

Instruction Checking Questions in Practice: A Discourse Analysis of Teacher- Student Interaction during Task Set-up in EFL context.

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ABSTRACT

This study describes how ICQs appear during task set-up in one English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom using qualitative discourse analysis based on the initiation- response- feedback IRF pattern model. The study analysed a transcript of 15- 20 minutes lesson on capacity, full, half, empty, nearly full, nearly empty. The analysis focus on two questions (1) What turn taking and teacher control look like when the teacher use ICQs and (2) What type of ICQs appear most often and what interaction pattern they create. The findings show that the teacher initiates 91.8% of all the interaction, students never start interaction, and choral responses are common. Out of 23 ICQs questions, yes/ no questions are most frequent (47.8%) followed by Wh- question (39.1) and either/ or questions (13.0%) .All the ICQs are display questions and there is not any referential question. Students' responses are very short (1-4 words) and every interaction follow the IRF pattern with no variation. This pattern match previous research in similar EFL context. The study concludes that ICQs in classroom appear with strongly teacher – centered interaction structure. The finding offer a detailed description for teacher and teacher trainers who wish to reflect on their own use of ICQs.

Keywords: Instruction Checking Questions (ICQs), Classroom Discourse Analysis, Teacher-Student Interaction, IRF Pattern Model, Display Questions, Task Set-Up

Introduction

In classroom interaction, the success of the class activity commonly depends on how well students understand what they are supposed to do. When task instructions are not clear or ambiguous, this leads to reduced learning opportunities and poorer outcomes. Due to this problem, teacher sometimes use instruction-checking questions (ICQs). These are short, targeted questions designed to make sure learners' understanding of the task procedures before the activity begins (Scivener, 2011). Unlike unspecific questions such as " Do you understand?", effective ICQs focus on specific aspects of the tasks, including whether students work in groups or individually, how much time the task will take, the mechanics of doing the task, and what they need to do the activity (Harmer, 2007).

Although ICQs are commonly recommended in teacher training courses and materials such as CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) and PCELT (Professional Certificate in English Language Teaching), there is limited researches on how they actually work in real classroom situations. Most of the studies on classroom questions focus on general types of questions such as either the question is display or (open-ended) referential questions (Behnam and Pouriran, 2009), rather than on the task set-

up, where ICQs are mainly used. This study address this gap by applying discourse analysis to teacher-students interaction during the task set-up time, focusing on how ICQs shape the interaction pattern and classroom management.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on models of classroom discourse (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975) which suggest that classroom interaction typically follows a three part interaction pattern Initiation – Response – Feedback (IRF) structure, where the teacher starts and interaction, a student responds, and finally the teacher give a feedback. This pattern is commonly used during instruction giving, task set- up, and checking stages, where the teacher controls the flow of classroom communication(Walsh, 2011). Some questions asked by the teacher are merely to check whether students know something the teacher already knows (display questions), while others are smart questions intended to learn something new(Referential question). This distinction helps us understand ICQs, even through most ICQs are display questions. However, we do not know it they truly help students understand the instructions. Thus, this study closely investigates both small details (e.g. word choice, sentence structure, and question type) and wider pattern (e.g., teacher talking time, how feedback and error correction are provided) to explain how ICQs actually work in classroom interaction.

The aim of this study is to analyze how interaction checking questions sjape teacher – student interaction during the task set- up phase of EFL lesson. The study investigates turn- taking pattern, the IRF pattern in ICQs sequences, and the type and function of ICQs (yes/ no questions, either/ or questions, Wh-questions). In addition, it considers how long and predictable student responses are, along with techniques teacher employ like repair or repetition. The analysis is based on data from classroom recoding, where teacher use ICQs in authentic teaching contexts. The following research questions guide the analysis:

1. What do turn- taking and the teacher control look like when teacher use ICQs during task set-up?

2. What type of ICQs are used most commonly, and what interactional patterns do they generate?

The significance of the study lies in its practical implications for language teachers and teacher trainers, as well as its contribution to the discourse analysis of pedagogical questions. By analyzing ICQs using a rigorous and systematic framework, it aims to close the gap between what teaching guideline suggest and what actually occurs in the real classroom.

