A Conversational Analysis of Expressing Love Topics in Some Mobile Phone Calls Among Mosuli Speakers

Asst. Prof. Dr. Nashwan Mustafa Al-Sa'ati
Department of English
College of Arts / University of Mosul

Abstract:

This study aims at analyzing some mobile telephone conversations among Mosuli dated couples. It tries to show the linguistic interactional strategies used in expressing love topics, i.e. how couples start, maintain and terminate their calls, the features that signal the conversation as love talk, and the sex differences involved in such type of conversation.

The study hypothesizes that couples' telephone conversation involves using the methods of normal telephone conversation management with some modification. In addition, a standard formula is adopted in starting and ending the conversation. Besides, the topics raised by lovers are of a special kind. Finally, males have the highest proportion than females in revealing love topics, using direct elicitation and directive.

The study has come up with certain findings that confirm the hypotheses raised. However, almost in contrast to the last raised hypothesis, it has been found that females appear to have the highest proportion in revealing topics, raising direct questions, and adopting directive exchanges.

key words: conversational analysis/ expressing love topics/ mobile phone calls/ dated couples

تحليل خطابي للتعبير عن مواضيع الحب بين المتكلمين الموصليين في بعض اتصالاتهم في الهاتف النقال

أ.م.د. نشوان مصطفى الساعاتي
قسم اللغة الانكليزية
كلية الآداب / جامعة الموصل

ملخص البحث:

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تحليل محادثات المحبين الموصليين عبر الهاتف النقـــال. تحـــاول الدراسة ان توضح السلوكيات التخاطبية اللغوية للتعبير عن مواضيع الحب وكيف يبــدأ المحبــون

ويستمرون ثم ينهون محادثاتهم عبر الهاتف وايضا الخصائص التي تحدد المحادثـــات علـــى انهـــا محادثات محبين وكذلك الاختلافات بين محادثات الذكور والاناث.

تفترض الدراسة ان محادثات المحبين عبر الهاتف تشمل استخدام الطرائق الشائعة في ادارة المحادثات العادية ولكن مع بعض التغييرات. فضلا عن ذلك، فان هناك صيغة قياسية فـــي ابتـــداء وانهاء هذا النوع من المحادثات. وتعد لغة المحبين، فضلا عن ذلك، لغـــة خاصـــة. واخيـــرا ان الذكور لهم الحصة الاكبر من الاناث في الافصاح عن مواضيع الحب واثـــارة الاســـئلة المباشـــرة وكذلك استخدام الجمل الامرية.

وتوصلت الدراسة الى عدة نتائج تؤكد الفرضيات المطروحة. وعلى النقيض من الفرضية الاخيرة، فقد بينت الدراسة ان الاناث، خلاف الذكور، لهن الحصة الاكبر في طـــرح العديـــد مـــن المواضيع واثارة الاسئلة المباشرة وكذلك استخدام الجمل الامرية.

1- Telephone Conversation:

Telephone conversations commonly present co-participants with certain circumstances to design their talk about. The most obvious fact is that they can't see each other, and that they are not in the same place when talking on the telephone. For Levinson (1983: 309), telephone conversations are "social activities effectively constituted by talk itself". Such activities tend to have a structure, which includes an opening section, topic-talk and a closing section. This structure, then, organizes the conversation as one unit.

Coronel- Molina (2012:1) points out that the analysis of telephone conversation is a well-established area of investigation, beginning in the late 1960's with Schegloff (1968) work on conversational opening. Since that time, numerous researchers have advanced the study of telephone interactions, both between members of the same language (e.g. Schegloff & Sacks 1973; Schegloff 1979; Hopper 1989; Hopper, etal, 1991; Lindstr?m 1994) and across languages (e.g. Godard 1977; Sifianou 1989; Halmari 1993). All the researchers cited previously, he adds, raised valid points to keep in mind especially when analyzing data from another language based on previous research for English.

2- The Problem:

Telephone conversations in many languages have been widely investigated. Nevertheless, to the best of our knowledge, there is little about (mobile) telephone conversation among dated couples in English and this type of conversation is absent in the Arabic literature as well. Thus, a more subtle way to demonstrate the feelings for couples towards each other is to pay close attention to the exact linguistic expressions and discoursal strategies they use.

3- Aims of the Study:

This research aims at examining the mechanism of mobile telephone conversation which controls the overall organization of the talk on the telephone . It analyzes some mobile telephone conversations and explains what it shows about the linguistic interactional strategies adopted in expressing love topics among Mosuli[1] dated couples. Thus, there is an interest in how couples talk about their love relationship on the telephone. That is, mobile telephone conversations are examined according to their structure of opening, topic-talk and closing. In this sense, the study reveals the structural organization of couples' interaction trying to explain how couples start, maintain and end their calls, etc.

In addition, the study aims at showing what features the conversation has that signal it as being the talk of two people who are in a close, loving relationship. Finally, the study tries to pinpoint some sex differences as far as this type of conversation is concerned.

