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A Conversation Analytic Study on Question-Response Sequences in Nonnative Interaction: Focusing on the Use of Alternative Questions

비원어민 상호작용에 나타난 질문-답변 연속체에 관한 대화분석 연구: 선택의문문 사용을 중심으로

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김 민 경

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ABSTRACT

The present study adds to the conversation analytic literature with the findings on question-response sequences found in nonnative interaction. Drawing on around 4-hour long conversation data between Korean learners of English and American English native speakers, this research firstly compared the incidence of three primary question types, polar (yes/no) questions, alternative questions, and content word (WH) questions in nonnative interaction with that of American English native interaction. Also, the use of alternative questions in particular was probed from the perspective of sequential environment and action formation using the techniques of conversation analysis. Finally, a questioner's turn design with trail-off 'or' in turn final position was scrutinized for its unique function as an interactional effort to mark the utterer's disadvantageous epistemic position. This new angle provides counterevidence against the oversimplified interpretation on its use as a "routine practice for asking a polar question".

Quantitative investigation on question-response sequences shows that there is a noticeable difference in the frequency of alternative questions in nonnative interaction (8.2%) compared to their use in native interaction (2.4%), which numerically coincides with the lower use of yes/no questions in nonnative interaction. Next, conversation analyses on the use of alternative questions show that there are at least three more distinctive sequential environments in which alternative questions are deployed in nonnative interaction compared to their use in native interaction. In the current data, other than in the adjacency pair of information request, which was the only interactional site for alternative questions in American English, interlocutors used alternative questions in three

different types of repair sequences: other-initiation of repair, self-initiation of repair (question reformulation), and word-search. Alternative questions in these environments are proposed to be doing various types of actions such as clarifying, offering a candidate answer, and defying preference structure on top of the primary action of information seeking. Lastly, turn-by-turn analyses on the use of trail-off ‘or’ turn ending show that questioners utilize it in a situation where they offer their best guess on the proposed alternative(s) while purposedly constructing an incomplete turn construction unit (TCU) with a dragging “or::” in turn final position. This practice can be interpreted as an effort on the part of the questioner to yield epistemic rights to the recipient who actually possesses superior access to the knowledge domain and in so doing to prompt the addressee to complete the turn with the information being sought.

Findings from this research provide further evidence for the conversation analysis (CA) concept of recipient design in that interlocutors make use of characteristics of different question types according to the demands of on-going conversation, in this case, more needs for clarification and elaboration present in nonnative interaction. Furthermore, dynamic use of alternative questions shown in this study can hopefully be applied in in-class interaction as a way to promote students’ learning as well as in extra-class interaction to improve intersubjectivity between interlocutors.

Key Words: Alternative question, Question-response sequence, Nonnative interaction, Question types, Trail-off ‘or’

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The present chapter introduces the background of this thesis by specifying the purpose of the study and stating the research questions. Section 1.1 clarifies the motivation of the study with concrete enunciation of the academic objectives. Section 1.2 presents the research questions upon which the overall research design is established. Finally, Section 1.3 lays out the chapter organization of the thesis.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

Questions are an effective tool in achieving social actions in everyday life as well as a main vehicle for enlightening students at the site of learning. Asking the right question enables people to accomplish different types of actions such as invitation, request, or comprehension check in a manner that is more efficient and socially acceptable. In this context, investigation of questions is critical in understanding the nature of human interaction and accordingly, “the grammar and format of questions have been extensively studied in linguistics” (Antaki & O’Reilly, 2014, p. 329). Conversation analysis (CA), which zooms in the actual ‘use’ rather than the ‘usage’ of questions in naturally occurring talk, sees questions as first pair parts that nominally make certain type of responses relevant (Schegloff,

1968). To specify, the question “What time is it?” is the first element of an adjoining pair (i.e., adjacency pair in CA terms) that usually has the effect of having the hearer respond with temporal information in the following turn, the second pair part. Each type of first pair part imposes different ‘expectedness’ or ‘relevance’ on the subsequent turn (e.g., invitation-acceptance/rejection, assessment-agreement/disagreement) and this relevance between two turns is the basis of the CA concept ‘adjacency pair’ (Wong & Waring, 2010). In light of adjacency pairs, investigation of questions alone without examining their responses cannot suffice and it is only fair to approach the matter treating question-response sequences as a whole.

CA Researchers have actively attempted to delve into the action of ‘questioning’ in English language (Dryer, 2008; Heritage & Roth, 1995; Keevallik, 2010; Pomerantz, 1988; Raymond, 2003; Schegloff & Lerner, 2009). It is relatively recent, however, that question-response sequences as a whole have been given due attention by researchers. The most prominent progress has been made by a group of CA researchers who jointly worked to compare the question-response sequences across ten different languages (Enfield, Stivers, & Levinson, 2010). The participating researchers investigated the question-response sequences of ten different languages [ǂĀkhoe Hai||om (Namibia), Danish, Dutch, English (US), Italian, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Tzeltal (Mexico), Yéli Dnye (Papua New Guinea)] using the CA methodology and the coding scheme developed for the project. Ten

researchers reported on not only the distribution of the three primary question types (polar, content word, and alternative questions) but also the diverse structure and use in each language so that the generic character of question-response sequences can be compared across languages (Enfield, Stivers, & Levinson, 2010).

The result of the comparative project shows that polar (yes/no) questions (e.g., “Do you remember John from Arkansas?”) form the majority in question-response (Q-R) sequences in all the studied languages except for the case of ǂĀkhoe Hai||om, which used content word (WH) questions (e.g., “Where is the nearest ATM?”) more frequently (Hoymann, 2010). Also, in all nine languages, content word (WH) question was the next commonly used form in the act of questioning showing a significant gap with the least used type of question, alternative questions (e.g., “Would you like coffee, tea, or soda?”). To clarify, alternative questions seem to be used very restrictedly in most languages usually occupying less than two percent of occurrences with the exception of Dutch in which alternative questions take up about 6.5% of all the question-response sequences (Englert, 2010). These findings explain why alternative questions are not so much investigated as other types of questions in the field of linguistics as well as CA. Since the occurrence of alternative questions is very rare, it has not drawn substantial research interest in the field of English conversation analysis in which the execution of research is highly reliant upon the feasibility of data collection. As a result, this area remains unsearched calling for an academic

undertaking in the foreseeable future.

Another reason for researching into the question-response sequences in nonnative interaction lies in the bias present in the existing body of literature in conversation analysis for second language acquisition (CA for SLA). Even though the sociocultural approach to language learning has its foundation on the premise of normality of second language talk (Gardener & Wagner, 2005), researchers have still concentrated on the problematic aspect of second language talk as can be seen in the well-established area of repair organization [i.e., ways of addressing problems in speaking, hearing, or understanding of the talk (Wong & Waring, 2010)] (Hosoda, 2000; Kasper, 1983; Kasper & Kim, 2007; Koshik & Seo, 2012; Nakamura, 2008; Wong, 2000). This tendency somewhat contradicts the assumption of normality of second language talk in social approaches to SLA. Therefore, there is a need to expand the focus of research to more general and diverse interactional elements such as sequence organization or action formation so that it can account for the successful production and outcomes of second language (L2) speakers' activities despite their apparent shortage of linguistic resources. Thus, the study in question-response sequences, which are the most common denominator of adjacency pairs, is expected to assist us in understanding the general attributes of nonnative interaction that might be intrinsically identical to or different from native interaction. For the aforementioned reasons, this conversation analytic study aims at investigating the question-response sequences found in the spoken interaction between English

native speakers and Korean learners of English.

Whereas question-response sequences are the broader focus of the quantitative aspect of this study, the qualitative analysis will specifically targets the least studied type of question in CA, alternative questions. An alternative question, which is one of the three primary question types in English language along with polar (yes/no) questions and content word (WH) questions, is often mistakenly described as a closed choice between pre-arranged options (Quirk, Randolph, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985). However, a careful look at the actual conversation data reveals that neither the speakers of an alternative question nor the respondents necessarily perceive this particular form of question as more constraining than yes/no questions or WH-questions.

As of now, there is not much accrued knowledge about the use of alternative questions in terms of their sequential characteristics or action formation. This insufficiency in research is presumably ascribable to the scarcity of their occurrence in mundane English conversation or the limited actions performed by them in native interaction (Koshik, 2005; Stivers & Enfield, 2010). Reflecting the prevalence of polar questions as a dominant way of asking a question, the existing body of literature on question-response sequences is disproportionately concentrated on yes/no questions (Dryer, 2008; Hakulinen, 2001; Heinemann, 2008; Holmberg, 2013; Keevallik, 2010; Park, 2012; Raymond, 2003) followed by an amply studied area of WH-questions (Egbert & Voge, 2008; Fox & Thompson,

2010; Koshik, 2003; Schegloff & Lerner, 2009). As a result, studies on alternative questions is somewhat fragmented tapping into their use in restricted institutional settings such as in-class interaction (Margutti, 2006), interviews with people with a learning disability (Houtkoop-Steenstra & Antaki, 1997), children's psychiatric interviews (Antaki & O'Reilly, 2014), or speed dating interaction (Stokoe, 2010), and in limited sequential contexts such as other initiation of repair (Koshik, 2005). Furthermore, the focus of institutional conversation analyses on question-response sequences in classroom interaction (Belhiah, 2012; Carlsen, 1991; Koole, & Elbers, 2014; Margutti, 2006) is asymmetrically tilted towards one party of interaction who commonly initiates a question-response sequence, the teacher. For this reason, no substantial attempt has been made to unravel the use of alternative questions regarding their frequency and context especially in casual (i.e., out-of-classroom) nonnative interaction in English.

Such a dearth of research efforts on alternative questions, especially within the field of study in interaction, behooves us to study the unexplored area in depth, and this thesis would be one of the embryonic endeavors to examine the actual use of alternative questions in ordinary interaction. With specific reference to the findings from a collaborative research project concerning the distribution of questions across question types in American English (Stivers, 2010), this study firstly aims at comparing the frequency of the three main question types that appeared in nonnative interaction with that of native interaction in American

English. Subsequently, this study seeks to locate the distinctive sequential characteristics of alternative questions in nonnative talk. Lastly, it investigates the unique actions performed by alternative questions with a special attention to the use of trail-off ‘or’, that is, finishing a sentence without completing it as in “Have you been married, or…?” (Stokoe, 2010). This interactional practice has been simply regarded as a conventional way of asking a polar question, but a closer look at the actual data will tell the different context in which interlocutors choose alternative questions with trail-off ‘or’ over polar questions. These research purposes are condensed into research questions in the following section.

1.2 Research Questions

Owing to the reflective and heuristic nature of qualitative analysis (Agee, 2009), developing research questions for this study also took iterative procedures throughout the whole research period. To increase understanding of the question-response sequences and the interactional practices pertaining to alternative questions in nonnative interaction, three research questions were devised as follows.

1. What is the distribution of questions across question types in nonnative interaction?
2. What are the characteristics of alternative questions in terms of their

sequential environments and action-formation?

3. For what interactional functions do interlocutors deploy trail-off ‘or’?

Answering the first research question will help draw a rough map of the question-response sequences in nonnative interaction while providing quantitative information about the incidence of different question types. The second research question is proposed to qualitatively analyze the different sequential contexts for alternative questions as well as to identify the actions performed by them. Findings as to this question are expected to tell if the employment of alternative questions can bring about any interactional or educational benefits to nonnative interaction. Finally, conversation analysis of the practice of trailing off a sentence with ‘or’ at the end will hopefully help us understand the interactional contexts conducive to such turn design features.

1.3 Organization of the Thesis

The present thesis comprises of five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the purpose of the study and states the research questions. Chapter 2 builds the foundation of the study by reviewing the theoretical framework and examining prior works on the issues relevant to this study. Chapter 3 justifies and expounds on the methodology in use for this research. Chapter 4 elucidates the obtained data from

quantitative and qualitative analyses while discussing the result for each research question. Finally, Chapter 5 draws a conclusion with a summary of findings as well as suggestions for future research on the basis of the limitations of the current study.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The present chapter provides accounts for the foundational theory and concepts prerequisite to understanding this thesis. In Section 2.1, the theoretical background of the study is discussed to contextualize the research and to introduce conversation analysis (CA) as a valid methodology for the research purpose. In Section 2.2, the sociocultural approach to SLA and the position of CA therein are examined. Lastly, in Section 2.3, prior work on the relevant CA issues will be reviewed to accommodate the readers with the basic definitions of key CA concepts as well as a brief summary of the hitherto accumulated knowledge about social interaction.

2.1 Sociocultural Approach to SLA

In the not too long history of the field of Second Language Acquisition, cognitive or psycholinguistic approaches have been yielding a wide range of appreciable findings relating to the nature and characteristics of additional language learning. In particular, during the 1980s and 1990s, researchers have poured unprecedented efforts to disentangle the manifold variables of language learning and to obtain exhaustive understandings about the relationships between

these variables (Ortega, 2009). This classical cognitive SLA perspective stems from Piagetian developmental psychology and is based on the premise that the human mind follows universal patterns even in multifaceted experiences such as additional language learning (Swain & Deters, 2007). Therefore, most research interest within this framework is concentrated on finding commonalities across individuals in the process of acquiring an additional language. Unsurprisingly, cognitive/psycholinguistic theories and methodologies are largely product-oriented and the integrity of research is heavily dependent on the validity of abstract constructs.

