptions (attempts to interrupt in which the first speaker



continues to talk and the interrupter stops talking) also are coded. Including these categories ensures that the coding scheme is mutually exclusive and exhaustive in coding all possible violations of the turn-taking violations rule. Interobserver agreement was ensured by have a second trained observer code 18% of the transcripts; then, a summary statistic was calculated to represent coding reliability for the entire coding system between the two observers, which was high: kappa of .88. Percentage agreements for each coding category also were generally found to be high: 90.49 for overlaps, 84.62 for SS, 84.63 for SI, 81.10 for listener responses, and 71.42 for unsuccessful interruptions. The percent agreement for unsuccessful interruptions was lower than other coding categories; however, this was not considered a concern because unsuccessful interruptions is not conceptually linked to conversational style; thus, not included in any subsequent analyses.

## RESULTS

*Treatment of the Data*

The frequencies for each of the three speech acts (O, SS and SI) that were produced by each speaker were summed separately for each topic (i.e., shared similarities, revealed differences). Because the number of speech acts for each speaker depends on the amount of time that person spoke, the raw frequencies for each speaker were transformed into rates by using the sum of each individual's speech act as the numerator and the individual's talking time (measured as the number of words spoken) as the denominator, a strategy typically used in previous research in this area (e.g., Beaumont, 1995, 2000; Hill, 1988; Steinberg, 1981). However, because the denominators in these computations were so large relative to the numerators, more meaningful data were obtained by multiplying each rate by the average number of words spoken by all speakers (i.e., 1746 for the shared similarities topic; and, 2009 for revealed differences topic). This strategy has been used in previous research by Beaumont, following the precedent set by Kollock, Blumstein, and Schwartz (1985). Thus, this computation yields data that represent the rate of overlaps, etc., for each speaker by controlling for the speaker's own talking time and the average talking time of the entire sample. This calculation offers more meaningful data because it provides comparable rates of O, SS, and SI per each 12-minute conversational topic, rather than rates of O, SS, and SI per number of words spoken. Thus, this study examined the rates of O, SS, and SI per 12-minutes of conversation, corrected for the amount of time each dyad member spent talking.

Before proceeding with the analyses of variance, the dependent variables (O, SS,

and SI rates) were checked for skewness, and the data for all the three variables were positively skewed. Therefore, as suggested by Tabachnik and Fidell (2001), a square root transformation was performed on the rates (which resulted in more normal distributions) and these transformed rates were used in the analyses (however, means and standard deviations of non-transformed rates are reported).

### *Multivariate Analyses*

Preliminary analyses were conducted to determine whether speakers' rates of O, SS, and SI were intercorrelated. Correlations were computed for all speakers across the two conversational topics ( $N = 112$ ; i.e., 56 speakers x 2 topics) regardless of conversational partner and were found to be significant for all combinations of the dependent variables ( $r = .28, p = .003$ , for SI and SS;  $r = .41, p < .001$ , for SI and O; and,  $r = .50, p < .001$ , for O and SS). Therefore, to address the hypotheses about conversational behaviors as a function of relationship and topic, speakers' rates of O, SS, and SI were analysed first by a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The design employed for this analysis was a 2 (speaker) x 2 (partner) x 2 (topic) repeated measures design with the dyad as the unit of analysis and the speech acts (i.e., O, SS, and SI) as the dependent variables. In this design "speech act" was included as a repeated measures variable to determine whether there were differences in speakers' rates of the three speech acts or if "speech act" should be considered as a composite variable (i.e., if there were no significant interactions with this variable in the MANOVA findings). The MANOVA results revealed significant main effects for speaker,  $F(1, 13) = 7.86, p = .015, \eta^2 = .38$ , and speech act,  $F(2, 12) = 58.51, p < .001, \eta^2 = .91$ .

These main effects of speaker and speech act were qualified by two significant interactions: topic by speech act,  $F(2, 12) = 8.07, p = .006, \eta^2 = .57$ , and speaker by partner by speech act,  $F(2, 12) = 4.60, p = .03, \eta^2 = .43$ . The significant multivariate  $F$  ratios for interactions between variables were followed by separate univariate analyses of variance (speaker x partner x topic ANOVAs). Significant univariate interactions were followed by Tukey's HSD tests of differences between means. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests; although, while not statistically significant, trends associated with univariate effects at an alpha level of .09 were noted (see Appendix J for MANOVA summary table and Appendix K for ANOVA summary table). Means and standard deviations for speakers' rates of O, SS, and SI are presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

### *Univariate Analyses*

*Speaker by partner interaction.* To examine the multivariate speaker by partner by speech type interaction, the univariate significance of the speaker by partner interaction was examined separately for each of the three dependent variables. This interaction was found to be significant only for overlaps,  $F(1, 13) = 7.91, p = .015, \eta^2 = .38$ . As displayed in Figure 1, there was no significant difference in the rate of overlaps produced by the target and her partner in the close relationship ( $M = 25.78, SD = 11.14$ , and  $M = 24.45, SD = 7.46$ ); however, the target women produced significantly more overlaps than their partners in the acquaintance relationship ( $M = 29.13, SD = 11.47$ , and  $M = 18.18, SD = 9.57$ ).

Although the means for SS and SI were in the same direction as for O, the

Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviations for Speakers' Rates of Overlaps as a Function of Partner and Topic*

Topic	Speaker	Partner	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Similar (shared) Experiences	Target	close friend	27.44	12.08
		acquaintance	34.60	16.18
	Partner	close friend	24.80	11.16
		acquaintance	21.22	9.11
Revealed Differences	Target	close friend	24.11	14.83
		acquaintance	23.66	14.78
	Partner	close friend	24.11	9.36
		acquaintance	15.13	11.74
Across Both Topics	Target	close friend	25.78	11.14
		acquaintance	29.13	11.47
	Partner	close friend	24.45	7.46
		acquaintance	18.18	9.57

Table 2

*Means and Standard Deviations for Speakers' Rates of Simultaneous Speech as a Function of Partner and Topic*

Topic	Speaker	Partner	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Similar (shared) Experiences	Target	close friend	13.29	8.59
		acquaintance	15.33	12.87
	Partner	close friend	10.29	7.68
		acquaintance	11.06	8.16
Revealed Differences	Target	close friend	11.56	9.50
		acquaintance	13.00	8.41
	Partner	close friend	10.76	5.30
		acquaintance	9.75	10.35
Across Both Topics	Target	close friend	12.42	7.45
		acquaintance	14.16	7.71
	Partner	close friend	10.52	5.66
		acquaintance	10.41	8.39

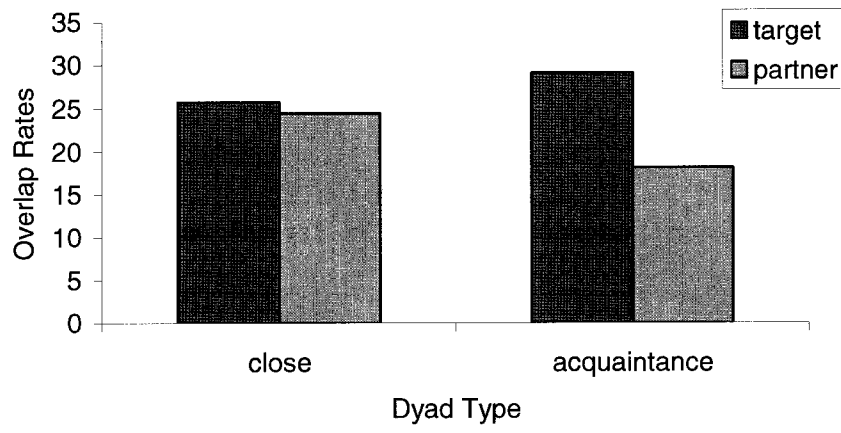
Table 3

*Means and Standard Deviations for Speakers' Rates of Successful Interruptions as a Function of Partner and Topic*

Topic	Speaker	Partner	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Similar (shared) Experiences	Target	close friend	6.29	4.79
		acquaintance	7.12	10.00
	Partner	close friend	5.13	5.62
		acquaintance	2.74	3.43
Revealed Differences	Target	close friend	7.91	5.87
		acquaintance	4.05	2.97
	Partner	close friend	6.27	3.92
		acquaintance	3.45	3.32
Across Both Topics	Target	close friend	7.10	4.27
		acquaintance	5.58	5.32
	Partner	close friend	5.70	3.76
		acquaintance	3.10	2.70

Figure 1

*Rates of overlaps as a function of speaker and dyad type.*





speaker by partner interaction was not significant for either SS or SI. Overall, then, it appears that the hypothesis with regard to more similar conversational styles in the friendship conversations was supported only with regard to the measure of fast-paced turn-taking (i.e., overlaps).

