

**Analyzing Praise Dynamics: Non-Native English Speakers' Use
of Adjacency Pairs in Language Teaching at De Access Hotel
and Culinary Training Centre**

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This research delves into the use of adjacency pairs in conversations between non-native speakers and EFL learners at De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre, employing discourse analysis. The study aimed to identify patterns of adjacency pairs in compliment exchanges and explore the preferred and dispreferred responses. Using a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design, data were collected through passive observer participation observation during language classes. The researcher transcribed and analyzed spoken conversations, revealing consistent (Q – A) and (Q – A, Q – A, Q – A) patterns,

emphasizing question-answer exchanges. Positive utterances (U) and non-verbal gestures (G) added diversity, while complex patterns like (Q (Q – A) A) and (U (Q – A) U) showcased layered interactions. The preferred response predominantly featured (Question – Answer), occurring seven times, followed by (Requesting – Acceptance) six times, while dispreferred responses were rare, primarily (Question – Unexpected Answer). This research provides English Department students with insights into adjacency pair patterns, preferred and dispreferred responses, enhancing classroom communication.

INTRODUCTION

Language is an important element in human life. Without language, people find it difficult to communicate with others. In other words, there will be no interaction between people. In language, speaking is divided into her two main types: speaking and writing. Written language is any language used in written texts, and spoken language is any language used in speaking activities, especially everyday conversations (McCharty, 1991; Kurniawan, 2021). Furthermore, although spoken and written language are the main ways people express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions, it is argued that spoken language receives more attention than written language due to its naturalistic behaviour. Recently, however, the relationship between spoken and written language has attracted the attention of linguists, anthropologists, educators, and psychologists (Roberts & Street, 2017; Wiese, 2016; Cook, 2004; Halliday, 1992).

Communication is one of language's purposes. It is a social interaction that requires the production of sentences. Engaging in these kinds of verbal interactions—that is, starting and maintaining involvement in the discourse—requires knowledge and abilities that extend well beyond the grammatical comprehension necessary for message interpretation. Automatically respond to everything you hear in everyday conversations. Both speakers and listeners must

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actively respond to what is happening by directly demonstrating their involvement through words and statements.

In the study of spoken language, adjacency pairs play a central role in organizing conversations. Introduced by Schegloff and Sacks (1973), adjacency pairs refer to pairs of utterances that are functionally related—such as a question followed by an answer or a greeting followed by a reciprocal greeting. These pairs help shape the natural flow of dialogue and reflect not just linguistic behaviour, but also the social norms that govern interaction.

Levinson (1983) emphasizes that these structures are not only grammatical but are fundamentally about social action—how people manage turn-taking, politeness, and expectations. For instance, when someone gives a compliment, the anticipated response might be a “thank you,” a smile, or a reciprocal compliment. These kinds of exchanges are key to creating smooth, culturally appropriate conversations.

Furthering this idea, Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Theory (1987) suggests that adjacency pairs often serve to maintain “face”—the public self-image that a speaker wants to claim. Compliments, in particular, are examples of positive politeness strategies, showing friendliness and solidarity between speakers.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), especially within professional sectors like hospitality, the ability to use and respond to adjacency pairs correctly is a mark of pragmatic competence (Kasper & Rose, 2002). This means learners are not just using grammatically correct sentences but are communicating appropriately in a social context.

Moreover, Kramsch (1998) reminds us that language is embedded in culture. The use of adjacency pairs must be understood within specific cultural norms—what might be a polite response in one language could be considered awkward or rude in another. This study, therefore, situates its analysis within the hospitality training context, where understanding cultural nuance is just as important as grammatical accuracy.

In general, conversation means people talking to each other (Paul, 2000: 4). The purposes of conversation include connecting people with many friends, giving information to others, and causing harm to others. Conversations usually begin in an organized manner. Utterances from a particular speaker must be responded to by other utterances from different speakers. In a conversation, a dialogue occurs between one character and another. For example, the first speaker is asked to contact her second speaker, and the second speaker responds. These activities are called adjacency pairs. There are several ways to point out and talk to stakeholders about choosing the next speaker. This technique can be demonstrated particularly well using a system of adjacency pairs (Gebhardt, 2004: 6).

1. Adjacent pair is an important term in sociolinguistics. It is a type of utterance by one speaker that requires a particular type of utterance by another speaker. The order of adjacent pairs is Adjacent,
2. Produced by another speaker,
3. Ordered as first part and second part.
4. A certain first part is entered as requiring a certain second part.