A departure from these more positivist paradigms, embracing features of objectivity and generalizability, began in the mid-1990s with a social turn inspired by other human and social sciences which had already undergone a gust of reconceptualization from the influence of sociocultural theory founded by a well-known Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (Ortega, 2009). From the sociocultural perspective, every human experience cannot be extricated from the context in which it occurs and is naturally bound to social and cultural communities surrounding the agents. Thus, the critics who raised a voice for the possibility of alternative approaches in SLA suggested "a pursuit of the particular, and not the general" (Ortega, 2009, p. 216) as a legitimate strategy for research (Block, 1996; Lantolf, 1996; van Lier, 1994). Above all, the watershed work by Firth and Wagner (1997) published in the Modern Language Journal instigated a full-fledged debate

on the disciplinary direction of SLA studies between researchers with cognitive and sociocultural perspectives. As summarized in the reflective commentary by Larsen-Freeman (2007), SLA researchers were divided into three groups, as those who were: "(a) broadly in agreement with Firth and Wagner, (b) partially in agreement, and (c) mostly in disagreement" (p. 773). In the years following, Firth and Wagner's article, in particular, was met with a series of strong opposition from Kasper (1997), Long (1997), and Gass (1998). These classical SLA researchers claimed that the subject of SLA study should be language acquisition rather than language use and criticized the absence of a methodology to prove the empirical evidence of language learning within the sociocultural framework of SLA. Nevertheless, a growing call for reconceptualization of the SLA field appeased the competing views of "cognitive/individual and social/contextual" (Larsen-Freeman, 2007, p.773) approaches, and even the strongest opponents of sociocultural SLA are now making reconciliatory moves to accommodate a new research agenda (Tarone, 2000; Markee & Kasper, 2004). Despite the initial resistance to the introduction of a new framework, the social dimensions of additional language learning are now an equally important research area, and different methodologies are tested to fulfill socially oriented research purposes. The present study also takes the sociocultural approach in the sense that the focus of the study is largely on observing the social site of interaction as it unfolds. Also, the analysis is not based on the observer's viewpoint but is grounded in the perspective/understanding

of the participants. Even though the conversations collected for this study did not occur in official language learning sites such as classroom or tutoring, in the sociocultural framework of learning, language learners' engagement in conversation conducted in the target language can truly be said to involve some degree of language learning.

2.2 Conversation Analysis

The view that sees language learning as social practice and language as social phenomenon grew out of the observation of second/foreign language learners whose linguistic deficiency did not seem to impede their successful interaction in various social settings (Firth & Wagner, 2007). In this framework, language learners are regarded as competent social participants, and language learning is seen as an adaptive process that enables an individual's behavior more viable in a particular context rather than as a linear process of accumulating knowledge (van Lier, 1988). In this context, social approaches to SLA focalize on learning-in-and-through-interaction through uncovering and explicating what L2 users actually do in various interactional contexts (Young, 1999). As an important methodology in this line of research, conversation analysis has been adopted to effectively reveal what the parties actually accomplish using various interactional resources in talk-in-interaction.

Conversation analysis, which was originally developed in the field of sociology, is the study of interactional practices shared by members who speak the same language (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). However, the status of English as lingua franca has dissolved the linguistic boundaries of speech communities (Firth, 1996), and therefore, the interaction between native speakers and nonnative speakers now have fallen into the subject of this unique field of study.

Past trends in CA for the field of SLA were inclined towards nonnative speakers' repair organization (Cazden, 2001; Kasper, 1983; Seedhouse, 2004; Wong, 2000b), category membership between native speakers and nonnative speakers (An, 2011; Bae & Oh, 2013; Hirano, 2009; Park, 2007; Vickers, 2010) and word search (Hosoda, 2000; Helasvuo, Laakso, &Sorjonen, 2003). Findings from these studies suggest that second language conversations are normal conversations (Gardener & Wagner, 2004), and second language learners are active participants in co-constructing meaning in conversation (Gibbons, 2003). Likewise, even though nonnative talk may well have different interactional features, for example, in repair organization (Kasper, 1983; Nakamura, 2008; Seo, 2008; Wong, 2000), the practices of repair do not necessarily equate with a speaker's disfluency or incompetence but rather constitute "an important component of one's interactional competence" (Wong, 2010, p. 211). Therefore, this study of question-response sequences in nonnative interaction is quite timely in light of its broader research focus on the generic character of lingua franca interaction.

2.3 Review of the Previous Studies

In the present section, key concepts of CA and some relevant issues to this thesis are discussed. Other related literature left out in this section will be dealt with when the context gives rise to the necessity of such discussion.

2.3.1 Nonnative Interaction

The term 'nonnative interaction' refers to "talk and interaction in which one or more participants are not native speakers of the language being used" (Olsher, 2000, p. 5). This definition was suggested in David Olsher and Lear Wingard's (2000) edited special issue of the *Issues in Applied Linguistics* as a response to the increasing interests on the application of CA to various areas of applied linguistics and nonnative discourse. Traditionally, conversation analysis has been dominantly monolingual, and the inclusion of nonnative speaker talk as the object of inquiry on interaction had posed potential problems such as transcription difficulties, relevance of categorical identity, and lack of a shared set of "cultural practices or interactional resources" (Wong & Olsher, 2000, p. 114) among participants that are critical in interpreting and analyzing the empirical data.

In an interview upon the controversial issues with regard to nonnative speaker talk, Emanuel Schegloff, a leading figure in the field of CA along with Harvey Sacks, has said that although there are more dangers in applying CA to

nonnative discourse compared to monolingual studies, it is not entirely hopeless if the researcher takes extra precautions in analyzing the data. To mention but a few, a researcher working on nonnative discourse needs not to limit the scope of inquiry in advance from a premature assumption on the interactional deficiency of nonnative speakers or should not "insist it [nonnative identity] into the data" (Wong & Olsher, 2000, p. 125) when there is no displayed orientation of co-interactant(s) to the speaker identity. The reason why nonnative talk should not be approached from pre-formed conceptions is because the notion of recipient design is ubiquitous in human interaction (Sacks et al., 1974). Simply put, speakers design their turn in such a way that can accommodate the recipient's understanding, and listeners as well interpret an utterance based on their assumption about the co-participant's knowledge. This reciprocity is not an interactional practice unique to nonnative talk but the most general and salient principle of conversation across cultures and languages. In other words, it is likely that a researcher draws a faulty conclusion that a certain discursive practice stems from a speaker/hearer's nonnative identity when it is actually the product of recipient-design.

Following the suggestions of Schegloff on the study of nonnative speaker talk, special heed was given throughout the analysis to defy the presupposition that nonnative discourse is fundamentally different from native discourse and also to make observation of the actual data at hand bearing in mind the concept of recipient design.

2.3.2 Question-Response Sequences

As in the pair of a question and an answer, adjacency pairs are a central unit in sequence organization. An adjacency pair, by definition, shows the following features in its basic form (Schegloff, 2007). It is:

> (a) composed of two turns, produced (b) by different speakers, (c) adjacently placed (i.e., one after the other), (d) these two turns are relatively ordered; that is, they are differentiated into first pair parts and second pair parts, and finally (e) pair-type related; that is, not every second pair part can properly follow any first pair part. (p. 13)

These criteria can be more easily understood if we consider the exemplars of adjacency pairs such as greeting-greeting, offer-acceptance/rejection, and summons-answer. Question-response sequences are a prototypical example of adjacency pair in the sense that some other adjacency pairs (e.g., offer-acceptance/rejection, request-acceptance/rejection) do take the form of question-response in many interactional contexts.

Like many other types of adjacency pairs, question-response sequences are also subject to the preference organization (Sacks, 1987). In general, preferred actions are "the 'natural,' 'normal,' or 'expected' actions, and their absence is noticeable" (Wong, 2010, p. 62). For example, to the question "Do you wanna go to

the movies this weekend?" a typical preferred response would be "Why not? What's showing these days?" rather than "Well.. I'm afraid I can't. But I'd love to some other time." As can be seen in this example, compared to dispreferred actions that can be potentially face-threatening, preferred actions usually occur more frequently, engender sequence expansion, and are delivered faster without delay, mitigation, or accounts in natural interaction (Wong, 2010).

Also, question-response sequences involve a special kind of preference structure called "type-conformity" (Raymond, 2003, p. 946), which is related to the grammatical form of question and answer. That is, if the preference of acceptance over rejection to an invitation is action-based, the preference of type-conforming answers over non-conforming ones is associated with the grammatical form of an utterance (Sidnell, 2010). Take an example of WH-type interrogatives and Yes/No questions. Questions beginning with "who", "where", and "when" make relevant answers containing information about a person, a place, or a time whereas polar questions "ostensibly reduce the response they make relevant to a choice between alternative tokens: prototypically 'yes' and 'no' "(Raymond, 2003, p. 944).

One last aspect of preference organization that needs to be taken into account for this study is that "preference applies to both first and second pair parts" (Wong, 2000, p. 62). Ordinarily, when it comes to illustrating the concept of preference organization, preference of second pair parts is discussed as a prototypical example (e.g., agreement is preferred over disagreement in response to assessment).

However, there certainly exists preference for first pair parts, too. For example, in a situation where there is a need to finish up some food, offers (e.g., "Would you like some more pancakes?") would be preferred over requests (e.g., "Can you eat more pancakes?") because dispreferred actions in response to offers routinely minimize face threats compared to the ones to requests. Because of the concept of "face" in this context, the notion of preference is often misunderstood to be a psychological or social concept. In relation to this confusion, the earlier CA researchers (Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987; Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977) strongly maintained that "preference does not refer to personal desires or psychological disposition of speakers" (Geyer, 2008, p. 35) but rather is a "purely formal/structural phenomenon (Bousfield, 2008, p. 237)." Although most CA researchers agree on this purist/traditional approach to preference organization, some have also admitted that the two are virtually indistinguishable because structural markedness present in dispreferred action is closely related with the psycho/social concept of "face" and "exptectedness" (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Heritage, 1989; Lerner, 1996).

The implication of such organization of preference for this study is as follows. If a certain type of question appears more often in nonnative interaction compared to their occurrence in native data, it could indirectly suggest that the preference structure for first pair parts (i.e., questions) in nonnative talk is somewhat different from the one in native talk. To specify, if there is an increase of alternative questions in the current data, their use needs to be analyzed within the sequential

context to see if they are more conducive for eliciting expected answers in terms of speed of delivery or sequence expansion. In addition, alternative questions will be compared with polar questions, which are the most typical kind in terms of preference, to examine how interlocutors make use of the ambiguous nature of alternative questions as to their preference in responses. For example, whereas teachers in classroom interaction occasionally use an alternative question placing the right option on the second alternative thereby encouraging students to choose the correct answer (Margutti, 2006), in daily conversation, alternative questions are ordinarily not as susceptible to the general preference structure as Yes/No questions (Koshik, 2005). Interlocutors' utilization of such features in ordinary conversation will be discussed as part of the findings of this thesis.

2.3.3. Alternative Questions

As defined in a glossary of linguistic terms (SIL International, 2003), the term 'alternative questions' usually refer to a question that presents two or more possible answers and presupposes that only one is true. This definition is better illustrated in the famous grammar book written by Quirk et al. (1985). The entry for alternative questions states that there are two types of alternative questions: the first resembling a yes-no question and the second a WH-question. The question "Shall we

take a bus? or the↓subway"[1] falls into the first category differing only in the final falling intonation from a yes/no question "Shall we take a bus or the subway?" delivered with a final rise. The former normally does not accept yes or no as an answer but expects a choice between a bus and the subway while the latter can be answered with yes or no as in "No, let's take the CAR." On the other hand, the WH-type alternative questions are a compound of two separate questions such as "What would you like on your sandwich? (Would you like) Chicken?, beef?, or ↓ham." For this type of alternative questions, the dictionary provides a parenthetical interpretation of its meaning as "You are being given a choice of only one of the three" (p. 824). These explanations reflect on the traditional belief that alternative questions are a rather forced-choice among the propositions presented by the questioner.

Even in a more recent grammar book titled "English Grammar Today" (Carter, 2011) published by Cambridge University Press, alternative questions are introduced as a question presenting a choice among two or more answers such as "Would you like mayonnaise? or ↓butter on it." In listing the possible responses to this question type, the recent grammar book has certainly evolved enough to suggest wider range of answers such as "both", "neither", or "no thank you" compared to the traditional functional grammar book (Quirk et al., 1985), which limited the answers

[1] The original notation for stress and intonation was substituted with the CA transcription symbols by the researcher without changing the values.

to the proposed choices in the question. Yet, what is overlooked in both grammar books is the realistic probability of answering 'outside the box' such as "I think I'd like some peanut butter." This kind of response might appear astray at first sight since the answerer disregarded the proposition set by the questioner. However, naturally occurring conversation data reveals that interlocutors do not seem to take this type of breakaway any problematic especially when the given alternatives are not an exhaustive list of contextually relevant propositions. As this aspect is part of the findings of this research, it will be further explicated in the result section.