4- Hypotheses:

1. Couples' mobile telephone conversation adopts the methods of normal telephone conversation management with some modification.
2. A standard formula is used in starting and terminating the telephone conversation.
3. The topics raised by lovers through telephone are of a special kind since lovers, through talking with each other playfully, express their feelings towards each other and want to show each other how much they want to be together.
4. Males reveal more love topics than females.
5. Males use direct elicitation more frequently than females.
6. Males have the highest proportion in using directive than females.

5. Data Collection:

This research is based on a corpus of dyadic audio-taped mobile telephone calls recorded by the researcher. The calls include conversations among native educated Mosuli Arabic dated couples ranging in age between 20 to 30 years old whom the researcher personally knows.

Moreover, the names of the participants are not going to be mentioned . Thus, in analyzing the data, a capital, indicating the sex of the participant, has been substituted for each participant's name for ease of use and for increased anonymity.

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[1] A variety of Iraqi Arabic

6. Limits of the Study:

The focus in this study is on the linguistic (verbal) cues with the exclusion of the paralinguistic and/or nonverbal cues that are involved in conducting the phone calls. This is due to the fact that it is difficult to reach reliable conclusions about these cues.

7. Analytical Procedure:

The analytical procedure of this study is as follows:
1. Dividing the mobile phone calls into sequences depending on the topics raised.
2. Describing the sequences according to the type of the turn and exchange involved, together with giving transcribed extracts integrated with contextual notes taken.
3. Providing diagramatical representation of the structure of each exchange.

8. Mobile Telephone Conversation:

Schegloff (2002 cited in Kiss, 2003: 26) believes that while face-to-face conversations are a "continuing state of incipient talk", mobile telephones give us the "possibility of making perpetual contact". Kiss (2003: 26), however, contends that mobile telephone conversations differ immensely from telephone conversations on the landline. Apart from the differences in technology, portability and surroundings, the mobile telephone has changed our attitude to availability and conversation. For availability, it is not important anymore where a person is or what the person is doing. As for the difference in conversation, the situation, on the mobile telephone, has to be established and broken down every time one wants to talk to someone. This means, that a summon and an answer, identification and recognition and maybe even greetings have to be done every time a conversational action becomes relevant. Also, when the end of a conversational action has come, a closing has to shut the channel.

9. Love Topics and Lovers' Telephone Conversation :

Routledge (2010:6) believes that love talk is celebratory; it is pleasurable making both participants laugh. Unlike other talks, it has no particular income, i.e. it is not transmitting information as in making arrangements, but it is the transmission of feelings and for each participant to cause a physical effect on the other. Both of the participants laugh and each tells the other that their words are having an effect.

For Routledge (2010:5) lovers' telephone conversation is distinguished from other types of conversations in the occurrence of the expressions of feelings about the other co-participant and expressing a wish to be together.

Thus, one may make a distinction between lovers' expressions of feelings and the expression of one's feelings about other things. When one phones a friend, he/she may feel safe to disclose that he/she is really distressed to have, for example, a research refused by a teacher, but he/she probably will not say much about how he/she feels about that friend.

10. Data Analysis:
10.1 Starting a Conversation (The Opening Phase):

Rezazadeh (2009: 1) argues that the beginning of telephone conversation has received much attention in socioliguistics, pragmatics and conversation analysis. The reason behind this, as Schegloff (1986, cited in Rezazadeh, 2009: 1) states, is that, first, the openings are interactionally brief. Second, participants may use conversational strategies or routines to manage identification and recognition of one another. For his part, Schegloff (1968), describing private telephone conversation openings in American English, and Levinson (1983: 312) affirm that openings tend to have a relatively fixed structure, viz. an ordered set of four sequences of adjacency pairs[1] where participants go through in an automated manner:

1.The summon- answer sequence (i. e. the phone rings and the called's answers "hello")

Coulthard (1985: 89) states that conversations are opened with greetings. Exceptions to this are the telephone conversations, though the first turn often is a "hello". In addition, in face-to-face conversation, it is normal that the person, who wants to speak to another, speaks first. One of the unusual features of a telephone conversation is that the called speaks first. However, Schegloff (1968: 1076) claims that though the called is the first to speak, he/she does not actually have the first turn. In fact, the caller does make the first turn of the conversation through causing the telephone of the called to ring (the summon).

The summon opens the channel for the conversation. Opening the channel needs the participation of both parties. For this, the summon is the first part of the adjacency pair "summon-answer". The use of a summon is to get the attention of a person.[2] By answering the summon, the called indicates that he/she is listening and the channel is open. This also explains why the

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[1] They are two related utterances which are produced successively by different speakers. They are ordered in that the first must belong to the class of first pair parts and the second to the class of second pair parts (Tehrani and Yeganeh, 1999: 4). Further reading see: Levinson (1983) and Coulthard (1985).

