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## Analysis of Adjacency Pairs and Leech's Maxims in Kamala Harris's Interview

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تحليل أزواج التجاور ومبادئ ليتش في مقابلة كامالا هاريس

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### Abstract

The occurrence of adjacency pairs (Henceforth, Aps) in conversation arises from the structured nature of dialogue, where one speaker's utterance requires a response of a specific kind. These pairs can be classified into various types, such as question-answer, request-response, or accusation-defense. In political interviews, adjacency pairs play a crucial role in shaping discourse, influencing public perception, and managing face-threatening acts. This study analyzes adjacency pairs in Kamala Harris's interview who is Vice President. The interviewer is NBC News' Hallie Jackson, focusing on the preferred and dispreferred responses within the political discourse. A significant aspect of this analysis involves Leech's politeness maxims, particularly the modesty maxim, which governs self-presentation and face management in discourse. The study examines how Harris navigates adjacency pairs, particularly in response to politically sensitive questions, and whether her responses align with or violate Leech's maxims. The study hypothesizes that question-answer pairs dominate the interaction, followed by accusation-defense sequences. In addition to that there is a violation to all of Leech's maxims but with high rate to the modesty maxim. Furthermore, it is anticipated that preferred responses-those aligning with the interviewer's expected discourse norms appear more frequently than dispreferred ones. The findings verified the second hypothesis but it did not verify the first hypothesis, and this contributes to understanding how political figures strategically employ adjacency pairs and politeness strategies in media interactions. **Key Words:** Adjacency Pairs, Political Interviews, Pragmatics, Leech's Politeness Maxims, Face Management

المستخلص

ينشأ ظهور أزواج التجاور (من الآن فصاعدًا، Aps) في الحوار من طبيعة الحوار المنظمة، حيث يتطلب كلام أحد المتحدثين استجابة من نوع محدد. يمكن تصنيف هذه الأزواج إلى أنواع مختلفة، مثل سؤال-جواب، أو طلب-رد، أو اتهام-دفاع. في المقابلات السياسية، تلعب أزواج التجاور دورًا حاسمًا في تشكيل الخطاب، والتأثير على التصور العام، وإدارة الأفعال التي تُهدد الوجه. تُحلل هذه الدراسة أزواج التجاور في مقابلة كامالا هاريس، نائبة الرئيس. تُجري المقابلة هالي جاكسون من NBC News، مع التركيز على الاستجابات المفضلة وغير المفضلة في الخطاب السياسي. أحد الجوانب المهمة لهذا التحليل يتعلق بمبادئ ليتش في اللباقة، وخاصة مبدأ التواضع، الذي يُنظم أسلوب العرض المُقنع وإدارة الوجه في الخطاب. تدرس الدراسة كيفية تعامل هاريس مع أزواج التجاور، لا سيما في الرد على الأسئلة الحساسة سياسيًا، وما إذا كانت إجاباتها تتوافق مع مبادئ ليتش أم تنتهكها. تفترض الدراسة أن أزواج الأسئلة والأجوبة تهيمن على التفاعل، تليها تسلسلات الاتهام والدفاع. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، هناك انتهاك لجميع مبادئ ليتش، ولكن بمعدل أعلى لمبدأ التواضع. علاوة على ذلك، من المتوقع أن تظهر الإجابات المفضلة - تلك التي تتوافق مع معايير الخطاب المتوقعة للمحاور - بشكل أكثر تكرارًا من الإجابات غير المفضلة. أكدت النتائج صحة الفرضية الثانية، لكنها لم تثبت صحة الفرضية الأولى، وهذا يُساهم في فهم كيفية استخدام الشخصيات السياسية لأزواج التجاور واستراتيجيات التهذيب بشكل استراتيجي في التفاعلات الإعلامية. **الكلمات المفتاحية:** أزواج التجاور، المقابلات السياسية، التداولية، مبادئ التهذيب لليتش، إدارة الوجه