And there is a rule that governs the use of adjacency pairs, which is that after producing the first part of a pair, the current speaker must stop speaking and the next speaker must produce the second part of the same pair. (Levinson, 1987: 303-304). Furthermore, according to Liddicoat (2007: 106), adjacency pairs are made up of strings that correctly exhibit the following characteristics:

1. Consists of two turns.
2. From different speakers,
3. Placed next to each other in their basic minimal form.
4. Ordered.
5. It is distinguished by pair type.

Adjacency pairs determine the type of introduction/response in a conversation. The first side of the pair can predict her second member of the pair. Common adjacency pairs are: Question-Answer, Offer-Acceptance, Greeting-Greeting. An adjacent pair of s consists of two different speaker towers, with the speakers placed next to each other. The general first two sections include questions, requests, offers, advice and information. The second typical pair includes response, acceptance, agreement, rejection, and refusal (Gardner in Davies and Elder, 2004:

–272). In every conversation, some conversations are different than others. Cutting (2002: 31) argues that conversation analysts argue that particular sequences representing sections of utterances or phrases emerge as speakers construct conversations with each other and negotiate in time. These are the pre sequence and insertion sequence:

1. Pre-sequence, this occurs when conversation participants call for attention or prepare for the next type of turn, they will make, for example:

Starting with a pre-request:

A: You Do you play jazz?

B: Yes.

A: Can I put one in?

Or with an invitation in advance:

A: Are you free tonight?

B: Yes.

A: Do you want to go see this movie?

2. The insertion sequence, which question and answer pair it contains, looks like this (Q (Q – A) A), for example:

A: Did you enjoy the meal?

B: Really?

A: Yes

B: Me too

According to the above example (2), the model used is (Q (Q – A) A), and we also It is possible to encounter other models of conversation such as (Q-A, Q-A), (U1-A1) (U2-A2).

From the above explanation, the author concludes that the adjacent pair always consists of two parts, one part Second is the response to First. part, for example if the first party asks the second party, then the second party must answer the first part, for example the question predicts the answer (Yule: 2006, 255).

A useful mechanism in organization 'a conversation switcher is that certain turns are linked to specific subsequent turns; These are the questions answered; greetings are returned with greetings; invitation by accepting or declining, etc.

According to Wood and Kroger (2000: 201), there are two possible types of answers. They are preferentially marked by positive comments and disparaged by negative comments. Riswan (2008:29-30) states that the characteristics of preferred responses are:

1. Delivered promptly
2. Brief and to the point.

While the characteristics of misreferred responses are:

1. Late response
2. Hesitation particles are used
3. Long explanation.

An example of a favourite answer is:

A: I think he is a good writer?

B: I think so too

While the example of the misreferred response is:

A: Can you see me tomorrow?

B: Oh, I doubt that.

The explanation above can be concluded as follow (Mey, 2004: 152), as in everyday conversational dynamics, people engage in a structured form of communication known as adjacency pairs. These pairs follow a pattern where one person's statement is met with a related response from another. For instance, in offers, someone may inquire, "Is it good for you?" and receive a positive reply, such as "Of course," signalling acceptance. Conversely, a refusal might occur with the same question, but this time the response is negative, like "I don't think so." Assessments involve expressing opinions, where agreement might be met with a concurring response like "I think so too," or disagreement with a contrasting "No." Blame and denial unfold in scenarios like "That is a bad car!" and responses varying from denial, "I don't think so," to admission, "I think so too." Questions, whether expected, leading to responses like "On the table," or unexpected, prompting uncertainty with "I don't know," showcase the intricate dynamics of conversation. These examples illustrate how individuals navigate through diverse responses, creating a rich tapestry of agreement, disagreement, acceptance, refusal, and more within the ebb and flow of communication.

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From the above explanation, the author can explain that if someone (first pair) offers something to the other person (second pair), then the second pair can receive two responses, they accept something from the first pair or she refuses. Therefore, when the second pair accepts what the first pair offers, it is called a preferred response. On the other hand, when the second pair rejects what the first pair offers, we talk about a non-preferred response.