[2] In face-to-face conversation, it can have the forms of an address such as "Mummy?", courtesy phrases or bodily movements such as a tap on the shoulder (Levinson 1983: 310).
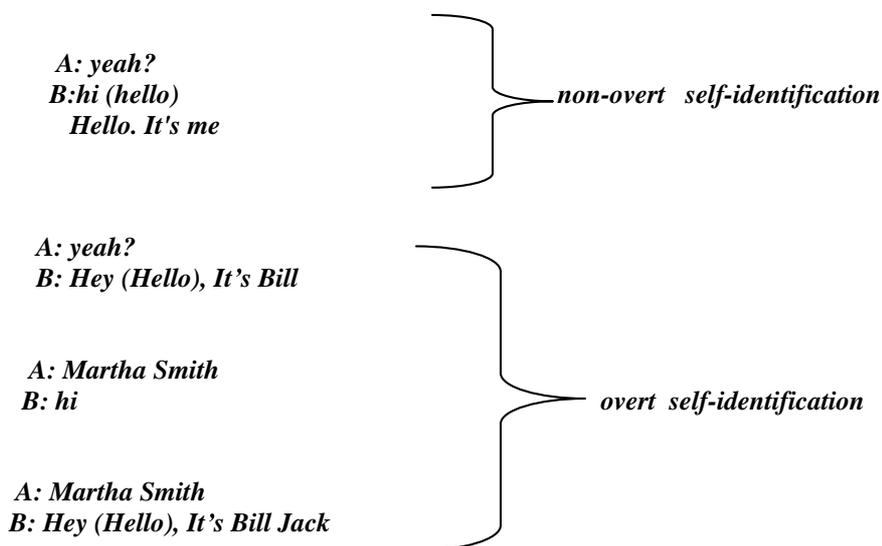
first turn of the called often is, for instance a "yeah". It corresponds to a normal answer to a summon in face-to-face conversation (Schegloff, 1968: 1076).

2. The identification and/or recognition sequence (i.e. participants show each other's recognition of the other)

e.g. Hello John?/ Yeah

e.g. Bill/ Hey Sally

The telephone does not provide visual ground for identification and recognition as found in face-to-face conversation. Thus, the caller and called have to identify and recognise themselves so that the conversation can begin. Levinson (1983: 311) points out that two techniques are used to achieve recognition: *non-overt self-identification* and *overt self-identification*. The former is mostly used among people who know each other well like family-members or friends. As a basis for recognition, one offers a short *voice-quality sample*. Thus, the called has the option to perform non-overt self-identification by answering the telephone with a simple answer to the summon without any further identification, without knowing who is calling. As for the caller, he/she usually knows whom he/she is calling and in which relation he/she stands to the called. Therefore, he/she can decide whether to use non-overt self-identification or not before the called answers. As for the overt self-identification, it is mostly done among acquaintances or in business contexts, when a recognition by a voice-quality sample is improbable. Both participants have the option to use this kind of identification. The called can give a station identification or his/her name on answering the telephone; the caller also can do so in the turn following this answer. Thus, there appears different ways for the opening of telephone conversations:

A: yeah?
B:hi (hello)
 Hello. It's me
  — *non-overt self-identification*

A: yeah?
B: Hey (Hello), It's Bill

A: Martha Smith
B: hi
  — *overt self-identification*

A: Martha Smith
B: Hey (Hello), It's Bill Jack

Levinson (1983: 311)

3. The exchange of greeting sequence

e.g. hi/ hi

Levinson (1983: 312) points out that reciprocal greetings can occur at the very beginning of the calls. For Ventola (1979:271), a greeting turn is an indication of the speaker's willingness to start the conversation. It also signifies the speaker's recognition of a previously established relationship. These greetings, Kiss (2003: 19) adds, are done in turns, which also fulfill other components of opening. However, a second part of the greeting sequence can be absent without being recognized as absent, when the caller uses his first turn to introduce the topic and thereby shortens the opening. Let's look at the following example cited from Levinson (1983: 312):

A: (rings)	(summon)
B: Hello	(answer) + (display for recognition)
A: Hi	(greetings 1st part)
	(claim that **A** has recognized **B**)
	(claim that **B** can recognize **A**)
B: Oh hi	(greetings 2nd part)
	(claim that **B** has recognized **A**)

In the previous example, **A** causes the telephone to ring and,with this action, he performs a summon. **B**'s answer to this summon is also his identification. **A** connects his identification with a greeting and confirms the recognition of **B**. Finally, **B** performs his greeting and at the same time confirms the recognition of **A**.

4. The "how are you" sequence [1]

e.g. How are you?

A'm all right. How   are/about you?

Thus, as far as our data analysis is concerned, participants, in starting their conversation, may manipulate a formulaic strategy in the form of a greeting-greeting sequence as in the following excerpt:

F: /halaw/
(Hello)[2]

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[1] Or "inquiry sequence" in which each participant offers an initial inquiry about the

other (Coronel-Molina, 2012:3).

[2] When greeting each other, couples may include some diminutive address terms such as /halaw **ħubbi (ħabi:bi)**/ (hello, **babe(darling)** or /şabʔ:ħ ilxe:r **ħaj?:ti**/ (good morning, **honey**). This process has a vital role in expressing endearement or showing an emotive attitude since these diminutive terms are indicative of love,

> *M:/halaw/*
> *(Hello)*

It should be noticed that couples, in our study, start their conversation with the greeting sequence without going through the first two sequences that are outlined by Schegloff (1968). This is so because they know who on the phone is. Thus, the identification and recognition are already performed with the summon and do not have to be done again in the following sequences.