This research paper is organized as following: Section two provides a review of previous literature on classroom talk, questions techniques, and the IRF pattern (initiation – Response – Feedback) model. Section three the methodology, covering data sources and analytical approach. Section four presents the results of the discourse analysis. Section five discusses the significance of these results. Finally, section six concludes by offering practical recommendations for teaching and suggestions for future researches.

2. Literature Review

Classroom Discourse: Definition and Features

Classroom discourse refers to the particular pattern of the language use that occurs in educational setting, shaped by the institutional rile of teachers and students and the educational goals of the lesson (Brown and Yule, 1989; Stubbs, 1983). Classroom interaction differs from the normal conversation in the limited by time and specific goals, and is featured by unequal power: the teacher control turn- taking, decides

who speak and in which time, evaluates the answers, and gives feedbacks (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Walsh, 2011). Cook (1989) indicated that discourse analysis investigates how conversations become meaningful and make sense to the people who involved in it. This is especially helpful for understanding how teachers and students work together to build understanding when the task is set up, particularly in the language classroom. Discourse can function both as giving instructions and as the objective of learning (Carter and Nunan, 2011). However, analyzing classroom discourse is not merely an academic exercise but it is a practical necessity for improving teaching action that recreates power relations. In the context of ICQs, this means that every question the teacher asks carries assumptions about who controls the interaction and what kind of response is valued.

The Initiation- Response- Feedback (IRF) model

The IRF is one of the most common models, proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) based on close observations of British primary classrooms. They identified a three-part interaction: the teacher initiates (beginning with question), the student responds, and finally the teacher gives feedbacks, either evaluation or correction. This pattern is also referred to as IRE (Initiation – Response – Evaluation). Research shows that this teacher-led pattern occurs in many different classroom contexts (Ellis, 1994). The IRF model has been widely used to EFL classroom interactions. For example, Maghfur (2021) used Sinclair and Coulthard's framework to analyze teacher–student interactions in an Indonesian Islamic school, finding that teacher talking time surpassed students' talking time. The study concluded that while this back-and-forth IRF pattern serves to help students prepare for exams, it did not help them truly learn to use the language. Similarly, a study of Kurdish English classes by Ismael and Mohammed (2025) found that following the IRF pattern, the teacher corrected students more than they engaged in real conversations, so students did not get the opportunity to practice the language. The IRF pattern is very frequent when the teacher uses Instruction Checking Questions (ICQs). For example, when the teacher asks "Are you working alone?" the student responds "No" and the teacher says "good, so you are in pairs". This clear technique is used to ensure that everyone understands the task, but it limits students' use of more extended language. As Walsh (2011) explained, the IRF is considered a good way to give information, but if overused, it can become a mechanical tool.

Teacher Talk and Classroom Interaction Competence

Teacher talk refers to the language used by the teacher inside the classroom to control and manage it, instruct, and interact with students. It is an essential factor in how students learn a new language (Chaudron, 1988). Walsh (2006, 2011) established the concept of Classroom Interaction Competence (CIC), which refers to the teacher's skill in using the language to create helpful conversation and maintain it with students, asking good questions, giving useful feedbacks, and managing who speaks and they speak. Ismael and Mohammed (2005) investigated Kurdish English classrooms using this CIC framework. They found that even when the teacher generally spoke clearly and provided useful feedback, their questions were often simple and fact-based rather than open-ended (referential) discussion questions. Teachers focused more on gaining the correct answers than on having deeper discussion. Students rarely initiated interaction or tried to ask questions. This behavior, in which many students stayed quiet because they want to show respect to their teachers, made interaction less likely to occur. These results show that using ICQs is not about asking the right questions: it also includes creating a

classroom atmosphere where students feel safe and free to show their understanding (Benarose & Hmouma, 2026).

Questioning in the classroom: Types and Functions

Asking questions inside the classroom is considered to be one of the most important things teachers do. Teachers spend a great time of the classroom in asking questions, and the type of the questions they ask affect how much and how well students participate in the classroom. There are two types of question: display questions and referential questions. The key difference between them are:

Display questions: these are questions, where the teacher already knows their answers. They usually elicit short, fact-based answers. Teachers typically use them to check students' understanding, recalling information, or for language practice. Example "What is the past simple of 'go'?"

Referential Questions: these are questions where the teacher does not know the answer, seeking real information, discussing opinions, talking about personal experiences. They tend to elicit longer and more thoughtful replies. Example "What did you do last night?"