### 1-Introduction

Sacks and Schegloff (1974) (as cited in Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p. 327) assert that conversation is highly organized. They note that there are specific principles that govern the process of turn-taking in dialogue. Various types of APs, which are sequences or turns of two related elements in a speech between two or more than two individuals are apparent where each one of these elements requires the presence of the other, such as the presence of a question requires the presence of an answer. Sacks (1974) defines a conversation as comprising a sequence of at least two turns, with certain turns being more connected than others. He highlights a specific type of turn sequence referred to as APs. The initial component of a pair usually predicts the subsequent one: "A question typically leads to an answer" (Couthard, 1985, p. 69). In a political interview, several conventions and rules set it apart from other forms of conversation. Adhering to these conventions and rules give political interviews their unique structure. This research seeks to identify the types of APs present in **Vice President Kamala Harris's interview that was hold on Tuesday and the interviewer is NBC News' Hallie Jackson who met her at the Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C..** The second goal is to explore and describe these APs. The research aims to examine pragmatic dimensions of such pairs as they are, in most cases, utilized in political interviews. The maxims of Leech's especially the modesty maxim in this used in this type of communication. The research suggests that the major types of adjacency pairs found in the political interview under examination are questions, accusations, and blame, highlighting questions and accusations in particular. Furthermore, there are recognizable pragmatic features related to the use of these adjacency pairs, including the violation of Leech's politeness maxim.

**2. Adjacency Pairs** Yule (1996, p.77) suggests that APs are common configurations or sequences used in the structure of conversations. He describes English conversation as an interaction predominantly involving two or more individuals who take turns speaking. Typically, only one individual talks at any given moment, and there is often an effort to reduce silence between turns. When several participants attempt to speak at once, one usually stops talking. Speakers can effectively end their turns in various ways, such as by asking a question or pausing after concluding a syntactic unit like a phrase or sentence. Other participants can express their desire to speak in multiple ways; they might start to make brief sounds, often repeatedly, while the current speaker is speaking and frequently use body language or facial expressions to show their intention to take a turn (1996). Renkema (1993, p. 113) critiques the notion of 'adjacency pairs.' She contends that the designation of APs is not entirely precise. She observes that the elements of a pair are often not placed directly adjacent to one another. To illustrate her point, she offers the following example: (2) A: Can you let me know how to reach the mall? B: Do you notice that large sign? A: Yes B: You should make a left turn there. In this instance, the initial inquiry and its reply are interrupted by another sequence of question and answer. It seems that Renkema does not acknowledge the concept of 'insertion pair.' Furthermore, Renkema (1993) later mentions the term 'adjacency pair,' indicating that the idea of APs is an essential aspect of conversation. Crystal (1998, p. 118) emphasizes the importance of exchanges consisting of three parts, where a response is succeeded by feedback (F). He notes that such interactions are especially prevalent in educational settings. He presents the following example: (3) Teacher: Where were the arrows stored? (I) Student: In a specific type of box. (R) Teacher: Correct, in a box. (F) Some language scholars suggest substituting the term APs with 'conditional relevance.' Levinson (1983, p. 306) and Schegloff (1972, p. 363-4) endorse this notion. They contend that the relationship between the elements of APs is not derived from a rule of formation that mandates a question must receive an answer to be deemed valid discourse, but rather from the establishment of certain expectations that must be met. Levinson (1983) points out another concern regarding the concept of adjacency pairs. He asserts that if there isn't a limited or small number of second parts corresponding to any initial part, the concept will become meaningless. Levinson views language as a completed entity rather than an evolving system. Furthermore, he emphasizes the significance of 'APs' by stating: "However the importance of the notion is revived by the concept of preference organization" (1983: 307).

3. Categories of APs According to Cook (1989, p. 52), the responses to APs typically consist of two probable replies. A request is generally followed by either a refusal or an acceptance or In these situations, one response is favored because it appears or occurs more often, while the other is regarded as less desirable due to its infrequency. He illustrates this by presenting the following types of adjacency pairs which are ordered alphabetically by the researcher:

1. Accusation - Deflection Pair
2. Accusation - Denial Pair.
3. Accusation - Counterargument Pair
4. Accusation - Counterattack Pair
5. Agreeing-agreeing

