



Corrective feedback: Pragmatic exposures in EFL classroom interactions

Hieronimus Canggung Darong ^{a,1,*} Stanislaus Guna ^a

^a Universitas Katolik Indonesia Santu Paulus, Indonesia

¹ hieronimusdarong@gmail.com*

* corresponding author

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ABSTRACT

The questioning act is considered to be one of the most common and prominent features of classroom interactions. This analysis was proposed to reveal teachers' questioning acts serving as pragmatic exposures in their corrective feedback strategies as they interact with students in the classroom. Data were collected from two EFL teachers that conveniently observed so-called non-intrusive observation, taking notes, and audio-recording that was subsequently transcribed. Certain episodes obtained from transcription were chosen and scrutinized in light of how well they contributed to the aim of the study using Conversation Analysis (CA). As a result, this study has yielded important insights into what and how questions are. Through corrective feedback, teacher questions were not only regarded and associated with their pedagogical purposes but also with the pragmatic and social function depending on the context where and how they possibly appeared. Besides giving a contribution to the body of knowledge, the questioning act provides significance and brings solutions to problematic classroom interactions that most teachers might have in the class.



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1. Introduction

Being able to communicate involves both knowing what to say and how to express it. Delivering the intended message from the speaker to the hearer or among interlocutors requires the capability known as pragmatic competence. The ability to express meanings and intents through speech acts (such as requests, invitations, conflicts, and so forth) in an appropriate manner within a certain social and cultural framework of communication is known as pragmatic competence [1]. If one deviates from this path, it could be challenging to grasp the speaker's intended meaning. In research studies, the speech act has received the most attention as the principal problem. The studies considered to speech act as a pragmatic element from a variety of angles. Some studies examined the types and effects of instruction, activities, and how to teach the speech act [2]–[8]; the approach and evaluation of the speech act production strategy, which places an emphasis on pragmatic competence and pleasant emotions influencing its production [9]–[11]. The investigations showed that the context from which the interlocutors understand the meaning affects speech act formation. Other studies looked at the interaction between a particular strategy and various variables, including the gender of the interlocutors, their social and economic standing, the size of the class, and more [12]–[15]. In this regard, such relevant factors control how speech acts are produced during communication. On the other hand, in the context of instruction, students must improve their metapragmatic awareness and pragmatic skills by becoming more aware of the potential pragmatic implications of their language choices [16]. Cultural sensitivity, communicative proficiency, and a cultural-linguistics approach to foreign language instruction should all be used to achieve this awareness [17]. In the meantime, other studies advised educators to focus on the relationship between cognitive and emotional factors that influence classroom communication [18] and the impact of cross-cultural adaptability) [19].

In this respect, Couper *et.al* discovered that pragmatic instruction improved pragmatic competence [7]. A crucial element of communicative skill is pragmatic competence. Because language use differs depending on the context, learners must understand how to build their pragmatic language knowledge. As a result, effective pragmatic instruction, both explicit and implicit, is unquestionably required. It allows for the possibility of corrective feedback from which the pragmatic competence in question occur. The lesson might benefit learners by making use of the pragmatic norms that are accepted as being followed by relevant communities. Furthermore, in order to achieve speech act creation in the classroom, complicated and challenging pragmatic teaching principles require systematic principles of tasks and activities [20]. They rely on the offered pragmatic suggestions as a result. Obstacles to pragmatic output may result from improper and unnatural pragmatic input. Differently, participants are exposed to pragmatics in EFL contexts through a variety of input sources, ranging from the participants themselves such as teacher talk to the use of audio-visual devices and printed materials [21]. The fact that conversational engagement is considered as the process driving language development, particularly in the production of speech acts, is input itself.

