

# INSTRUCTION GIVING IN EFL CLASSES FROM A CONVERSATION ANALYSIS APPROACH: A CASE STUDY

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## **Abstract**

This research is embedded in the context of tertiary education in Vietnam where the instruction giving stage is assessed. Drawing on a Conversation Analysis perspective, the study aims to reveal teachers' instructional patterns in three EFL classes of freshmen, thus not only maximizing the interactional structures that can enhance classroom communication but also minimizing the problems that can hinder teacher-student exchange. The findings show that two main instructional styles that can be classified from the inspected discourse namely, interactive instruction containing students' contribution and monologue-type instruction with little learners' involvement. Positive and negative aspects implied from the instruction giving phase that impact on classroom language are also enumerated prior to suggesting implications for educators to implement.

**Keywords:** *instruction giving, conversation analysis, classroom interaction.*

## **Background of the study**

In a teaching and learning environment, there are many factors that can exert influences on classroom interaction, among which instruction giving is seemingly the pivotal element towards the success of a lesson (Scrivener, 2011). By mastering this skill, teachers are likely to regulate the classroom management effectively, thus improving the quality of the pedagogy in class. However, for non-native teachers, their English language proficiency can, to some extent, have impacts on their classroom language. Consequently, research into how foreign teachers deliver their classroom discourse in EFL settings, in particular with classroom instruction, would be of significant importance for both teachers' self-reflective practice and trainee teachers' application.

To examine how instruction is given in educational settings, Conversation Analysis (CA) has risen to be an effective tool in recent years. This approach is capable of explaining “social organization of natural language-in-use” (Button & Lee, 1987, p.2), which conversationalists interpret and follow. Using authentic language, CA has the ability to provide an understanding on how instruction giving is constructed in particular points of interaction via the speeches and actions of the participants, through which interpretations of these talks and actions can be made.

Currently, in tertiary education, specifically, investigating instruction giving in classroom interaction from Conversation Analysis has not obtained much attention from researchers in Vietnam contexts. Hence, this study not only offers scholars an overview into how non-native teachers, in this case – Vietnamese teachers, deliver instructions in EFL classes in Vietnam but also suggests implications for teachers to implement.

Accordingly, this study seeks answer to the following research questions:

1. How do non-native teachers give instructions in EFL classes of freshmen in a university in Vietnam?
2. How does the instruction giving of non-native teachers influence classroom interaction?

## **Literature review**

### **Instruction giving in EFL classrooms**

Concerning classroom interaction, instruction giving is among the methods to ensure the efficiency of a lesson. According to Margaretha (2015), giving instruction is necessary when a task is assigned for students; prior to working on the task, students need to fully understand what they are going to do; otherwise the activity will be a failure. Therefore, the ultimate goal of giving instruction is to inform students of what they need to do ahead of participating in an activity.

In order to deliver a good instruction, Sowell (2017) suggests teachers should follow three stages. In the first phase – preparation, when designing lesson plans, teachers can write out the instruction and practice giving it (Woodberry and Aldrich, 2000). The language for instruction should be simple such as “imperatives and short sentences” (Sowell, 2017, p.14) and below students’ present level (Scrivener, 2012). In the next stage – delivery, it is advised that teachers should complete group arrangements (if any) and obtain students’ attention

before giving in-class instruction (Sowell, 2017). According to Sowell (2017), while delivering, teachers are recommended to articulate clearly, demonstrate the instruction, use body language, facial expression or visuals to facilitate meaning, divide long instructions into shorter ones, ask concept-check questions and allocate short pauses to give students time to comprehend (Proctor, 2014; Scrivener, 2012). Finally, in the last stage, having delivered the instruction, it is the teacher's job to monitor students' activities to ensure the task is carried out as anticipated (Sowell, 2017). This study will focus on the delivery stage.