*Main effect of topic.* To examine the multivariate topic by speech type interaction, the univariate significance of the main effect of topic was examined separately for each of the three dependent variables. This main effect was found to be significant or approaching significance for two of the dependent variables: for O,  $F(1, 13) = 5.85, p = .031, \eta^2 = .31$ ; and, for SS,  $F(1, 13) = 3.48, p = .085, \eta^2 = .21$ . Examination of the relevant means for the topic main effect indicated that speakers produced significantly more overlaps in the shared similarities topic ( $M = 27.02, SD = 7.61$ ) than in the revealed differences topic ( $M = 21.75, SD = 10.08$ ). Similarly, there was a tendency for speakers to produce more SS in the shared similarities topic ( $M = 12.49, SD = 4.30$ ) than in the revealed differences topic ( $M = 11.27, SD = 5.47$ ). Overall, then, it appears that speakers tended to produce more high involvement conversational behaviors in the shared similarities topic than in the revealed differences topic.

### *Correlation Analyses*

To investigate the relationship between speech behavior and personality characteristics, Pearson  $r$  correlations were conducted between each speaker's speech act (O, SS, SI) and her NEO self-report extraversion scores; and, each speaker's speech act and her partner's NEO observer-report extraversion scores. There were no significant

correlations.

## DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this study was to examine patterns of conversational behavior in the context of women's friendship (i.e., close, acquaintance) and conversational topic (i.e., shared experiences, revealed differences). Another goal of this study was to investigate the relationship between conversational behavior and personality characteristics. It was hypothesized that women would use higher rates of high-involvement characteristics (i.e., overlaps, simultaneous speech, and interruptions) in conversations with their close friends than in conversations with acquaintances. Furthermore, conversational behavior would be more similar between women in close friend situations than between women in acquaintance situations. It was also expected there would be higher rates of high involvement characteristics when the discussion magnified shared similarities between conversational partners than when the discussion magnified revealed differences between conversational partners. Additionally, it was hypothesized that high involvement conversational style characteristics would be related to personality characteristics (i.e., extraversion).

The hypothesis regarding differences of conversational style as a function of topic was supported. The results indicated that the interactants produced more overlaps and simultaneous speech during discussions when shared experiences were discussed than when differences of opinions were discussed. That is, in situations in which the conversational topic focused on similarities between conversational partners, speakers produced more high involvement conversation behaviors; however, when interactants discussed differences in opinions, they produced fewer high involvement conversation behaviors. This finding provides a verification of the manipulation of the experimental

task demands for this study and is consistent with Tannen's (1984) observation, via ethnographic research, that friends' conversations about shared memories included more high involvement conversation behaviors.

The hypotheses regarding differences in conversational styles between close friends and acquaintances as a function of partner were partially supported. The results indicated that there were no significant differences in the rate of overlaps produced by women and their close friends; however, the target women produced significantly more overlaps than their acquaintances. Nevertheless, this finding was not reproduced for rates of simultaneous speech and successful interruptions. These findings suggest that there is convergence in the fast turn-taking pace (i.e., overlapping speech) between friends, but not for other elements related to the high involvement conversational style (i.e., high rates of simultaneous speech and interruptions). An explanation for the lack of statistically significant findings for simultaneous speech and successful interruptions may be due to a lack of statistical power. That is, the combination of small sample size, high variability (large standard deviations), and low rates (relative to rates of overlaps) associated with the SS and SI dependent variables may have made it more difficult to pull out any group differences.

Another explanation for the unexpected findings for SS and SI might be connected to the operational definition of friendship and the theoretical notions about conversational behavior that guided the measurement strategies used in this study. The operational definition of close friendship versus acquaintance used in this study was defined in terms of different levels of intimacy within the context of friendship. Consequently, the experimental setting (i.e., dyad type) in this study differed not in terms

of group differences per se but rather in terms of differences in intimacy levels within the context of women's same-sex relationships. Therefore, in this study, the differences within groups may have been larger than the differences between groups. In other words, the differences in intimacy levels between individual dyads may have been more meaningfully variable than the potentially artificially created differences between the two groups of dyads (friend vs. acquaintances), which would result in nonsignificant findings when using statistical procedures based on the comparison of group means.

Furthermore, the dependent variables measured were primarily based on conversational behavior as described by sociolinguists (e.g., Tannen, 1984, 1989; Tannen & Gumperz, 1979). The theoretical premises of Gumperz and Tannen about the possible conflicts that occur when interactants use different conversational styles were developed within the context of cultural or sub-cultural differences (i.e., interethnic or cross-gender communication conflicts). Accordingly, sociolinguistic theoretical explanations might be useful for investigating observable differences between identifiably different cultural groups (i.e., groups that may include socialized habits for communication); however, the conversational classifications, as guided by Tannen and Gumperz, may not be as useful for observing individual differences within more subtle social groups distinctions (e.g., friendship). Thus, communicative behaviors described by Tannen (1984) may be more suitable for capturing macro between-group differences, but are too gross to capture naturally occurring micro individual differences in behavior (e.g., body positioning, gaze, smiling, etc.) present within social groups. Hence, the communication theory developed by Giles and Coupland (1991), called "communication accommodation theory" or CAT, might be a more relevant theory to investigate individual differences in speech styles.

The unique feature of CAT is that it provides a theoretical basis that accounts for intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns and encompasses both macro and micro communicative behaviors and strategies. The theory proposes that social-cognitive and affective factors can determine linguistic (verbal and nonverbal) behaviors used during social interaction (intergroup and ingroup). As stated in the Introduction, individuals adjust their speech behaviors to either converge (become similar) or diverge (become dissimilar) with each other. Individuals converge their speech styles when they want to facilitate social interaction; however, if they want to disassociate from their partners, they adjust their speech behaviors such that their speech styles end up diverging (e.g., Street & Giles, 1982). The speech behaviors include an array of behaviors such as speech rate, pausing, length of utterances, smiling, gazing, body positioning, and so on (Giles & Coupland, 1991). Devising a system to measure micro communicative behaviors that includes nonverbal behavior such smiling, body positioning, facial expressions, may reveal more about individual differences than merely relying on violations in turn-taking behavior, as is typical of many sociolinguistic studies.

Furthermore, CAT also takes individual differences into account when examining convergence and divergence in communication, and how these individual differences may lead to inferences about how interpersonal relationships are formed and how they are maintained. For instance, when interactants are forming a relationship, they often attempt to use more similar communication behaviors (convergence) in order to highlight interpersonal similarities; however, once a close relationship is formed, interactants may feel comfortable enough to allow for more divergence in communication behaviors in order to showcase their individuality (Giles & Coupland, 1991).