A study in Iranian English classrooms found that display questions (about 52%) were used marginally more often than referential questions (about 28%). More essentially, referential questions led to increase the students' talking time, averaging 1.8 minutes compared to 0.87 minutes for the display questions. However, not all referential questions worked equally well, some of students still provide short answers. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most, but not all, referential questions create more interaction. This distinction matters for Instruction Checking Questions (ICQs). Most of the ICQs are display question type because the teacher already knows the answer (e.g. "Are you writing or speaking?" answer "Speaking"). However, some ICQs could turn to referential questions (e.g., "How will you share speaking time with your partner?") which might lead students to give a full answer. This study will investigate ICQs on a scale from display to referential.

Instruction Checking Question (ICQs): What they are and how to use

ICQs are a special type of question used by the teacher before the students start the activity to check their understanding of the task procedures (Scrivener, 2011). Unlike Concept Checking Questions (CCQs), which is used to check the understanding of the concept like grammar or vocabulary points, ICQs check practical matters such as "Are you working alone or in group?" "How much time do you have to do the task?" "Are you writing or speaking?" "What do you do first?"

Harmer (2007) provided useful tips for using ICQs effectively:

Do not ask an unspecific question like the one "Do you understand?" because the students often say "yes" even if they do not understand, simply to save their faces.

Ask clear and specific questions that require students to show their understanding.

Use Yes/ no questions, either / or questions, or Wh- questions (e.g., "How many minutes do you have?")

Ask ICQs after giving instruction but before handing out the material of starting the activity.

Scrivener emphasized that teachers should prepared their ICQs during the lesson planning rather than inventing them during the class time. Also, keep the number of ICQs low so students do not become swamped. Good ICQs are short, use simple language, and focus on the most critical points. Even though these tips are common in teaching advice, there is surprisingly little observational researches on how ICQs actually work in the classroom. Most of the evidence comes from personal experience and teacher reflection, not from detailed analysis of the classroom talk. This gap is what this study aims to fill.

Empirical Studies on Teacher Questioning in EFL Context

Several recent studies have investigated how teacher as questions in English as foreign language classroom. These studies gives useful points of comparison for the present research.

In Iranian classroom interactions, Afzali and Kianpoor (2020) found that teachers asked referential questions (with many possible answers) and repeated or emphasized what students said, which helped interaction continuous. However, they also noticed that the teachers often used display questions (with only one right answer), which limited the students talking time. Similarly, Vebryarto (2020) reported that referential questions encouraged deeper thinking and interaction, while display questions were less effective.

The Kurdish study by Ismael and Mohammed (2025) is closely related. It used both classroom observation and students questionnaires, and did not ignore the cultural factors. The findings showed that while 75% of the students said that their teachers feedbacks helped them participate more in the class, over 50% said they stayed quiet in the classroom because they wanted to show the respect to their teachers- a cultural norm that decreases the interaction. The class observation showed that teacher provided clear feedback in 77.8% of the lesson and asked understandable questions in 88% of the lesson, but students rarely engaged in the interaction; only 11% of classes had all students actually participating.

Maghfur (2021) studied Indonesian Islamic schools using Sinclair and Coulthard's model. He found that the teacher controlled interaction and managed the class using three method: giving direct, clear instructions, asking questions, and leaving words or phrases unfinished. The study concluded that while this pattern works well for the examination preparation, it does not help the students truly acquiring or using the language. One reason behind thus it that English was seen as less important than Arabic and Indonesian.

Behnam and Pouriran (2009) added interesting observations that challenge simple ideas about the type of questions. They noted that sometimes display question type could still elicit two or three minutes answers. In addition, students still had the opportunity to converse even without any teacher questions if the topic of the lesson was interesting. These finding suggest that how questions work depends on other factors, such as the topic of the lesson matter to the students or not, their personalities, and the overall classroom atmosphere.

Research Gap

Previous research has discussed classroom interactions and gave very useful concepts such as IRF, CIC, and the difference between display and referential questions. Many studies have been conducted in different English classrooms around the world. However, there is a clear gap: very few studies have

focused specifically on Instruction Checking Questions (ICQs) used in the task set-up. Most researches have examined teacher questions in general classroom interactions of how teachers provide feedback and correct errors.