A compliment is a comment that says something positive about someone or something (Merriem-Webster Dictionary). People tend to compliment others in their everyday conversations. Compliments are sometimes considered a way to establish communication. It is the expression of the speaker's positive opinion of the person in question towards the addressee to whom he is speaking (Pillet-Shore, 2015). However, compliments are not always expressed verbally. It can also be an act of expressing admiration or approval (Merriem-Webster dictionary). According to Holmes, a complement is defined as "a speaking act that praises someone for a 'good thing' (property) that is not the speaker, generally the one receiving the compliment. (Acquired attributes, character, abilities, etc.) was evaluated positively by the speaker. and the listener", and she also states that "compliments are often seen as models of positive politeness strategies" (Holmes, 1986, cited in Holmes, 2015: 117). It is a type of speech act intended to maintain a good feeling in the listener. A sincere compliment always makes others feel good. This can reduce the social distance between speaker and listener (Holmes, 2015).

Manes and Wolfson (1981), cited by Aijmer (2014), show that compliments can be Use to start a conversation. This can act as a greeting. Complimentary responses can be used to continue communication. Even when the interlocutors meet for the first time. A compliment on a neutral topic can lead to follow-up when receiving a response. He may even go ahead and reach an agreement or a meeting. Additionally, Manes and Wolfson explain that compliments can be used as thanks. When a person says, "You are such a good man," they sometimes say it as a thank you. Compliments are mostly used for new things, such as a new car, a dress or

even a hairstyle. It can also be used to renew a friendship when two friends meet after a long period of separation.

Therefore, to reveal an overview of previous research, many studies have discussed the adjacency pair model, typically the research by Yanti (2008; also see Boyer, 2011; Adisty, 2012; Feldman and Robinson, 2012; Vidi, 2012; Andriyanto, 2013; Ariff and Mugableh, 2013; Enyi, 2015; Jamaludin, 2015; Saputra, 2016; Ergul, 2016; Ermawati, Yanti, and Elfiondri, 2016; Hafidzoh, 2016; Khumaidillah, 2016; Isgianto, 2016; Suryati, 2016; Tamrin, 2016; Rum, 2017; Surya, Malini, and Sedeng, 2018; Wiratno, 2018). Yanti (2008) attempts to answer McCarthy's (2000) theory of neighbouring invitation pairs and determine what types of neighbouring pairs are created by instructors and students. The researcher enriches the adjacency pair theory and how to analyze it using adjacency pair theory. Next, Boyer (2011) revealed that automatic detection of dialogue structure in the context of human-to-human dialogue is receiving increasing attention. Then, the adjacent pairs that depend on these actions are identified using χ^2 analysis and a hidden Markov model is applied to the observed sequences to create a model describing the conversation structure.

The research gap between previous studies and the present study, "The Use of Adjacency Pairs Between non-native speakers and the EFL Learners in *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre*," lies in specific aspects not explored in earlier research. While previous studies discussed general adjacency pair patterns, the new study focuses on how these patterns occur in the unique setting of foreign language learning at *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre* which is in the environment of a hotel and culinary environment. This study aims to highlight the preferred and misreferred responses in the learning environment, and the specific types of adjacency pair patterns that emerge. By concentrating on these specifics, the new research aims to offer a deeper understanding of how these patterns function in the foreign language teaching and learning process.

De Access Culinary and Hospitality Training Centre is a Grade A certified training centre under the Directorate for Early Childhood and Community

Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture, operating in the hospitality sector. *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre* carries values, including being the best partner of the government, service companies (hotels, restaurants, resorts, villages, restaurants & cafes, airlines, travel agencies, etc.) and of the community (students) by providing smart solutions by providing training in the field of hospitality services that can meet the needs of the service industry. Implement appropriate course and training processes that align with government regulations and industry needs, and become an affordable provider of work-ready workforce services affordable for the community with the best quality ready-made labour source. The researchers aimed to find out how the flattery strategies of native speakers affect EFL students at *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre*.

Based on the above explanation, in the study, the following research questions are of interest: (1) To describe what the patterns of adjacency pairs are used in conversation containing compliments used in the teaching learning process taught by the non-native speakers, and (2) To elaborate the preferred and misreferred responses of adjacency pairs in the conversation used in the teaching learning process taught by the L2 Speakers in *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre*.