The next point of interest concerning alternative questions is its distinction from polar questions. Unlike the feeble research attention given to alternative questions in the field of CA, there have been constant attempts to study the nature of alternative questions in other fields of study such as syntax and semantics (Biezma, 2009; Bolinger, 1978; Schwarz, 1999; van Rooy & Šafář̌ová , 2003). In the field of semantics, for instance, alternative questions are viewed as a strategic employment of plausible responses to induce an answer for the BIG question. In other words, an alternative question "Are you making pasta? or ↓fish" can be strategically employed to achieve the goal of obtaining an answer for the BIG question "What are you making?" In this sense, polar and alternative questions are similar to each other in that they are sub-questions of a WH-question. What outwardly distinguishes them is their different final intonation. In semantic terms, final falling intonation signals a "closure operator carrying presuppositional information" (Biezma, 2009, p. 47)

about open/closed lists. To illustrate, polar questions involve open lists signaled by a final rise whereas alternative questions entail closed lists marked by a final fall in intonation. The strict application of this theory would result in the same conclusion that alternative questions are a forced choice among the limited number of options as defined in the grammar books (Quirk et al., 1985; Carter, 2011; SIL International, 2003). However, these assertions can be nullified when we observe how interactants understand the import of alternative questions in the on-going talk-in-interaction. In the interaction data collected for this study, an alternative question delivered with final falling intonation is not always perceived to suggest a closed list for response. What functions as a critical criterion whether the question involves an open/closed list seems to be the relative epistemic status of each participant upon the knowledge domain being discussed. The issue of epistemics will be shortly dealt with in the next section.

With respect to the order of the alternatives, there are contrasting findings between mundane conversation and institutional talk. According to Koshik (2005), who has studied alternative questions in daily English conversation,[2] there is no marked preference or significance for the first alternative over the second and vice versa. On the other hand, Antaki and O'Reilly (2014) found that mental health

[2] Some of the examples in Koshik's (2005) study were drawn from institutional encounters, but the conversations were mostly about routine events or non-sensitive issues unlike the study of Antaki and O'Reilly (2014) whose research subjects were children with possible psychiatric conditions.

practitioners often place an undesirable alternative on the first position and the less negative answer on the second in an effort to make a choice of the latter a preferred response. In a similar vein, Margutti (2006) found that teachers in classroom interaction routinely put the right answer on the second alternative implicitly making the right answer a preferred response. Since the current study does not draw conversation data from institutional talk, the order of alternatives may not bear significance in terms of preference, but it will be reviewed from a different perspective of certainty (or epistemic authority).

Finally, there is an interesting turn design called "trail-off 'or'" (Stokoe, 2010, p. 260), which lies in between the boundaries of polar and alternative questions. Here the term 'trail-off' refers to a speaker' purposedly unfinished turn construction with a final "or" that is characterized by a stretched turn ending and/or continuing intonation. This particular type of question has been "routinely treated as a practice for asking a polar question" (Stivers & Enfield, 2010, p. 2622) because it is often responded with yes or no. However, through conversation analysis of this turn design, it will be demonstrated that interlocutors deploy such a turn design feature for a specific interactional purpose in Section 4.3.

2.3.4 Epistemics

Talking is very indigenous to human. Human interaction is essentially a transaction of one another's internal ideas and emotions that are otherwise unseeable, and for this reason, conversation is the primary means of establishing understanding or intersubjectivity between individuals (Schutz, 1967). Knowledge is also a common object of interactional transaction, and Epistemics, the study of knowledge in crude terms, deals with not only objective facts but also subjective information such as feelings and opinions. As manifestly declared by Sacks, one of the first establishers of CA, conversation analysis is a systematic science of social action and the pursuit of knowledge is one of the crucial driving forces of social actions (Heritage, 2012b). In question-response sequences, in particular, the primary action being implemented is "conveying of news to otherwise unknowing recipients" (Heritage, 2012b, p. 30), and in this context, Heritage used the term epistemic engine (2012b, p. 34) to describe the role of information imbalance between interlocutors as normative warrants for talking.

A search for knowledge is usually realized through a request for information/confirmation in talk-in-interaction, and there are multiple resources that are commonly utilized by interlocutors in soliciting the target information: "interrogative morphosyntax, interrogative intonation, recipient epistemic expertise on the topic relative to the speaker, and speaker gaze to the recipient" (Stivers &

Rossano, 2010, p. 8). As with the commonsensical action of interrogative syntax and rising intonation as questioning, information is also ‘a key element’ in deciding if the utterance is a real question in pursuit of particular information. For example, an utterance with an interrogative syntax with a rising intonation would normatively make relevant an answer from the next speaker. However, this proposition does not hold in every context if we take into account the epistemic status of the speaker and the recipient. When a turn designed in interrogative syntax is produced by someone in a known (K+, i.e., has more access to the knowledge domain) position, the turn is ordinarily interpreted by the addressee either as a pre-informing question (e.g., “you know what?”), a known answer question (e.g., teacher question) or a rhetorical question (e.g., “Can't you do anything right?”) rather than as a request for information. In this context, Heritage (2012b) claimed that given the specification of ‘Who knows better?’, this unequal access to a certain knowledge domain between parties “dominates morphosyntax and intonation in shaping whether utterances are to be understood as conveying or requesting information” (p. 24). This can explain why some languages can manage the action of questioning without any form of interrogative syntax for polar questions (Dryer , 2008). The relevance of the relative information status among interactants in question-response sequences will be further examined in Section 4.3.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

The present chapter reports on the comprehensive procedure of this study: recruitment of participants, data collection and transcription, quantification, codification, and finally qualitative conversation analysis. Section 3.1 spells out the recruiting process and the configuration of conversation participants. Section 3.2 gives details of data processing from collection, transcription to quantification. Lastly, Section 3.3 briefly explains the basic concepts of conversation analysis as the primary methodology of this study.

3.1 Participants

Participants were recruited online via the medium of social network service (SNS). For around a two-month-long recruiting and data collecting period, five English native speakers and seven Korean learners of English voluntarily participated in the research. Although this study did not assume any a priori categorical information as a variable for analysis, the recruitment notice specified that only those who possess above intermediate level English proficiency are eligible to apply for participation so as to secure a sufficient amount of interactional product and to maintain the pace of each conversation comparable. The standard for ‘intermediate level English proficiency’ was decided against the

score ranges of the Test of English Proficiency developed by Seoul National University (TEPS).

Table 3.1 Description of the Participants

Categorical Information	Names[3]	Age	Gender	TEPS Score Range[4] / Nationality
Korean learners of English	JAY	21-25	Male	901-990
	HEA	25-30	Female	901-990
	MAE	21-25	Female	801-900
	MEG	26-30	Female	801-900
	KAI	21-25	Male	801-900
	GIL	21-25	Male	801-900
	BON	21-25	Female	700-801
Native speakers of English	IKE	35-40	Male	American
	SAY	25-30	Male	American
	LIL	30-35	Female	American
	PAM	25-30	Female	American
	EMM	30-35	Female	American

[3] All the names appearing in the conversation data are pseudonyms.

[4] The participants did not have to submit their certified English test scores. Instead, on the day of data collection, they were asked to give the researcher their approximate TEPS score ranges verbally which were recorded by the researcher.

All the nonnative subjects are Korean learners of English who are aged between 20 and 30 and have less than two years of living experience in English speaking countries. The approximate TEPS score ranges given by the Korean participants are presented in Table 3.1. Despite the fact that their unofficially submitted TEPS scores did not range over 250 points, there was a fair degree of variance in the Korean participants' speaking abilities as can be observed in the conversation data in Chapter 4. At the same time, it would be advisable to clearly state that Korean participants' proficiency levels were not actively used as analytic criteria except for a limited number of cases where such projection could be validated by the data. Table 3.1 also shows that all the native informants are native speakers of American English aged between 25 and 40. They have varying degrees of exposure to Korean language and culture, and all have had one to three years of English teaching experience in Korea. The data were collected from five dyads and one three-member group, and the detailed configuration is provided in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Conversation Group Configuration

Number of Interactants	Status for the Language of Interaction (English)	Acquaintedness	Duration
Two	NS-NNS (PAM-MEG)	Acquainted	67m 34s
	NS-NNS (IKE-MAE)	Unacquainted	53m 58s
	NS-NNS (LIL-KAI)	Unacquainted	52m 23s
	NS-NNS (SAY-HEA)	Acquainted	50m 42s
	NNS-NNS (JAY-GIL)	Unacquainted	14m 25s
Three	NS-2NNS (EMM-HEA-BON)	Acquainted	11m 03s
		Total	4h 18 m

As Table 3.2 shows, the group configuration is mostly dyads consisting of one English native speaker and one Korean learner of English with the exception of one pair in which one advanced and one low intermediate level speaker participated. The three letter pseudonyms were chosen uniformly both for native and nonnative speakers for some reasons. Most of all, using English as a lingua franca, interlocutors do not always orient to their speaker identities as a native or nonnative speaker of the language in use (Bae & Oh, 2013); therefore, employing different name systems for native and nonnative speakers respectively brings in a potential danger for the analyst as well as readers of this thesis to falsely attribute the product of conversation to their speaker identity. Also, in drawing conversation

analytic discussion, interactants' categorical information is provided near the beginning of each excerpt, so the information cannot be said to be entirely unaccounted.

The reason why 'acquaintedness' was proposed as one of the grouping criteria other than the interactants' first language is as follows; with question-answer sequences as the main interest of the study, the possibility that knowledge about other interactant(s) might influence the turn-design features or types of action implemented in talk-in-interaction was raised as a prospect variable that needed to be taken into consideration for the research design. Participants in the three unacquainted dyads were randomly paired by the researcher on the day of data collection, and the data from acquainted groups were collected during the participants' casual social gatherings.

There can be raised a question about the naturalness of the conversation data for this study because of its inclusion of strangers as conversation partners. Although conversation analysis restricts its study object to naturally occurring talk in principle, talking with unacquainted person(s) is a natural human experience in everyday life. As the data testifies, after the first few ice breaking minutes pass, interlocutors do not overtly show symptoms of experimental talking except for their continual efforts to search for new topics. Such interactional tendency of pursuing contiguity and minimizing silence is not idiosyncratic to interaction between strangers but quite general in mundane talk (Sacks et al., 1974). Certainly,

the degree of pressure on continuing conversation might vary to some extent depending on the relationship of interactants; for example, we would normally feel less uneasy with prolonged silence when we are talking to more familiar person(s) such as family or close friends. Thus, this study treats interaction between strangers as naturally occurring talk since less acquaintedness does not seem to change the fundamental mechanism of talk.

3.2 Conversation Data

The ensuing sections from 3.2.1 to 3.2.3 give details of the processing of the audio-recorded data such as collecting, transcribing, quantifying, and codifying of the conversations.

3.2.1 Data Collection and Transcription

The conversation data come from audio recordings of approximately 4 hour 20 min long mundane talk in English language. The audio recording was conducted with four different electronic gadgets[5] equipped with a digital audio-recording function. Each conversation was recorded with a main audio-recording

[5] ESONIC Linear PCM Recorder MR-340, Cowon J3 MP3 player, Samsung I9300 Galaxy S III, Apple i-Phone 5S

device along with a smart phone for backup, and the backup data actually proved to be useful when the main audio-recorder failed to store the data with the expected sound quality. These recordings were then carefully transcribed by the researcher according to the specific conventions[6] originally developed by Gail Jefferson and revised in more recent years (Jefferson, 2004).

3.2.2 Quantification of Question-Response Sequences

Although there have been an increasing number of quantitative studies of interaction, conversation analysis is irrefutably qualitative by its nature. In his article "Reflections on Quantification in the Study of Conversation," Schegloff (1993), the most influential figure in CA, maintained his position that quantitative studies of interaction cannot be defensibly done without suffering the loss of a whole range of sequential contexts that are indispensable in inquiry into interaction. To quote his own words, "quantification is no substitute for analysis" (p. 114). In this sense, it should be reaffirmed that the ultimate purpose of the current study is not to underwrite the significance of the quantitative findings. Rather, the basic comparison of occurrences between native data and nonnative data serves as a point of departure in identifying a promising area of investigation. Meanwhile, Stiver and Enfield (2010) justified the usefulness of quantitative data especially in

[6] Refer to Appendix 1 for Glossary of transcript symbols

drawing a comparison among interaction data that might have different interactional resources, and the rationale for adopting their coding instructions is discussed in detail as follows.

For comparative purposes, this study borrowed and adapted a coding scheme outlined in Enfield, Stivers, and Levinson's (2010) for quantifying the data at hand. The coding scheme was developed by researchers who collaboratively worked for the 10-language comparative project on question-response sequences in spontaneous conversation based on the existing qualitative analyses of interaction. Iterative modifications had been made in order to reflect language-specific traits such as auxiliary-subject inversion and morphological marking and also to incorporate conceptual and analytic issues brought up in the discussion among the researchers. For these reasons, the contributors to this project confidently claim this coding scheme to be "empirically well-grounded and analytically well-motivated" (p. 2620) categories that can be applied to any language including English as a lingua franca, although they also admit that the scheme cannot be perfect and thus requires further modification along the way. Thanks to the project's decision to publicize detailed instructions for codification, other researchers in the field are now kindly supplied with an investigation tool for further research, and this study is one of the beneficiaries of such generous decision.

All the utterances regarded as doing questioning were counted according

to the inclusion criteria and classified into three major types of questions: polar (yes/no), alternative, and content word (WH). Although the names of the question types, and even the term 'question' itself may invoke the concept of interrogatives, it is now well acknowledged that the act of questioning can be accomplished through various mechanisms other than lexico-morphosyntactic constructions, for example, paralinguistic features (e.g. rising intonation), multimodal expressions (e.g. eye-gaze), recipient epistemic superiority on the issue (e.g., B-event statements[7]) (Heritage & Roth, 1995; Heritage, 2012b; Rossano, Brown, & Levinson, 2009; Stivers & Rossano, 2010). Therefore, the researcher had to carefully examine the transcribed data while simultaneously listening to the audio-recordings to identify a question-response sequence checking three relevant turn-design features (i.e. lexico-morphosyntax, stress-intonation, and recipient-focused epistemicity) except multimodal expressions which were not available in the current audio-recorded data. Below is Table 3.3 showing the inclusion criteria used for identifying question-response sequences from the conversation data. There were such cases that Stivers and Enfield's (2010) inclusion criteria did not afford clear instructions so the researcher supplemented the coding scheme with a slight revision as was suggested by the creators of the original version. The revision is marked in italics in Table 3.3.