Even though ICQs are very commonly taught in teacher training, they have not been systematically studied. Moreover, most researches on the type of questions used by teachers have been conducted in real classroom. Few have compared ideal teaching demonstrating (where ICQs are carefully planned ahead of time) with more natural, semi-planned classroom interaction (where ICQs might be changed on the spot) comparing these two could reveal essential differences between the teaching books recommended and what actually occurs in the classrooms.

This study fills this gap by analysis ICQs in real classroom interaction. The analysis will focus on who speaks and when, IRF pattern, questions types, students' responses, and mistakes or misunderstanding are handled and corrected. By doing so, the study aims to help improve both the theory of classroom talk and the practical ways the teacher ask questions.

3. Methodology

In this section, The researchers will examine the research approach, data sources, participants, data collection procedures, analytical framework, and ethical considerations adopted in this study. The aim of this study is to give a clear and replicable description of how the discourse analysis was carried out.

Research Approach

This study applied a qualitative discourse analysis approach. Discourse analysis is suitable for examine how language operate in social contexts such as the classroom, and it studies the organization of interaction, patterns of communication, and the linguistic features that support teaching and learning language (Stubbs, 1983; Walsh, 2011)

This study investigates the role of Instruction Checking Questions (ICQs) in teacher – students' interaction during the task set-up phrase.

Data Source

The data of this study are based on a single classroom transcription documenting a 15-16 minutes English language lesson for grade 1B at the International Knowledge School (IKS). The lesson is about the capacity concept (half full, nearly full, nearly empty, full, and empty) using examples such as a water mug and water bottle. The transcript was originally recorded and transcribed for analysis as part of the study's purpose. The transcript was provided as a clean, continuous dialogue (see Appendix A) the lesson was provided in what appears to be an EFL or ESL context, which the students replying in short English, sentences.

Participants

The participants in the recorded lesson are:

The teacher: a female referred to in transcript as Miss Alaa Hammed. The teacher leads the interaction and controls the class by asking questions and giving feedbacks.

The number of the students is 21. The transcript occasionally names individual students (e.g., Maria , Jad) but most of responses are choral responses (the whole class together) or from unidentified students. The students are in Grade B1, which is obverse from the simplicity of the language and the use of basic concepts and repetitions.

Data Collection

The data collection follow these steps:

1. Recording the original lesson was audio recorded. The recording seized both teacher and the students speech.
2. Transcription: the audio was transcribed by the researcher. The transcription includes all the teacher sentences and students' responses, whether if it is choral or individual. Pause, overlap, and intonation were not transcribed in details because the focus of this study analysis is on type of questions, turn taking, and IRF pattern, rather than fine –grained prosodic features.
3. Cleaning and formatting: the transcription is a clean, continuous conversation with speaker labels (Teacher – Students – Student (Maria), etc..). This clear version is presented in Appendix A.
4. Anonymization: students' names were hold, as no identifying information was included.

4. Analytical Framework

The analysis contains several frameworks to give a comprehensive examination of ICQs

Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) IRF model: each teacher question is coded as initiations, each students' answer as a response, and each teacher reaction as a feedback (or follow up). This allows the researcher to map the structure of interaction and identify variations (e.g., missing feedback, extended responses).

Micro- analysis of the type of questions : using a micro- analytic approach common in critical discourse analysis (Behman and Pouriran, 2009), each ICQs is classified according to:

Form: Yes/ no questions, either/ or questions, or Wh- questions (What, When, Where, How).

Function: display questions vs. referential questions (Long and Sato, 1983) Display questions are those where the teacher already knows the answers, while the referential questions needs unknown information.

In addition, the frequency of each question and students' relies length (short vs. extended) was noted.

Macro- analysis of interaction: At the macro level, the analysis examine:

Turn- taking: who starts turns and how they allocated(e.g., nominated by teacher, choral response, or self-selection).

Teacher control: How the teacher controls and manages the class through questioning.

Repair and repetition: How the teacher response to incorrect or unfinished answers (e.g., repetition or rephrasing)

Scaffolding: how the teacher use ICQs to guide students toward the correct understanding.