### **Conversation Analysis**

CA, as a "research discipline" (Masats, 2017, p.323), investigates the data based on the following principles. Firstly, interaction is not as spontaneous as people might believe, but is "systematically organized, deeply ordered and methodic" (Seedhouse, 2004, p.14) in which conversation analysts are required to reveal how the conversation is structured and sequenced. Secondly, interaction, as it is "context-shaped" (Seedhouse, 2004, p.14), is put in a setting where the conversation takes place; therefore, it is impossible to remove the element of context out of the analysis. In addition, participants constantly add new exchanges to create a conversation, leading to the Seedhouse's idea (2014, p.14) that these contributions are "context-renewing". Thirdly, insignificant as the details might be namely silences, pauses, whispers and so on, transcripts must be made as accurately as possible (Masats, 2007). Lastly, no assumptions regarding the data should be made prior to the implementation of investigating the records. In other words, CA scholars "engage in unmotivated looking in data sessions" (Atkinson, 2011, p.124).

In Conversation Analysis, turn taking is apparently a key feature in which participants are aware of their role when to take the floor (Barraja-Rohan, 2011). Each conversation is a series of turns made up of units that are coined as turn constructional units (TCU). Liddicoat (2007, p.54) likens TCU to "grammatical units namely words, phrases, clauses and sentences". When a TCU is completed, it is likely to be followed by Transition Relevance Place (TRP) – points where a speaker's talk is complete and speaker change could be appropriate. This is when a turn takes place. The norms applied for TRPs can be illustrated as follows:

**Table 1.****Norms applied during TRPs (Summarized based on Seedhouse, 2004, p.28)**

|                    |                             |                                      |   |  |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Situation 1</b> | Speaker A selects Speaker B | Speaker A stops                      | Speaker B starts                          | Note: In the TRP where Speaker A stops talking and selects the particular Speaker B to continue the conversation, Speaker B has the right and obligation to speak.                         |
| <b>Situation 2</b> | Speaker A selects no one    | Speaker A stops                      | Speaker B, Speaker C, and so on can start | Note: In the TRP where Speaker A transfers the turn to the next speaker but no one is selected, whoever speaks first gains the right to speak.   |
| <b>Situation 3</b> | Speaker A selects no one    | Speaker A stops and no one continues | Speaker A may continue the turn           | Note: In the TRP when Speaker A stops, no one is selected and no one actually continues, Speaker A may (but need not to) continue until others speak or the conversation comes to the end. |

These principles are also applied in the giving instruction phase or what Seedhouse (2004, p.133) called “procedural context”. In this context, the teacher aims to convey how the procedure of to-be-accomplished activities in classroom should be implemented, which puts the teacher “in little danger of being interrupted” (Seedhouse, 2004, p.133). There are also cases when students might signal that they wish to take a turn or in other settings where teachers hopes to transfer the exchange for students to continue. Examining how teachers handle these situations would be of paramount importance in order to suggest any positive implications in teaching and to minimize any problems that might obstruct learning activities.

Since the discourse of instruction giving potentially affects teaching and learning of languages, concerning how CA can contribute to Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is worth discussing. Although CA has been criticized for its incapability of analyzing what happens in the mind of individuals because “CA is a behavioral discipline while SLA studies is a cognitive discipline” (Markee, 2000, p.30), researchers have increasingly considered “cognition as a socially distributed, not just as an individual phenomenon” (Markee & Kasper, 2004, p.496). This means how learners behave in classroom settings may be regarded as “a conversational process that observably occurs in the intersubjective space between participants” (Markee and Kasper, 2004, p.496). Hence, CA supporters can apply this approach, both to comprehend the features and structures of L2 interaction and to unearth characteristics of L2 participants through the microscopic investigation of their exchange (Cheng, 2016).