[7] B-event statements refer to statements by one speaker that include some events over which the recipient has better or more authoritative access (e.g. recipient feelings or experiences, recipient's opinions, recipient's plans for future courses of action) (Rossano, 2010, p. 2762).

Table 3.3 Inclusion Criteria

A	An utterance had to be either (or both) a formal question (i.e., with lexical, morphological, syntactic or prosodic marking) or a functional question (i.e., effectively seeking information, confirmation, or agreement regardless of their sentence type) to be coded as a question.
B	Newsmarks such as ‘‘Really?’’, ‘‘Is it?’’ or ‘‘Yeah?’’ were coded as functional questions because they were routinely treated as seeking confirmation. *However, if the same tokens were delivered in an exclamatory tone and/or immediately followed by other utterances in the same turn (e.g., ‘‘RE::Ally. fantastic wow.[8]’’) expressing the state of surprise rather than seeking confirmation, they were not coded as questions.*[9]
C	Turns that were interrogatively formatted (e.g., syntactically) but directed to oneself rather than to a recipient (*outlouds*, e.g., “Um.. what was the other thing um: there’s another thing I had to ask you. uh let’s see”) were not coded as questions since they were not used in search of a response.
D	Questions seeking acknowledgment in, for example, the middle of a storytelling (e.g.,‘‘and they tell you the whole movie, right? and I can’t stand that.’’) were not coded as questions because they appeared to seek neither confirmation nor

[8] All the examples in parantheses come from the conversation data collected for this study.

[9] Entries in italics are added by the researcher to refine the coding scheme in response to incidents of uncategorizable utterances.

	affirmation and also because the hearer normally did not respond other than with an acknowledgment token such as “Mm Hm”.
E	Questions offered in reported speech (e.g.,‘‘so yesterday I asked the airlines why should I pay too much maybe twice than I expect’’) were not coded as questions.
F	Requests for immediate physical action (e.g.,‘‘Meggie I can't get the noo(hh)dles how can you get the noodle, gimme help.’’) were not coded if it was a non-verbal action that was the relevant next response.
G	*When a speaker started a question but dropped the turn and began a new one, thereby annulling the obligation to respond (e.g., “>°you know what's°< work ethic or what but um (.) but yeah my senior year of college.”), that turn was not coded as a question.*

(Adapted from Stivers & Enfield, 2010)

3.2.3 Codification of Question Types

Once all the question-response sequences were singled out, the next step was to categorize each sequence according to the following coding scheme in Table 3.4. Although the original scheme covered extensive range of features such as declarative/interrogative formatting, positive/dubitative(e.g., “maybe”)/negative marking, and types of content word in WH-questions, etc., this study employed only the part that is relevant in distinguishing question types as in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Question Type Coding Scheme

Polar Question	A polar question is any question that makes relevant affirmation/confirmation or disconfirmation. It contains a proposition with two possible answers in semantic terms: true/the case versus not true/not the case. The question might involve a question particle (e.g., "right?"), inversion, or a tag. It does not necessarily involve formal interrogative marking (as in a declarative question). It could be positive or negative.
Content (Q-word) question	A content question (also known as Q-word or WH-question) is where part of a proposition is presupposed, and the utterance seeks the identity of one element of the proposition. Thus, in 'Who stole my newspaper' it is presupposed that 'Someone stole my newspaper', and the purpose of the question (at least nominally) is to ascertain the identity of the person corresponding to this 'someone'. Variation in a language in the syntactic position of the Q-Word is not relevant to whether it is coded as such (cf. "Where do you work." or "You work where?").
Alternative question	Alternative questions include the proposal of a restricted set of alternative answers in their formulation (e.g., "all they are fifth graders? or sixth grad-graders."). Note that just having "or" in the question does not automatically make it an alternative question. "Do you want coffee or", for instance, was not coded as an alternative question because (1) the prosodic contour of

	these questions is recognizeable as a discrete way of asking a question, and (2) they are routinely treated as a practice for asking a polar question as evidenced by regularly receiving answers.
"Through-produced" multi-questions	*"Through-produced" multi-question types in which more than two questions are delivered in the same turn (e.g., "so what was the purpose of the meeting < why did you have to go travel.") were coded as one enquiry.* *When the multi-question question combined polar and content word questions, the one that the recipient is oriented to, which was usually the last question, was counted.*[10]

(Adapted from Stivers & Enfield, 2010)

What needs to be noted in Table 3.4 is the criterion for alternative question type. This coding scheme is also reflecting an old belief that alternative questions embody two or more assumptions envisioned by the questioner and thereby, at least tacitly, constrain the response to the proposed set of alternatives. To effectively compare the frequency of alternative questions in nonnative interaction with that of American English native interaction, it was both imperative and essential to apply the same coding scheme in categorizing question types. From Section 4.3 and beyond, however, utterances containing trail-off 'or' herein described as a routine practice for asking a polar question will be reexamined in

[10] Italicized entry was added by the researcher for more correct quantification.

light of its unheeded functions that are related to interlocutors' relative epistemic status on the matter being discussed.

3.3 CA Methodology

In the study of interaction, utterances are considered to be more than mere verbalization of ideas but are deemed to be a tool for achieving social actions. This view is well expressed in Schegloff's outlook on language, "language is not only a tool for thinking, it is also a tool for acting" (1996, p. 4). Accordingly, any conversation analytic studies are bound to investigate the human interaction from the perspective of action formation trying to answer the central question, "why that now?" (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 299). Put differently, analysts need to answer the question "what is the interactant trying to accomplish through his/her utterance at that particular moment?" while observing the surface of interaction. The indispensability of actions in analyzing the conversation explains the idiosyncratic use of present participles such as 'doing questioning' or 'agreeing and disagreeing' in CA, which might sound unnatural to ordinary people outside the field.

If 'action' is the central focus of study in CA, 'structure' is both the goal and means of analyzing the talk. Here, structure refers to the different layers of organizations that construct talk-in-interaction such as turn taking organization, sequence organization, repair organization, and so on. These structural patterns

found in interaction help discover the elements of interactional orderliness that interactants follow while concurrently serve as the prime source from which analytical observation can be drawn. More importantly, CA rigorously sticks to the principle of 'emic-perspective' meaning that analysts should refrain from inferring a conclusion from their own frame of reference but adopt the participants' viewpoints while attending to the evidence internal to the raw conversation data.

In accordance with the major principles of CA, the current study adheres to the ethnomethodological standards in analyzing the talk. More specifically, careful attention is paid to obtain the hearer's understanding of an immediately preceding utterance as well as to warrant the accountability of such interpretation based on the sequential positioning of each utterance. Besides, "displayed orientation of a co-participanat to some feature" (Schegloff, 1993, p. 101) of interaction is also the essential criteria for examining the evidence of 'relevance' in talk-in-interaction.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

To comply with the requirements for social and behavioral research at Seoul National University, the researcher completed the CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) Program at the University of Miami through an online course and obtained the certificate on May 30, 2014. Upon the completion of the CITI program (Completion Report Number: K-2014-13082502), the incipient research design along with the subject recruitment document and consent form were submitted to Seoul National University Institutional Review Board (SNUIRB) and acquired its approval to launch the research (IRB No. 1407/002-015) on July 24, 2014.

As initially planned and observed, there was no coercion involved to persuade any subject into participating in the research during the recruiting and data collecting process, and all the subjects voluntarily decided on their participation. The researcher did not give any personal information about other interlocutor(s) when they were paired with an unacquainted partner, nor were the interactants given any specific topic to talk about since this research seeks to investigate day-to-day interaction in principle.

Personal information of the participants is not exposed in the thesis except their approximate TEPS scores and proficiency level that they agreed to provide anonymously for analysis, and they were only asked to give their age

range rather than exact age as in “between 26-30”. All the persons’ names were replaced with pseudonyms before being transcribed and other proper nouns such as school names and residential area that might provide any clue in inferring participants’ identity were left out in the quoted excerpts. In addition, after quoting the excerpts from the collected conversation data, the researcher reviewed the content of the excerpts several times to make sure their private information was safely secured.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present chapter delineates the findings of this research in the order of the proposed research questions. First, the result of quantitative analysis on the distribution of different question types will be presented in Section 4.1. In Section 4.2, the actual use of alternative questions will be categorized and analyzed based on their sequential contexts as well as action-formation. Next, Section 4.3 demonstrates how trail-off ‘or’ is used from the perspective of epistemic status.

4.1 Distribution of Questions in Nonnative Interaction

According to the coding scheme presented in Section 3.2.3, the transcribed data was first analyzed turn-by-turn to detect the implemented action of questioning by the interlocutors. Occurrences of each question type were counted and the percentage of their incidence was calculated to be compared with that of American English data (Stivers, 2010). Table 4.1 shows the distribution of questions used in the current conversation data across three different question types.

Table 4.1 Distribution of questions across question type

	LIL KAI	PAM MEG	IKE MAE	HEA EMM BON	JAY GIL	SAY HEA	Occurrence	Percentage	American English
Polar	81	121	26	13	9	64	314	**64.1%**	**70.1%**
Al-Q	10	11	13	2	1	3	40	**8.2%**	**2.4%**
WH	11	75	25	6	1	18	136	**27.8%**	**27.4%**
Sub-Total	102	207	64	21	11	85	**Total**	**N=490**	**N=328**
Duration [11]	52'	68’	54’	11’	14’	51’	Total: 250 min		

Out of the total 490 occurrences of question-response sequences, which is about one and a half times larger sample compared to the American English data, 314 sequences turned out to be polar questions forming around 64 percent. This dominance is not surprising considering the fact that polar question is the most favored question type in many other languages such as Italian (Rossano, 2010), Dutch (Englert, 2010), or Korean (Yoon, 2010) even though linguistic resources available for forming polar questions vary greatly across languages (Dryer, 2013). Intriguingly, the proportion of WH-questions remains pretty much the same

[11] The time duration was rounded to a whole number.

between the two data when there is a slight decrease in the frequency of polar questions in nonnative data compared to its counterpart of American English data. It might be a coincidence that the decrease in polar questions jibes with the increase of alternative questions at least numerically. Nevertheless, it seems apparent that interlocutors in nonnative interaction deployed alternative questions about three and a half times more often than American English speakers did in talk-in-interaction.

The accurate value for the time duration of American English conversation data is not specified in Stivers' study (2010) except the total number of conversation set, which is 17. Therefore, a direct comparison between the two studies cannot be made if there were more question-response sequences in one data than the other within the same time frame. However, one notable feature illustrated in Excerpt (1) hints at such possibility of more frequent incidents of question-response sequences in nonnative talk. Excerpt (1) is a rather extreme but not an uncommon example that demonstrates how one question-response sequence can be significantly expanded creating more than usual number of inserted Q-R sequences in nonnative interaction due to some phonological differences between the interlocutors' first languages.

Excerpt (1) [NS-NNS SAY-HEA]

```
01 ->     MEG:   are there thee lilakkura café is i:n
02               ((school name)) university.
03        PAM:   it's called () it's not called lilakkura
04               café it's called capy capy loom loom
05        MEG:   a [hahahahah]
06        PAM:      [hahahahaha]
07  ->    MEG:   what? cop-
08        PAM:   copy copy loom loom
09        ()
10        MEG:   caffee
11        PAM:   copy
12        MEG:   coffee
13        PAM:   no- not coffee but copy
14   ->   MEG:   copy, si o pi wy?
15        PAM:   si- sio- () yeah but the thee spelling is
16               (0.2) ca- AH AH
17        MEG:   ah
18        PAM:   ah sound
19        MEG:   a:hhh kaah
20        PAM:   (k)a::h
21        MEG:   capy
22        PAM:   copy
23        MEG:   copy copy room room
24        PAM:   loom loom
25        MEG:   room room
26        PAM:   loo::m loom
27   ->   MEG:   uh hhh what?
28        PAM:   hhhh
29   ->   MEG:   okay how does it spell. ri-
```

In answer to MEG's first question in line 01 as to the existence of a café in a certain location, PAM does not initially provide a type-conforming answer but

repairs on the name of the café. This statement, although appearing rather dispreferred in its structure, is actually an aligning response in its semantic make up, confirming the location of the café as it is stated by MEG. Meanwhile, the other-initiated repair on the café name leads to at least four more additional question-response sequences within the excerpt (line 07, 14, 27, 29) and continues quite a while after the excerpt ends. Similarly, in nonnative interaction data that were collected for this study, there appeared a good number of such repetitive sequences that seek confirmation or clarification on the preceding utterance which commonly result in sequence expansion characteristic of nonnative interaction (Huh, 2014; Park, 2007), and this might have led to an increase in overall incidence of question-response sequences.

Regardless, the ratio of content word questions remains unchanged between the two data sets, and it is a logical next step to look on where the changes might have come from: less use of polar questions and more employment of alternative questions. Since the focus of this research is on alternative questions rather than polar questions that have been extensively researched in other studies, we will look at the interactional environments of alternative questions in the next section.

4.2 The Characteristics of Alternative Questions in Use

In the following sections from Section 4.2.1 to 4.2.5, different types of sequential environments for alternative questions will be explored, first quantitatively with the result of codification and then qualitatively with conversation analytic discussion. Subsequently, in Section 4.2.6, excerpts containing alternative questions will be analyzed from the perspective of action formation.