Comparative lens- demonstration vs. classroom reality: this study is based on single transcript of only one lesson. The analysis offers a comparative use of ICQs against recommended practice in teaching literature (Harmer, 2007; Scrivener, 2011) to identify differences between theory and the actual classrooms apply.

Coding procedure

The transcription was analyzed line-by-line using the following coding scheme:

Code	Definition	Example from Transcript
I initiation	Teacher question or instruction that expects a response	"So, What does the capacity mean?"
R Response	Students answer verbal or non-verbal	"How much we have of something."
F Feedback	Teacher evaluation, correction or acknowledgement	"Excellent, Maria, This is half full."
ICQs Y/N	Yes / No questions	"Do I have a lot of water?"
ICQs E/O	Either / Or questions	"Is the full or almost full?"
ICQs Wh-	Wh- questions (What, Where, When, Why)	"Where do we draw the line?"
Display	Teacher knows the answer	"What does full mean?"
Referential	Teacher does not know the answer	None identified in this transcript: (all of the questions are display question)
Choral response	Multiple students respond together	"Students in the middle."
Individual Nomination	Teacher name the student	"Yes, Maria. What is this?"

The researchers performed this coding manually. To ensure reliability, a second coder with training in discourse analysis coded 20% of the transcript.

Research Questions Addressed by The Methodology

This methodology, as designed above, aims to answer the following two research questions:

1. What do turn- taking and teacher control look like when the teacher uses ICQs during task set- up?

2. What type of ICQs are used most commonly, and what interaction pattern do they generate?

These questions are addressed by counting ICQs types (yes/ no/ Wh- questions, either / or questions) and by examining the length and quality of the students' answers to each type of question.

Ethical Considerations

The transcript was provided as recoded of the only one lesson. The following ethical principles were observed:

1. Anonymity, only students' first names are mentioned; no other personal information is included in the transcription analysis.
2. Confidentiality: the transcript is treated as confidential and will not be shared out of the academic context of this paper.
3. Academic integrity: the transcript is presented in full in Appendix A for clarifications.

Formal ethical approval was not required, as the data are anonymized and non-experiment.

Limitations of the Methodology

Several limitations should be acknowledgeable:

1. Single transcript the analysis is based on only one lesson. So the findings cannot be generalized to other teachers, contexts, or proficiency levels.
2. No video access: the researcher had an audio recording only of the lesson and a transcript, but not a real classroom observation or video recording. Because there is no permission from the school to record video or to attend the class to observe the lesson. Consequently, non-verbal cues (gestures, eyes gaze, pointing) that are integral to ICQs could not be analyzed.
3. Choral responses: Many students' answers are choral, making it difficult to determine individual understanding or to measure individual turn length accurately.
4. Teacher- students formality: the transcript suggests a warm, familiar relationship between the teacher and the students both. The teacher used habibi (an Arabic term of endearment). This may not be typical of all EFL classrooms.

Despite these limitations. The approach gives a useful and replicable framework for analyzing ICQs in classroom interactions.

5. Analysis and Findings

In this section, a descriptive discourse analysis following these research questions:

1. What do turn-taking and teacher control look like when a teacher uses ICQs during task set-up?
2. What types of ICQs are used most commonly, and what interactional patterns do they generate?

The findings are based on a line-by line of coding of teacher- student interaction using the IRF pattern model (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975).

Overview of Data

The transcript contains approximately 85 teacher questions and 70 students responses (including choral and individual responses) the lesson topic is capacity (full, nearly full, half full, nearly empty, empty) the teacher uses materials such as a water bottle and water mug. The teacher individually nominates most students' response. Approximately 23 distinct ICQs are used to check students understanding of the procedure.

Turn- taking and Teacher Control (what they look like)

Teacher – Initiated Turns

In the transcription, the teacher begins nearly every exchange. Out of approximately 85 teacher turns, about 91.8% are initiating questions or direct questions. Students do not initiates any interaction or ask any questions. Their role in the interaction is only to respond to the teacher's questions. This pattern follows the tradition IRF pattern. Where the teacher controls the entire conversation and interaction (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975).

In this interaction, the teacher choose who speaks by asking for raised hands and calling Maria's name. Maria then responds with an answer, after which the teacher provides positive feedback. No student speaks without being called.