Sometimes, starting a conversation can be achieved through couples asking about the health and well-being of each other. That is, without even going through the third sequence outlined by Schegloff (1968). To do so is part of the Mosuli Arabic etiquette which requires the participants first inquire about the health and/ or activities of each others or of their family members. Therefore, at the beginning of a conversation, as long as the participants are asking about each others, one considers it to be part of the opening sequence. Once the topic changed, it is then the end of the greeting, regardless of whether or not participants later return to the discussion of family matters. This is clearly explained through:

> *M:/?aʃɔ:nki (?)/*
> *(How are you?)*
> *F: /?ilħamdilla/*
> *(God bless (Thanks Allah))*

Through the previous example, one can notice that the response denotes one's well-being and thanking Allah for the present state of affairs. This response is shared by all Arab community members and is bound to religious beliefs. Thus, this reply has cultural and religious roots which result in this conventionalized response.

However, there may appear a turn having a mixture of greeting plus couples asking about the health and well-being of each other which usually receives a single response as a second part. Let us look at the following excerpt:

> *M: / ṣab?:ħ ilxe:r (.) ?aʃɔ:nki (?)*
> *(Good morning. How are you?)*
> *F: /?ilħamdilla/*
> *(God bless (Thanks Allah))*

10-2- Maintenance of Conversation: Topic Talk (Turn-Taking System Phase):

After manipulating the greeting or the ' how are you' sequences, i.e. after inquiring about one another's health and well-being , the couples move

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care, affection, intimacy and a strong relation between the two participants, especially as the address term is suffixed by ' **i** ' , that is, the possessive pronoun **'my'.** The diminutives, however, may be placed before or after the greeting sequence.

one step forward to introduce the first topic. According to Schegloff (1986, cited in Rezazadeh, 2009:2), after identification and recognition are achieved and a set of 'how are yous' is exchanged, the caller usually introduces the first topic or the reason for the call.

This reason of the summon (call) is the first turn after the conversation's opening and the first turn of topic-talk. This is shown, as Coulthard (1985: 80) points out, by, for example "I just thought I could call you" if no specific reason for the call exists. For Levinson (1983: 313), the reason of the call is important, that is why, it is mentioned at the beginning of the topic-talk but it does not have to fit to any prior topics to achieve "topic fitting" or "topical coherence" since there are no prior topics (ibid).

Furthermore, the topic-talk of mobile telephone conversation tends to be short and very focused. This could be due to the costs of mobile telephone conversation, the portability or the quality of the connection (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973: 307). Longer conversations are, if possible, held by landline telephone. That is why, conversations on the mobile telephone are usually *monotopical*. On the landline, monotopical conversations are, for example, typical of business conversations. Monotopical conversations are not defined by having just one topic, but as having the expectations of the called to contain only one topic. If more than one topic is part of the conversation, the caller is expected to announce this at the beginning of the call (ibid).

In our study, topic-talk is realized through turns that appear together as adjacency pairs in the form of the initiation- response of an

exchange[1] . The analysis of the data shows that there are three types of exchanges for maintaining the conversation or for introducing the first and subsequent topics on the phone, viz. informative, elicitation (direct and indirect) and directive.

10.2.1 Informative Exchanges

It has been found that informative exchanges can have just an initiation. This is clearly presented in the following excerpt where the female proceeds by introducing the purpose of the call, viz. talking about a massage sent by her lover:

F: /qare:tu rris?:la laħ?it m?: qaʕattu/
(I read the message the moment I woke up)

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[1] Exchange refers to the transfer of the speaker role from one participant to another. Coulthard and Montgomery (1981: 99) define an exchange as " the unit concerned with negotiating the transmission of information".

However, it is not unfamiliar, in our study, to find samples of informative that can be followed by a response in the form of a clarification request as in the following excerpt where the male is talking about the weather:

> M: /ʔanʔ: le:bis tʃʔ:ke:t bas mit ʕad3d3ib ʔaʃɔ:n
>   ʕajjiɣsilu:n (!)
>   (I wear a jacket but I am impressed how they are washing!)
> F: /ʔaʃɔ:n (?)/
>   (What?)
> M: / mit ʕad3d3ib ʔaʃɔ:n ʕajjiɣsilu:n (!)/
> (I am impressed how they are washing!)

Informative exchanges can also be shown to have a response in the form of an evaluation. This is obviously found in the following excerpt in which the female is wondering about some guys who are washing the cars and the male evaluates what she mentions as a result:

> F: / ʔide:him ʕab?:lak qitʕit dam/
>   (Their hands could be just like a piece of blood)
> M: / wʔaʃɔ:n qitʕit dam (!) humma ħitti m?:jʈi:qu:n
>   jiħkɔ:n/
> (What a piece of blood! They are even unable to speak)

There are also other extracts where informative can be shown as having acknowledge[1] as in the following excerpt in which the male is informing the female of the number of times he has called :

> M: /x?:bartu θaθ ʔarbaʕ marr?:t/
>   (I called three or four times)
> F: / maʕɣif/
>   (I don't know)

Moreover, informative exchanges can be shown to have acknowledge plus a comment. This is clearly presented in the following excerpt where the male is talking about envy:

> M: / m?:quttu ʃe: bas ʔax?:f tiħsibi:n ɣ?:ħ ʔaħsidki/
>   (I didn't say anything but I am afraid that you think I'll envy you)
> F: /hmm/
>   (Mmm)
> / l?: m?: h?:ki? /
> (It is not like that)

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[1] Acknowledge shows that the intiation has been understood. It is realized as

/ maʕɣif/ (I don't know), /naʕam/ (yes; o.k.) and mm).