It is important to note that target women tended to produce approximately the same amount of overlaps, simultaneous speech and successful interruptions with both her conversational partners; that is, target women did not change their individual conversational behavior from one situation to another. In fact, the amount of overlaps produced by the close friend, the target with her close friend, and the target with her acquaintance are similar; however, the amount of overlaps produced by the acquaintance was considerably lower. This finding is contrary to what one might expect to find given that high involvement characteristics are generally observed in the conversations of women (e.g., Beaumont, 1995, 2000; Coates, 1989, 1996). A possible explanation for this finding may be parallel to Beaumont and Wagner's (2004) explanation for their unexpected finding for the conversational styles of fathers and adolescent daughters. They reasoned that when interactants have different understandings about the demands of the experimental task, then these differences draw for unusual findings for conversational style. Specifically, Beaumont and Wagner suggest that the shared understanding between individuals about the conversational task (i.e., differences of opinion) may account for why certain dyads (i.e., adolescent-mother) use divergent conversational styles while other types of dyads (i.e., father-daughter) use convergent styles. In their words:

“Although the experimental task was the same for both adolescent-mother and adolescent-father interactions (i.e., to discuss differences of opinions), the shared understanding about the demands of that context was different for mother versus father dyads. The adolescent-mother dyads may have interpreted the context as one in which the mother gave advice or listened to the adolescents' concerns, and this shared understanding of the conversational demands created an asymmetrical interaction that is typical of adolescent-mother conversations, and which pulled for different conversational styles. In contrast, the adolescent-father dyads (and particularly daughter-father dyads) may have interpreted the context as one in which they equally justify their opinions, and this shared understanding of the conversational demands created a symmetrical interaction that is typical of

adolescent-father verbal interactions, and which pulls for more similar conversational styles” (pp. 360-361).

This explanation is also pertinent to the present somewhat unusual finding for the conversational behaviors of the women who were acquaintances. Participants were informed that the nature of the study was to investigate conversation in women’s friendships. The target participant may have viewed that the demands of the experimental task required her to act friendly. For women, ‘friendly talk’ is comprised of fast-paced, high involvement style conversational behaviors. Thus, if target women perceived that the experimental task required her to act friendly (regardless of nature of relationship), they likely would have engaged in a high involvement style with both conversational partners. The acquaintance, on the other hand, may have had a different understanding of the experimental task because when the target participants self-selected the acquaintance to participate in the study, the target participant may have disclosed the nature of the experimental task to her partner (e.g., the study was about friendship, and the acquaintance partner was self-selected by the participant as an acquaintance). Consequently, the acquaintance partner may have viewed her role as more formal and that the experimental task required her to engage in more “polite” kinds of communication behaviors which would have pulled for a more high considerateness kind of conversational style. If this explanation is true, it suggests that despite the attempts of researchers to provide experimentally controlled conversational contexts, participants’ interpretations about task demands can still provide another layer of contextual differences that can override the experimentally manipulated settings for observing communication differences.



The hypothesis stating that characteristics related to high involvement conversational style are related to extraversion was not supported. There have been mixed findings in previous research in regard to the relationship between speech behaviors and extraversion. The findings in this study are inconsistent with previous findings by Scherer (e.g., Scherer, 1978, 1979; Scherer, Scherer, Hall, & Rosenthal, 1977) which showed that faster turn-taking and more frequent interruptions was associated with extraversion. However, the present findings are consistent with the results of Siegman and colleagues, who after repeated efforts have been unable to replicate the findings of Scherer and his colleagues (Siegman, 1987). Furthermore, most of the research regarding communication variables and personality characteristics has been based primarily on perceived personality characteristics (Giles & Coupland, 1991). An updated review of the literature revealed that there is little, if any, evidence that shows how conversational behavior might be related to personality characteristics. Thus, the present research is consistent with that conclusion, although given the small sample size for the current study, the finding that there is no relationship between an individual's personality characteristics and her conversational speech behaviors should be interpreted with caution.

The current study adds to the existing literature about friendship communication by using observational methods to show *how* women friends converse. Previous studies obtained information through self-report (e.g., Johnson & Aries, 1983; Oxley, Dzindolet, Miller 2002) or observational coding techniques of verbal content (Hay, 2000; Anderson & Leaper, 1998; Planalp, 1993) to describe and differentiate the subject matter in conversations between friends as a function of social group (e.g., gender) or group

discrimination (e.g., friends vs. acquaintances). As noted in the introduction of this study, Duck and Pittman (1994) argue that because conversation is part of everyday life and individuals use conversation to monitor and assess their relationships, researchers need to examine 'conversational mechanisms' that manage relationships. The methods (observational methods along with using the dyad as the unit of analyses) used in this study were ideally suited to examine observable 'conversational mechanisms' occurring between conversational partners. Thus, this study provided information about *how* women talk and established nonverbal conversation mechanisms that women may use to foster and maintain friendship.

The results showed that women partners in close friend conversations use fast-paced turn taking (i.e., overlaps), and as such indicate that women may view fast-paced turn taking (i.e., overlaps) as friendly behavior. In fact, according to Tannen (1989), women use fast-paced, overlapping turn-taking to signal friendliness and involvement. As such, women may use their conversational behavior to maintain and foster intimacy in their friendships.

It is important to note some limitations related to this study. The small sample size and the lack of power limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study investigated conversational style and personality characteristic in the context of women's friendship where the participant women were primarily middle class, Caucasian women. Thus, the generalizability of the results is also limited in terms of gender and culture. Furthermore, the use of audio taped observations limited the type of conversational behaviors that could be observed. That is, videotaping women's conversations would provide information about more subtle communication habits such

as body positioning, gestures and facial expressions.

In conclusion, this study found that high paced turn taking occurs when women talk with close friends. Thus, the results contribute to the literature about women's friendship by providing evidence that women use fast-paced turn taking with their close friends, and this communication behavior might play a part in maintaining friendship. It is important to note, however, that the findings were contrary to what has been generally observed in conversation between women friends; thus, these findings might reflect that different speech behaviors could be related to different interpretations of the demands of the experimental task. This study also provides evidence that during discussions where similarities between conversational partners are emphasized women use higher paced turn taking than during discussions when their differences with their conversational partners are magnified. This suggests shifts in high paced turn taking in conversations between women may signal shifts in rapport between the conversational partners. The results of this study suggest the importance of investigating not only observable behavior, but also perceptions and intentions related to the conversational context. It would be useful for future research to include ethnographic research methods to examine women's perceptions of the experimental task demands, and women's perceptions and interpretations of their own and their partner's conversational behaviors. Such methods might answer some the questions about the role of individual differences in conversational styles posited from the results of this study as well as those of Beaumont and colleagues (e.g., Beaumont, 2000; Beaumont and Wagner, 2004), and thus, would provide a richer picture of the importance of conversation for the maintenance of friendship.

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Appendix A  
Information Letter

Dear Participant:

We are looking for women aged 21 to 55 to participate in a research project about women's friendships. This research project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Sherry Beaumont, Psychology Program, UNBC, Phone 960-6501, and has been approved by the UNBC Research Ethics Committee. If you are interested in participating in the study, you will need a close friend and a casual friend to participate along with you. Therefore, we ask that you obtain informal consent from your friends, prior to completing the screening portion of the study.

The purpose of this study is to investigate conversational patterns and personality characteristics in women's friendships. The project will involve three phases. The first phase is a screening process in which we will ask that you select a close friend and a casual friend to participate in the study with you. You will be asked to fill out screening questionnaires to ensure that your selections meet the criteria of the study. The questionnaires will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Please be assured that the information you provide about your selected partners will be held in strict confidence.