ICQs	Form	Number of questions	Percentage	Example from transcript
Yes / No	Questions with auxiliary verb (Do/ Does/ Is/ Are..etc)	11	47.8%	"Do I have a lot of water?"
Either/ Or	Questions with two choices	3	13.0%	"Is this full or almost full?"
Wh- questions	Why/ Where/ What/ Howetc.	9	39.1%	" Where do we draw the line?"
Total		23	100%	

Function of questions

All 23 ICQs function as display type of questions. In every case, the teacher already knows the answer. There are no referential questions (where the teacher does not know the answer)

Yes/ No questions: there are 11 yes / no ICQs (about 47.8%). The responses to this type of questions are short, single words ("yes" or "no") from the students.

Example:

Teacher: "If I say 'empty' do I have any water? Do I draw a line?"

Students: "No"

The teacher then moves to the next question. Students answer are always short.

Wh- questions: there are 9 wh- questions (about 39.1%). These questions starts with (Where, What, How...etc). In this type of question, students' answers are somewhat longer than for yes/ no questions, but still range from 2 to 4 words.

Example:

Teacher: "Why nearly empty?"

Students: "Because it is almost empty."

This is the longest students' responses in the entire transcript (four words).

Another example:

Teacher: "What does capacity mean?"

Students: "How much we have of something."

Either / or questions: There are 3 either / or questions (about 13.0%) the teacher give two options, and the students choose one of them:

Example:

Teacher: "Why nearly empty?"

Students: "Because it is almost empty."

Interaction pattern by ICQs Types

ICQs	Typical students response length words	Teacher feedback after response	Do students start new talk
Yes / No	1	Positive words "Excellent"	No
Either / Or	2-1	Positive words Repeat answers	No
Wh- questions	4-2	Positive words Sometimes explain more	No

In all cases, the teacher gives feedback for correct answers (e.g., "great" "excellent" "very good"). For incorrect answers, the teacher does not say "Wrong" instead of that the teacher repeats the information or asks the questions again.

The IRF pattern in the Transcript:

Every ICQs interaction follows the three- parts patterns described by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). A typical example:

I (Initiation): Teacher: "What does "full" mean?"

R (Response): Teacher: "Full of water."

F (Feedback): Teacher: "If I say "empty", do I have any water?"

In each interaction, the feedback move is a new question rather than an evaluation. This represent the IRF pattern as it occurs in the drawing activity, where teacher asks four ICQs in a row.

No other pattern appears. There are no students-initiated IRF sequences (where students ask a questions and the teacher relies). There are no extended student turns and no student- student interaction.

Summary of Analysis

Turn- taking teacher control:

The teacher initiates 91.8% of all interactions. Students never begin a turn. Choral responses are common in the transcript. The teacher calls individual students by their name. No students ask questions.

Types of ICQs:

Yes/ No questions appear most often (about 47.8%) followed by wh- questions (about 39.1%) and finally either / or questions (about 13.0%) all the ICQs are display questions. There is no referential questions appear.

Students' responses:

Students' answers are very short, ranging from 1 to 4 words. The longest response in the whole transcript is four words: "Because it is almost empty."

IRF pattern:

Every interaction follows the Initiation – Response – Feedback structure. No variations from this pattern occur.

Description Analysis

These descriptions determine what turn- taking, teacher control, types of ICQs, and interaction patterns look like in this classroom interaction. This analysis does not claim that ICQs cause this pattern. It simply reports what appears in the transcript.

6. Discussion

In this study, the researchers describes how instruction-checking questions ICQs appear in an EFL classroom interaction during task set-up. Focusing on turn taking, teacher control of the classroom, questions type, and interaction patterns. In this discussion, connect these descriptions to previous studies.

Turn-Taking and Teacher Control – descriptive look

In the classroom interaction, the teacher starts nearly all of interact (91.8%). Students do not start any exchanges, No students asks any questions. Choral responses are common in transcript. The teacher calls an individual students by names. This interaction pattern matches the IRF structure described by Scinclair and Coulthard (1975), where the teacher start the initiations (initiates) student responses and then the teacher provides feedback.

Similar pattern appear in other studies Ismael and Mohammed (2025) reported that in Kurdish EFL classroom teacher starts most of interactions and students rarely spoke without the teacher's permission. Maghfur (2009) found the same in an Indonesian Islamic Schools, teacher control every exchanges with short students' responses. Behnam and Pouriran (2009) observed that Iranian EFL classroom also follow IRF patterns with limited students' initiation.