Nevertheless, informative exchanges, sometimes, can be followed by a surprise. The following excerpt, where the female is talking about how good her lover became in texting messages, clarifies this:

> **F: / ʃiɣit ʕid3bi bkit?:bt irras?:ʔil/**
> **(You become awesome in texting messages)**
> **M:/ ʔan?: (!!!)/**
> **(Me!!!)**

Informative exchanges may be followed by a reformulation. This is shown in the following extract in which the male reformulates what has been mentioned by his beloved talking about one of his friend as being miser to give just a missed call at midnight since the call at that time is cheap:

> **F: / huwwa baxi:l (,) bas min jʃi:ɣ niʃ ille:l(,) jrammiʃ/**
> **(He is miser, only when it becomes midnight, he gives a**
> **missed call)**
> **M: / l?: td3?:wbi:nu /**
> **(Don't answer him)**

The structure of the informative exchange is clearly presented in the following diagram:

Structure	Acts
IR	I = initiation: informative R=^response: clarification request / evaluation/ acknowledge (+comment) / surprise/ reformulation

Fig. 1: The Structure of Informative Exchange

10.2.2 Elicitation Exchanges
10.2.2.1 Direct Elicitation

It has been shown that direct elicitation could have just an initiation, (followed by a hypothetical response) as a kind of a rhetorical question. This is clearly presented in the following excerpt in which the male is talking about a certain person in his mind:

> **M:/ ʔaʃ jiṭi:q jiʕmal (?)/**
> **(What can he do?)**

However, the elicitative act may be preceded by another act, viz. a starter in the form of a short statement referring to a question occurring afterwards. This can be seen in the following exccerpt where the female is asking the male about the reason behind being suddenly silent:

> **F: / fad3?atan ʃiɣit ʃ? :mit (,)**

> *?aʃaku (?)*
> *(All of a sudden you became silent,*
> *what's up?)*

Nevertheless, elicitation can be followed by a response as in the following excerpt where the female is asking the male if he wants to go or not:

> *F: / ?axʔ:ʃ tɣi:d tɣɔ:ħ (?)/*
> *(I am afraid that you want to go?)*
> *M: /?e: ħubbi/*
> *(Oh yes, babe)*

Sometimes, the response may be followed by a comment as well. Let us look at the following excerpt where the male is talking about how he feels frozen for seeing his friends washing the cars:

> *F: / we:ṣabak (?) /*
> *(Where are you?)*
> *M: / ʕalbʔ:b(.) ʕajiɣsilu:n issajjʔ:rʔ:t wan?: md3ammad)*
> *(At the door. They are washing the cars and I feel frozen)*

Elicitation can also be shown to have a clarification request. As a result, the speaker repeats what he/she has already mentioned to avoid misunderstanding that might occur because of the mixing of two turns. This is obviously presented in the following excerpt where the male asks the female if she wants water or not:

> *M: / tɣi:di:n mʔ:j (,) ħabi:bi (?)/*
>   *(Do you want water, darling?)*
> *F: / ?aʃnu: (?)/*
>   *(What ?)*
> *M: / tɣi:di:n mʔ:j (?)/*
>   *(Do you want water?)*

There are also some cases where elicitation can be presented as having a topic shift instead of a response.[1] The following excerpt, in which the male is discussing the matter of being not informed earlier, explains this:

> *M: / ?aʃaʕmal ?i??: m?: tqilli:li ?ei ʃe: (?)/*
>   *(What shall I do if you don't tell me anything?)*

> *F: / ?assaʕ xalli:na (.) ?aʃilaxbʔ:r (?)/*
>   *(Now let us be out of this. What's up?)*

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[1] For Hammer et al (2012:1) topic shift includes either sequences in which the talk

 is separated by silence or sequences in which one talker is interrupted by the other.

Furthermore, elicitation may be followed by a surprise. This is clearly shown in the following extract where the male shows his surprise behind a question raised by his beloved of why he is bored:

> **F: / le:ʃ ?inta ḍajjid3 (?)/**
> **(Why are you bored?)**
> **M: / le:ʃ ḍajjid3 (!)/**
> **(Why I'm bored !!)**

The structure of the elicitation exchange is obviously presented in the following diagram:

Structure	Acts
IR	I = initiation: (starter +) elicitation. R = $^{\text{response}}$:$_{\text{response (+comment)}}$ /clarification request/ topic shift/ surprise.