The majority of the interactions in a classroom are managed by the teacher. The teacher also oversees the topic of discourse and controls turn-taking in the interactional [22]. Teachers' talks need to be conducted effectively and interactively in order for this to be realized. In this context, the structures of speech do not happen on their own. They are carried out sequentially and are completely intertwined [23]. The questioning act is one of the teacher talks that could give learners some ideas. The questioned inputs are also closely related to the corrective feedback that emerges during the dialogues. Teachers encourage pupils to talk and stimulate verbal interaction in the classroom by asking questions, regardless of whether their production is a single word, a sentence, or longer utterances in conversational patterns and in turn taking systems. So, one of the most useful pragmatic inputs in teachers' corrective feedback on students' language production during classroom interactions is the questioning act. However, this remains unexplored by previous studies. Therefore, this analysis was proposed to reveal teachers' questioning acts serving as pragmatic exposures in their corrective feedback strategies covering form and function as they interact with students in the classroom. In the context of classroom interactions, examining teacher questions that serve as pragmatic inputs (exposures) is good for pragmatic knowledge and practical pedagogical practice.

2. Pragmatic Input

The organization of the classroom, the inputs, and the opportunities offered to students were the subject of research investigations conducted in a classroom setting [24]. Opportunities are addressed through the interaction process that teachers and students participate in. In other words, a language classroom context is a learning environment where a teacher and students can come together for a predetermined amount of time in order to engage in learning. Both teachers and students can organize the language production that results from the inputs provided and the interaction organization controlled through interactions. Additionally, students should be aware of the linguistic and tactical choices available to them in a particular circumstance [4]. Learners must likely adapt to the situation as well as the form and function of the target language in order to interact pragmatically. Failure to do so could result in unwanted results as well as the treatment of the speaker in an unfavorable or unwelcome manner [19], [22]. Failure in this context can be divided into two groups: pragma-linguistic and sociolinguistic transfer. The former focuses on how learners decide which forms and methods to bring over from their L1 into their interlanguage. As such, pragma-linguistic competence is concerned with the speaker's capacity to extrapolate an utterance's communicative intent from its linguistic surface. Meanwhile, the latter is concerned with how different cultures view the significance of the internal and external background variables. It concerns the speaker's ability to modify speech act techniques in light of the sociocultural factors present in a communicative speech event [5], [9]. But even though it can be challenging to distinguish between these ideas in actual encounters, they are axiomatically connected and ought to be treated as one in the setting of the classroom.

Moving on, individuals who are interested in target language acquisition have extensively studied input as the key issue. The researchers' recognition of the learning process in the context of EFL throws light on the input source in classroom interactions. The teachers' talks in their interactions with students are primary sources of language inputs [25], [26]. To put students in an active role, relevant interactional characteristics like recast and clarification checks are strong to inviting students' responses in the meaning negotiation process, [27], [28]. As a result, teaching techniques may include providing input and encouraging the learners' language production [29]. In support of this claim,

Palma notes that recasts, metalinguistic explanation, elicitation, repetition, and clarification requests—which are frequently carried out through implicit and explicit feedback—are the most common types of corrective strategies used in the meaning negotiation process [30]. In the meantime, it has been demonstrated by the results that pragmatic investigation in EFL classroom settings demonstrates the advantages of all pragmatic features that may be taught, whether doing so implicitly or overtly. Additionally, it's critical to provide learners with numerous opportunities to participate in conversations using a variety of suitable and context-based language production. Thus, in transferring the EFL classroom setting to pragmatic language development, instructors as the input source are crucial. To add, the quantity of input is dependent on the quick and immediate development of learners' fluency and lexicogrammar [28], [31]. To actualize this, teachers should provide students the chance to interact with one another and internalize what they are exposed to throughout their talks. The more students interact, the more input becomes graspable. However, learning may not occur if the input is not understandable in its context. Teachers and students should therefore be aware of the pragmatic rules that are inherent in the situation [12], [16], [24]. Thus, it is crucial for language teachers to take into account the adaptability of the context provided through pragmatic exposures when interacting with students.