4.2.1 Sequential Environments for Alternative Questions

In American English native data (Stivers, 2010), the only sequential environment where alternative questions occurred was in the adjacency pair of information request which also accounts for about half occasions (n=20) in nonnative interaction. In the current nonnative interaction data, participants used alternative questions in at least three more environments, other initiation of repair, self-initiation of repair, and word search, which take up about the same number of incidents as information request when combined.

Table 4.2 shows the distribution of alternative questions across different

sequential contexts. Note that the digits presented in parentheses show the incidence of questions involving trail-off ‘or’ in each category. The occurrence of trail-off ‘or’ is absent only in self-initiated repair sequences, and the possible reason for this phenomenon will be explained in Section 4.3.

Table 4.2 Use of alternative questions in different sequential environments

	Information Request	**Other initiated repair**	**Self-initiated repair**	**Word search**	**Total**
LIL-KAI	5(3)[12]	2	1	2(3)	10(6)
PAM-MEG	5(3)	2		1(1)	11(1)
IKE-MAE	5	2(1)	6		13(1)
J-E-B		2			2
JAY-GIL	(1)		1		1(1)
SAY-HEA	2(1)	1			3(1)
Total	**20(5)**	**9(1)**	**8**	**3(4)**	**40(10)**

[12] The digit in the parenthesis is the number of trail-off ‘or’ used in each context.

4.2.2 Information Request

Now we will have a look at each sequential environment in the order of frequency. Excerpt (2) below shows a canonical adjacency pair of information seeking involving an alternative question. During their lunch meeting, MEG and PAM face a choice between two alternatives, noodle and cheese. MEG asks for PAM's choice in line 01, and PAM provides a type-conforming response with her preference stated within it, which then is accepted by MEG in the next turn.

Excerpt (2) [NS-NNS PAM-MEG]

```
01  ->     MEG:     you want (.) noodle? or cheese.
02         PAM:     noodle.  [hh]
03         MEG:              [noo]dle then ta(hh)ke this.
```

Considering MEG's formulation of her turn as an alternative question, it appears that one is supposed to choose only one kind so that the other can have the other menu probably because there are not enough portions for two. The formulation of the question as well as the situation in which it appears resembles the sample alternative question "Do you want SHERbet? YOgurt?, or ↓FRUIT" from the functional grammar book (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 824). In such a context, an alternative question is literally being used to pressure the answerer to make a choice among the closed options. However, alternative questions found in different

interactional contexts show that neither a questioner nor a recipient necessarily orients to such constraining nature of this question type. The next extract illustrates the case in point well.

Excerpt (3) [NS-NNS LIL-KAI]

```
01   ->    LIL:    did you travel (.) to those places with
02               your class? or with your family.
03         KAI:    with my (.) two closest friends
04         LIL:    [oh nice]
```

In Excerpt (3), LIL asks about KAI's company on his trip to Eastern Europe using an alternative question. Drawing on his previous telling about his high school field trip abroad, LIL composes her question with the two most plausible candidates she can think of in the canonical intonation of alternative questions, a rise on the former alternative and downward final intonation on the latter. As Bolinger (1957) and Koshik (2005) stated, there seems to be no particular preference for one alternative over the other in this form of questioning. However, as can be seen in KAI's response in this sequence, the recipient does not necessarily have to choose from the proffered options but can instead answer the implied content word question "who did you travel with?" when the answer is not among the given alternatives.

The difference between Excerpt (2) and (3) lies not in the linguistic form of questions but in the epistemicity relevant to the question being asked. In Excerpt

(2), every possible alternative on the menu is visibly present in front of both interlocutors since this segment of conversation is taking place after the waiter served all the ordered menu. Thus, MEG composes her question with a comprehensive list of available options. Therefore, notwithstanding the possibility of PAM choosing to respond in a non-conforming way as in "both / neither / can we just share?", it is more likely that such a question is understood as a request for selection between the proposed options. In contrast, in Excerpt (3), there exists an epistemic imbalance between the questioner and the recipient intrinsically in favor of the latter (B-event), and it is very unlikely that LIL can enumerate an exhaustive set of alternatives in her question. For this reason, in such a circumstance, even an alternatively formatted question cannot be perceived to be doing the same action as the canonical example described in the functional grammar book. In this sense, alternative questions bear more resemblance to WH-questions regarding their relevant answers with the contrast lying only on the range of contextually available answers. Polar questions, on the other hand, nominally make relevant answers containing yes/no instead of content words.[13]

The resemblance of alternative questions to WH-questions is not unnoticed by earlier researchers in various fields. For one, in the field of semantics,

[13] Some conversation analytic researchers (Sorjonen, 2001; Heritage & Raymond, 2012) have claimed that simply saying yes/no to polar questions might imply lack of agency on the part of a responder and thus be perceived as insufficient.

van Rooy and Šafář̌ová (2003) contended that alternative questions can be seen as "special cases of WH-questions" (p. 292) in that an alternative question is a strategic enquiry about sub-propositions of which elimination/selection (rejection/acceptance in CA terms) logically entails an answer to a Big (WH) question. Second, in the functional approach to language, alternative questions are ordinarily described as an elliptical form of WH-question, particularly in conjunction with the content word 'which'. For example, the sentence "Which ice cream would you LIKE? Would you like CHOcolate?, vaNILla?, or STRAWberry." (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 823) illustrates the close linkage between alternative questions and WH-questions. Nonnative interlocutors also take advantage of such resemblance in designing their turns as exemplified in the following segment of interaction.

In Excerpt (4), HEA, a Korean learner of English, asks about how SAY, an American native speaker, has purchased the plane ticket for his flight back to the States.

Excerpt (4) [NS-NNS SAY-HEA]

```
01        SAY:   so::: (1.0) that's how:: yeah, (1.0)
02               it's like a couple like ten days in
03               ↑Taiwan, (2.2) 23 hours in ↑Beijing
04               (0.5) and then,
05        HEA:   ↓hm:m
06        SAY:   go home
07  ->    HEA:   but did you buy the ticket? (.) like
08               separately? o::r is it u:::h connected
09               ticket.
```

10 (0.5)
11 SAY: u:::m (0.7) three: tickets.
12 HEA: ah three tickets. a::h
13 SAY: seoul to ↑Taiwan
14 (0.2)
15 HEA: Taiwan to ↓Be[ijing]
16 SAY: [a:::h] Taiwa::n to
17 Sanfrancisco actually
18 HEA: a:::::h

Her initial turn-design of interrogative in line 07 cannot be understood as a polar question asking whether SAY has bought the ticket or not because he has given some information about his purchase of the flight ticket earlier in their meeting. Therefore, her construction of an alternative question can be interpreted as an inquiry about the specific make-up of the purchased ticket since she has known that he is making a detour on his way back home. The reason why she chose to deploy an alternative question cannot be inferred directly from her utterance; however, the additional attachment of illustration such as “like separately” as well as the continuing transition to an alternative question with evident prolongation of “o:::r” and “u::::h” in line 08 indicates that she might have had difficulty in producing a WH-question that correctly conveys her intention and instead, she is deploying an alternative question containing some exemplifications that can function as a quasi WH-question. This strategy is well-received by the recipient who, after a couple of pauses in line 10 and 11, which might have been consumed in speculating her intention, finally gets what information she seeks to know and

offers a corresponding answer in the next turn. SAY's response "three: tickets" is not exactly type-conforming since alternative questions nominally dictates the recipient to choose from the proffered options, but it is more of a response to a WH-question "How many tickets did you buy?". Nevertheless, the response seems to have solved her curiosity as we can see the change-of-state token (Heritage, 1984) "ah"[14] uttered twice in the next turn as well as the repetition of the prior turn which also functions as a news-receipt (Greer, Andrade, Butterfield, & Mischinger, 2009). After HEA acknowledges the information conveyed in line 12, SAY continues to elaborate the information concerning his journey back to the states in the following turns.

What we can learn from Excerpt (4) is that interlocutors' selection of question types in question-response sequences is not exclusively dependent on the different characteristics of each question type but is also contingent on the type of action being implemented by the interlocutors in the ensuing moments of interaction. To repeat, interactants are flexible enough to take into account not only the linguistic features of an utterance but also the circumstantial variables such as epistemic status or linguistic competence of the other interlocutor(s).

[14] One of the most common change-of-state tokens is "oh" in English, but in nonnative interaction data collected for this study, Korean learners of English used the Korean version "ah" (Seo, 2007, p. 187) far more often than "oh" when expressing their epistemic transition from 'unknown' to 'known'.

4.2.3 Other Initiation of Repair

The next sequential environment where alternative questions commonly appear in nonnative interaction is other-initiation of repair. Using an alternative question in this sequential environment has already been explored by Koshik (2005) although the majority of the excerpts used in the study were from native interaction data. Also, she clearly states that "other-initiated repair that use alternative questions are very rare, so rare that they have not yet been described in any of the repair literature" (Koshik, 2005, p. 194). In contrast to the previous findings on the scarcity of alternative questions in this sequential environment, there appeared almost a half number of alternative questions for other-initiated repair (n=9) as their use for seeking information (n=20) in the nonnative interaction for this study.

Koshik (2005) categorized three different actions for which alternative questions are deployed in repair sequences: (1) to proffer candidate hearings for confirmation, (2) to display candidate understandings for clarification, and (3) to initiate error correction on a preceding utterance. In the data collected for this study, there appeared only the first two occasions of presenting candidate hearings or understandings, and Excerpt (5) and (6) exemplify the cases in point respectively.

Firstly, in Excerpt (5), EMM is talking about her disappointing experience in watching a school musical comparing it to her alma mater's excelling performance.

Excerpt (5) [NS-NNS-NNS EMM-HEA-BON]

```
01        EMM:   cuz (.) like my high ↑school (.)
02               the choir (0.2) our choir was like one of
03               the top in the united states
04        HEA:   mm::m
05        EMM:   so like we had really good singer::z
06               (0.8) and then::
07   ->   HEA:   your college, (0.4) or hi[gh school]?
08        EMM:                            [no high s]chool
09               high school (0.9) and then u::mm (0.8)
10               y'know <I grew up dancing so::
```

Despite EMM's mention of "my high school" in line 01, HEA attempts to repair on the school level after two turns have already passed. This delayed other-initiated repair had been described by Wong (2000) as marked characteristics of nonnative interaction. To specify, when an interlocutor detects 'repairable' (Schegloff, 1992) in a co-participant's utterance, it is typical for the repair initiator to bring up his/her hearing or understanding problem in the next turn relative to the trouble-source utterance (Schegloff et al., 1977) in native interaction. However, as can be seen in Excerpt (5), HEA, who is a Korean learner of English, initiates repair in the delayed turn after there have been two times of speaker change. Interestingly, instead of offering two alternate hearings with some shared phonetic features (e.g., "wi:despread or whitespread") (Koshik, 2005, p. 200), which is usually the case in native interaction, HEA's formation of alternative questions is not based on the phonetic similarities but on her guessing of the school level. Furthermore, the

question is not delivered in the representative prosodic contour of an alternative question, a rise on the former and then a fall on the latter. This deviance can imply that the trouble might have stemmed not from 'mishearing' but 'non-hearing'; HEA probably has not heard the word 'high school' in the prior turn, and missing the temporal information, she tries to fill in the gap by offering a guess "your college," which is met with a developing silence, and then she swiftly appends her second best guess "or high school?" making the whole turn into a form of alternative question. Presumably, her ultimate purpose in initiating the repair might not have been of resolving confusion between two competing hearings but rather of seeking the corresponding information on a missing piece of the puzzle in her hearing.

Irrespective of the types of action performed in talk-in-interaction, delays in tackling a hearing/understanding problem seem to place no substantial barrier in effecting a repair sequence; even though HEA targeted an utterance from three turns earlier, the speaker of the trouble source ratifies one of the two alternatives "high school" thereby closing the repair sequence and resumes her original telling without any discernible resistance. This observation is in line with the notion of 'priority activity' that explains the interactional priority placed on the turns 'addressing the problems of understanding' (Kendrick, 2015; Sacks et al., 1974) over other turns at talk.

Whereas the above Excerpt (5) illustrates a repair sequence containing an

alternative question initiated by a non-native speaker, the next extract shows an example of a native speaker's initiation of repair prompted by a nonnative speaker's difficulty in articulating her thoughts.

Excerpt (6) [NS-NNS-NNS EMM-HEA-BON]

```
01      HEA:    I I'm [confus]ed cuz there was another
02              student who moved to America
03      BON:          [mmm mmm]
04      EMM:     yeah
05      HEA:     i::n the::  NOT (.) her year but, u::h
06      (1.2)
07  ->  EMM:    [after? or before]
08      HEA:    [one of her senior] but (0.2)
09              be[fore]
10      EMM:      [oh be]fore
```

In Excerpt (6), HEA is talking about one of her former students who had moved to America, and while specifying the student's school year, she displays signs of difficulty in phrasing such as elongation of function words ("i::n", "the::"), pause, and use of circumlocution ("not her year"). In spite of her unfinished turn construction unit (TCU)[15] and absence of call for help, the native interactant, EMM, offers help in the form of an alternative question launching a repair sequence. One distinctive feature here is that there was no actual utterance of a

[15] A turn construction unit (TCU) refers to the basic unit of a turn such as a word, a phrase, a clause, or a sentence that completes a communicative act (Wong & Waring, 2010).

trouble-source but instead was absence of a significant utterance. Therefore, unlike the typical circumstance where troubles in hearing/understanding trigger repair, repair in this case was prompted by troubles in getting oneself across. In line 06, EMM designs the alternative question with the two highly feasible candidates "after or before"; obviously, if the student were in "not her (BON's) year" as proclaimed by HEA, he/she must have been in the year either after or before her. As the subsequent turn in line 07, which is overlapped with the alternative question shows, HEA seems to have been in search of the right expression in the trouble-source turn. Although she finally came up with the expression "one of her senior," this utterance may not be heard due to the overlap and she resolves the interactional problem raised by EMM by offering an answer to the alternative question, which is promptly accepted by the questioner.