In the second phase, you will complete a variety of questionnaires and engage in a 20-minute audio taped conversation with one of your selected partners. The third phase involves the same tasks, however, with your other selected partner. Each of these phases will take approximately 90 minutes each.

All the information that you provide will be treated as strictly confidential and will not be made available to anyone except those involved in the project. All completed questionnaires, audio taped conversations, and this signed form will be kept for seven years in a locked and secure place at UNBC. In addition, any questionnaires and cassette tapes collected will be assigned numbers to ensure that no identifying information is stored in the data files. All information you provide will be used for research purposes only.

If you have any further questions related to this project, please do not hesitate to contact Jacqueline Boonstra or Rebecca Wiebe at the Life Span Development Laboratory, Psychology Department-UNBC, phone number 960-6062. Any complaints or concerns about this study can be addressed to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, UNBC, Phone 960-5820.

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My signature on this form indicates that I agree to participate in the first phase of this research project (screening process to select partners)

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**Participant Name (Please Print)**

---

**Phone number**

---

Participant's Signature

---

Date

Appendix B

Relationship Closeness Inventory for Casual Friend

**We are currently investigating the nature of women’s friendships. As part of this study, we would like you to answer the following questions about your relationship with a casual woman friend. Please select this person carefully since this decision will affect the rest of this questionnaire.**

With this person in mind, please respond to the following questions:

1. Who is this person? (initial of first name only) \_\_\_\_\_
- a. What is this person’s age? \_\_\_\_\_ What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
- b. What is this person’s sex? \_\_\_\_\_ What is your sex? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which of the following best describes you relationship with this person?  
(Check only one)

\_\_\_\_\_ close friend (non-romantic)      \_\_\_\_\_ casual friend

3. How long have you known this person? Please indicate the number of years and/or months

(for example,   3   years,   8   months).      \_\_\_\_\_ years  
\_\_\_\_\_ months

**We would like you to estimate the amount of time you typically spend alone with this person (referenced to below as “X”) during the day. We would like you to make these time estimates by breaking the day into morning, afternoon, and evening, although you should interpret each of these time periods in terms of your own typical daily schedule. (For example, if you work a night shift, “morning” may actually reflect time in the afternoon, but is nevertheless time immediately after waking.) Think back over the past week and write in the average amount of time, per day, that you spent alone with X during each time period. If you did not spend any time with X in some time periods, write   0   hour(s)   0   minutes.**

4. DURING THE PAST WEEK, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent *alone with X* in the MORNING (e.g., between the time you wake and 12 noon)?

\_\_\_\_\_ hour(s)      \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

5. DURING THE PAST WEEK, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent *alone with X* in the AFTERNOON (e.g., between 12 noon and 6 pm)?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ hour(s) \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

6. DURING THE PAST WEEK, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent *alone with X* in the EVENING (e.g., between 6 pm and bedtime)?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ hour(s) \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

*The following is a list of different activities that people may engage in over the course of one week. For each of the activities listed, please check all of those that you have engaged in alone with X in the past week. Check only those activities that were done alone with X and not done with X in the presence of others.*

In the past week, I did the following activities alone with X: (Check all that apply)

- \_\_\_\_\_ did laundry
- \_\_\_\_\_ prepared a meal
- \_\_\_\_\_ watched TV
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to an auction/antique show
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a restaurant
- \_\_\_\_\_ went for a walk/drive
- \_\_\_\_\_ planned a party/social event
- \_\_\_\_\_ cleaned house/apartment
- \_\_\_\_\_ worked on homework
- \_\_\_\_\_ outdoor recreation (e.g., sailing)
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a play
- \_\_\_\_\_ visited family
- \_\_\_\_\_ played cards/board game
- \_\_\_\_\_ exercised (e.g., jogging, aerobics)
- \_\_\_\_\_ went dancing
- \_\_\_\_\_ played music/sang
- \_\_\_\_\_ wilderness activity (e.g., hunting, hiking, fishing)
- \_\_\_\_\_ went on an outing (e.g., picnic, beach, zoo, winter carnival)
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a department, book, hardware store, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ discussed things of a non-personal nature
- \_\_\_\_\_ went on a trip (e.g., vacation or weekend)
- \_\_\_\_\_ discussed things of a personal nature
- \_\_\_\_\_ attended a non-class lecture or presentation
- \_\_\_\_\_ talked on the phone
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a party
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a concert
- \_\_\_\_\_ attended a sporting event
- \_\_\_\_\_ visited friends
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a movie

- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a bar
- \_\_\_\_\_ ate a meal
- \_\_\_\_\_ participated in a sporting activity
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a grocery store
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a museum/art show
- \_\_\_\_\_ attended class
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to church/religious function
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a clothing store
- \_\_\_\_\_ other (please list)

*Now we would like you to tell us how much X affects your future plans and goals. Using the 7-point scale below, please indicate the degree to which your future plans and goals are affected by X by writing the appropriate number in the space corresponding to each item. If an area does not apply to you (e.g., you have no plans or goals in that area), circle number 1.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Not at All		A great extent				
1. My vacation plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. My marriage plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My plans to have children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My plans to make <i>major</i> investments (house, car, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. My plans to join a club, social organization, church, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. My school-related plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. My plans for achieving a particular financial standard of living	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*The following questions concern the amount of influence X has on your thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. Using the 7-point scale below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by writing the appropriate number in the space corresponding to each item.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	I Strongly Disagree			I Strongly Agree			
1. X will influence my future financial security.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. X does not influence everyday things in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. X influences important things in my life. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. X influences which parties and other social events I attend. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. X influences the extent to which I accept responsibilities in our relationship. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. X does *not* influence how much time I spend doing house-hold work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. X does *not* influence how I choose to spend my money. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. X influences the way I feel about myself. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. X does *not* influence my moods. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. X influences the basic values that I hold. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. X does *not* influence the opinions that I have of other important people in my life. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. X does *not* influence when I see, and the amount of time I spend with, my family. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. X influences when I see, and the amount of time I spend with, my friends. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. X does *not* influence which of my friends I see. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. X does *not* influence the type of career I have. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. X influences or will influence how much time I devote to my career. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. X does not influence my chances of getting a good job in the future. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. X influences the way I feel about the future. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. X does *not* have the capacity to influence how I act in various situations. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. X influences and contributes to my overall happiness. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. X does *not* influence my present financial security. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
22. X influences how I spend my free time. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. X influences when I see X and the amount of  
time the two of us spend together. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
24. X does *not* influence how I dress. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
25. X influences how I decorate my home  
(e.g., dorm room, apartment, house). 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
26. X does *not* influence where I live. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. X influences what I watch on TV. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



## Appendix C

## Relationship Closeness Inventory For Close Friend

**We are currently investigating the nature of women's friendships. As part of this study, we would like you to answer the following questions about your relationship with a close woman friend. Specifically, we would like you to choose a person with whom you have the *close, deep, involved, and intimate relationship*, and answer the following questions with regard to this particular person. *Please select this person carefully since this decision will affect the rest of this questionnaire.***

With this person in mind, please respond to the following questions:

1. Who is this person? (initial of first name only) \_\_\_\_\_

- a. What is this person's age? \_\_\_\_\_ What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_  
 b. What is this person's sex? \_\_\_\_\_ What is your sex? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which of the following best describes your relationship with this person?  
 (Check only one)

\_\_\_\_\_ close friend (non-romantic)      \_\_\_\_\_ casual friend

3. How long have you known this person? Please indicate the number of years and/or months

(for example,   3   years,   8   months). \_\_\_\_\_ years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ months

**We would like you to estimate the amount of time you typically spend alone with this person (referenced to below as "X") during the day. We would like you to make these time estimates by breaking the day into morning, afternoon, and evening, although you should interpret each of these time periods in terms of your own typical daily schedule. (For example, if you work a night shift, "morning" may actually reflect time in the afternoon, but is nevertheless time immediately after waking.) Think back over the past week and write in the average amount of time, per day, that you spent alone with X during each time period. If you did not spend any time with X in some time periods, write   0   hour(s)   0   minutes.**

4. DURING THE PAST WEEK, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent *alone with X* in the MORNING (e.g., between the time you wake and

12 noon)?