The I + 1 hypothesis, which Krashen popularized, states that language acquisition can occur when learners are exposed to input with a structure that is beyond their existing level of language proficiency. In this regard, teacher talks, as the source of the input, must be able to expose students' language and must correspond to their degree of language competency. As a result, exposure in the EFL context is made through a variety of input sources, from the participants themselves such as teacher talks (feedback technique and questioning) to the employment of audio-visual equipment and printed materials, [21]. Thus, the input itself is seen as the driving force moving language development forward, especially in oral performance. Corrective feedback is an attempt to help learners in learning the target language. It should be constructed in such a way that learners are pushed to the current stage of learning level and helps teachers to realign the learning instruction. In addition, by means of corrective feedback, learners are exposed to the target language following the learning objectives. However, language exposure should be employed pragmatically; following the context of discourse moves during the instruction. Thus, teachers should consider the employment of corrective feedback following the context so-called pragmatic exposure. As a result, the focus of this study is largely on the pragmatic-feedback exposures used by English teachers while engaging with pupils.

3. Method

Two EFL teachers were conveniently chosen as the subjects of this descriptive qualitative study. The school board informed me that the two teachers were deserve to be the subject of the study. They have been teaching English for more than five years. Besides, they have been exposed to English and possessed a range of abilities and knowledge in it. The researcher made an observation as part of the data collection. In this regard, the technique employed for data collection was the passive observation, often known as non-intrusive observation. The researcher was merely there in the classroom to watch; he did not speak to the teacher or the students. The researcher took notes and recorded audio in order to obtain more comprehensive and reliable data. In this respect, to prevent shocking students and causing them to feel alarmed and uncomfortable, permission (both teacher and students) was requested to observe the session without carrying a camera before beginning to record their interactions. The observed classroom interactions were entirely transcribed using the conversation analysis convention, which was mostly based on Jefferson [32] and taken into account the predominate IRE/F interaction pattern in the classroom. The episodes that were picked and carefully examined after transcription were those that best served the study's objectives. Teacher questions were classified based on the corrective feedback framework provided by Mackey *et al* and [33], questioning types by [34] and the functions [35]. Data triangulation was done in order to account for the study's underlying biases and preconceptions. The results of comparing and cross-checking every piece of evidence were then taken into account.

4. Results and Discussion

It is necessary to present questioning as the pragmatic exposure, followed by the discussion. Following the IRF pattern used by the two EFL teachers in their interactions with their students, the exposure in question was examined. The use of the questioning act as one of the pragmatic exposures

in EFL classroom interactions was the main concern of this study. In this study, there are many things to do with questioning. Teachers can explain how things should be done and how they actually are, express feelings and attitudes, and convey information and any changes brought about by the questions. For example, a teacher's question "how is it going? This question might be interpreted as an inquiry into someone's condition or as a greeting expression. The effect of such a question might be an action done by an interlocutor, a response about his/her condition, an interlocutor's statement of the current condition, and a greeting response. Regarding this, pragmatics emphasizes certain requirements and guidelines of speakers' (teachers') intents, the wish for a message or outcome that must hold for a question to be employed in classroom interactions [36]–[39]. This means that it is unquestionably necessary to take into account both what is said (form, meaning, function, and how information is presented) and the context in which it is uttered. Putting it differently, what to do when asking a question is to take language and context into account. The questions must be answered linguistically and culturally in order to achieve the intended-desired goals. Furthermore, teacher questions have intentions beyond their literal meaning. Speech attitudes and speakers' views on what is said can both reveal intentions. By fact, the complex connections between these two are evident as the interpretation focuses primarily on the linguistic meaning and the context of the utterances [40].