### **Application of Conversation Analysis into instruction giving**

Researchers of CA would examine the transcribed data to “yield descriptions of recurrent structures and practices of social interaction” (Enyi, 2015, p.173) that are conversed by teachers and students. In other words, classroom conversation analysts need to decode how the teacher-student and student-student interaction is organized and sequenced (Masats, 2017). A merit of applying CA into classroom discourse can be highlighted in Xiao’s paper in 2014 as this scholar states that the classroom context with a variety of interaction is considered as “dynamic and changing process” (2014, p.555), and CA is able to uncover details of classroom situations compared to other methods.

Despite the vast amount of research into classroom language, studies using CA to investigate teachers’ instruction giving are still scarce among scholars. Margaretha (2015) conducts a study with elementary students using a descriptive method and lists such problems in classrooms as complex and long instruction, inappropriate word choice or not checking students’ understanding. However, this study merely enumerates the problems without further analysis as it does not follow the CA approach. Satar and Wigham (2017) adopt a multi-modal framework to examine instruction giving via online language tutorials, where gaze, gesture and text chats to introduce key words are the focus of the study when the target language is French. Yet, the data in this research do not allow the author to fully cover these features.

Concerning the Vietnam context, very few scholars have conducted research in classroom using CA. Tran (2016) applies the principles of CA into classroom interaction; however, the research examines students' responsive turns in discussion tasks in the absence of teachers' role. A more proximal topic belongs to Le and Reynanda (2017)'s study in which the researchers investigate how teachers' English proficiency creates learning opportunities for learners. This study shows that even with certified high-level achievements, teachers still face problems while using language to support teaching and learning. Nonetheless, this article embraces general English rather than the instruction giving stage. In short, the few studies are inadequate to cover the Vietnam current educational situation and research into the specific phase of instruction giving has received little attention from conversational analysts; consequently, this study is implemented with a view to bridging this existing gap.

### **Methodology**

The subject of the study involves three teachers (coded as X, Y and Z) and students in three classes of freshmen at a pedagogical university in Vietnam. There are approximately 30 students in each class. They are assumed to be at A2+ - B1 level as they have just passed the university entrance exam which is presumed to be at this level. The students are in the first semester of university, and they are experiencing a new environment of learning, which is relatively different from their high school, where the speaking skill received less practice than other skills. Furthermore, the teachers' description is outlined as in Table 2:

**Table 2.**  
**Demographic information of the teachers participating in this study**

|                  | <b>Gender</b> | <b>Teaching experience</b> | <b>Language competence</b>                 | <b>Number of lessons recorded</b> |
|------------------|---------------|----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Teacher X</b> | Female        | 1 year                     | IELTS 7.0 in Speaking<br>IELTS 7.0 overall | 4 lessons                         |
| <b>Teacher Y</b> | Female        | 1 year                     | IELTS 7.0 in Speaking<br>IELTS 8.0 overall | 5 lessons                         |
| <b>Teacher Z</b> | Male          | 7 years                    | IELTS 7.0 in Speaking<br>IELTS 8.0 overall | 5 lessons                         |

The teachers were chosen in terms of their language proficiency and the time of the exam – the IELTS tests were taken within a year of this research, so it can be ensured that the teachers have maintained their English competency as the results were relatively recent.

In order to collect the data, approximately 50 hours of 14 lessons are video recorded in total. The lessons cover language skills teaching with different classroom activities. At the same time, non-participatory observation by the researcher was implemented. Having been transcribed using the transcription conventions by Seedhouse (2004, p.267), the data were analyzed in-depth for repetitive and representative cases.

Though CA, an emic perspective, does not operate by interviewing research participants since analyzing the details of the interactions and how interlocutors offer to each other should be in focus (Markee & Kasper, 2004), interviews of five randomly-chosen students in each class are conducted to elicit more understanding of classroom activities and instruction-giving phases. These students were shown typical extracts of the corpus prior to sitting for the interview. Questions in the semi-structured interview include: (1) What are the good points of this instruction?, (2) What needs to be improved in this instruction?, and (3) Does the teacher need to ask post-instruction questions to check students' understanding of this instruction?. Supplementary questions were asked when students' answers needed clarification.