METHOD

In conducting this study, a descriptive research design was chosen by the researcher, employing passive observer participation observation. The primary aim was to gather data from conversations occurring within classroom settings between non-native speakers and students. The participants consisted of non-native speakers and EFL learners engaged in spoken conversations during teaching-learning activities. The data were sourced from teaching-learning sessions conducted by non-native speakers at *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre*. To facilitate the study, participant observation by a passive observer was utilized as the instrument. Interactions between non-native speakers and students were recorded using a video recorder, with subsequent transcriptions produced. This research

instrument focused on collecting data concerning the speaking behaviour of non-native speakers. The data collection technique involved the researcher adopting the role of a passive participatory observer. This meant there was no direct involvement in the conversation process, with the sole focus being on data collection. Observations concentrated on the language act processes of non-native speakers and students. The researcher attended classes taught by non-native speakers, carefully monitored the teaching-learning process, and documented classroom activities, particularly focusing on the use of compliments without interfering in the learning environment. Conversations between non-native speakers and students were subsequently transcribed. In terms of data analysis, the collected data underwent the following procedure: transcribing spoken conversations, analyzing adjacency pair patterns based on Cutting's (2002) framework, and elaborating on the preferred and mispreferred responses of adjacency pairs using May's theory (2004).

To strengthen the credibility of this study, we employed a multi-layered qualitative methodology. The main technique used was passive observer participation, where the researcher observed classroom interactions without interfering. These sessions were video recorded to ensure accuracy, and field notes were taken to capture the surrounding context, such as tone of voice, body language, and classroom dynamics.

To ensure the validity of our data, we also used triangulation. This involved comparing the transcribed conversations with real-time notes and consulting participants to verify the meaning of their responses. This process helped **to** reduce bias and to confirm that our interpretations were consistent with participants' intended meanings.

The data analysis followed a coding process in two stages. First, we applied pre-established categories based on known types of adjacency pairs (like question-answer, offer-acceptance, etc.). Next, we allowed new patterns to emerge from the data itself—these were often shaped by the unique nature of hospitality training, where politeness and customer service norms are highly emphasized.

To increase reliability, a second trained analyst reviewed a sample of the transcripts. This inter-coder reliability check helped ensure that the categories were applied consistently.

Ethically, the study followed standard research protocols. All participants provided informed consent, and their identities were protected through anonymization. The research was conducted under the approval of an institutional review board, and all recordings were stored securely.

In summary, this rigorous method allowed us to explore not only how adjacency pairs were used, but also why certain responses were preferred or avoided. This insight is especially valuable in training contexts where effective, culturally appropriate communication is critical for future professionals in the hospitality and tourism industries.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this part, the researcher comes to the finding and discussion that depict the patterns of adjacency pairs and also the preferred and misreferred responses of adjacency pairs in the conversation used in the teaching learning process taught by the non-native speakers in *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre*.

Result or Research Finding

The patterns of adjacency pairs in the teaching learning process

After analyzing the data, the researcher finds the patterns of adjacency pairs used in the teaching learning process taught by the non-native speakers to the EFL Learners in *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre*. And the result is described as the following figure.

Pattern	Meaning
(Q – A, Q – A, Q – A)	Occur in three times, the first speaker asks the second character.
(Q – A, Q – A)	The question is posed twice by the first speaker to the second character.
(U – U)	The first speaker just says a positive utterance not a question to the second character.
(Q – A)	The first speaker addresses the second character with a simple affirmation rather than a query.
(Q – A), (U – U)	The second character directly responds to the first speaker's query in the first turn, and in the final turn, there is just a positive utterance rather than a question.
(U) – (G)	The second character responds with gestures after the first speaker makes a nice statement.
(Q (Q – A) A)	The first speaker poses a question to the second character, who does not respond. The second speaker then poses a question to the first speaker. At the conclusion of the conversation, the second speaker simply answers the opening query.
(U (Q – A) U)	The second speaker asks her/his after the first speaker makes a good statement. For this reason, she/he responds to it. Subsequently, the second speaker just replies with another affirmative statement to the first.

Figure 1. The patterns of adjacency pairs in the teaching learning process.

The identified patterns, outlined in figure 6.1, showcase various interactions. Notable patterns include instances where the first speaker repetitively asks the second character (Q – A, Q – A, Q – A) or twice (Q – A, Q – A). Additionally, scenarios where positive utterances without questions are made (U – U) and instances where the first speaker asks a question and the second speaker responds directly (Q – A) were observed. Complex patterns, such as the first speaker answering a question while the second character questions and then eventually answers, were also evident (Q (Q – A) A). Positive utterances followed by questions and positive responses (U (Q – A) U) added further dynamics to the teaching-learning conversations. Overall, these patterns offer insights into the

nuanced and varied nature of interactions between L2 speakers and EFL learners in the given context.