In line with the aforementioned ideas, data in Table 1 demonstrates the use of teacher questions that take into account context and intentions. Standing on coding scheme offered by Mackey *et al* [41], the intentions in question were concerned with corrective feedback strategy in the form of morphosyntactic error, which appears as students incorrectly use tense (He goes to Surabaya yesterday), conjugation (they have good), particles (it is error), and word order (He always is late), phonological error (I need an *hauer* (*hour*) to go there), which typically indicates words mispronunciation, lexical error happens when a teacher misunderstands a learner's utterance. In addition, according to Ellis' kinds [42], the two EFL teachers mainly used clarification requests and explicit corrections instead of recasting, repetition, elicitation, and paralinguistic signal. These goals were carried out in accordance with the context in which the teachers posed the questions as the corrective feedback types. In this respect, the discourse moves and information exchanges that take place in their interactions with students are referred to the context.

Table 1. Pragmatic exposure of teacher questions

Teacher (T)	Exposure	Type	Form	Function
T1	CF	Display Referential Convergence Divergence	Morphosyntactic error phonological error semantic error, recast, repetition, elicitation, Lexical error, morphosyntactic error recast, repetition, elicitation, paralinguistic signal, clarification request, and explicit correction	understanding checks, activity managing questions, repair, and topic elaboration
T2	CF	Display Referential Convergence Divergence		understanding checks, activity managing questions, repair, and topic elaboration

T: teacher; T1: teacher 1; T2: teacher 2; CF: Corrective feedback

Further investigation using Conversation Analysis (CA) found that interactions were dominated by display or closed questions. The use of display questions was beneficial in terms of not only stimulating students' thought processes and ensuring that they understood, but also as an exposure to invite student verbal response, thereby helping them discursively construct the classroom talk, as they encountered certain criteria of the difficulty of discourse and syntactical complexity. This study supported earlier studies that found specific question types alter students' responses if they meet certain requirements for discourse level and questioning syntactic complexity. The questioning cognitively impacts the pragmatic inputs that the students' verbal response is exposed to [43]–[46]. This study discovered that contingency (What did you ask?), convergence-divergence (well, so you think he actually goes there- Why do you think the lady wanted to listen your story?, and syntactical form (What comes on your mind- do have an idea? were highly helpful in inviting student responses, carrying out discursive roles, and extending classroom discourse. First of all, the contingency discovered in this study supports earlier studies Boyd [34], Gan [47], Lam [48] and May [49] that revealed the importance of the contingency on previous speaker contribution as a feature of interactional competence and the need for teachers to take this into consideration when using questions. Second, similar to the first, the teacher questions were primarily convergent and

consistently evolved student contributions through display questions. Divergent questions, nevertheless, often lead to longer discourse.

In terms of function, this study found that teacher questions serve as knowledge checks, activity controlling inquiries, repair (addressing either comprehension or task completion issues), and, lastly, topic elaboration questions. Regarding the former, it is described as question like "Do you follow me?" and "Do you understand?" that are meant to check students' understanding. This question is frequently written as a Y/N question, which accepts either an affirmative or negative response. The teacher can provide new knowledge after getting the students' confirmation. If the understanding check yields a negative result, however, the teacher must repeat earlier instructions. Activity managing questions, or questions that distribute turn-taking in order to control the ongoing activity, make up the second sort of question found in this study. For example, Who can fill in the blank?, anything else? Others? fall into the category in question. Throughout the exercises, activity management questions were used in various sequences. The third category deals with repair questions; that is, questions that are concerned with the mechanism that addresses the need for clarification [39], [50]. Speaking, listening, and comprehension problems are common among conversational participants and are frequently resolved through repair sequences [51]. The transcript revealed two distinct forms of repair namely repair focusing on the teacher's difficulties in following students' conversation (do you mean *gone or gun?* and focusing on the students' difficulties in completing the utterance (No, I don't... *didn't* do it). Only when the students were actively participating in the exercise were both sorts of repair questions used. Most cases of repair initiation were detected in the third position, which is where the evaluation turn is typically placed (IRE). The repair initiation is of benefit to create students' opportunities to finish the repair, improve the clarity or ensure that the response complies with the given question. The fourth sort of inquiry is a topic elaboration question, which requests more information from the respondent on a previous subject. Furthermore, topic elaborations frequently involve referential questions for which the teacher may not be aware of the solution. Topic elaboration questions that serve as referential questions are preferred in classroom activities because they encourage learning and students' thinking level.