6. Assertion - Contradiction Pair
- 7. Assessment-Agreement/Disagreement Pairs**
8. Assessment (evaluation- disagreement)
9. Challenge - Acknowledgment Pair.
10. Challenge - Counterchallenge Pair
11. Criticism - Reframing Pair
12. Doubt - Assurance Pair
13. Doubt - Confidence Pair
14. Hypothetical Criticism - Generalization Pair
15. Hypothetical Question - Avoidance Pair
16. Hypothetical Scenario - Dismissal Pair
17. Invitation - Deflection Pair
18. Invitation - Polite Rejection Pair
19. Offer - Acceptance Pair
20. Offer - Decline Pair
21. Offer - Neutral Response Pair
22. Offer - Rejection Pair
23. Question - Evasion Pair.
24. Question - Justification Pair
25. Question - Non-Answer Pair
26. Request - Clarification Pair
27. Request for Prediction - Avoidance Pair
28. Request - Refusal Pair
29. Statement - Disagreement Pair
30. Statement - Partial Agreement Pair.
31. Statement - Redirection Pair
32. Suggestion - Agreement Pair
33. Suggestion - Rejection Pair

Many speakers initiate dispreferred responses with a short pause, or use phrases like 'well' or 'you see', frequently offering an explanation or rationale for their reply. In this regard, Coulthard (1985, p. 69) identifies a category of first pair parts that includes Greetings, Questions, Challenges, Offers, Complaints, Requests, and Invitations. He observes that for some first pair parts, the corresponding second part is mutual (Greeting-Greeting), while for others, there is only one appropriate second (Question-Answer), and for a few, there are various alternatives (Complaint-Apology/Justification). This suggests that certain initial components of APs can accommodate either a) a single possible second part, or b) multiple possible second parts. APs that permit exclusively one potential second part can be categorized into two types: 1) reciprocal and 2) non-reciprocal. In addition to greeting-greeting, reciprocal pair parts may also include: leave taking-leave taking; thanking-thanking, etc. Non-reciprocal forms of adjacent pairs may include question-answer; among others. When analyzing adjacency pairs in terms of their structure, they can be divided into two categories: simple or complex. Simple pairs are made up of concise and clear utterances, whereas complex pairs contain longer utterances that include several actions and different types.

### 3. Insertion Sequence

As stated by Cook (1989, p. 53), it is possible for the second element of an adjacency pair to be delayed by another related question and response that ties into both the initial and subsequent parts. This occurrence is termed an insertion sequence. Nevertheless, speakers might sometimes shift to an entirely different topic before returning to the original conversation. This scenario is referred to as a side sequence. Both insertion sequences and side sequences emphasize the collaborative and negotiated aspects of dialogue. Schegloff (1968, p. 293) defines insertion and side sequences as segments of conversational activity that have their own structure but are entirely unrelated to the conversation in progress and are instead integrated into it. The term 'inserted' is employed because the initial conversation often resumes from where it left off, sometimes without any indication that an interruption occurred. Yule (1996, p. 78) defines an insertion sequence as one adjacency pair nested within another. Yule (1996) gives an example involving a request-accepting pair, where the request includes (Q1- A1) along with an insertion sequence consisting of a question-answer pair (Q2- A2) that appears to serve as a condition for accepting the request.

(6) Jean: Could you possibly mail this letter ? (This is a request not a question T1) Fred: Is there a stamp on it? (T2) Jean: Yeah. (T2) Fred: Okay. (T1= acceptance) (Ibid) The acceptance is delayed in the previously mentioned example, caused by the sequence of inserts, implies that not all initial parts necessarily receive the anticipated second parts from the speaker: the presence of this delay is always seen as significant. It also signifies the gap between expectations and what is delivered. The example below is provided by Merritt (1976, p. 333), illustrating a pair embedded within another, demonstrating the impact of insertion sequences on the flow of conversation.