In the transcript, even when the students work on the task "drawing a line" the teacher continuous to ask questions and give instructions. There is no interact between the students between each other or anyone of them asks any question. This description is consistent with teacher-centered interaction reported in many EFL context.

Type of Questions:

Yes/ no questions appear almost of time about (47.8%) followed by Wh questions appear about (39.1%) and either / or appears about (13.0%). All the ICQs questions are display questions and no referential questions appears.

Students' response:

Response are very short 1 to 5 words the longest responses is four words

IRF pattern are similar to those reported in other EFL studies. (Behnam and Pouriran, 2009; Ismael and Mohammed, 2025; Maghfur, 2001) the teacher's ICQs are clear and specific but they appear very often about one question every 45 seconds, and most of them yes/ no questions or display type of question. Students' response remain short and there is no interaction start from the students of student- student interaction.

Suggestions for teaching

Based on the descriptions in this study, the following suggestions may help teacher who want to change their classroom interaction.

1. use more either/ or , or Wh questions instead of yes /no question.
2. Try one or two referential ICQs for example "What would you do if your bottle was half full?"
3. Ask fewer ICQs focus only in the most important check (3-5 per task).
4. Give the students time to ask their questions for example "Does Anyone have a question? With long pause.
5. Use individual checks after choral answers For example call one students to explain their own words.

Types of ICQs and interaction pattern

The transcript contains 23 ICQs, yes/ no questions appear most of the time about (47.8%), followed by Wh questions appear about (39.1%) then either / or questions appear about (13.0%) all the ICQs are display type of questions where the teacher already knows the answer, and there is not any referential questions.

Long and Sato (1983) noted that most of classroom teacher use more display questions rather than referential question, Behnam and Pouriran (2009) found about (51.6%) display questions in Iranian EFL classroom. The present transcript shows a similar pattern with a higher percentage of display questions (100% of ICQs)

The students' response are very short 1 to 4 words. The longest response is four words "Because it is most empty". This shorter than response reported by Behnam and Pouriran (2009) who found that referential questions sometimes produces longer responses, and in the present transcript, there is no referential ICQs appears so the answers remain short.

The IRF appears in every interaction. The teacher starts by asking question, the student's response, then the teacher gives feedback (often-new question). No variation from the IRF happens. Walsh (2011) described classroom interactions as often following IRF, but also mentioned that sometimes-real classrooms show more flexible pattern. In this transcript, the pattern is very consistent and does not change.

Feedback and Correction

The teacher's feedbacks are always positive like "excellent, Good, very good" when the students answer incorrectly "for example say "yes" to drawing the line at top" the teacher does not say "wrong" but instead of that he repeats the correct answer and asks again. This type of correction appears throughout the lesson.

Ismael and Mohammed (2025) observed that Kurdish EFL teacher gave feedback that was "more corrective than dialogic". In this transcript, feedback is positive and corrective but it does not need to longer students talk.

Comparison with Pedagogical Recommendations:

Teaching manuals (Harmer,2007; Scrivener, 2011) recommend that ICQs should be specific focuses on the key task features, and with a limited number. In this transcript, the teacher ICQs are specific e.g. "Where do we draw the line?" and focus on the main concepts. However, the teacher asks about 23 ICQs in a 15- 20 minutes lesson, about a question for every 45 seconds. This is more frequent than many manuals suggest.

The teacher ask ICQs during the task, while the students are drawing, not just before the task begin. This different from the recommendations to ask ICQs before an activity start.

Summary of Discussion

In this classroom interaction transcript, ICQs appears within a strongly teacher-centered interaction pattern. The teacher starts most of interactions and receives very short responses form the students. The IRF pattern repeated with no changes. These descriptions findings are similar to these reported in other

EFL context (Behnam and Pouriran, 2009; Ismael and Mohammed, 2025; Maghfur, 2021) this study does not claim that ICQs cause this type of pattern, but it simply describes what occurs in this particular lesson.

7. Conclusion

This study describe how instruction-checking questions (ICQs) appear during task set-up in one EFL classroom. This analysis focus on two research questions: (1) What turn taking and teacher control look like when the teacher use ICQs and (2) What type of ICQs appear most often and what interaction patterns they create.