Recall the definition of repair organization as an interactional mechanism addressed to recurrent problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding (Schegloff et al., 1977). In this segment of conversation, we find at least two kinds of problems, speaking and understanding, which are in nature interdependent on each other. In face of apparent interactional difficulty, not only the speaker of the trouble source but also the recipient collaborates to build a good level of intersubjectivity, and in this case, it was efficiently accomplished through the use of an alternative question.

4.2.4 Self-Initiation of Repair

The third sequential environment where alternative questions commonly appear was in self-initiation of repair. In Excerpt (7), MAE, a Korean learner of English, initiated a new topic about movies. In the course of developing the topic, IKE, an American native speaker of English, veers from the role of respondent and open a new question-response sequence with a WH-question in line 06 “how do you view movies”.

Excerpt (7) [NS-NNS IKE-MAE]

```
01      MAE:    do you like watching movies?
02      IKE:    oh yeah (.) yap.
03      (0.5)
04      MAE:    what was your (.) recent favorite.
05      IKE:    o:::h (0.9) oh first thing (.)
06  ->          how do you view movies.
07      (1.2)
08  ->  IKE:    do you view them a:s uh critical art
09              form? Or do you view them as light
10              entertainments,
11      (0.4)
12      IKE:    like how do you::
13      MAE:    [uh]
14      IKE:    [wh]at do you prefer: like
15      MAE:    um actually I’m like u::m (1.0) yeah
16              going between those two
17      (0.9)
18      MAE:    whenever I see a movie
```

19 IKE: mm mm

20 MAE: I try to entertain m- myself with it

This abrupt overturn as well as the vagueness of the question itself seems to leave MAE unanswerable for 1.2 second. In response to the absence of response, IKE self-repairs his question into more elaborate terms, that is, an alternative question. Similar to the typical semantic make up of alternative questions, he formulates his question with two contrasting notions about movies: critical art vs. light entertainment. Although there could be a number of possibilities between the two extreme points of view about movies, this way of phrasing does impose curbs on response at least to some degree. At the same time, if the recipient were experiencing difficulty in understanding the exact import of a question or in articulating one's thoughts, such clarification through reformulation of the question can work to the advantage of the recipient as seems to be the case in this fragment of conversation. Unlike the utter silence after the first WH-question in line 07, MAE attempts to kick off her turn in line 13 after the alternative question is completed and then followed by the repetition of the first part of the original WH-question. Semantically, MAE's response is somewhat rejecting the terms set by IKE in that her point of view about movies does not reside in neither of the alternatives. Nevertheless, in subsequently elaborating on her response, she avails herself of the phrases from the alternative question "entertain myself" in line 20. In this context, IKE's self-repair can be interpreted to have brought a couple of

interactional benefits; (1) by clarifying his inquiry, he made his action of information seeking clearer in terms of what type of information is being sought in what manners, and (2) by repeating and elaborating the question, the information-seeker afforded the recipient some time and linguistic resources that can be used in constructing the response.

As in Excerpt (7), the common sequential environment in which self-repair on a question occurs is when there is a noticeable delay on the transition relevance place after the first pair part of question-response sequence is thoroughly produced. This practice seems to come partly from the pressure to minimize silence in English conversation (Sacks et al, 1974).[16] When an expected next speaker does not take the floor in conversation, other interlocutor(s) would normally take up his/her turn again in order to work on the probable interactional problem causing the delay as in Excerpt (7); otherwise, as in other instances that are not presented here, the first pair part speaker can also choose to drop the sequence and move to another topic.

Self-repair involving an alternative question also occurred in an environment where the speaker was trying to defeat the preference structure

---

[16] Through quantitative analyses of duration of pauses at speaker changes, O'Connell (2012, pp. 134-7) found that speaker changes unexceptionally entail a pause in conversational settings and the mean duration of pauses at speaker changes (1.38 s) is significantly longer than that in all other positions (0.97 s). Also, long pauses (≥3 s) typically occurred at speaker changes rather than in the same turn. What this implies is that a pause lasting longer than a certain length of time might have the effect of pressuring interlocutor(s) to start the next turn regardless of the completion of the prior TCU.

intrinsic to question-response sequences. Prior to Excerpt (8), MAE and IKE have started talking about the medieval English literature, which had motivated MAE to major in English literature in college. At the outset of Excerpt (8), IKE has downgraded his epistemic status concerning the topic by saying “I don’t know anything about that” in line 01.

Excerpt (8) [NS-NNS IKE-MAE]

```
01          IKE:   [Actu]ally I don’t know anything about
02                 that (.) uh I I know some stuff about
03                 fairy tales
04          MAE:   mm mm
05   ->     IKE:   do you remember anything about how::
06                 robin hood cha:nged? or, (1.2)
07          MAE:   mm:: um
08   ->     IKE:   or is it too long ago.
09          MAE:   hhhhhh uh (.) oh in middle ages
```

More often than not, such roundabout epistemic downgrade is deployed to solicit a response or to encourage the other party to expand a sequence on the topic (Heritage, 2012a). In this fragment of conversation, however, it did not bring about such consequences but is met with a minimal acknowledgement token “mm mm”. Once again, IKE pursues the topic in the subsequent turn. The question in line 05 is not an assertive request for information but rather a form of pre-request for information. His way of approaching the issue is fairly cautious starting from a

downgraded epistemic claim in line 01 and then developing into an epistemic status check 05, but never reaching an assertive request for information such as "So how did Robinhood change?" or "Can you tell me about the changes?". At first, his question checking the availability of the information takes the form of a polar question with a distinctive 'or' in the turn final position in line 05 and 06. His continuing intonation as well as a turn holding device 'or' at the end of line 06 gives somewhat equivocal impression on whether he is to wrap up his turn or not. The ambiguity whether this is a transition relevance place or not makes the conversation halt for 1.2 seconds, which can be interpreted either as an intra-turn or inter-turn pause (ten Have, 2007, p. 107), and MAE finally takes up the floor and offers some minimal response tokens such as "mm::" and "um" void of any expanded content (McCarthy, 2003). These non-word vocalizations seem to be perceived as a problematic response by IKE; he picks up where he left out in the prior turn and belatedly alters the utterance into an alternative question in line 08. Although it is produced in two separate turns, when combined, the question has distinctive features of an alternative question: first, the question is conjoining two contrasting presuppositions (i.e., the recipient either remembers the relevant information or she doesn't) which is actually a kind of tautology from semantic perspectives (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 824), and second, despite the clausal level of conjoining, the question is delivered in the canonical prosodic contour with a rising intonation on the former and falling on the latter.

The reason why IKE repaired his initial polar question into an alternative question in this sequential environment seems quite evident from MAE's minimal response between the first and second alternative. The former alternative is a positive polar question if we disregard the trail-off 'or' in the turn final position. When this positively constructed question is met with a minimal acknowledgement token "mm::" and a hesitation marker "um" symptomatic of a dispreferred response, IKE simply attaches an or-prefaced question that is negatively marked. This type of self-repair into an alternative question specifically seems to aim at nullifying the preference structure inherent in polar questions. By reversing the polarity, he makes "not remembering" a preferred response while maintaining the action performed by the utterance unchanged. This interactional practice testifies to the concept of '*pre-emptive reformulation with preference reversal*' described by Schegloff (2007, p. 70) and demonstrates an interlocutor's witty flexibility in circumventing rejection in talk-in-interaction. MAE giggles at such interactional knack and aligns with the pre-request for information in the following turn and talks about the changes in the narrative of Robinhood during the middle ages.

There was one more sequential environment in which a nonnative speaker used an alternative question for self-repair. It was when the speaker ran into trouble in producing a complete WH-question as in the instance of Excerpt (9).

Excerpt (9) [NNS-NNS JAY-GIL]

```
01     GIL:   yeah so:: (1.8) er and I know I I the I
02            became to know::: <that there are many::
03            good English speakers i(hh)n (0.2) our
04            schoo(hh)::l hh (0.8) yes um wher::e
05  ->        (1.2) do you (1.1) uh do you li::ve in
06            the America or Canada:[::]:
07     JAY:                          [uh]  thousand-  I
08            I've been to the united states when I was
09            uh (1.0) twelve thirteen I've been there
10            for about [little le]ss than two years
11     GIL:              [a::::::h]
```

GIL and JAY are both native speakers of Korean, and JAY possesses near-native English proficiency thanks to his early exposure to English language as well as his recent service in the U.S. Army for two years. Prior to Excerpt (9), GIL, who has very modest evaluation on his own English speaking ability, has started confessing his hardship in taking an English lecture after returning to campus from his military service. In Excerpt (9), GIL talks about students with good English proficiency, and by this comment, he indirectly refers to the other interlocutor, JAY. Towards the end of line 04, GIL starts off a question with "where". The notably stretched Q-word 'where' as well as the following intra-turn pause shows his struggle in producing the question properly and after one more occurrence of a pause, he recycles the turn beginning (Schegloff, 1987) and repairs the initial WH-question into an alternative question. Replacing a WH-question with an alternative question in a circumstance where a questioner has trouble embodying intended

meaning in a WH-question has been discussed in Section 4.2.2. In Excerpt (9) as well, the alternative question "do you li::ve in the America or Canada:::", which supposedly would have been 'did you live in America or Canada?' if the speaker had not made an error on verb tense, appears to be used because GIL is facing a difficulty in weaving what he intends to say into a WH-question[17]. This presumption is further supported by the elongated turn final element "Canada:::"; although it is delivered in the form of an alternative question, he is not limiting the range of candidate answers to the two English speaking countries he came up with by not completely bringing his turn to an end. This practice of elongating the turn-final vowel was often witnessed in a question with trail-off 'or', which will be discussed in depth in Section 4.3, as an interactional resource to show the tentative status of the proposed option(s). In other words, America and Canada are not suggested as the only possible responses for GIL's question; rather, they are presented as representative examples of English speaking countries. Here, JAY responds to the question with a foreign country name, which happens to correspond with one of the alternatives. However, it would have caused no interactional trouble even if JAY had provided other English speaking country names such as England or Australia since the ultimate import of GIL's inquiry is to

[17] It is also plausible that GIL's intended question was "Have you lived abroad before?" instead of "Where (In which foreign country) did you live?". However, in the current analysis, I stick to the content word "where", which was part of the original utterance by GIL.

know the specifics of JAY's past experience in living abroad rather than to have JAY choose between America and Canada.

As demonstrated in Excerpt 7 through 9, it has been found that speakers deploy alternative questions in self-repairing environments for different purposes: clarifying their own utterance, reversing preference structure, and reformulating a question. This versatility proves the effectiveness of alternative questions for lubricating interaction in nonnative talk, and one last sequential environment of alternative questions will be discussed in the following section.

4.2.5 Word Search

The final sequential environment where alternative questions were effectively employed was in word search activity. Excerpt (10) begins with KAI talking about her sister, and he apparently seems to have trouble finding the right words to describe her personality.

Excerpt (10) [NS-NNS LIL-KAI]

```
01     KAI:   she's kind of she::::::: um she's really
02            strong and
03     LIL:   mmm
04     KAI:   she has uh (0.5) you know like (0.2)
05            mm::m (1.2) how do you call this mac-
06            like (0.5) being really (0.2) m:::m being
07            just like- (0.4) alpha girl and (1.5)
```

```
08     LIL:   [>ye maybe she's< just]
09     KAI:     [ha::s has stro:]::ng mmm (1.0) kind of
10  -> LIL:   strong personality? or [like strong
11             physically.]
12     KAI:   [yeah strong personality] and kind of
13             (0.2) she does::n't (0.4) uh she has a
14             kind of (1.8) mm mm straight opinion?
15             like kinda (0.2) if- she does not::
16     LIL:   she's strong strong-minded
17     KAI:   yeah [yeah sh]e's [really strong] minded
18     LIL:         [you mean]     [yeah  yeah]
```

Not only the frequent interruption of pauses within the turn but also the verbalized invitation to help in line 05 shows that he is entering a word search in order to portray his sister's character. After the first adjective 'strong' is given as the only clue to guess what her personality is like, LIL patiently waits until the next meaningful content word "alpha girl" is produced. When there happens another significant pause at the end of line 07, she finally takes the floor and attempts to proffer her guess "ye maybe she's just". Her turn is almost entirely overlapped with KAI's repetition of the adjective 'strong', which is followed by some perturbation such as 'mmm' and 'kind of'. At this point, LIL asks an alternative question that can facilitate the word search. Among the proposed two alternatives of strong personality and physical strength, KAI immediately picks up the first alternative and continues elaborating on his description. Now that the scope of word search has been narrowed, LIL eventually succeeds in offering a solution to KAI's search, which is unhesitatingly welcomed by KAI in line 17.