Fig. 2: The Structure of Direct Elicitation Exchange

10.2.2.2 Indirect Elicitation

The data also shows that there is an indirect elicitation which can be followed by a verbal response. This is clearly shown in the following extract where the female asks her lover indirectly whether he was angry with her or not:

> **F: / ʕab?:li ?inta ziʕl?:n maʕ?:j/**
> **(I thought that you are angry with me)**
> **M: / l?: ħabi:bi (,) l /**
> **(No, darling, I'm not)**

Sometimes, the response to an indirect elicitation can be followed by a comment as well. Let us look at the following excerpt where the female responds to an indirect question raised by her lover in that he is wondering why she avoids envy:

> **M: / ?ax?:ʃ ?inti tx?:fi:n min ilhasad /**
> **(I'm afraid you are avoiding envy)**
> **F: / l?: (.) ?aħliflak bnu:r innabi muħammad/**
> **(No. I swear by the light of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him))**

The structure of the indirect elicitation exchange is presented in the following diagram:

Structure	Acts
IR	I = initiation: indirect elicitation. R = $^{response}_{\text{response (+comment)}}$

Fig. 3: The Structure of Indirect Elicitation Exchange

10.2.3 Directive Exchanges

It has been shown that directive can have just an initiation[1]. This can be presented in the following excerpt where the male is asking for a kiss:

M: / bu:si:ni/
(Kiss me)

Sometimes, there can appear a directive plus a comment. This is obviously presented in the following excerpt where the female heard someone calling her:

F: / ?inti?ir daqi:qa/
(Wait a minute)
/ jimkin ?abu:j ʕeiʂi:ħni/
(I think my Dad is calling me)

However, directive sometimes can be followed by a verbal react which is clear in the following excerpt in which the male asks the female to wait:

M: / bas laħ?a (,) ħabi:bi/
(Just a moment, darling)
F: / ?e:/
(O.K)

Directive can also be presented as having a react with a comment. Let us look at the following excerpt in which the female asks the male not to go far away:

F: / l?:tɣɔ:ħ bʕi:d/
(Don't go far away)
M: / l?:/
(No)
/ bas li:be:t ʂadi:qi wiħtim?:l ɣ?:ħ ?aɣɔ:ħ
ʕad3d3?:miʕa/
(Only to my friend's house and perhaps I'll go to
university)

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[1] It should be mentioned that the initiation here is followed by a react but the react is realized non-verbally.

Directive sometimes can be presented as having a reformulation. Let us look at the following excerpt where the female is talking about a certain message sent by the male:

> **F: / ?i??akkar ?ei ris?:la baʕaθta ilbi:ħa/**
> ***(Remember which message you sent yesterday)***
> **M: / ʕalamu:d m?:k?:n ʕindi ʃaħin (?)/**
> ***(Is it about that I have no recharge?)***

The structure of the directive exchange is obviously presented in the following diagram:

Structure	Acts
IR	I = initiation : directive (+ comment) R = ^{response} : react (+ comment) /reformulation

Fig 4: The Structure of Directive Exchange

10. 3 Terminating a Conversation:
10.3.1 Pre-Closing Phase (Leave- Taking Turns):

A conversation cannot be regarded as being closed just by speaking no more or, in the case of telephone conversation, by hanging up. The turn-taking system has to be overruled to close a conversation so that the non-verbalization of a speaker is not considered a silence. This has to be achieved simultaneously by both participants so that no party expects the other to speak anymore (Levinson, 1983: 324).

Topic-talk can be closed by the use of a pre-closing or passing turn. Hence, a pre-closing is a shift from topic-talk into the phase of closing. That is, the closing has to be prepared by this pre-closing (passing) turn. The other speaker can use the possibility of this passing turn to introduce a new topic but if the passing turn is answered with another passing turn by the other speaker, the topic can be regarded as closed. At this place, the performer of the first passing turn can either choose to introduce a new topic him-/herself or, if he has nothing more to contribute to the conversation, introduce a terminal exchange. However, the way of introducing a new topic after performing a passing turn is dispreferred. The reason for this is that a passing turn is the point of a *possible pre-closing*. The other speaker can take up the possibility of such possible pre-closing to either decline this if he/she has more to contribute to the conversation by introducing a new topic or accept it. In the case of acceptance, the passing turn is replied with another passing turn (Levinson, 1983: 324).

It should be mentioned that, as far as the present study is concerned, closings are somehow longer than opening. This goes in agreement with what

Schegloff and Sacks (1973) proposed. Thus, before ending the conversation completely, there are various types of pre- closing turns or verbal cues (or initiation of the closing sequence (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973). These turns indicate the participants' desire to terminate the conversation. They are divided according to their contents into five types[1]. Thus, the pre- closing turn may contain reasons for ending the conversation because the called might not have time to talk on the phone or the time of the call might be inconvenient. Kiss (2003: 37) argues that the conversation might go on for a long time. In such a case, special techniques are used to end the conversation. Such techniques are referred to as "restricted techniques" because their form depends on the performer. A possibility for a called to end a conversation by such techniques is for example when he/she says *"This is costing you a lot of money"*. With this, the called implies that he/she does not wish to continue the conversation but without looking rude. The caller in contrast can refer to his/her disturbing the called with the call. Here, topics from the beginning of the call can be used, for example a caller might say "*I will let you go back to wash the dishes"* since the called said at the beginning of the call that he/she was doing so when the caller called (ibid). This can be clarified in our study through the following excerpt where the female wishes to end the call with her lover lest someone doubts her:

> *F: / ɣada ɣ?:ħ nkammil ħaki:na (.) m?:ti:q ?a?al ?akθaɣ*
>
> *le:n m?:ɣi:d ?ei ?aħad jʃik bijji/*
>
> *(Tomorrow we'll continue our talk. I can't stay anymore*
>
> *because I don't want anyone doubts me)*

Second, the pre-closing turn may reflect the speaker's concern about the other person's welfare after leaving. This is obviously presented in the following excerpt:

> *M: / di:rib?:lki ʕala nafiski/*
>
> *(Take care)*

Third, the pre-closing turn may contain a reference to future resumption of the conversation as in the following excerpt:

> *F: / min ?aqʕid (,) ɣ?:ħ ?axabirak/*

---

[1] In fact, in having such a division, we are following Laver (1975, cited in James,1980:134) where he calls these types " leave-taking turns".

(When I wake up, I'll call you)

Fourth, the pre-closing may involve a turn which shows the speaker's opinion about the conversation. Let us look at the following:

M: / ħilu ?abqa maʕ?:ki/
(It is nice staying with you)

Finally, the pre-closing turn may contain a reference to mutual acquaintance. This can be shown through:

M: / salmi:li ʕala ?ixitki/

(Say hello to your sister)

10.3.2 Closing Phase (Goodbye Turns):

This phase involves turns that terminate the mobile telephone conversation completely indicating that participants have nothing more to add. Like the whole mobile telephone conversation, the closings also tend to be short. With the utterance of the second passing turn, the possible pre-closing becomes a *pre-closing* and the closing of the conversation becomes immediately relevant. Though closings, usually, occur at the end of a topic, Coulthard (1985: 90) believes that this can not be considered a sufficient characterization for their place since conversations are not necessarily closed after the first closed topic. But a closing phase is "not a place for new things to come up" (Sacks & Schegloff 1973: 319); thus, when a new topic does come up, it is marked.

Kiss (2003: 38) believes that the closings of conversation are complicated, because both participants have to arrive simultaneously at a point where the conversation is considered closed. For Levinson (1983: 324), they are realized by the exchange of dismissals such as "*bye*; *see you"*, etc.. The first uttered dismissal announces imminent closure and the second part secures it. Hence, they are "goodbye" turns where the first part of a terminal exchange is replied to by the other participant with a second part of terminal exchange. Such kind of turns are very short and include, in our study, examples like: */ bai/* (**good) bye),** */maʕa ssal? :mi/* (**safety be with you),** */?alwad?:ʕ /* (**Farewell to you),** */?aḷḷa jiħrisak/* (**Godspeed)** etc.

11. Conclusions:

The present study investigates the interactional behaviour in some mobile telephone conversations among Mosuli Arabic dated couples. For the opening phase, it supports Schegloff's assertions of certain conversational universals across languages. Couples go through the norms of telephone conversation opening and perform certain strategies before talking about the

reason for the call or topic-talk. That is, the standard opening sequences identified by Schegloff recur constantly in the conversations. The only difference is that the first two sequences do not occur since couples know each other well. Hence, they use a formulaic pattern of greeting- greeting sequence. Moreover, they may start their conversation through (greeting +) asking about the health and well-being of each other. The 'optional' greeting indicates the non-occurrence of the third sequence of the opening phase, sometimes, by couples. That is, without even going through the third sequence outlined by Schegloff (1968). This is considered to be a sign of intimacy and at the same time it is part of Mosuli Arabic etiquette that requires the participants first inquire about the health and/ or activities of each other. The response to this, in turn, is expressed through thanking Allah for the present state of affairs. This is bound to religious and cultural beliefs. As a result, the greeting and the 'how are you' sequences are the main and basic elements in the opening phase. Thus, intimate interpersonal relations shape the nature and design of couples' telephone openings.

After the greeting and inquiring about the health and well- being of one another, the couples talk about the reason for the call or move on to introduce some topics. These topics are somehow long and focused, a feature which could be different from other types of topics on mobile telephone conversation for people having no love relationship. Therefore, it has been found that the maintainance of couples' conversation involves three types of exchange, namely informative, elicitation (direct and indirect) and directive. All the types of exchanges contain the same structure, viz. IR (Initiation-Response). However, the realizations of each structure of these exchanges are different. Thus, the informative exchange is realized through 'informative' act as ' I ' which is a statement to provide a certain piece of information. The response to this statement is 'R' which is realized as clarification request/ evaluation/ acknowledge (+comment)/ surprise/ and reformulation. As for the direct elicitation exchange, it is realized through ' elicitation ' act as ' I ' which is a question for a fact or information. This question may be preceded by another act, viz. starter in the form of a short statement referring to a question occurring afterwards. The response to this eliciting act is ' R ' which is realized as response (+ comment)/clarification request/ topic shift/ and surprise. The indirect elicitation exchange is realized through ' indirect elicitation ' act as ' I ' which is a question for a fact or information. The response to this indirect eliciting act is ' R ' which is realized as response (+ comment). Finally, the directive exchange is realized through ' directive ' act as ' I ' which is an act that seeks to make the addressee perform verbal and nonverbal acts. This direct act may, sometimes, be followed by a comment. The response to this act, in turn, is ' R ' which is realized as react (+ comment) /reformulation.

