Gamst' Conversational Grammar

TABLE 1
Grammar Rules for Simply Dyadic Conversations

1) Conversation →   Encounter + Interaction + Departure
2) Encounter →   Greeting*[a] + [Inquiry][b] + (Situation + Relationship)[c]
3) Interaction →   Topic* + Topic Exchange*
4) Departure →   Abridgement + [Termination]

Selection Restriction Rules on the Content of the Conversation

1) Situation →   Time
                     Place
                     Occasion

2) Relationship →   Age
                     Sex
                     Status
                     Previous Interactions

3) Topic →   Interests
                     Needs
                     Concerns
                     Point of View

4) Reciprocity
    Instructions →   Dialogue will be of short duration
                     Few topics will emerge
                     Each topic will be relatively simple
                     Each utterance will be relatively short

[a]Asterisk (*) means the element may be repeated.
[b]Brackets [ ] mean the element may be optionally included in the grammatical surface and deep structure.
[c]Parentheses ( ) mean that no particular sequential order is implied.

FIG. 1. Example and structure of a simple dyadic conversation.