\_\_\_\_\_ hour(s) \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

5. DURING THE PAST WEEK, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent *alone with X* in the AFTERNOON (e.g., between 12 noon and 6 pm)?

\_\_\_\_\_ hour(s) \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

6. DURING THE PAST WEEK, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent *alone with X* in the EVENING (e.g., between 6 pm and bedtime)?

\_\_\_\_\_ hour(s) \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

The following is a list of different activities that people may engage in over the course of one week. For each of the activities listed, please check all of those that you have engaged in alone with X in the past week. Check only those activities that were done alone with X and not done with X in the presence of others.

In the past week, I did the following activities alone with X: (Check all that apply)

- \_\_\_\_\_ did laundry
- \_\_\_\_\_ prepared a meal
- \_\_\_\_\_ watched TV
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to an auction/antique show
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a restaurant
- \_\_\_\_\_ went for a walk/drive
- \_\_\_\_\_ planned a party/social event
- \_\_\_\_\_ cleaned house/apartment
- \_\_\_\_\_ worked on homework
- \_\_\_\_\_ outdoor recreation (e.g., sailing)
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a play
- \_\_\_\_\_ visited family
- \_\_\_\_\_ played cards/board game
- \_\_\_\_\_ exercised (e.g., jogging, aerobics)
- \_\_\_\_\_ went dancing
- \_\_\_\_\_ played music/sang
- \_\_\_\_\_ wilderness activity (e.g., hunting, hiking, fishing)
- \_\_\_\_\_ went on an outing (e.g., picnic, beach, zoo, winter carnival)
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a department, book, hardware store, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ discussed things of a non-personal nature
- \_\_\_\_\_ went on a trip (e.g., vacation or weekend)
- \_\_\_\_\_ discussed things of a personal nature
- \_\_\_\_\_ attended a non-class lecture or presentation
- \_\_\_\_\_ talked on the phone
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a party
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a concert

- \_\_\_\_\_ attended a sporting event
- \_\_\_\_\_ visited friends
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a movie
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a bar
- \_\_\_\_\_ ate a meal
- \_\_\_\_\_ participated in a sporting activity
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a grocery store
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a museum/art show
- \_\_\_\_\_ attended class
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to church/religious function
- \_\_\_\_\_ went to a clothing store
- \_\_\_\_\_ other (please list)

*Now we would like you to tell us how much X affects your future plans and goals. Using the 7-point scale below, please indicate the degree to which your future plans and goals are affected by X by writing the appropriate number in the space corresponding to each item. If an area does not apply to you (e.g., you have no plans or goals in that area), circle number 1.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Not at All		A great extent				
1. My vacation plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. My marriage plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My plans to have children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My plans to make <i>major</i> investments (house, car, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. My plans to join a club, social organization, church, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. My school-related plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. My plans for achieving a particular financial standard of living	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*The following questions concern the amount of influence X has on your thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. Using the 7-point scale below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by writing the appropriate number in the space corresponding to each item.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	I Strongly Disagree			I Strongly Agree			
1. X will influence my future financial security.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. X does not influence everyday things in my life. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. X influences important things in my life. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. X influences which parties and other social events I attend. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. X influences the extent to which I accept responsibilities in our relationship. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. X does *not* influence how much time I spend doing house-hold work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. X does *not* influence how I choose to spend my money. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. X influences the way I feel about myself. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. X does *not* influence my moods. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. X influences the basic values that I hold. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. X does *not* influence the opinions that I have of other important people in my life. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. X does *not* influence when I see, and the amount of time I spend with, my family. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. X influences when I see, and the amount of time I spend with, my friends. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. X does *not* influence which of my friends I see. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. X does *not* influence the type of career I have. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. X influences or will influence how much time I devote to my career. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. X does not influence my chances of getting a good job in the future. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. X influences the way I feel about the future. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. X does *not* have the capacity to influence how

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I act in various situations.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 20. X influences and contributes to my overall happiness.                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 21. X does <i>not</i> influence my present financial security.                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 22. X influences how I spend my free time.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 23. X influences when I see X and the amount of<br>time the two of us spend together. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 24. X does <i>not</i> influence how I dress.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 25. X influences how I decorate my home<br>(e.g., dorm room, apartment, house).       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 26. X does <i>not</i> influence where I live.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 27. X influences what I watch on TV.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

## Appendix D

## Informed Consent

The purpose of this informed consent is to ensure that you understand the purpose of this exercise, the nature of your involvement, and your rights as a participant. This information sheet should provide sufficient information for you to determine whether or not you wish to participate in this study.

**Project Title: Conversational Styles and Personality Characteristics in Women's Friendships**

**Research Personnel:** Jacqueline Boonstra (M Sc. in Psychology Candidate, Phone 960-6062), or Rebecca Wiebe (B Sc. in Psychology Candidate), will answer any questions you may have about this form and/or the procedure related to this project. This project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. S. L. Beaumont, Psychology Program, UNBC, Phone 960-6501. Any complaints or concerns about this study can be addressed to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, UNBC, Phone 960-5820.

**Purpose:** This research project is being conducted for Jacqueline Boonstra's Master's thesis in Psychology and has been approved by the UNBC Research Ethics Committee. This study intends to investigate conversational patterns and personality characteristics in women's friendships.

**Task Requirements:** You will complete a variety of questionnaires that ask you about your preferences and attitudes concerning yourself, your friend, and various social situations. In addition, you will engage in an audiotaped conversation with your friend. You will be given topics for discussion.

**Duration:** The entire session will last between 1.5 to 2 hours. The questionnaires take about 60 to 75 minutes to complete. The conversation will last about 20 minutes.

**Feedback:** A summary sheet based upon your responses to your personality inventory is available to you upon request. Information obtained from this project for research purposes only. All the results will be communicated to others based only on group information. No information about specific individuals will be available.

**Potential Risk/Discomfort:** There are no physical or psychological risks in this study

**Confidentiality:** Only researchers working on this project will have access to the information. All completed questionnaires, audiotaped conversations, and this signed form will be kept for seven years in a locked and secure place at UNBC. In addition, any questionnaires and cassette tapes collected will be assigned numbers to ensure that no identifying information is stored in the data files. Participants requesting a summary sheet of their personality inventory are given a number, which will identify their summary sheet.

**Right to Withdraw:** You have the right to withdraw your consent and terminate your participations at any time, without any penalty.

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Appendix E

Demographics Form

Please answer the following questions about yourself for our records.