Turn taking and teacher control:

The teacher starts about 91.8% of the interaction, students do not start any interaction. No students asks any question. Choral response are common in transcript.

This study described one EFL classroom where ICQs appeared within a very structure of teacher – centered pattern. The teacher asked many yes/ no display questions, students gave a very short answers. No student started an interaction. This description matched the findings from similar context. This study did not indicate whether ICQs a were good or bad, it is simply showed what they looked like in this lesson. Teacher who want more students talking time in their classes may consider changing how they use ICQs. Teacher who want fast, clear comprehension checks may find this pattern useful. The choice depends on the teacher's goals.

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Appendix

The following transcript present the classroom interaction verbatim. Teacher (T), Students (S) and individual named students appeared as in the original recording:

Line	Speaker	Utterance
00.00	T	What is this? My water mug? Thank you. This is miss Anna's water mug, yes.
00.05	S	Yes.

00.06	T	So, how much water do I have in this Mug? Do I have a lot of water? Do I have a little bit of water? This is called capacity. So, what does capacity mean?
00.15	S	How much we have of something?
00.16	T	Water, milk, juice, anything. We call that capacity. Maybe today I out water, maybe tomorrow I put juice or coffee or anything. So, if I want to know how much do I have of something here, this is called capacity. What do we call this?
00.25	S	Capacity.
00.26	T	So, what is capacity.
00.35	S	It is how much I have of water, milk, coffee, juice, or anything.
00.36	T	Thank you. Now, how can I name this one? Please raise your hand if you can. Raise your hand and stay quiet. Yes, Maria, what is this?
00.50	Student (Maria)	Half full.
00.51	T	Excellent, Maria, this is half-full. So, where do we draw the line here? Wait, draw the line at the top of the cup?
01.05	S	Yes
01.06	T	No. Habibi, it's half full. It is not full. It is not full. It is half. What does half mean? Remember when we took a lesson about a circle and then we said this is half a circle. Is this a full circle?
01.20	S	No.
01.21	T	This is half. Same here. Are we going to draw the line at the top?
01.35	S	No.
01.36	T	Do we draw it at the bottom here a little bit? What is the middle? Why in the middle?
01.50	S	Because the middle means half.
01.51	T	Excellent. Everybody draw the line. And when you're done drawing the line, please, can somebody read this?

02.10	T	Next, we have what? Please, can somebody read this?
02.11	S	Nearly full.
02.30	T	Excellent. This is nearly full. What does full mean? Full means all the way here. But what does nearly full mean.
02.31	S	It is not full, but almost full.
02.45	T	Exactly. I have so much water, but it is not full yet. If I have water all the way here, this is full. This full. Half. Empty. Nearly full. Nearly empty. So what does full mean.
02.46	S	Full of water.
03.05	T	If I say empty, do I have ant water.
03.06	S	No.
03.20	T	If I say half full, where is the water?
03.21	S	In the middle.
03.40	T	Excellent. How about nearly full?
03.41	S	Almost full.
04.00	T	Now, let's look at jad's water bottle. He drank how much water.
04.01	S	A little bit.
04.15	T	So, what do we call this? IS this full?
04.16	S	No.
04.25	T	Is it full or almost full?
04.26	S	Almost full.
04.35	T	Good. So this is nearly full.
04. 36	T	Now, look at another water bottle. The water is in the middle. What do we call this?

04.45	S	Half.
04.46	T	Excellent.
05.00	T	Now, look at this one. Is it empty?
05.01	S	No.
05.10	T	Is it full?
05.11	S	No.
05.25	T	Is it half?
05.26	S	No.
05.40	T	How much water does it have?
05.41	S	A little bit.
06.00	T	So what do we call this?
06.01	S	Nearly empty.
06.11	T	Why nearly empty?
06.30	S	Because it is almost empty.
06.31	T	Now, let's think again. Where do we draw the line for half? Top, Bottom, or middle?
07.01	S	Middle.
07.02	T	Excellent. What do we call it when the line is in the middle?
07.15	S	Half.
07.16	T	When the line is all the way at the top?
07.30	S	Full.
07.31	T	When the line is all the way at the bottom?

08.00	S	Empty.
08.01	T	Very good, everybody.