(7) A: Can I get a bottle of Wine? (Q1) B: Your age is twenty-one? (Q2) A: No (A2)

B: No (A1) (1976) Schegloff (as cited in Coulthard, 1985, p.73) explains the rationale behind the use of insertion sequences, stating that a subsequent speaker produces not a second pair part but rather another first pair part, sometimes because they do not comprehend, wish to avoid commitment until gaining more information, or are simply delaying. According to Mey (1993, p.223), the use of insertion sequences is very important in specific situations. He points out that although the requirement for two utterances to be close together applies within the same conversation, there are cases where this closeness is not present, and the resulting overlap still maintains the flow of conversation. According to Jefferson (1972), as cited in Coulthard (1985, p. 75), there exists an embedded sequence that differs from Schegloff's insertion sequence, which he identifies as a 'side sequence.' Jefferson (1972) observes that conversations can sometimes be unexpectedly halted by a request for clarification, after which the discussion continues from the point at which it was interrupted. He suggests that the 'misapprehension sequence' consists of a three-part structure, which includes 'a type of statement, a type of misinterpretation, and a type of clarification.' Jefferson (1972: 76) states that the phrase 'insertion sequence' can be altered through 'repair,' which refers to the corrections made in response to issues that arise during a conversation. Wooten (1975) (as cited in Wardhaugh, 1986, p. 292) provides the following example to clarify the concept of insertion sequence:

“(9) Patient: I'm a nurse, but my husband prevents me from working. Therapist: How old are you? Patient: I'll be thirty-one this December. Therapist: What do you mean when you say he won't let you work?” The therapist's inquiry regarding the patient's age aims to clarify her statement about her husband restricting her from working. In this case, the therapist believes that at 31 years old, the patient should understand that she possesses more authority over her life than she appears willing to acknowledge. The debate over the terminology for these types of sequences seems never-ending, but the majority of linguists prefer the term "insertion sequence" to describe everything that is added or nested within APs (Wardhaugh, 1986, p. 292).

#### **4. Pre-Sequences**

Yule (1996, p. 67) suggests that the notion of face-saving can aid in comprehending how individuals engaged in dialogue grasp more than just the spoken words. Regarding politeness, the fundamental premise is that a person's face is often at risk when they need to achieve something that involves another individual. The highest risk appears to occur when the other party is placed in an uncomfortable situation. One method to mitigate this risk is to create an opportunity for the other to suspend the potentially hazardous action. For instance, when making a request, speakers frequently introduce what may be identified as a 'pre-request'. In essence, the speaker might provide an introduction to persuade the listener to accept what is desired (1996). Pre-sequences are conversational formats that foster cooperation in an impending turn sequence. By inviting collaboration, the pre-sequence ensures that upcoming exchanges proceed without face-threatening issues such as rejections or disagreements. As a result, pre-sequences help reduce the chances of dispreferred actions (like refusals and disagreements) and increase the likelihood of preferred responses in future interactions (Levinson, 1983, p. 89). Heritage (1985, p. 4) points out that pre-sequence objects serve as tools for clearing the ground, with the aim of verifying the appropriateness or relevance of expected actions such as delivering 'news' announcements, making requests, or extending invitations. In these situations, the risk of face-threatening rejections regarding activities proposed by the speaker is avoided through prior indications from the recipient that the activity may be seen as unsuitable, irrelevant, impractical, unwanted, or carrying a similar sentiment (1985).

#### **5. Pragmatics**

Yule (1996b, p.127) emphasizes the necessity of distinguishing between the linguistic meaning and the actual intention of the speaker. This distinction is both fascinating and impactful, as it includes aspects of meaning that are not limited to the meanings of linguistic expressions, but instead arise from how a speaker adapts these expressions while taking certain contextual conditions into account. The first type of meaning pertains strictly to the linguistic expression itself. Yule (1996: 3) also points out that the social distance between speakers plays a crucial role in shaping their communication. He suggests that, depending on how close or distant they feel from

the listener, speakers assess the level of information that needs to be shared. Pragmatics is concerned with how this relative distance is articulated. Blakemore (1987, p.11) mentions that semantics and pragmatics appear to address the concept of meaning but differ in their approach to it. Semantics is concerned with the truth conditions of an utterance independent of the context in which it occurs, while pragmatics examines the aspects of meaning that are linked to the language user's intentions.