The adjacency pairs' preferred and misreferred responses

From the analysis of the data, the writer also finds preferred and misreferred response used in the conversation between the non-native speakers and the students and can be described as the following figure 6.2;

Preferred Response	frequency
(Question – Answer)	7
(Greeting – Greeting)	0
(Assessment – Agreement)	0
(Requesting – Acceptance)	6
(Offer – Agreement)	0

Figure 2. The phenomena of preferred response in the classroom session.

And also the result of dispreferred response is described in figure 6.3

Dispreferred response	Frequency
(Question – Unexpected Answer)	1
(Requesting – Refusal)	0
(Offer – Refusal)	0

Figure 3. The phenomena of dispreferred response in the classroom session.

From the table 6.2 and 6.3 about the preferred and dispreferred responses, the writer explains that the case of preferred response is mostly dominated by (Question – Answer) because this preferred response occurs 7 times in each data. Next, (Requesting – Acceptance) occurs six times in each data and there are no occurrences in (Offer – Agreement), (Greeting – Greeting), (Assessment – Agreement) data. Next, the writer finds that the form of misreferred response is mostly dominated by (Question – Unexpected Answer) because this misreferred response occurs once and there are no occurrences in (Requesting – Refusal) and (Offer – Refusal).

Discussion

In the data analysis, the writer examined conversations between non-native speakers and EFL learners. The presented micro-conversations revealed patterns such as (Q – A) for expected question-answer exchanges and (U – A) for statements with positive responses. Notably, (Q – A, Q – A) and (Q – A, U – P) patterns emerged as preferred responses, while a (U – U) pattern indicated a misreferred response. Besides, the detailed analysis of micro-conversations highlighted instances of both preferred and misreferred responses. The analysis showcased the prevalence of (Q – A) as the dominant preferred response (7 occurrences), followed by (U – A) (6 occurrences). Conversely, no instances of (Greeting – Greeting), (Assessment – Agreement), or (Offer – Agreement) were observed in the data. The misreferred response was primarily represented by (Q – Unexpected Answer) occurring once, with no occurrences in (Requesting – Refusal) or (Offer – Refusal). This examination provides insights into the dynamics of adjacency pairs in the interactions between non-native speakers and EFL learners, shedding light on patterns and responses that contribute to effective communication in the teaching-learning process.

The analysis presented in this study, focusing on adjacency pairs in conversations between non-native speakers and EFL learners, adds to the existing body of research in a unique context. Unlike Yanti (2008), who delved into McCarthy's (2000) theory to explore adjacency pairs of invitation between lecturers and students, this study broadens the application of discourse analysis to interactions in a language learning environment. Furthermore, this study differs from Boyer (2011), who primarily focused on automatically detecting dialogue structure within corpora of human-human dialogue. While Boyer applied χ^2 analysis and hidden Markov modelling to identify dependent adjacency pairs, our research delves into the nuances of preferred and misreferred responses in specific conversational patterns.

The comparison emphasizes on the diversity of research goals and methodologies within the broader field of discourse analysis. While Yanti (2008)

and Boyer (2011) contribute valuable insights into specific aspects of dialogue structure and adjacency pairs, the present study provides a distinct examination of conversational dynamics between non-native speakers and EFL learners in a teaching-learning context. Together, these studies contribute to a comprehensive understanding of discourse patterns across various settings and communication scenarios.

The findings of this study reveal how the interactional patterns between non-native English speakers and EFL learners at the De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre reflect more than just language exchange—they showcase a social and pedagogical process at work. By analyzing how compliments are given and received through adjacency pairs, we gain insight into how these speech acts support both language learning and relationship building in classroom discourse.

The consistent use of (Q – A) and (Requesting – Acceptance) patterns indicates that the teaching process relies heavily on structured dialogue. Instructors often pose questions not just to test knowledge, but also to initiate interaction and guide learners into confident expression. As noted by Holmes and Stubbe (2015), question-answer sequences in institutional settings like classrooms often serve dual roles: delivering content and managing classroom dynamics. In the context of hospitality training, this structured approach mirrors the kind of polite, clear communication expected in the service industry, thus reinforcing the relevance of such practices beyond the classroom.