As with the opening sequences, the same is true for the phases of closing sequences in that they go in line with what Schegloff identified. In addition, closings are somehow longer than openings, which is also in line with what Schegloff and Sacks (1973) proposed. Hence, there is a formulaic routine to closing a conversation which consists of a pre-closing + closing sequences. This reflects the fact that one can predict that it is difficult for couples to close down a conversation without a pre-closing turn. This pre-closing is a preparation for closing the topic completely. Thus, the couples draw on the shared rules of how to do closings. This implies the possibility of a much longer closing sequence than opening. In fact, there are several pre-closing turns before couples decide that they no longer have any new topics to discuss. The pre-closing turns are leave-taking turns and include reasonns for ending the call, the speaker's concern about the other person's welfare after leaving, a reference to future resumption of the conversation, the speaker's opinion about the conversation, and a reference to mutual acquaintance. As for the closing phase, it is very short and involves goodbye turns.

Furthermore, through their conversation, especially the greeting sequence, couples include some diminutive address terms suffixed by ' i ' (my). These terms express love, care and show strong relations between the couples.

As for the topics that the couples raised during their telephone conversations, it has been noticed that the couples exploit topics which allow them to dwell on things of longing, hope and bad luck. They manipulate expressions of showing feelings towards each others. They show each other sexual desire, love support, pride in each other and understanding of what the other suffers.

In contrast to the last three hypotheses, it has been found that females reveal more topics, whether love or other types of topics, than males . It seems that they are more openly enthusiastic and feel free to discuss love topics having the percentage 68.5% but males 31.5%. In addition, males avoid asking for things directly. They have resorted to indirect elicitation more than females. In fact, they avoid asking directly when they want to evaluate or give their opinions towards some important matters. Females, on the other hand, ask directly for not to be in opposition to their lovers and not to lose their relation as a result. Thus, in adopting direct elicitation, females have the percentage 55.5.% while males have 44.5 %. As for indirect elicitation, males have the percentage 67% whereas females have the percentage 33% .Finally, it seems that females have the highest proportion in resorting to directive with the percentage 55.5% while males have the percentage 44.5%, a percentage similar to the percentage gained in using direct elicitation.

12. Suggestions for Further Studies:

1. A further investigation is needed to show the effect of age and sex on turn-taking rules and features as whether or not there is a difference between normal telephone conversation of participants having different age and sex.

2. A study is needed to investigate how far mobile telephone conversation is different from that of landline or from face-to-face encounters.

3. One may need to find out whether or not the telephone conversation structure among dated couples is the same as that among relatives, friends, etc.

4. A further investigation may be done to study the (non-)overt self identification among participants and whether or not participants always identify themselves overtly, and whether some problems arise in using or not using these strategies by the caller and the called.

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Key to Phonemic Symbols

A- Consonants

/?/	**as in**	/?an?:/	(I)
/b/	**as in**	/barmi:l/	(barrel)
/t/	as in	/tam?:m/	(right)
/θ/	as in	/θal?:θa/	(three)
/d3/	as in	/d3ab?:n/	(coward)
/ħ/	as in	/ħali:b/	(milk)
/x/	as in	/xibiz/	(bread)
/d/	as in	/daktɔ:r/	(doctor)
/?/	as in	/?ahab/	(gold)
/r/	as in	/rabb/	(God)
/z/	as in	/zi:na/	(a girl's name)
/s/	as in	/sin/	(tooth)
/ʃ/	as in	/baʃʃa:r/	(a boy's name)
/ş/	as in	/şaħin/	(dish)
/ḍ/	as in	/wuḍu:?/	(ablution)
/ṭ/	as in	/ṭabil/	(drum)
/?/	as in	/?uhur/	(noon)
/ʕ/	as in	/ʕe:n/	(eye)
/γ/	as in	/γ?:?ib/	(absent)
/f/	as in	/filim/	(film)
/q/	as in	/qur??:n/	(Qur'an)
/k/	as in	/ku:b/	(cup)
/g/	as in	/jgu:l/	(he says)
/l/	as in	/ʕilik/	(gum)
/ḷ/	as in	/?aḷḷa:h/	(God)
/m/	as in	/?umm/	(mother)
/n/	as in	/n?:m/	(he slept)
/h/	as in	/huwa/	(he)
/w/	as in	/walad/	(boy)
/j/	as in	/ja?kul/	(he eats)

B- Vowels

i. Short Vowels

/a/	as in	/ ḍarab/	(he beats)
/i/	as in	/kit?:b/	(book)
/u/	as in	/qum/	(stand up)

ii. Long Vowels

/?:/	as in	/b?:b/	(door)
/a:/	as in	/na:r/	(fire)
/i:/	as in	/ saʕi:d/	(happy)
/u:/	as in	/banu:n/	(boys)
/ɔ:/	as in	/sɔ:m/	(fast)
/e:/	as in	/de:n/	(debt)

iii. Diphthongs

/aj/	as in	/ajḍan/	(too)
/aw/	as in	/hawl/	(year)
/ai/	as in	/hai/	(hi)

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