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity:  Aboriginal  African-American (or Canadian)  
 Asian  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Caucasian

Check the highest education level of education that you have completed:

elementary school (please specify grade completed) \_\_\_\_\_  
 secondary school (please specify grade completed) \_\_\_\_\_  
 high school diploma  
 trade/technical school (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 some college  
 college diploma (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 some university  
 university degree (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Other: (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status:  single (never married)  divorced  
 married or common-law  widowed  
 separated



## Appendix F

## Revealed Differences Questionnaire

**Here are a number of situations that people face in their lives. People have different ideas about what to do in these situations, and we are interested in your own personal opinion about them.**

**Please put a check mark (✓) next to the alternative that comes closest to your own opinion. Please choose only ONE answer for each question.**

1. The parents of a 14-year-old girl want to buy their daughter a new coat. The girl would like to pick out the coat herself to be sure it is in the same style as her friends wear. Her parents want to get a more practical coat for her, one that will last for several seasons. Should the girl pick out the coat herself, or should the parents have the final word?  
 Girl should pick coat herself  
 Parents should have final word
  
2. Mrs. Jones has a problem with her 3-month-old baby, who often cries when nothing is wrong with him, even after he's been fed and changed. The doctor says the baby is in good health, and says that all babies cry sometimes. The baby's crying upsets Mrs. Jones and she wonders what to do. What would you advise her?  
 Pick up the baby, or play with him, when he cries  
 Let him cry, and try to get used to it
  
3. Some people believe that there is nothing a person can't do or be if he wants to, and if he really works hard. Do you agree or disagree?  
 Agree  
 Disagree
  
4. Margaret has been seeing a man whom she likes very much and they are starting to get serious. She has never told him that she was engaged once before, several years ago, and that it ended unhappily. She hesitates to tell him now because it might seem strange that she never mentioned it before. Do you think she should tell him about it or just remain silent?  
 Tell him  
 Remain silent
  
5. A 20-year-old boy who lives at home prefers to go with his parents when they visit their friends and relatives rather than to spend time in social activities with friends his own age. The parents feel that this is not good for him but do not know what

to do. Do you think they should let him come with them as long as he wants to, or should they put more pressure on him to spend time with friends his own age?

- Let him come with them as long as he wants to  
 Pressure him to spend time with friends his own age

6. A foreman sees one of his crew taking some company materials home from work. Should he report him or should he just ignore it?  
 Report him  
 Just ignore it
7. You are traveling on the train by yourself when a middle-aged woman sits down next to you to talk about her trip and asks questions about you. Would you talk to her about yourself or would you begin to read your newspaper so she would stop talking to you?  
 Talk to her about your self  
 Read your newspaper
8. George has just begun a new job and doesn't know anyone in his crew. A few of the men get together to go bowling after work and have asked him to join them. Should he join them right away or would it be better to wait a while before getting involved with one particular group?  
 Join in right away  
 Wait a while
9. Since her husband died, Mrs. Green has been living alone. She has not been feeling well lately and her daughter is worried about there not being anyone there to take care of her. She wants Mrs. Green to give up her house and come to live with her. Mrs. Green wants to stay in her own house. Do you think it would be best for her to stay in her own home or go to live with her daughter?  
 Stay in her own home  
 Live with her daughter
10. A 6-year-old boy comes home from school crying. He tells his mother that another little boy in his class hit him. His mother tells him to stop being a crybaby and to hit the other boy back next time. Do you think that was the right thing to tell him or not?  
 Right thing to tell him  
 Not the right thing
11. Mrs. Allen, a widow, has asked her son to wallpaper some rooms in her house and to do some repair work for her. His wife wants him to do work around their own house that needs to be done. Do you think his mother has the right to expect him to do work at her house?  
 Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

12. When a 17-year-old girl has a party at her house, should her parents go out for the evening to give her and her friends privacy, or should they stay home?

\_\_\_\_\_ Should go out

\_\_\_\_\_ Should stay home

13. A Boy Scout group plans to enter a magazine subscription contest. Under the rules of the contest a boy can either try for the individual prize of a bicycle or put his subscriptions in with the other boys in his group to try for the TV set. Some boys think that they should all put their subscriptions together to try for the TV set, other boys think they should each have a chance to try for the bicycle. What do you think they should do?

\_\_\_\_\_ Put subscriptions together for TV set

\_\_\_\_\_ Let each boy try for the bicycle

14. Mrs. Jones is worried about her 11-year-old son, who very often talks back to her when she asks him to do something. She feels that if she lets him talk back he will lose respect for her. But she also wonders if it isn't sometimes good to let a child express how he feels even when it is toward his parents. Do you think it would be a good idea to let him talk back sometimes?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

15. Some parents think children should not be disciplined very strictly; others feel children should be strictly disciplined so they learn early about what things are right and wrong. What do you think parents should do?

\_\_\_\_\_ Not use strict discipline

\_\_\_\_\_ Use strict discipline

16. Now that Ryan is two years old, his mother has decided to take a part-time job because the family needs extra money. While she is at work, an older woman comes over to take care of him. Ryan likes this woman but misses his mother a lot, and doesn't feel like playing when she isn't there. What do you think his mother should do?

\_\_\_\_\_ Stop work and stay at home with him

\_\_\_\_\_ Continue working and let him get used to her being away

17. Mrs. Thomas is concerned about her 19-year-old son who she feels is always making plans that he does not carry out. For instance, he may decide in the evening to look for a job the next day, but when morning comes she cannot get him out of bed. Do you think Mrs. Thomas should try to pressure him or should she let him carry out his plans in his own way?

\_\_\_\_\_ Pressure him

\_\_\_\_\_ Let him carry out plans in his own way

18. Jim is very worried about his job and his girlfriend. One day when he meets a friend, he tells him about the whole problem. Afterward, he reconsiders and thinks that he should have kept his personal problems to himself. Which do you think he should have done?  
 Told his friend about his problems  
 Kept his personal problems to himself
19. Mrs. Burn's husband died two weeks ago and since then she has spent most of her time sitting at home and feeling sad. Her daughter insists that it would be better right now for her to find things to do and keep busy so that she won't think about her husband's death. Which do you think is better?  
 Keep busy and not think about him  
 Take time to get over his death
20. The question of bedtime is an issue in many families. Do you think a 15-year-old should be allowed to have the final word about what time he goes to bed, or should his parents have the last word?  
 15-year-old should have final say  
 Parents should have last word
21. The doctor has come to the conclusion, after many tests and examinations, that his patient, Mr. Weber, has an incurable illness. Should he tell Mr. Weber the truth or should he put off telling him as long as possible?  
 Tell him the truth  
 Put off telling him
22. Mr. and Mrs. Adams have saved a considerable amount of money during their 35 years of marriage. Mrs. Adams suggests that they give some of this money to their son, who needs it to go into business for himself. Mr. Adams thinks they should use the money themselves to enjoy some of the things they have worked hard for, like going to Florida in the Winter. What would you advise them to do?  
 Give some of the money to their son  
 Use it to enjoy things they worked hard for
23. Jean is 19 years old and has been going with one guy, whom she likes, steadily for the past year and feels that she has gotten to know him well. Sometimes she feels, though, that it would be better to go out with many guys and not get too involved with one person yet. Which do you think is better?  
 Go out with one  
 Go out with many
24. Children are often disturbed when they find out that their own parents sometimes tell "white lies," that is, small lies to avoid embarrassing situations or hurting someone's feelings. Should parents try to explain why they have to tell these lies so the children will not be disturbed when they hear them, or should they always avoid telling any kind of lies when the children are around?  
 Explain "white lies" to children

\_\_\_\_\_ Avoid telling any lies

25. Mrs. Collins is taking Peter to kindergarten for the first time. Peter says that he wants to wear his old baseball cap. Mrs. Collins would like to let him wear it since he wants to, but she knows that the other children will be dressed in their best clothes and she'll be embarrassed in front of the other mothers if he wears the old hat. Should she let him wear it, or not?

\_\_\_\_\_ She should let him wear it

\_\_\_\_\_ She should not let him wear it

26. Mr. and Mrs. Carter's 20-year-old son sometimes leaves the house for long periods of time without telling his parents where he is going and refuses to tell them where he's been when he returns. His father and mother feel they have a right to know how he spends his time. Do you think he has a right to keep this to himself, or should he tell his parents?