## 6. Research Methodology

The researchers address two issues, namely the frequency of adjacency pairs and the infringement of Leech's modesty maxim in a political interview featuring **Kamala Harris**. Consequently, the various types of adjacency pairs identified by Cook (1989) are examined in detail. Leech's politeness maxims are explained, though the primary emphasis is on the modesty maxim, which is central to this investigation. A political interview was selected as it offers a rich context where the study's issues can be prominently observed. The interviewee is **Kamala Harris**, known for her distinctive style on social media. The analysis of adjacency pairs and Leech's politeness maxims cannot be undertaken without discussing the overall structure of conversation. Since the nature of this study is deeply rooted in pragmatics, the study will adopt a qualitative approach supported by tables and percentages that are obtained manually. The classification of adjacency pairs will be based on Cook (1989) and the examination of leech's maxims will be clarified depending on leech maxims (1983).

### 7.1 Leech's Model

Cruse (2000, p. 361) suggests that the cooperative principle (CP) helps to clarify the formation of implicature to some extent. However, there is a category of implicature, specifically those related to politeness, which are not addressed by this framework. This gap leads Leech to introduce an additional pragmatic principle, which he terms the politeness principle (PP), intended to work alongside the CP. Furthermore, Leech asserts that the investigation of politeness inherently involves the examination of social interaction and the appropriateness of specific behavioral modes according to socio-cultural contexts. Leech (1983, p. 132) categorizes the PP into several maxims. Six of them, the focus of the study, are paired as follow:

1. Tact Maxim
  - (a) Reduce the cost to others
  - (b) Increase the benefit to others.
2. Generosity Maxim [Gen, henceforth].
  - (a) Reduce the benefit to oneself
  - (b) Increase the cost to oneself.
3. Approbation Maxim
  - (a) Decrease the dispraise of others
  - (b) Emphasize compliments towards others.
4. Modesty Maxim
  - (a) Decrease self-praise.
  - (b) Increase self-criticism.
5. Agreement Maxim
  - (a) Reduce disagreement between oneself and others.
  - (b) Enhance agreement between oneself and others.
6. Sympathy Maxim
  - (a) Diminish hostility between oneself and others.
  - (b) Amplify empathy between oneself and others.
7. Maxim of Encouragement
8. Maxim of Obligation
9. Maxim of Clarity
10. Maxim of Approval
11. Maxim of Humility

The primary form of politeness in English-speaking culture is governed by the tact maxim. This maxim pertains to Searle's categories of directives and commissives within illocutions and can be evaluated on a 'cost-benefit scale,' as illustrated below:

1. Peel these potatoes
2. Hand me the newspaper
3. Sit down

4. Look at that
5. Enjoy your holiday
6. Have another sandwich

This scale moves from (cost to H, less polite ) to ( benefit to H, more polite)

### Adjacency Pairs Analysis

#### 1. Agreeing-agreeing

**JACKSON:** Thank you, Madam Vice President, for your time today.

**HARRIS:** I'm glad to be with you. Thank you.

**2. Assessment (evaluation- disagreement)****JACKSON:** "You look at some of the numbers on this, and our new NBC News poll shows that more voters think that the Biden administration policies have hurt them rather than help them... And I wonder, are the last four years an obstacle to you in this race?" **HARRIS:** "Here's how I look at it. First of all, let me be very clear, mine will not be a continuation of the Biden administration..."

#### 3. Offer - Acceptance Pair

**JACKSON:** "Would you consider offering an olive branch to Republicans?"

**HARRIS:** "I'm always open to working with those who want to move the country forward." Jackson extends an offer of bipartisan cooperation, and Harris responds positively but without commitment. This allows her to appear open-minded while avoiding any definitive stance.

#### 4. Suggestion - Rejection Pair

**JACKSON:** "Would you consider compromises on abortion rights to pass legislation?"

**HARRIS:** "I don't think we should be making concessions when we're talking about fundamental freedoms Jackson suggests a political compromise, but Harris firmly rejects it to emphasize her commitment to reproductive rights.

#### 5. Invitation - Deflection Pair

**JACKSON:** "Would you debate Trump directly?"**HARRIS:** "I am focused on speaking directly to the American people." Rather than accepting or declining, Harris deflects the invitation and shifts the focus to her campaign priorities.