## Findings and discussions

### Findings of Research question 1

Having investigated the data, the section will illustrate several typical extracts for further examination since the analysis of single fragments enables the depiction “a very high degree of complexity in talk” (Atkinson, 2011, p.124). There are two main instructional styles that can be identified from the discourse namely interactive instruction containing students’ contribution and monologue-type instruction with little learner involvement.

### Interactive instruction involving students’ participation

In the first excerpt, teacher X introduces the instruction for a listening exercise.

#### Extract 1

- 1 TX: So today we are going to learn (.) how to make some request (.) >and first of all< you are  
2 going to hear (.) five ((showing five fingers)) dialogues↓ and oh no open your book page one  
3 hundred and six ah >one hundred and eight< (3.0) <one hundred and eight> (5.0) ((waiting for  
4 students to open books))
- 5 TX: Yeah so you are going to <hear five dialogues↓> and try to match each dialogue with >a  
6 picture from A to B< Do you understand↑ You’re going to↑
- 7 SS: Listen =
- 8 TX: =Listen and then you (.) match↑=
- 9 SS: =match
- 10 TX: the dialogues with the (.) pictures. °Good work°

The instruction for this listening exercise is relatively simple as teacher X asks students to match the pictures with dialogues they will listen to. After giving the instruction though not very fluently in Line 2, teacher X forgets to mention where the exercise is, teacher X repeats the instruction and elicits responses from students. Teacher X raises voice at the end of incomplete sentences in Line 6 and Line 8 as a signal to transfer the next turn to students, to check students’ understanding of what they need to do. Aware of the situation, students join in to finish the sentences, ensuring the teacher that they have comprehended the instruction.

In the next extract, teacher Y leads students in the new lesson after presenting some pictures.

**Extract 2**

- 1 TY: Can you guess from what the pictures >can you guess< what >the topic of the lesson<  
 2 to↑day↓?
- 3 SS: [Celebrities
- 4 TY: [Celebriti::es YEA::H I think we have (2.0) We are going to:: (.) find out some >interesting  
 5 information< about celebrities↑ culture↓. Alright↑ So:: (2.0) Now we're talking about (.) famous  
 6 stars. What are the common features↓ of famous stars? >What are the qualities< of famous stars?  
 7 (2.0) They must be:: ↑
- 8 SS: Beautiful
- 9 TY: >Ah BEAUtiful< yah↑
- 10 SS: Handsome
- 11 TY: Hand↑some↓. Right? (.) >What else↑<
- 12 SS: Talent
- 13 TY: TAlent↑ Talented↓. Right >What else↑< >in terms of< their appearance. The way:: they::
- 14 SS: Wear
- 15 TY: ah wear. >So they must be very↑<
- 16 SS: Fashionable
- 17 TY: <Fashionable>. Yeah so today to be more specific we are going to (.) ah find out some↑thing↓  
 18 about (.) the way that famous people DRESS. Alright↑ Ah. Okay so now (.) <I have>  
 19 TY: I would like you to work in groups of:: THREE. Okay↑ ah °work in group of 3° so >excuse  
 20 me< can you >one of you< move here (.) to join them? ((hand directing to a group)) One of you  
 21 only with this activity only. (3.0) ((one student moves to another group)) Yeah so please work in  
 22 group of three >and I::< will give you some pa↑per↓.< In this paper> , we <ha:ve a picture> with  
 23 <a lot of> >a lot of↑< ((showing the paper to students))
- 24 SS: Clothes
- 25 TY: Clothes yeah a lot of <clothing items↓> Alright↑ And what I would like you to do↑(.) IS:: to  
 26 (.) write down the name >to find out< the name of each item (.) and write them down in (.) a blank  
 27 paper like this ((showing a blank paper)). >Alright↑< <The first group> to finish↓ please say  
 28 Bingo. Okay↑ Are you clear↑.
- 29 SS: [Yeah
- 30 TY: [Yeah alright thank you↑