\_\_\_\_\_ Has a right to keep this to himself

\_\_\_\_\_ Should tell his parents

27. Human nature being what it is, there will be wars and conflicts. Do you agree with this?

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

28. Mrs. Johnson's mother is a widow who is now bedridden and needs someone to take care of her. Mrs. Johnson is thinking of having her mother come to live with her. However, she has three children at home who are still in school and she wonders if it might be better for her mother to go into a nursing home. Which do you think she should do?

\_\_\_\_\_ Have her mother come to live with her

\_\_\_\_\_ Have her mother go into a nursing home

29. Janice has been spending a lot of time with a girl in her high school class that her parents disapprove of. They feel this other girl is a bad influence and want Janice to stop seeing her. Janice feels she has a right to pick her own friends. Do you think Janice is right in this?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

30. Mrs. Rogers wants to send her 4-year-old girl to nursery school. The little girl is afraid to be with the other children unless her mother is with her, and she has cried each time Mrs. Rogers has left her at the school. Do you think it is better to send her to school even though she cries about it, or would it be better to wait until she's older?

\_\_\_\_\_ Better to send her to school

\_\_\_\_\_ Better to wait until she's older

31. Mrs. Williams discovers that a 10-dollar bill that was on her dining room table has disappeared. Suddenly she notices that her daughter's 5-year-old playmate has the bill sticking out of her back pocket. The child refuses to admit that she took the money. Mrs. Williams knows her mother will punish the girl very harshly. Should she tell her mother about this or not?  
 Should tell child's mother  
 Should not tell child's mother
32. A 15-year-old boy has ideas about religion that differ from those of his parents. His father becomes annoyed when he expresses these ideas and many arguments have arisen. Do you think he should keep his ideas to himself to avoid arguments, or does he have a right to express his own ideas if he wants to?  
 Should keep his ideas to himself  
 Has the right to express his own ideas
33. At what age do you think it is proper for a girl to begin dating? That is, going with a boy to a movie or going out with him when they're not with a group their own age. Fourteen or older, or under fourteen?  
 Fourteen or older  
 Under fourteen
34. When a committee is working together, is it important for the chairman to help people get along well together or is it more important for him to make sure that the job gets done regardless of how people feel?  
 Help people get along well together  
 Make sure the job gets done
35. Some parents feel that obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn. Do you agree?  
 Agree  
 Disagree

Appendix G

Shared Similarities Topic

People have memories that are associated with their interpersonal relationships. For the next few minutes, talk about any memories you have connected to your friendship with each other. Start by talking about your memories of when the two of you first met. Feel free, however, to talk about any memories you have concerning your experiences together as friends and/or how your friendship developed.

Appendix H

Your NEO Summary

# Your NEO Summary

Paul T. Costa, Jr., Ph.D., and Robert R. McCrae, Ph.D.

The NEO inventory measures five broad domains, or dimensions, of personality. The responses that you gave to the statements about your thoughts, feelings, and goals can be compared with those of other adults to give a description of your personality.

For each of the five domains, descriptions are given below for different ranges of scores. The descriptions that are *checked* provide descriptions of you, based on your responses to the inventory items.

The NEO inventory measures differences among normal individuals. It is not a test of intelligence or ability, and it is not intended to diagnose problems of mental health

or adjustment. It does, however, give you some idea about what makes you unique in your ways of thinking, feeling, and interacting with others.

This summary is intended to give you a general idea of how your personality might be described. It is not a detailed report. If you completed the inventory again, you might score somewhat differently. For most individuals, however, personality traits tend to be very stable in adulthood. Unless you experience major life changes or make deliberate efforts to change yourself, this summary should apply to you throughout your adult life.

Compared with the responses of other people, your responses suggest that you can be described as:

<input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive, emotional, and prone to experience feelings that are upsetting.	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally calm and able to deal with stress, but you sometimes experience feelings of guilt, anger, or sadness.	<input type="checkbox"/> Secure, hardy, and generally relaxed even under stressful conditions.
<input type="checkbox"/> Extraverted, outgoing, active, and high-spirited. You prefer to be around people most of the time.	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate in activity and enthusiasm. You enjoy the company of others but you also value privacy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Introverted, reserved, and serious. You prefer to be alone or with a few close friends.
<input type="checkbox"/> Open to new experiences. You have broad interests and are very imaginative.	<input type="checkbox"/> Practical but willing to consider new ways of doing things. You seek a balance between the old and the new.	<input type="checkbox"/> Down-to-earth, practical, traditional, and pretty much set in your ways.
<input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate, good-natured, and eager to cooperate and avoid conflict.	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally warm, trusting, and agreeable, but you can sometimes be stubborn and competitive.	<input type="checkbox"/> Hardheaded, skeptical, proud, and competitive. You tend to express your anger directly.
<input type="checkbox"/> Conscientious and well-organized. You have high standards and always strive to achieve your goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Dependable and moderately well-organized. You generally have clear goals but are able to set your work aside.	<input type="checkbox"/> Easygoing, not very well-organized, and sometimes careless. You prefer not to make plans.

**PAR** Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc., P.O. Box 998, Odessa, FL 33550; Toll-free 1-800-331-TEST; <http://www.parinc.com>

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## Appendix I

## Temporal Conversational Style Coding Manual

**TEMPORAL CONVERSATIONAL STYLE CODING MANUAL**

Listen to the tape and follow along with the transcript. Listen to the entire tape once before beginning to code. After you have listened to the tape a first time, play it again and begin coding. Replay when necessary.

Your task is to code for the structure of the conversation. That is, how the conversation is organized, constructed or arranged. Specifically, your task is to note any time when the normal turn-taking rule for conversation has been violated. While coding these conversations adopt the belief that when two people have a conversation, they assume that only one person will talk at once and that they will take turns talking. Therefore, while coding the tapes, assume that at any point in the conversation only one person should hold the conversational floor and the other person is silent, and that each speaker will wait his or her turn before beginning to speak. If these rules are violated, then the structure of the conversation has been disrupted. Your job is to: (1) identify when the turn-taking rule has been violated; and, (2) make a judgment as to what kind of a turn-taking violation has occurred.

There are three ways that the turn-taking rule can be violated: (1) the two speakers just mix up their "timing" (see OVERLAPS below); (2) the second speaker makes a short remark that simply indicates that he or she is listening to the other speaker (see LISTENER RESPONSES below); and, (3) the second speaker tries

---

to take over the floor before the first speaker is finished his or her turn (see INTERRUPTIONS below). NOTE: Remember that you are coding for conversational structure. Do not make judgments about the speaker's intentions beyond what is described in the following descriptions of the codes. For example, your task is to identify whether or not an interruption occurred NOT whether the speaker intended to agree or disagree by that interruption.

(1) **OVERLAPS (O)**:

Overlaps are instances when both speakers are talking simultaneously; but, it is NOT clear that anyone was being interrupted. An Overlap is simply an indication that the timing of the turn-taking has been unintentionally disrupted. Code all of the following as Overlaps (O):

(a) Instances when the second speaker begins her turn a bit early (i.e., overlaps with the last word or less of the first speaker's turn). However, if the second speaker cuts off more than one word, DO NOT code it as an Overlap (i.e., it would be coded as an interruption. See below).

(b) Instances when both speakers begin talking at the same time. This typically happens after a pause in the utterance (or a period in the transcript.) In the following example, M's statement would be coded as an Overlap. It is important to remember that in these cases, the Overlap is coded to the speaker who ends up holding the

floor (e.g., M in the following example).