#### 6. Question - Justification Pair

**JACKSON:** "Why do you think your economic plan is better?"**HARRIS:** "Economists have reviewed it and found that it will strengthen the economy. Harris justifies her position using expert validation, strengthening her argument with credibility.

#### 7. Accusation - Denial Pair

**JACKSON:** "Some say your campaign is struggling to connect with voters." **HARRIS:** "I strongly disagree. I'm traveling the country and hearing positive feedback Harris refutes the accusation by presenting her own perspective based on direct voter interactions.

#### 8. Request - Clarification Pair

**JACKSON:** "Can you clarify your stance on immigration reform?" **HARRIS:** "Absolutely. My plan includes securing the border while protecting immigrant rights." Harris acknowledges the request and provides a clear, structured response, demonstrating transparency.

#### 9. Assertion - Contradiction Pair

**JACKSON:** "Trump's policies have helped the economy." **HARRIS:** "His policies have only benefited the wealthy, not working-class Americans. Harris directly contradicts the assertion, offering an alternative perspective.

#### 10. Hypothetical Question - Avoidance Pair

**JACKSON:** "If Trump wins, what will be your response?" **HARRIS:** "I am focused on winning this election and delivering for the American people." Harris avoids speculation and keeps the focus on her campaign.

#### 11. Offer - Rejection Pair

**JACKSON:** "Would you consider pardoning Trump if convicted?" **HARRIS:** "I'm not engaging in hypotheticals." Harris refuses to engage, maintaining political neutrality.

#### 12. Doubt - Assurance Pair

**JACKSON:** "Polls show you're trailing in key states. Are you concerned?" **HARRIS:** "We are confident in our message, and I believe voters will respond positively." Harris reassures confidence without engaging in negative discourse.

#### 13. Accusation - Counterargument Pair

JACKSON: "Your administration hasn't done enough on healthcare." HARRIS: "We have expanded healthcare access and reduced prescription drug costs." Harris refutes criticism by citing specific achievements.

**14. Suggestion - Agreement Pair**

JACKSON: "Would more investment in education help the economy?" HARRIS: "Absolutely. That's why I'm committed to funding public schools." Harris agrees and expands upon the suggestion to reinforce her position.

**15. Request - Refusal Pair**

JACKSON: "Will you release more campaign financial details?" HARRIS: "We have already been fully transparent." Harris indirectly refuses the request by asserting previous transparency.

**16. Challenge - Counterchallenge Pair**

JACKSON: "Some argue Trump's tax plan is more effective than yours." HARRIS: "Independent economists disagree and say my plan benefits the middle class." Harris counters by appealing to expert analysis rather than direct debate.

**17. Statement - Redirection Pair**

JACKSON: "Critics say you haven't done enough on climate change." HARRIS: "We have made historic investments in clean energy and will continue to do so." Harris redirects the criticism by focusing on accomplishments.

**18. Question - Non-Answer Pair**

JACKSON: "Do you think sexism plays a role in your candidacy?" HARRIS: "I believe voters care about leadership and results." Harris avoids directly addressing sexism and instead refocuses on broader campaign themes.

**19. Hypothetical Scenario - Dismissal Pair**

JACKSON: "If Congress remains Republican-controlled, how will you push your agenda?" HARRIS: "I'm working to earn votes so we can enact real change." Instead of engaging with the hypothetical, Harris emphasizes voter mobilization.

**20. Offer - Decline Pair**

JACKSON: "Would you compromise on healthcare policy to pass a bipartisan bill?" HARRIS: "Healthcare is a right, not a privilege, and we must protect it." Harris declines the offer indirectly by reaffirming her position.

**21. Question - Evasion Pair**

JACKSON: "Would you consider Liz Cheney for a cabinet position?" HARRIS: "We're focused on assembling the best team possible for the country." Harris avoids a direct answer, keeping her options open.

**22. Invitation - Polite Rejection Pair**

JACKSON: "Would you like to respond to Trump's recent comments about you?" HARRIS: "I'm focused on my campaign and the issues that matter to Americans." Harris rejects the invitation to engage in a conflict, staying on message.

**23. Accusation - Counterattack Pair**

JACKSON: "Republicans say your tax plan will harm businesses." HARRIS: "What harms businesses is giving tax breaks to billionaires while small businesses struggle." Harris counters with an opposing argument rather than defending herself.