The above extract illustrates the use of an alternative question in a word search activity. Evidently, word search is a particular type of repair (Schegloff et al., 1977) in that it taps into interactional problems in speaking, and in this excerpt as well, the word search sequence was inserted to fulfill the purpose of clarification. However, we need to adhere to the principle of conversation analysis and refrain from overgeneralizing the implication of this excerpt; although here is provided only a case in which a native speaker makes use of an alternative question to aid a Korean learner of English in finding the word he was looking for, word search is not a peculiar phenomenon of nonnative interaction. It is common both in native and nonnative interaction, and a search of a lexical item does not necessarily indicate linguistic deficiency (Koshik & Seo, 2008). As a matter of fact, in some of the instances collected for this study, a nonnative speaker helps a native interlocutor to resolve a word search. Therefore, it would be suffice to say that alternative questions can be used as efficient interactional resources in offering candidate answers in word search regardless of speaker identity.

In the previous sections from 4.2.2 to 4.2.5, we explored the use of alternative questions in each sequential environment. As it happens, apart from the case of request for information, which was the only interactional site where alternative questions were employed in American native data, the rest three environments converge to repair organization: other-initiation of repair, self-initiation of repair, and word search. It is questionable if there is a marked

difference on the frequency of repair sequences between native interaction and nonnative interaction since quantitative information is relatively rare in the field of CA. We can only conjecture from the rich accumulation of repair studies in nonnative interaction that repair organization plays an extraordinary role in nonnative interaction (Hosoda, 2000; Kasper, 1983; Kasper & Kim, 2007; Koshik & Seo, 2012; Nakamura, 2008; Wong, 2000). The current study's findings on interlocutors' dynamic use of alternative questions in more diverse sequential environments also substantiate the weight repair organization bears in naturally occurring nonnative interaction.

4.2.6 Actions Implemented through Alternative Questions

Although conversation analysis in general aims at finding the "generic orders of organization" (Schegloff, 2007, p. 14) in talk-in-interaction, it is also an analyst's duty to give careful heed to their "fine-tuned adaptation to local circumstances" (ten Have, 1990, p. 24). In addition, as is widely acknowledged among those who advocate the interactional view on grammar, grammar cannot be seen as an accumulated fund of knowledge on linguistic usage, but should be viewed as "lived behavior, whose form and meaning unfold in experienced interactional and historical time" (Schegloff, Ochs, & Thompson , 1996, p. 38). In

a similar vein, it would be an impractical attempt to exhaustively identify the type of actions implemented by alternative questions in this thesis. Most of the actions performed by alternative questions in the data at hand were presented in the turn-by-turn analysis in the previous section, and the main reason a separate chapter for action formation was reserved is to avert a misleading impression that occurrence of an alternative question in one sequential environment has one to one correspondence with a particular type of action. Therefore, in this section we will have a brief look at some recurrently witnessed actions across the collected data.

Firstly, the most conspicuous action performed by an alternative question is 'clarifying' as illustrated in Excerpt (11).

Excerpt (11) [NS-NNS LIL-KAI]

```
01          LIL:   he is from the north he is from new york,
02          KAI:   oh new york.
03          LIL:   so we will live in the new york area.
04   ->     KAI:   new york state? or new york (0.2) s- city
05          LIL:   new york state [upsta]te new york
06          KAI:                  [a::  ]           ye ye
```

Hearing LIL's mention of her husband's hometown along with their future plan of returning there, KAI requests for clarification on the ambiguity that the regional name 'new york' has created in the form of an alternative question in line 04. As can be seen in this exemplar, deployment of an alternative question appears particularly effective in resolving interactional demands for clarification especially

when there is a limited number of relevant options.

The next type of action performed by asking an alternative question is "offering candidate answers" (Pomerantz, 1988, p. 360). Just before Extract (12), IKE and MAE have started talking about the movie that MAE saw on the previous week, and in Extract (12) IKE issues three consecutive question-response sequences concerning the movie.

Extract (12) [NS-NNS IKE-MAE]

```
01      IKE:   £okay£ .hhh °so° um
02      MAE:   um
03  ->  IKE:   and how wazit
04      MAE:   it was (.) really good
05      IKE:   good.
06      (1.0)
07   -> IKE:   why? Hhh=
08      MAE:   =mmm
09   -> IKE:   just did you like the story or
10             characters or directing,
11      MAE:   m::mm I really liked the ↑narratives
12      IKE:   o[kay]
```

The first WH-question in line 03, which inquires about the quality of the movie, is met with a less than enthusiastic response. Her positive, yet not so emotionally loaded evaluation is a sequentially valid response, but is deemed as insufficient by the questioner who presumably projected the sequence to be expanded. The repetition of the second pair part answer 'good' by the questioner in line 05 could

have been interpreted by the recipient as a go-ahead sign to specify her response in the following turn, but she does not elaborate her answer and there develops about one second pause, which eventually makes IKE voice an eliciting question 'why'. Here we can see a discrepancy between the action implemented through the and-prefaced question 'how wazit' and the action perceived by the recipient; that is, the questioner sought to know the viewer's personal appreciation as well as the grounds for it while the respondent perceived only the former.

In reply to two turns of delayed response, IKE reformulates his content word question into an alternative one composed of three likely candidates in lines 09 and 10. In so doing, he is offering a model of the type of answer that can comply with his purpose of information seeking. Pomerantz (1988) argued that providing a model while asking a question is "functional whenever a speaker has a reason to guide a co-participant to respond in a particular way" (p. 367). IKE might have observed MAE's difficulty in answering his content word question, or he has grown impatient (guessing from the turn initial word 'just') and wanted to be more efficient in getting the information he was looking for. Either way, his decision to incorporate some candidate answers in his question instead of simply asking 'why' seems to bring about the desired outcome. In the next turn, at last, MAE produces a second pair part that resembles the model utterance of IKE. The substitution of the lexical item 'story' with near synonymous 'narratives' can be deemed to reflect her agency as an original holder of the information sought. In

this instance, the primary action performed by an alternative question is request for information. Simultaneously, transition from a content word question to an alternative question definitely helped accomplish the implemented action, and therein we can say that an alternative question was deployed to do the action of offering a candidate answer.

Alternative questions are also used when a questioner is trying to defy a preference structure present in question-response sequences. Take a look at Excerpt (13) for example.

Excerpt (13) [NS-NNS IKE-MAE]

```
01     IKE:   because I was interested in other things
02            at that [time]
03     MAE:           [m::m]
04     (0.5)
05  -> IKE:   so:: (1.0) but then ay:: (.) I do agree-
06            (0.7) like do you think that you
07            have to take classes outside your major?
08            or do you disagree with it.
09     MAE:   u:mm (1.5) I think it's haf (.) um I
10            think u:m (0.5) individual has to deci:de
11            (0.2) yeah what to take
12     (0.4)
13     IKE:   m:m okay (0.9) I do think that people
14            should be for:c[ed]
15     MAE:                  [m:]::m
16     IKE:   to take things outside their field
```

While conversing on the university graduation requirements, IKE initiates

a question-response sequence asking the co-participant's opinion about mandatory courses. Interestingly, if you look at line 05, right before opening the question-response sequence, IKE voices his opinion "I do agree", which is cut off before speaking the proposition he is agreeing to. The reason he cut off his statement can be inferred from his next move, questioning. When asking a question, if the questioner expresses his/her own opinion first, it is very likely to affect the second pair part (response) in adjacency pair. On the whole, interactants tend to align with their co-interactants than to oppose them, and this inclination is corroborated by "the greater aggregate frequency of preferred second pair parts" (Schegloff, 2007, p. 72). For this reason, IKE aborts his statement in the middle and begins a question-response sequence. The choice of an alternative question in this environment satisfies his need to abolish the premature articulation of his opinion on the matter being asked. As previously demonstrated in Section 4.2.2, there is "no structural preference for one of the two alternatives over the other" (Koshik, 2005, p. 144) in alternative questions, and thus, he is in effect defying the preference structure underlying this agreeing-disagreeing sequence while accomplishing the primary action of information seeking. MAE's response, on the other hand, is also strategically elusive in putting forth her opinion; she does not employ any negative words or markings but instead says "individual (not the university) has to decide what to take", meaning that she actually disagrees with the first proposition contained in the alternative question. The ensuing pause in

line 12 as well as the perturbation in third position after the question-response sequence forewarns the upcoming disalignment by IKE. As anticipated from his previous statement, IKE in fact believes that students "should be forced to take things (classes) outside their field." As demonstrated in this extract, alternative questions can be used as a means of defying preference structure in a circumstance where the speaker has the needs to do so.

This section illustrated different types of actions performed by alternative questions using the actual instances in conversation. The collected interactional data showed that interlocutors use alternative questions for achieving socials actions such as seeking information, clarifying the context, offering a candidate answer, and defying a preference structure. The next section will explore the previously unattended aspect of trail-off 'or' drawing a proposition about its function from actual instances in conversation.

4.3 The Use of Trail-off 'or'

Fully articulated alternative questions with more than two options nominally direct the addressee to choose among the mentioned set of answers. In the field of semantics, the 'exhaustivity' of the list is said to be marked by the final tone at the end of the list: the final intonation is rising as in polar question when the question involves an open list (i.e., not all the available options are spelled out)

whereas the last alternative would be delivered in falling intonation if all the epistemically relevant options are enumerated (Biezma, 2009). In the collection of conversation data, however, the actual use of alternative questions did not always display such prosodic features. One noteworthy exception is found in a phenomenon called 'trail-off' in the turn final position. Here the term 'trail-off' refers to a speaker' purposedly unfinished turn construction that can be characterized by a stretched turn final sound and/or continuing intonation. Most typically, trail-off 'or' appears when the interlocutor is trying to guess something that falls within the co-participant's knowledge domain as in the next example.

Before Excerpt (14), GIL and JAY have been talking about their commute to university, and JAY's account on his recent moving near the school has provided GIL with some clues on the whereabouts of JAY's new residence.

Excerpt (14) [NNS-NNS JAY-GIL]

```
01 ->  GIL:   oh maybe (0.8) you live i::n the (0.2)
02            in thee ↑emco apartment O:R,
03     JAY:   no thee one thee one at across
04     GIL:   a: k- (0.2) le-
05     JAY:   le lemian lemian Samsung lemian hhh
```

In line 01, GIL makes a move stating his presumption on the name of the apartment. In spite of its declarative syntax, GIL's epistemically inferior position in terms of the relevant information has the effect of making this utterance a question.

Such a question with trail-off ‘or’ has been largely unheeded by scholars in the field of CA and is customarily interpreted to be doing the same action as a polar question. In Excerpt (14) too, GIL’s question is perceived as a polar question by the addressee; JAY firstly responds with ‘no’ and then supplies the tacitly requested information. The only deviance in comparison to a typical polar question is on the elongated turn-final ‘or’ delivered in continuing intonation.

In other cases, the recipient of the question does not articulate yes/no but instead proffer the requested information directly as in Excerpt (15).

Excerpt (15) [NS-NNS LIL-KAI]

```
01     LIL:   maybe you have to find out something else
02            she likes to do
03     KAI:   [yeah she::]
04  -> LIL:   [does she pl]ay does she:: do music? or::
05     (0.5)
06     KAI:   she just uh loves listening to music
07     LIL:   okay [hhh]
08     KAI:       [and] and (0.5) he doesn’t play any
09            instruments or something a:[:nd]
10     LIL:                              [mm]
11     KAI:   she loves just watching movies (0.2)
12            a:nd (0.5) she does not like (1.2) uh
13            moving or like
14     LIL:   oh she’s she’s very
```

Here again, LIL asks a polar question while trying to guess what KAI’s girlfriend is interested in. This time, her intonation is following the canonical tone

on the first alternative but trails off after the stretched ‘or.’ In reply to this eccentric way of questioning, KAI offers relevant information concerning the issue at present. A possible analysis about KAI’s response is as follows. For one, he might be offering a dispreferred response to the first proposition ‘does she do music?’ without explicitly stating ‘no’; alternatively, in response to LIL’s attempt to seek information about his girlfriend, he is filling in the epistemic gap expressed by the trail-off ‘or’ in the prior turn. KAI’s next move in the subsequent turns suggests that he is not merely responding to the first proposition. What he is oriented to in this sequence is not ‘does she do music or not’ but ‘what does she like or not like to do.’ Therefore, we can postulate that the use of trail-off ‘or’ in the course of guessing/questioning shows the questioner’s display of epistemic downgrade, which then can act as an implicit request for the addressee to fill in the information gap. This proposal is indisputably in accordance with the findings of Biezma and Rawlins’s (2012) semantic study. In their comparative study between responses to alternative and polar question semantics, alternative questions are described to be ‘exhaustive’ in two ways: “they exhaust the space of epistemic possibilities, as well as the space of discourse possibilities” (p. 361). According to this account, fully articulated alternative questions can come across as closing up the epistemic and discursive space in interaction. Therefore, especially in an environment where the questioner holds relatively low expertise in the knowledge domain, it could be a wiser interactional strategy to yield the turn to the co-participant without

finalizing the list.

The next segment of conversation clearly illustrates the case in point. As in Excerpt (16), an inquirer would occasionally add redundant trail-off ‘or’ in the turn final position even after the inquirer has already exhaustified all the possible answers in the list.