Furthermore, the presence of positive utterances (U) and even non-verbal gestures (G) within these adjacency pair exchanges reflects the affective dimension of language teaching. Compliments, in particular, emerge not just as language tools, but as emotional connectors—they signal encouragement, recognition, and social warmth. This supports Goffman's (1967) theory of face, which emphasizes the importance of maintaining one's self-image in interaction. When instructors praise students—even subtly—it helps maintain the learner's positive face, encouraging continued participation and reducing anxiety.

Interestingly, the presence of complex sequences such as (Q (Q – A) A) and (U (Q – A) U) suggests a degree of conversational flexibility and authenticity. These structures go beyond simple stimulus-response and show that learners are beginning to negotiate meaning, ask questions in return, and shape the conversation themselves. This aligns with Kasper and Rose's (2002) concept of pragmatic competence—the ability to use language effectively and appropriately depending on the context. For hospitality students, developing this competence is essential, as their future careers will involve spontaneous conversations with guests from diverse cultural backgrounds.

On the topic of preferred and dispreferred responses, the data reveals a strong preference for direct, expected replies. This suggests that learners are still developing comfort with the unpredictability of real-world dialogue. Dispreferred responses—such as hesitation or unexpected answers—were rare, but when they did occur, they highlighted moments of discomfort or uncertainty. According to Levinson (1983), dispreferred responses are typically accompanied by delays, softeners, or explanations, as a way to mitigate the potential social awkwardness. In the few cases identified in this study, the use of such strategies was minimal, possibly due to the learners' limited language proficiency or unfamiliarity with pragmatic conventions in English.

This brings us to an important implication: while structural awareness of adjacency pairs is present, learners might need more explicit instruction and practice in handling less predictable or more nuanced interactions. Role-playing, reflective discussions, and feedback loops can help bridge this gap, allowing learners to move from merely responding correctly to responding appropriately in various social contexts.

Another interesting observation is the role of culture in shaping adjacency pair behaviour. As Kramsch (1998) emphasizes, language use is always embedded in cultural norms. What is considered polite or appropriate in one culture may not translate directly into another. For instance, accepting a compliment outright may be seen as confident in Western contexts, but might be interpreted as boastful in

some Asian cultures. Learners, therefore, not only need to know what to say but also when and how to say it, given the expectations of their target audience.

Finally, the study adds depth to existing research by situating the analysis in a hospitality education context, where social interaction is a key job skill. It complements earlier work by Yanti (2008), who looked at academic settings, and Boyer (2011), who used computational models to detect dialogue patterns. This study, in contrast, focuses on the human side of interaction—how people connect, respond, and navigate the social world of language in real-time educational settings.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research, centered on the utilization of adjacency pairs between non-native speakers and EFL learners at *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre*, conducted a comprehensive discourse analysis to discern patterns and responses in these conversational interactions. The study revealed prevalent patterns such as (Q – A) and (Q – A, Q – A, Q – A), emphasizing question-answer exchanges and showcasing nuanced conversational flows with the incorporation of positive utterances (U) and non-verbal gestures (G). Preferred responses predominantly manifested as (Question – Answer), followed by (Requesting – Acceptance), while misreferred responses, notably (Question – Unexpected Answer), were less frequent. By extending the application of adjacency pair analysis to the unique setting of foreign language teaching, this research bridges a gap identified in previous studies by Yanti (2008) and Boyer (2011). The study significantly contributes to the discourse analysis literature, offering insights into the dynamics of adjacency pairs in language learning contexts and shedding light on specific patterns that characterize interactions between L2 speakers and EFL learners in a teaching-learning environment.

This study set out to explore how non-native English-speaking instructors and their EFL students at the De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre used adjacency pairs, especially within the context of giving and responding to

compliments. Through careful observation, transcription, and discourse analysis, the research revealed how these conversational structures play a key role in shaping interactions within a professional training environment.

One of the main findings was that certain types of adjacency pairs dominate classroom discourse, particularly the question–answer pattern, which appeared frequently and naturally during instructional interactions. This is expected in a learning setting where students are encouraged to participate through direct questions, requests, and evaluations. However, it was particularly insightful to see how compliments were not merely praise, but also functioned as a pedagogical tool to motivate, guide, and build rapport with learners.

Additionally, the study shed light on the way preferred and dispreferred responses were manifested. Preferred responses were generally timely, concise, and supportive—indicating a shared understanding of social norms. Dispreferred responses, while rare, were marked by hesitation or unexpected content, showing moments where communication could potentially break down or become misaligned. These nuanced findings emphasize how even small conversational cues can carry significant meaning in a classroom setting.