C: Yeah that's right. /I think so/

M: /I knew you/ would agree with me.

(c) All other instances when the two speakers are talking simultaneously; but, it is not clear that anyone was being interrupted (e.g., the two speakers say something in unison). That is, use the Overlap category as "default" code when you have any doubts about whether a situation constitutes any of the other categories (e.g., Interruption).

## 2) **LISTENER RESPONSES (LR):**

Short utterances made by the second speaker to indicate to the first speaker that she or he is listening. These utterances can be spoken simultaneously with the current speaker or while the first speaker takes a short pause (or breath) within his or her continuous utterance. They are typically one-word utterances (e.g., "mhmm"), but can be two word utterances (e.g., "that's right" or "that's true"). The critical feature is that the second speaker's short utterance was not made in an attempt to take over the conversational floor. That is, you have to make a judgement about whether the LR was all that the speaker had intended to say. For example:

C: You shouldn't make a big thing /out/

M: /Mhmm./

C: of a little thing.

C: You shouldn't make a big thing out of a little thing

M: Mhmm.

C: because then it just keeps going on and on.

In both of these examples the mother's statement ("Mhmm") would be coded as a Listener Response (LR). However, if the mother had said, "Mhmm", and then went on to say something else in the same turn, it would NOT be coded as LR. For example:

C: You shouldn't make a big thing out of a little /thing./

M: /Mhmm./ But what  
about .....

In the previous example, the simultaneous speech would be coded as an OVERLAP (because it cuts off C's last word), NOT as LR. If it didn't cut off the last word (i.e., they did not speak simultaneously) then don't code it as anything because there is no violation of the turn-taking rule.

Sometimes a speaker will forget a word or will stumble on the pronunciation of a word, and the other person will help her out by saying the word that she might have been looking for. For example:

M: So, I think she should be given the /the/

C: /The/ choice.

M: The choice. Or given the right to choose.

In this case, C's statement would be coded as LR because she is not trying to take over the floor, and she is helping M to continue talking.

NOTE: Only code short responses, like “mhmm”, as LR if they actually violate the turn-taking rule. Do NOT code these utterances as LR if they occur in a normal transition point in the turn-taking pattern. That is, if speaker A is talking and finishes his/her utterance, and then speaker B says “mhmm” as his/her turn, and then speaker A takes a new turn and happens to continue talking about the same thing he/she was saying previously, DO NOT code speaker B's “mhmm” as LR because there was no true violation of the turn-taking rule. For example:

C: You shouldn't make a big thing out of a little thing.

M: Mhmm.

C: You know like when Dad takes a fit when there's too much noise.

#### (4) **INTERRUPTIONS:**

An interruption occurs when the second speaker clearly tries to take over the floor while the first speaker is still talking. In deciding whether the first speaker had finished before the interrupter started to talk, use all available cues, including grammar (was the sentence complete?), semantics (did the message make sense without further elaboration?), and tone of voice (did the speaker sound done?).

NOTE: Certain speakers may have the tendency to finish their utterances with a grammatically incomplete sentence (i.e., sentences ending with “I mean”, “you know”, “but”, “so”, etc.). Under those circumstances it is important to consider the semantics of the sentence and the speaker’s tone of voice when deciding to code an utterance as an interruption. Always take a conservative approach to coding interruptions. That is, if it is not clear that the second speaker was trying to take over the floor then DO NOT code the utterance as an interruption.

If it is clear that the second speaker was trying to take the floor from the first speaker before she was finished, AND the second speaker ends up holding the floor, then code the second speaker's utterance as a **SUCCESSFUL INTERRUPTION (SI)**. In the following example, C's statement would be coded as SI.

M: On the other side of it, I /wonder/

C: /Weil/ maybe she's really sick.

If it is clear that the second speaker was trying to interrupt the first speaker before she was finished, BUT the second speaker does not take over the floor, then code it as an **UNSUCCESSFUL INTERRUPTION (UI)**.

Code all UIs as either a **complete utterance** (thought) (**C**), or as an **incomplete utterance** (thought) (**I**). Again, use all available cues to determine if it is complete or incomplete.

The following is an example of a **UI(C)**:

M: He wants to go along /with his parents./

C: /I know but/ it's like he's giving up his life.

In this example, C interrupts M before she is finished, but M finishes anyway, and C also says a complete statement.

The example that follows would be coded as **UI(I)** because C does not end up holding the floor.

M: He wants to go along /with his/

C: /Ya, but/

M: parents.

It is important to remember that if B unsuccessfully interrupts A, then A will continue her sentence until she is done. When A finishes her sentence after B's attempt to interrupt, do not code A as successfully interrupting B (i.e., A is simply finishing her sentence because B was not successful in getting her to stop). For the above example, C's statement would be coded as UI(I), and M's second "turn" would NOT be coded as SI (i.e., it would not be coded as anything).

## Appendix J

MANOVA 2 (speaker) x 2 (partner) x 2 (topic) Summary Table

Effect and Interaction	Summary Statistics			
	F	df	p	$\eta^2$
<b>Speech</b>	<b>58.51</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>&lt;.001*</b>	<b>.91</b>
Topic	2.70	13	.124	.17
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>7.86</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>.015*</b>	<b>.38</b>
Partner	1.64	13	.222	.11
<b>Speech x Topic</b>	<b>8.07</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>.006*</b>	<b>.57</b>
Speech x Speaker	0.24	12	.788	.04
Topic x Speaker	2.30	13	.153	.15
Speech x Topic x Speaker	0.58	12	.573	.09
Speech x Partner	1.26	12	.319	.17
Topic x Partner	4.54	13	.053	.26
Speech x Topic x Partner	0.33	12	.725	.05
Speaker x Partner	2.20	13	.162	.14
<b>Speech x Speaker x Partner</b>	<b>4.60</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>.033*</b>	<b>.43</b>
Topic x Speaker x Partner	0.01	13	.929	.01
Speech x Topic x Speaker x Partner	1.14	12	.354	.16

Notes: \* statistically significant  $p < .05$ .



## Appendix K

ANOVA 2 (speaker) x 2 (partner) x 2 (topic) Summary Table

Speech Act	Effect and Interaction	Summary Statistics			
		F	df	p	$\eta^2$
Overlaps	<b>Topic</b>	<b>5.85</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>.031*</b>	<b>.31</b>
	Speaker	8.59	13	.012***	.40
	Partner	1.03	13	.330	.07
	Topic x Speaker	0.54	13	.474	.04
	Topic x Partner	6.06	13	.029***	.32
	<b>Speaker x Partner</b>	<b>7.91</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>.015*</b>	<b>.38</b>
	Topic x Speaker x Partner	0.04	13	.839	.01
	Simultaneous Speech	Topic	3.48	13	.085***
Speaker		3.98	13	.067**	.23
Partner		0.01	13	.966	.01
Topic x Speaker		0.40	13	.540	.03
Topic x Partner		0.95	13	.347	.07
Speaker x Partner		0.80	13	.388	.06
Topic x Speaker x Partner		0.99	13	.336	.07
Successful Interruptions		Topic	1.19	13	.296
	Speaker	3.34	13	.091	.20
	Partner	6.55	13	.024**	.34
	Topic x Speaker	3.30	13	.092	.20
	Topic x Partner	1.88	13	.193	.13
	Speaker x Partner	0.25	13	.627	.02
	Topic x Speaker x Partner	0.80	13	.388	.06

Notes: \* statistically significant  $p < .05$ .

\*\* significant or approaching significance at the univariate level, but not at the multivariate level, so not reported or noted.

\*\*\* approaching significance ( $< .09$ ).