In this case, prior to giving instruction, teacher Y asks students a number of eliciting questions about the topic of celebrity culture, which stimulates students' contribution as can be seen in Line 3, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 24 with students adding words to teachers' intentionally incomplete sentences. This technique is similar to the one used by teacher X in Extract 1 since raising the voice is seen as an indication of next speaker selection. These prompts serve as a context for students to understand the task they are going to do, which distinguishes this example from others. Teacher Y subsequently delivers the instruction, supported by stress and intonation to denote key words ("DRESS" in Line 18, "THREE" in Line 19, "pa↑per↓" in Line 22), slow articulation ("<ha:ve a picture>" in Line 22, "<clothing items↓>" in Line 25, "<The first group>" in Line 27), or example demonstration (hands pointing to one group, showing papers to students). The instruction seems fluent most of the time though a change of word flow can be recorded in Line 18 when teacher Y is likely to show something by saying "I have", followed by a substitution of topic to group work arrangement.

The third extract demonstrates an instruction for the group discussion activity in teacher Z's class as a while-speaking activity.

**Extract 3**

- 1 TZ: >Okay now< I have some (.) <other discussions> for you (.) and ah you did this (.) one  
 2 before↑ so please choose one color you love ↓ ((going to each desk to give students a set of  
 3 colorful sticks))  
 4 TZ: okay please choose the color you love (.) NO different color  
 5 (4.0) ((going to the next desk))  
 6 TZ: and:: (.) ((going to the next desk)) yes (3.0) so for people ((inaudible)) great↓ ye↓ llow↑ a:nd  
 7 this one ((going to the next desk))  
 8 TZ: excuse me work in group of four (5.0) ok you must be green ((going to the next desk))  
 9 TZ: excuse me please turn around ((pointing to two boys)) and work with these two girls↑ (4.0)  
 10 okay (.) now this one orange (.) okay so another one another one another one↓  
 11 TZ: ((coming back to teacher's desk)) wow OKAY NOW I have four questions >together↑< and  
 12 if (.) the screen (.) is orange↑ <the person with orange> has to answer↓  
 13 ((students nodding))  
 14 TZ: So if the screen is::: ((raising a green stick))  
 15 SS: [Green  
 16 TZ: [Green >who is going< to answer  
 17 TZ: The person with green  
 18 TZ: Raise your hand (.) raise your stick (.) okay so if the screen is this one↑  
 19 S1: Yellow  
 20 TZ: you have to answer okay↑ ((pointing to S1)) (.) So make sure you speak as if you were in the  
 21 exam as long as possible↑ (.) When you finish (2.0) <one member> in your group has to ask  
 22 (.) another question (.) I mean follow-up question (.) Now for example when ah you have  
 23 finished ((pointing to a student)) one (.) among you ((pointing to other group members)) has  
 24 to give another question (.) Understand me↑  
 25 SS: Yeah  
 26 TZ: Okay

In this example, teacher Z supposes students have done this activity before as shown in Line 1 and 2, so teacher Z immediately distributes color sticks prior to giving any instruction. However, students might not have recalled this activity; hence, while giving the sticks, teacher Z requested that each student in a group to take a different color or that students work in group as can be seen in Line 4, 8, 9 and 10. The first part of this instruction-giving phase is a monologue. Having completed the stick distribution, teacher Z continues giving the instruction with the structure “if”. Teacher Z models the first “orange” example in Line 11

and 12 and delivers an interaction instruction by using body language (Line 14), repeating the same structure as an example (Line 14, 18), asking a question (Line 16) or requesting student's physical response (Line 18), all of which are signposts that the next exchange should be of the students. In the second phase of the instruction, teacher Z takes an example to ensure students understand what they are asked to do by pointing to some students to illustrate the instruction in Line 22 and 23. In this excerpt, the teacher involves students in the instruction giving by delivering incomplete sentences in Line 14 and 18, and inviting students to answer as in Line 15 and 19.