Then, the three basic categories of teacher questioning roles are diagnostic (line 2 of the second paragraph, What does he refer to?), instructional (What do you think?), and motivational (Why do you study English?) [52]. The first deals with in-class inquiries that let the teacher assess what the pupils already know, what they believe, and how they perceive the subject under discussion. Teachers are able to assess the state of students' thinking at that very time. The second category focuses on classroom exercises that encourage students to learn new content and connect it to what they already know. Engaging students in class and challenging their thinking is the final purpose. In this study, this function is carried out by teachers who call students' attention back to the lesson while allowing for debate. In keeping with the aforementioned category, the purpose of the teacher questions in this study is also to manage the structure-based transfer of speaking turns or privileges in conversation. As a result of the meaning negotiation process, previous research investigations have demonstrated that teachers used questions to make their students more engaged in the classroom discourse moves. They do this by utilizing interactional characteristics like recast and clarification checks [27], [28], [30]. In the meantime, the questions could be used to prompt learners' thought processes and act as a guide and scaffolding after the exchange of knowledge during dialogues [53]–[55]. As a result, the functions that serve several purposes or functions can be observed in both the context of an instant reaction and the overall discourse movements that take place during encounters. In conclusion, this study has provided a crucial understanding of what and how questions are functioned as pragmatic exposure in corrective feedback. This means that teacher questions had a pragmatic and social function as well, depending on the context in which and how they might have appeared, in addition to their instructional aims, as suggested by earlier studies [29], [56].

It's crucial to note that asking questions is a speaking act that has an impact on how information is organized. Questions must be based on the social norms and standards that regulate the connections between a teacher and students because it has multiple meanings; language forms alone are insufficient to identify their meaning. Additionally, by posing a question, a teacher seeks to obtain knowledge, convey a circumstance or experience, as well as exert or receive the students' influence depending on the situation (illocutionary acts). In addition, one of the most frequent and noticeable aspects of interactions in the classroom is the act of questioning. As such, this study supports earlier research that found teachers' questions are the most effective discourse move choice in English language classrooms [34], and that teacher talks are a fundamental technique that can be used to encourage

students' participation, thought, and language production [36], [57]. Furthermore, the teacher questions discovered in this study are focused on turn-taking and sequence structuring, which may alter the types of contributions made by students in interactions. As such, this study is consistent with Chappell [54] and Kapellidi [58] highlighting that teachers should be aware of the many sorts of conversations taking place in their lessons and should manage them strategically and effectively in terms of mood and the exchange of goods. In this sense, teacher inquiries are seen as practical exposures that help students achieve the stated goals through various forms of corrective feedback.

5. Conclusion

As a matter of fact, classroom interaction is a social activity and the classroom is viewed as a mini-community with its own set of customs, traditions, and rules. In this situation, the study of inquiry as a pragmatic exposure is advantageous and encouraging for the development of interaction quality. One can see clearly what is going on in it. Along with adding to the body of knowledge, this observational study may also have some implications for language teaching and offer solutions to challenging classroom interactions that most teachers may encounter. Teachers should consider whether or not the questions they raise result in interactive interactions, which in turn create a positive learning environment along with good input and output. As such, teacher questions should be constructed in such a way that they functioned as exposures pragmatically. Since corrective feedback is carried out through questioning, teachers should consider its function in context following the discourse moves occurring in classroom interactions. The commodity exchanges that likely appear are logical consequences of corrective feedback that functioned as pragmatic exposures. However, it is insufficient to examine discourse moves along with the commodity exchanges in question from the perspective of corrective feedback's function as pragmatic exposure. There might be other features such as teacher's talk, types and syntactical form of questioning, students learning level. These features are challenging areas for further studies.

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