**24. Request for Prediction - Avoidance Pair**

JACKSON: "Do you think you will win this election?" HARRIS: "We are working hard every day to earn the trust of voters." Harris avoids making a definitive prediction, maintaining a diplomatic stance.

**25. Statement - Disagreement Pair**

JACKSON: "Some say you lack executive experience." HARRIS: "I have served as Attorney General and Vice President, tackling major national issues." Harris refutes the criticism by listing her qualifications.

**26. Criticism - Reframing Pair**

JACKSON: "Your policies have faced significant opposition." HARRIS: "That's because real change takes time, and we are committed to progress." Harris reframes opposition as part of a long-term commitment to change.

**27. Challenge - Acknowledgment Pair**

JACKSON: "The country is deeply divided. How do you plan to unite it?"

HARRIS: "I believe we have more in common than what separates us, and I will work to bring people together."

Harris acknowledges the issue but focuses on a unifying message instead of discussing division.

**28. Offer - Neutral Response Pair**

JACKSON: "Would you be willing to work with former Trump officials?" HARRIS: "I will work with anyone committed to strengthening America." Harris keeps her response neutral, neither accepting nor rejecting outright.

## 29. Accusation - Deflection Pair

JACKSON: "Your administration's policies have led to higher deficits." HARRIS: "We've made necessary investments in healthcare and education that benefit working families." Instead of addressing the deficit, Harris shifts the focus to policy benefits.

## 30. Doubt - Confidence Pair

JACKSON: "Do you worry about low youth voter turnout?" HARRIS: "Young people are engaged, and we're seeing incredible enthusiasm on the ground." Harris dismisses the doubt and replaces it with a confident statement.

## 31. Statement - Partial Agreement Pair

JACKSON: "Inflation is still affecting American families." HARRIS: "That's why I'm focused on reducing costs, but we've already made significant progress." Harris acknowledges the issue while subtly emphasizing achievements.

## 32. Hypothetical Criticism - Generalization Pair

JACKSON: "If your policies fail, what will you do?" HARRIS: "I am committed to delivering results for the American people, and that remains my priority." Harris avoids discussing failure and reinforces her commitment to success.

## 33. Assessment-Agreement/Disagreement Pairs

This occurs when one speaker makes an evaluation or judgment, and the other either agrees or disagrees.

**Example 1:** JACKSON: "Former President Trump leads you on this issue." HARRIS: "Well, when I'm out... I have to earn the vote." Jackson makes an **assessment** based on polling data. Harris **disagrees indirectly**, countering with anecdotal evidence and emphasizing voter outreach.

**Example 2:** JACKSON: "Some of your allies have suggested there's sexism at play."

HARRIS: "Let me just tell you something, you've come to my events, and you will see there are men and women at those events." Jackson **assesses** that sexism might be influencing the election. Harris **avoids confirming or denying**, shifting focus to **diversity in her campaign events**. The following table shows the occurrence of each

APS Table 1: Data based on the adjacency pairs analysis

| Type of Adjacency Pair               | Frequency |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| Agreeing-agreeing                    | 1         |
| Assessment (evaluation-disagreement) | 3         |
| Offer                                | 4         |
| Suggestion                           | 3         |
| Invitation                           | 3         |
| Question                             | 6         |
| Challenges                           | 3         |
| Assertion                            | 2         |
| Accusation                           | 6         |
| Statements                           | 5         |
| Assessment                           | 2         |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>38</b> |