### **Monologue-type instruction with little students' participation**

In addition to instruction including students' participation, monologue-type instruction was also recorded.

Extract 4 is an instruction from teacher X requesting students to do a pair work activity.

#### **Extract 4**

- 1 TX: And now I would like you (.) ((tsk)) to make uhm some notes for the prompts here ((pointing  
2 to the exercise)). And try to describe your favorite (.) object and do not say what is that kind of  
3 object (.) and let your friend guess it. >OK <now >first of all<, make some notes (.) okay,  
4 then talk to the person (.) sitting next to you about it to see whether he or she can guess what is  
5 that kind of object. OK ↑. Now do it. Make some notes first.
- 6 (9 .0) ((going around the class))
- 7 TX: <Favorite object>
- 8 (20.0) ((looking at a student's stuff))
- 9 TX: Make some notes.
- 10 (29.0) ((coming back to the teacher's desk))
- 11 TX: NOW, shhh, make some notes.
- 12 (27.0) ((sitting at the teacher's desk))
- 13 TX: And try to use the phrases you have just learnt↑ Okay↑ ((looking at students))(2.0)  
14 try to use the phrase you see in the paragraph. ((looking at the mobile screen))

In this example, teacher X asks students to make notes for a speaking activity. To illustrate the instruction, the teacher uses gesture (pointing as Line 1,2), employs phrases denoting order ("first of all" in Line 3, "then" in Line 4, "Now" in Line 5) or repeats important points (Line 7, 9, 11, 13, 14). However, it is noted that after the class-fronted instruction from Line 1 to Line 5, teacher X continues giving instruction while walking around the class (Line

6), looking at a student's material (Line 8), sitting at the teacher's desk, and looking at the mobile screen (Line 13,14). Embedded in a situation where students' attention is not guaranteed, if the teacher delivers information, it is difficult for students to follow as they are working on their own task. For example, in Line 11, teacher X says "now" in a loud voice, accompanied by "shhh" which signifies students are in the middle of talking, and they do not respond to what the teacher is saying. Remarkably, in Line 14, teacher X introduces new information suggesting students should use the language they have learnt previously while looking at teacher's mobile screen. This action, without calling for students' attention, does not propose any eye contact with students nor does it request students to pay attention to the teacher's instruction.

In the following extract, at the beginning of the lesson, teacher Y instructs students about what they will do that day – a video reflection. Students have been asked to make a video by themselves and send it to their peers prior to going to class.

#### **Extract 5**

- 1 TY: In the lesson today (.) we are going to do a kind of (.) video reflection↑ Ah you're gonna work in  
 2 group of four or five↑ as I mention before↑ And:: now ah in each group >you're gonna< work in  
 3 pair (.) or in group of three. >I think this group< you have to work in group of three ((pointing to a  
 4 group)). And other group you will >divide your group into two pairs< (.) and in each pair (.)  
 5 ((inaudible)) you use your electronic devices↑ ((picking up a smartphone)) to listen (.) to and  
 6 watch the video that your friend has sent to you↓ While watching (.) you should (.) give some  
 7 comments or some feedback on your friend's video↓ Are you clear↑  
 8 SS: Yes  
 9 TY: Yeah and remember (.) to:: >may be< to note down your comments↑ just write some key words↑  
 10 (.) or something >so that< you can remember to comment for your friends↑ Okay↑ and <after>  
 11 you have finished watching (.) discuss (.) and give (.) the comment, tell your friends your  
 12 comment. Alright↑ (3.0) Okay so now let's start↑