Excerpt (16) [NS-NNS PAM-MEG]

```
01        MEG:   ah bu::t when i bought the airline ticket
02               to ↑tokyo ay:: hh (3.0) seriously i'd
03               (0.5) i made a mistake so: (1.0) I didn't
04               see the dollars (1.0) i mea:n (1.4) by
05               mistake,
06        PAM:   aha
07        (2.5)
08  ->    PAM:   you didn't see ↑what
09        (1.0)
10        MEG:   how can i say (.) u:::h (5.0) ay:: I
11               didn't see the (0.8) po::und po::und
12               marker
13        PAM:   o::h
14        MEG:   so i thou::ght that was the dollar price.
15        PAM:   aha::
16        MEG:   the price- (0.8)
17  ->    PAM:   so you thought it was cheaper? (.) or
18               more expensive? or::
19        MEG:   mo:re expensive
20        PAM:   a::[:h]
21        MEG:      [may]be TWICE
22        PAM:   mM M::m
```

In the course of telling about her recent trip to Tokyo, MEG starts

complaining about the overpriced ticket that she mistakenly got to purchase. In the meantime, MEG's account on the purchase arouses some confusion in the interaction apparently due to her difficulty in conveying her thoughts as evidenced by recursive pauses and an explicit appeal for help "how can i say". In line 08, PAM makes a move to help clarify the trouble source with a WH-question 'you didn't see what'. However, it turns out that what MEG did not see at the time of ticketing was not 'dollars' as initially accounted but 'pound markers'. Still, the mere correction on the monetary unit seems to be insufficient to resolve the interactional problem occurred in this conversation. In line 17, PAM once more attempts other repair on the prior term with an alternative question this time. Considering MEG's whiny tone in delivery (which unfortunately cannot be expressed in the transcription) as well as the negative nuance implicated by the word 'mistake', it is unlikely that the flight fare to Tokyo was set at a reasonable price from MEG's standard. Therefore, PAM's composition of the alternatives is legitimately exhaustive. Nevertheless, she does not finalize the list after she enumerates the two alternatives but goes on to add a redundant 'or' with a notable elongation. Her rising intonation on the last spelled out alternative 'more expensive' also indicates that the list is not finished yet. This interactional practice can be interpreted as an effort to spare room for the recipient to fill in; while proffering the most plausible candidate(s), with the addition of 'or' at the turn-final position, the inquirer hands over the epistemic right to the recipient who can claim

the epistemic priority on the subject matter being asked. The distributional pattern of this practice of trail-off ‘or’ further supports this proposition since it has not occurred, not even once, in self-initiation of repair. The reason for this absence is manifest if we consider the particular interactional demands intrinsic to self-repair. Interactants initiate self-repair when there is actual or expected interactional trouble on the part of the hearer, since one usually knows what he/she intends to say on his/her minds. Naturally, environments that invoke self-repair are when the addressee does not or possibly cannot understand the implication of the message on transfer, and with regards to the exact import of the preceding utterance, the speaker of the trouble source should have superior knowledge. Therefore, the initiator of self-repair ordinarily would not need to resort to the expertise of the recipient in composing the question, and that explains why trail-off ‘or’ did not occur in self-repair sequences. Nevertheless, it also should be noted that this explanation on the absence of trail-off ‘or’ in self-initiation of repair is limited to the data collected for the present study and thus is not intended to be generalizable to every interactional setting that might involve more complex epistemic structure among interactants.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

The present chapter summarizes the key findings of the research and evaluates its prospective contributions to the field of conversation analysis and English education. Firstly, in Section 5.1, major findings of the study are summed up with some CA and pedagogical implications. In Section 5.2, limitations of the current study will be discussed with some recommendations for future research.

5.1 Major Findings and Implications

The conclusion of this study is based on the quantification of question-response sequences found in nonnative interaction as well as conversation analysis on the use of alternative questions in the collection of data. As previously mentioned, quantification is advised to be used as a supplementary means of research in the field of CA, and accordingly, this study also presented the quantitative findings as a noteworthy trend observed in nonnative interaction rather than as a definite character of nonnative interaction. The quantification of question-response sequences found in the current data showed different distributional patterns across the three primary question types compared to those of American native interaction data. Most discernible difference was found in the

more frequent adoption of alternative questions by interlocutors, of which rate of increase numerically corresponds with the less used incidence of polar questions in nonnative interaction. The next step of codification revealed additional sequential environments for alternative questions. In addition to the adjacency pair of information request, which was the exclusive sequential environment for alternative questions in American native data, participants in this study employed alternative questions in three different types of repair sequences: other initiation of repair, self-initiation of repair, and word search. Conversation analysis on the actual use of alternative questions demonstrated that deployment of alternative questions help the utterer do the following actions depending on the specific needs contingent on the interaction: clarifying, offering a candidate answer, and defying preference structure. These actions can be regarded as auxiliary in the sense that the actions performed in those alternative question sequences are ultimately 'request for information or confirmation,' but at the same time, interactants' decision to make use of an alternative question rather than other types of questions advocates the proposition that the above mentioned actions are also involved in the course of interaction. Finally, the interactional practice of trailing off in the turn final position was explored from the perspective of epistemic status, and it was argued that a questioner's use of trail-off 'or' is a roundabout marking of epistemic downgrade that can be interpreted as a deliberate effort to hand over knowledge claims on the state of affairs being discussed.

The prospective contributions of this research to the field of CA and English education are as follows. For one, this study excavated the use of alternative questions in more various sequential environments in conjunction with their unique action formation in talk-in-interaction. Also, the interactional practice of employing the trail-off 'or' in questioning was reilluminated from the perspective of epistemic status, and this further attests to interlocutors' sensitivity to relative epistemic status in the on-going conversation. To elaborate, findings from this research repeatedly confirm the CA concept of recipient-design in that interlocutors make use of characteristics of different question types according to the demands of on-going conversation, in this case, more needs for clarification and elaboration present in nonnative interaction. In other words, the additional actions performed by alternative questions such as clarifying and offering a candidate answer can be suitably exploited in nonnative interaction in a facilitative way to lubricate conversation and to afford nonnative speakers language and time resources. Furthermore, the interactional efficacy that alternative questions bring to nonnative interaction in the course of requesting for information and clarification suggests their well-suited role in English language class. For instance, as found in Svennevig's (2013) study, reformulation of an open question into a question with a list of alternatives promotes nonnative speakers' understanding and participation. This recipient-friendly nature of alternative questions was well witnessed in this study's data as well, and therefore, the current study can be said to have found

further empirical evidence in support of such a proposition that a question with a list alternatives has the effect of promoting conversational contiguity especially in nonnative interaction. In this context, practitioners as well as curriculum developers in the field of English education may as well explore alternative questions in various contexts so as to help students make the best use of the dynamic functions of alternative questions in real conversation.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

The current study was conducted with the help of voluntary participants who possess above intermediate level of English proficiency. Thus, the participant group cannot be representative of collective Korean learners of English, particularly missing the novice group.[18] Also, since some conversation partners met for the first time on the day of data collection, their interaction may not be as much natural as usual conversation data in CA. Therefore, it is advisable for future researchers to investigate question-response sequences in more natural settings outside of classroom while diversifying the proficiency level of the participants. Finally, this study only used the audio-recorded conversation data and thus lacked the multimodal aspect of interaction. For this reason, investigation of multimodal

[18] There was one participant whose proficiency level was novice. However, it turned out that she was not actively engaged in any of the identified alternative question sequences.

expressions from video-recorded data may complement the findings of the present study.

5.3 Suggestions for Future Research

Future researchers who are interested in question-response sequences in nonnative interaction may benefit from studying how language learners make use of different question types as their speaking proficiency develops. As was seen in this study, nonnative interaction involved more use of alternative questions. Therefore, comparative study on the frequency of different question types among novice, intermediate, and advanced speakers of English will tell if the use of alternative question becomes less frequent as the conversation participants' proficiency approximates near native level.

Another interesting area for future research would be the composition of alternatives in questioning with respect to epistemic 'exhaustivity.' The present study has shown that interactants are highly sensitive to the relative epistemic status of each other and this epistemic imbalance does influence the composition of utterances. Therefore, not only the distinction between open and closed list of alternatives but also the number or the order of alternatives might provide interesting research opportunities for those who are interested in the interdisciplinary study between conversation analysis and semantics.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

GLOSSARY OF TRANSCRIPT SYMBOLS

[ ]	Square brackets mark the start and end of overlapping speech. They are aligned to mark the precise position of overlap as in the example below.
↑ ↓	Vertical arrows indicate shifts into especially high or low pitch.
→	Side arrows are used to draw attention to features of talk that are relevant to the current analysis.
<u>word</u>	Underlining indicates emphasis; the extent of underlining within individual words locates emphasis and also indicates how heavy it is.
WORD	Upper case indicates especially loud sounds relative to the surrounding talk.
°word°	Degree signs bracketing an utterance indicate that the sounds are softer than the surrounding talk.
(0.4)	Numbers in round brackets measure pauses in seconds (in this case, 4 tenths of a second).
(.)	A micro-pause, hearable but too short to measure.
(( ))	Double parentheses contain transcriber's description
Wo::rd	Colons show degrees of elongation of the prior sound; the more colons, the more elongation.
hhh	Aspiration (out-breaths); proportionally as for colons.
.hhh	Inspiration (in-breaths); proportionally as for colons.

word,	Continuation marker, speaker has not finished; marked by fall-rise or weak rising intonation, as when delivering a list.
word?	Question marks signal stronger, 'questioning' intonation, irrespective of grammar.
word.	Full stops mark falling, stopping intonation ('final contour'), irrespective of grammar, and not necessarily followed by a pause.
Wor-	A dash indicates a cut-off.
>word<	'greater than' and 'lesser than' signs enclose speeded-up talk. Occasionally they are used the other way round for slower talk.
<word	A pre-positioned left carat is a 'left push' indicating a hurried start.
=	Equal signs mark the immediate 'latching' of successive talk, whether of one or more speakers, with no interval.
hehe/haha	Voiced laughter
wo(hh)rd	Laughter within speech is signalled by h's in round brackets.
£ word £	The pound-sterling sign indicates a quality of voice which conveys 'suppressed laughter'
(word)	Uncertainty on the transcriber's part

국 문 초 록

주요어: 선택의문문, 질문-답변 연속체, 비원어민 상호작용, 질문 유형, 말차례 끝 'or'의 사용
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본 석사논문은 영어 비원어민 상호작용에 나타난 질문-답변 연속체에 관한 대화분석연구이다. 한국인 영어학습자들과 미국인 영어원어민 화자들간에 일어난 4시간 가량의 대화 자료를 바탕으로, 첫째, 영어의 세 가지 주요 질문 유형인 판정(yes/no)의문, 설명(WH)의문, 선택(alternative)의문의 사용빈도를 미국영어에서의 사용빈도와 비교분석하고, 둘째, 선택의문문의 사용을 연속체적 환경(sequential environment)과 화행 조성(action formation)의 관점에서 깊이 있게 분석하였다. 마지막으로, 지금까지 판정의문문을 묻는 관례적 방식 중 하나로 여겨졌던 말차례 끝 'or'(trail-off 'or')라는 독특한 말차례 설계(turn design)을 발화자의 상대적 지식 지위(epistemic status)라는 관점에서 접근하여 분석하였다.

질문-답변 연속체에 대한 양적 비교연구는 비원어민 상호작용에서의 선택의문문 사용(8.2%)이 원어민 상호작용에서의 사용(2.4%)보다 훨씬 빈번하다는 것을 보여주었고, 우연하게도 이 증가량은 판정의문문의 감소와 수적으로 거의 일치하였다. 다음으로 선택의문문 사용에 대한 질적 대화분석은 이 유형의 질문이 나타나는 다양한 연속체적 환경을 보여주었다. 원어민 상호작용에서 선택의문문은 유일하게 정보 요청을 위한 인접쌍(adjacency pair)에서만 나타났지만, 본 연구 데이터에서는 이 외에도 추가적으로 세 가지 다른 수정구조 (repair

organization)인 타인수정, 자기수정, 단어탐색에서도 등장하는 것을 볼 수 있다. 이러한 환경에서의 선택의문문은 기본적으로 정보탐색이라는 주된 행위 외에도 문맥 명확하게 하기(clarifying), 예비 답변 제공하기(offering a candidate answer), 선호구조 취소하기(defying preference structure) 등의 추가적 행위를 하는 것으로 보여진다. 마지막으로, 말차례 끝 'or'에 대한 대화분석을 통해 질문자가 자신의 최선의 추측을 선택의문문의 앞부분에 발화하고 의도적으로 'or'를 길게 늘여 말차례를 불완전하게 끝맺는 관행이 있음을 밝혀냈다. 이는 질문자가 질문 행위를 수행하는 데 있어 질문자와 답변자 사이에 편재하는 지식 지위의 불균형에 초점을 맞추고 실제로 해당 지식 영역에 대한 우위를 점하고 있는 답변자에게 인식론적 권리를 건넴으로써 자신이 물어본 지식에 대한 답을 촉구하는 전략적 접근방식이라 볼 수 있겠다.

이 연구의 결과는 대화자들이 진행중인 상호작용의 특수한 요구에 민감하게 부응하여 각각의 질문유형이 가지는 상호작용적 특성을 충분히 활용한다는 점에서 대화분석의 주요 개념인 '수용자 설계 (recipient design)'를 뒷받침한다고 볼 수 있다. 자기수정, 타인수정, 단어탐색이라는 세 개의 추가적인 수정구조 내 연속체 환경에서의 선택의문문의 쓰임은 비원어민 상호작용에 존재하는 추가적 설명과 상술의 필요성에 대화자들이 반응한 결과라고 볼 수 있을 것이다. 이 연구를 통해 밝혀진 선택의문문의 역동적 쓰임은 교실 내 상호작용에서 학생들의 언어사용을 촉진하기 위한 방법으로 활용될 수 있으며 또한 교실 밖 대화에서도 대화자간 공통주관성(intersubjectivity)을 높이기 위한 효과적 상호작용 전략이 될 수 있을 것으로 기대한다.