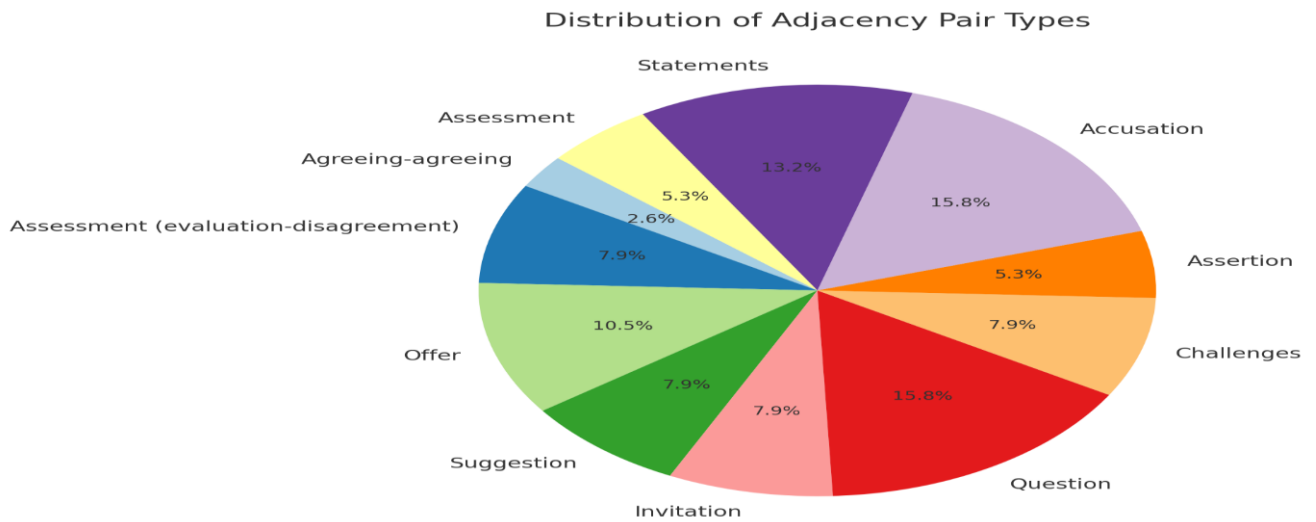


Figure 1: Pie-plot for the distribution of adjacency pair types

### Leech's Maxims Analysis

#### 1. Maxim of Tact

HARRIS: "I respect all viewpoints, but my focus is on policies that benefit all Americans."

Harris tactfully acknowledges differing opinions while reinforcing her policy goals.

#### 2. Maxim of Generosity

HARRIS: "This campaign is not about me. It's about the people and their future."

Harris shifts attention away from herself and emphasizes public interest, aligning with generosity.

#### 3. Maxim of Sympathy

HARRIS: "I understand the struggles families face, and I will fight for them."

By showing empathy, Harris strengthens her connection with voters.

#### 4. Maxim of Agreement

HARRIS: "We all want a strong economy and a secure future, regardless of party."

Harris finds common ground to reduce political polarization.

#### 5. Maxim of Modesty

HARRIS: "I have had the privilege of serving, and I continue to learn every day."

She downplays her achievements, making her response more relatable and humble.

#### 6. Maxim of Encouragement

HARRIS: "Together, we can build a future where everyone thrives."

Harris encourages unity and optimism among voters.

#### 7. Maxim of Obligation

HARRIS: "I owe it to the American people to be transparent about my policies."

By emphasizing duty and responsibility, Harris enhances credibility.

#### 8. Maxim of Clarity

HARRIS: "My tax plan will lower costs for middle-class families by increasing credits and reducing burdens."

A structured explanation ensures accessibility and comprehension.

#### 9. Maxim of Approval

HARRIS: "President Biden has done remarkable work in strengthening our alliances."

By praising Biden, Harris maintains party unity and alignment.

#### 10. Maxim of Humility

HARRIS: "Leadership is about listening and learning, not just making decisions."

She presents herself as open to growth, making her leadership style more appealing.

### Conclusion

Through the up given analysis, it is evident that Kamala Harris employs various adjacency pairs and Leech's maxims to navigate political discourse effectively. Her strategic use of question-answer sequences is an evident that she is aware of the main objectives of the interview. She was able to answer the questions that imply accusations in their folds. She could dead with other types of adjacency pairs such as offers, suggestions, and challenges and this dealing allows her to maintain control over the conversation and reinforce her key messages.

Additionally, her application of politeness maxims—such as tact, sympathy, and generosity—helps in maintaining a positive and respectful tone, even in response to challenging or critical questions.

By analyzing these elements, we gain a deeper understanding of how political figures use linguistic strategies to shape public perception and engage with the electorate.

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