It is apparent that there are two phases in this instruction. For the first stage, teacher Y delivers a relatively long instruction from Line 1 to Line 7. The teacher initially talks to the whole class then directs a group that needs a different seating arrangement when Line 3 and 4 shows teacher Y refers to some specific groups. Teacher Y continues the speech until Line 7 where the teacher poses a cliché question of "Are you clear?" to transfer the turn to the students. Responding to this question, students answer "Yes" while actually it is impossible

to realize whether they understand what they are going to do next. The subsequent stage also commences with a series of instruction. Noticeably, in this case, teacher Y allocates hardly any pauses or wait-time for students to picture the task given except for only one 3-second pause in Line 12 towards the end of the instruction. No concept-checking questions are asked. The utterance “Let’s start” in Line 12 does not appear to given interaction for students as following teacher’s request is their sole option.

In brief, two styles of giving instruction are recorded as illustrated in the examples above, namely solo teacher talk and interactive dialogue with students. It is apparent that the teacher is the initiator of the conversation, followed by either students’ exchange or teacher’s continuation. The nature of this classroom talk – instruction giving – offers limited chance for students to commence the conversation; however, with teacher’s turn allocation, students’ active participation can still be detected.

### **Findings of Research question 2**

The recordings indicate that, classroom interaction might have been enhanced through some of the features. Initially, inviting students to contribute to teachers’ instruction is one way to check learners’ comprehension without mandatorily allocating time to ask them concept-checking questions. By doing this, though, teachers retain their controlling role in teacher-student interaction, and it not only helps to preclude teachers from posing cliché questions such as “Are you clear?”, “Do you understand?” or “Is it okay?” as can be seen in some above-illustrated examples but also more attentively draws learners’ responsiveness to the instruction. Secondly, teachers’ simple language is another factor that helps students clearly grasp what will be done in the next stage. The majority of the examined discourse can be classified as simple sentences, compound sentences that are connected with simple linkers as “and”, “so” or a series of utterances that are combined with sequential connectors namely “first of all”, “then”, “now” or “after”. These structures considerably contribute to the simplicity of language, ensuring students’ comprehensive understanding of the given task since learners have merely transferred into a community where listening and speaking skills receive more drill. Thirdly, a practice that is highly valued by investigated students can be linked to adding the lead-in context prior to delivering the instruction. Students might be eager to participate in the activity when they are introduced to the setting of the task, unlike other exercises when teachers present what students should do immediately. Having realized the purpose of the task, students can positively become involved in the classroom activity. Last

but not least, while giving instruction, teachers' paying attention to each group also obtains students' participation. That is, class-fronted instruction sometimes provides insufficient direction to a certain number of groups in classrooms, especially in mixed-level classes. Hence, teachers can allot time to explicate the rule to some specific groups that need further explication, from which students surely benefit. This quality can be seen in Extract 2 and 5 of teacher Y when this teacher personally shows some groups how to do the task.

On the other hand, there are factors in the data that impede classroom interaction. The first problem is teacher's long instruction with few or no pauses. For example, during the instruction giving phase of teacher Y, when it is a sequence of sentences, albeit simple ones, all of the interviewed students opine that the teacher should break it down and allocate wait time for them to understand step-by-step. Giving all the instruction at one time is not only hard for teachers to produce but also causes troubles for listeners when they cannot recognize some key points of the instruction. This finding connects with Margaretha's study (2015), which indicated that lengthy complex instruction is also an issue in EFL classrooms in Indonesia. Another problem recorded in this data is teacher's giving instruction while students' attention is not secured. As in extract of teacher X, having requested students to do the activity, teacher X carries on giving information, even new instructions to those who are busy doing their own task. This shows inefficiency as when asked, students concur that they cannot pay attention although they know the teacher is saying something. Since the teacher does not specifically call for a response, students are not urged to produce any interactive patterns with their teacher, which ultimately leads to failure in teacher-student communication. This situation supports Sowell's suggestion (2017) to gather students' attention prior to delivering any information. The next concern originates from post-instruction stage where it is advised that teachers should ask concept-checking questions (Proctor, 2014; Scrivener, 2012). Nevertheless, instances such as "Are you clear?" in Extract 2, "Understand me?" in Extract 3 or "Okay?" in Extract 4 fail to offer teachers any guarantee that their students fully understand the instruction. The students who were interviewed all agree teachers should ensure students know what the task requires them to do. Still, there is a case when some students say post-instruction questions are unnecessary when students have already participated in teachers' instruction. As in Extract 1 and Extract 3, teacher X and teacher Z engage students into the instruction phase as a method to check their understanding, and 93% of the students who were interviewed believe there is no need to ask checking questions.