Importantly, the research not only highlights linguistic patterns but also demonstrates how pragmatic competence—the ability to use language appropriately in context—is developed through regular exposure to natural interaction. For students preparing to enter the hospitality industry, where excellent communication is essential, this kind of learning is invaluable. It teaches not just how to speak, but how to interact meaningfully with others from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Limitation

This study on adjacency pairs between non-native speakers and EFL learners at *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre* has limitations that warrant consideration. The findings, while insightful for the specific context, may not be broadly applicable due to the context-specific nature of the research. The

limited sample size and focus on a particular educational institution restrict the generalizability of the results. Cultural influences on communication are not extensively explored, and the temporal aspect is not considered, potentially overlooking evolving language dynamics. Observer bias may be present in the passive observer method used. The study's emphasis on compliments and the scarcity of instances for dispreferred responses may narrow the scope of understanding broader conversational dynamics in language learning environments. These limitations underscore the need for caution in generalizing the findings and suggest avenues for future research to address these constraints.

While the study offers valuable insights, it also faces several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research was conducted at a single institution with a relatively small group of participants. This means that the findings cannot be automatically generalized to all EFL learners or hospitality training centres, especially those in different countries or cultural contexts.

Second, the use of passive observation—while minimally disruptive—limits the ability to fully understand what participants were thinking or intending during specific interactions. Although the transcripts were rich in content, there may have been subtleties in tone, facial expressions, or internal motivations that were missed.

Another limitation lies in the focus on compliments. While this speech act is certainly important in hospitality contexts, other types of speech acts (such as complaints, refusals, or negotiations) also deserve attention. A broader analysis of different interaction types might reveal other interesting adjacency pair patterns or cultural nuances in communication.

Moreover, this study did not explore longitudinal data—how these patterns might evolve over time as students become more proficient or as relationships with instructors deepen. Observing changes in communication over a full semester or training cycle could yield deeper understanding of language development and interpersonal rapport.

Lastly, although ethical standards were followed, including participant consent and anonymity, there remains the possibility of observer's bias, especially since analysis was largely done by a single researcher. A multi-researcher team might offer more objective interpretation and reduce subjectivity in coding and analysis.

Implication

Implications of this research extend to both the academic and practical realms. Academically, the study enriches discourse analysis literature by applying adjacency pair analysis to the unique context of foreign language teaching at *De Access Hotel and Culinary Training Centre*. The identified patterns and responses provide a foundation for further investigations into language learning dynamics. Additionally, the study bridges a gap in existing research, offering insights that can inform future studies exploring conversational patterns in diverse educational settings. On a practical level, the findings hold relevance for educators and language learners, providing a nuanced understanding of effective communication strategies. Awareness of preferred and dispreferred responses, as well as patterns in adjacency pairs, can enhance language teaching methodologies, fostering a more conducive learning environment. Policymakers and curriculum developers may also benefit from these insights, potentially influencing language education policies to align with effective communication practices. Ultimately, the implications of this research lie in its potential to positively impact language education strategies, contributing to improved teaching and learning outcomes.

Despite these limitations, the study offers several important implications for language educators, curriculum developers, and researchers in applied linguistics and hospitality education.

For language teachers, especially those working in vocational or professional English settings, the findings stress the importance of incorporating natural, interactive speaking tasks into the classroom. Instead of focusing solely on grammar and vocabulary drills, educators should allow learners to practice using

adjacency pairs in real-world contexts, such as customer service scenarios, interviews, or team collaboration.

For curriculum developers, the research suggests that pragmatic competence should be an explicit goal of instruction. Learning materials can be designed to include role-plays, video-based case studies, and reflection activities that emphasize social appropriateness and response patterns.

Institutions can also benefit by training teachers—especially those who are non-native speakers themselves—to recognize and model culturally sensitive interaction strategies. This not only improves communication but also fosters a respectful, empathetic learning environment that mirrors the values of the hospitality industry.

From a research perspective, this study opens the door for further investigation into how adjacency pairs function in different contexts, such as cross-cultural teams, tourism front desks, or culinary presentations. It also encourages more collaborative research, combining insights from sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and hospitality studies.

In conclusion, understanding how learners and instructors use and respond to each other's words through adjacency pairs is not just an academic pursuit—it's a practical, human-centered approach that can greatly enrich language education and professional preparation. It shows us that communication is not just about what we say, but how we relate to one another in the process.

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