## **Discussions and Implications**

The subsequent discussion is devoted to some issues that emerged from the results, followed by some implications for further implementation.

First and foremost, it is noteworthy that all the teachers in this research are non-native speakers, so to some extent, they encounter a language barrier while delivering instruction to students. The phenomenon is uncommon; however, it can perhaps be most easily seen in Extract 3 where teacher X commits a grammatical mistake when saying “do not say what is that kind of object” and even repeats this twice. Hence, standardized qualifications of language do not guarantee whether teachers can produce effective classroom language or not. Although language errors in teachers’ instruction exist, in the interviews students did not consider these as hindering their comprehension of the instruction since they could work out the meaning in these circumstances without many difficulties. Therefore, it can be said that, minor language inaccuracies may not impede the interaction between teachers and students during the instruction giving phase. However, this finding contrasts with Le and Renandya’s (2017) research on the relationship between the teacher’s command of English and classroom language use, in which they state students are likely to “have a more positive perception towards their more proficient teachers than the less proficient ones” (2017, p.79). In spite of this difference, it is vital for language teachers to master the target language to deliver the lesson with maximum efficacy, which is similarly concurred by Meng and Wang (2011) as they claim EFL teachers’ language is important in the learner’s acquisition. Non-native teachers are advised to expose themselves frequently to a standard English environment, in whichever way that might be suitable for them, in order to advance their language competency, thus limiting their possibility to make mistakes in classroom discourse.

In addition, teachers should have training in classroom language, particularly in instruction giving strategies. Breaking instruction into phases (Sowell, 2017), setting contexts for activities, involving students in the instruction stage as a method to check understanding are some of the techniques that teachers-to-be, students of pedagogical universities, or even teachers should develop. By dividing long instruction into shorter ones, teachers can ensure all of the students, even weak ones, are able to understand their task. Using shorter instructions also enable teachers to control their language since they have more time to handle the language output. Additionally, providing contexts of the activity can also engage students

during the instruction giving stage. Students subsequently are aware of the purpose of the given task and are likely to take part in the task more enthusiastically.

Another technique to be introduced is allowing students to contribute to the instructional delivery, in which interactive language patterns can be used to strengthen both teacher-learner exchange and the students' understanding of the task. If teachers implement this act, post-checking questions might not be necessary, thus saving time for classroom activities. On a larger scale, in the curriculum of pedagogical studies, classroom language should be introduced to students prior to the teaching internship, and practiced intensively. In addition to verbal language, non-verbal signals as well as other techniques mentioned above should be familiar to teachers-to-be so that they can apply comprehensive strategies in the pivotal stage of instruction giving.

### **Conclusion**

This case study applied the Conversation Analysis approach into classroom language, particularly instructional talk of teachers in a Vietnamese university. Distinctive extracts were thoroughly investigated in order to reveal a detailed view of different methods of delivering instruction and whether these practices promote or deter classroom communication. This topic needs more scholars to investigate as the current research merely elicited a small amount of data, which only concentrated on a certain subject of teachers' instructional language in EFL classes of freshmen. In sum, the correlation among teachers' language aptitude, teacher's teaching methodology and students' learning is a multifaceted aspect (Freeman et. al., 2015), in which each of these components needs to be addressed meticulously.

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