The Analysis of the Beginning of the Telephone Conversations from the Middle School English Textbooks in Korea

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I. Introduction

In terms of accomplishing a certain level of language competence, the competence is considered equal to the grammatical competence from the perspective of Chomsky (1965). On the other hand, Hymes regarded the grammatical competence as one of the sub-categories in the communicative competence, focusing on the communicative competence in the language learning (Hymes, 1972). To be specific, the communicative competence can be organized with four categories as follows: grammatical, psycholinguistic, sociocultural, and probabilistic. In other words, language learning should include acquiring these four different categories.

The Korean public educational system starts the English teaching from the third grade in elementary school, and after the four-year course is finished, Korean students continue their English learning in the next-level of school – middle school. It is asserted that those ESL students in the low level should aim at surviving in the temporary contacts with native speakers in daily situation and building social contacts (Van Ek, 1976). This argument relates to establishing the communicative competence, which tries to build grammatical, psycholinguistic, sociocultural, and probabilistic categories together. This means that textbooks – the fundamental material in ESL class – needs to guide the way to be interactionally fluent in social contexts as a non-native speaker as well as the way to make correct sentences. In the same vein, this investigation aims at examining English textbooks' availability to improve the interactional fluency through the conversational analysis tool. Some scholars

in Korea have been involved in researching English textbooks by comparing them to native speakers' spoken grammar and the vocabulary in the corpus data (Kim et al., 2009; Kwon, 2004; Yu, 1999). This investigation aims at examining English textbooks' availability to improve the interactional fluency through the conversational analysis tool.

When it comes to the research on the development of the fluent interaction, one of the genres that help to explore the talk-in-interaction is the telephone conversation. The telephone conversation has its own unique feature that differentiates itself from other types of conversation; the parties in the telephone conversation are not able to have access to any facial expressions or body gesture except the verbal interaction (Schegloff, 1979). And this is why learners are reluctant or uncomfortable to communicate with native speakers on the phone (Wong and Waring, 2010). Despite the difference, the research from Schegloff (1979) reveals that the telephone conversation and other sorts of conversation still share the "gross" similarities. This advocates the argument that the telephone conversation makes easier to focus on the analysis of the talk-in-interaction between the parties in social context, while excluding other visually possible factors. And the analysis contributes to find a number of patterns in human interaction such as the turn-takings, the adjacency, the sequence and the like.

In the telephone conversation, the unique feature has captured many scholars' attention by "its routine as *achievement*": the beginnings of the telephone conversation (Schegloff, 1986). The beginnings of the telephone conversation consist of the opening sequence and the anchor position. In particular, the opening sequence is comprised of four parts such as summon-answer, identification-recognition, greetings, and how-are-you sequence as presented in (1). This sequence serves as a role in gatekeeping and constituting the parties. The pattern in the beginnings of the telephone conversation is found to be ritual, automatic, and ultimately routine (Schegloff, 1986). Thus, ESL classes need to target learners to automotize the native speakers' routine, and this type of teaching should be differentiated from just "teaching expressions". And the textbooks, as mentioned earlier as the foundation in ESL classes, need to be examined whether they can achieve the goal and are applicable in

the reality of talk-in-interaction.

(1) [Schegloff, 1986, p.115 – modified in Wong an Waring, 2010]
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01    ((ring))
02    A:    Hello,                    }    Summons-answer
03    C:    Hello, Jim?               }    Identification-recognition
04    A:    Yeah,
05    C:    It's Bonnie.              }    Identification-recognition
                                           greeting
06    A:    Hi,
07    C:    Hi, how are yuh.          }    Greeting + first how are you
                                                second how are you
08    A:    Fine, how're you,
09    C:    Oh, okay I guess,
10    A:    Oh okay,                       Anchor point
11    C:    Uhm, (0.2) what are you
12          doing New Year's Eve.
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While anchor position is not canonically included in the opening sequence of the telephone conversation, the study involves the anchor point and examined the whole beginning sequence. This is because turning to the anchor position requires the interactional and mutual agreement of the parities, which needs more than the capability of employing various expressions. Therefore, the study will investigate overall distribution of the beginnings of the telephone conversation in the middle school English textbooks in Korea, focusing on their role in promoting students' interactional fluency, which supports the argument that ESL classes should improve not only grammatical and psycholinguistic knowledge but also sociocultural and probabilistic one.

II. Data

In Korea, there are 25 kinds of English textbook for middle students, and Korean middle schools have their own rights to choose whatever textbook they consider eligible. Among 25 types of English textbooks in Korean middle school, 11 textbooks include the telephone conversation and are analyzed. The analysis excludes the pair practice in the telephone conversation, the mis-

alignment talk by the absence of the recipient or the wrong number, and the institutional talk in order to focus on the study of the sequence from the casual talk between acquaintances. (The institutional talk has some differences from the casual talk such as its compactness (Bowles, 2006).) Therefore, four dialogues are eliminated, and the study employs 26 telephone dialogues from the textbooks.

The data is analyzed on the basis of the following standards:
· Whether the sequence is represented in a canonical ordering.
· Whether one party participates the sequence in a more active way or not
· Whether an expression is utilized more than other possible expression

Other standards can be utilized to analyze the dialogues. However, the study chooses these three standards from the perspective that these will be enough to show the distinct features of the beginnings of the textbook telephone conversations.

III. Analysis

1. Summons-answer

Among 30 excerpts, most of them, 22 out of 26 in table 1, do not contain the summons-answer sequence and start the talk from the identification sequence. In other words, five out of 11 textbooks that include the telephone conversation demonstrate the summon-answer sequence.

All textbook telephone conversations do not illustrate the summons – the phone ring. The importance of this "trivial-looking" event can be emphasized by its power of changing the first topic of the conversation. For example, if the recipient answers the phone before the complete ring, the caller can ask the

Table 1. The frequency of the summon-answer sequence

No summons-answer	Summons-answer existed
18	8

recipient's vicinity of the phone instead of how-are-you sequence as (2) (Schegloff, 1986).

(2) [(Schegloff 1986: 119, #2)
          -ri
Joan: Hello?
Cheryl: Hello:
Joan: Hi:,
Cheryl: .hh Y' were s(h)itting by the pho:ne?
Joan: No, I'm(0.3) I'm in the kitchen, but I wz talkin to a friend a
           mine earlier.
           I was just putting (0.2) my fried rice on my plate to go each
           lunch
           (Schegloff 1986: 119, #2)

When Joan answered the phone before the phone ring completed, Cheryl asked where Joan was sitting, wondering Joan's previous state. Cheryl's reason for the call would not be checking the place where Joan was sitting, but the first topic after the greeting was initiated in this way. This proves that the summons can impact the way the first topic initiates, and the absence of the summons can pedagogically cause a wrong impact on learners to care about just "telephone expressions" rather than "the talk-in-interaction."

(3) [Cheonjae, Lesson 10, p.130]
    Girl: Hello? Can I speak to Mark?
    Boy: This is Mark speaking.
    Girl: Hi, Mark. This is Cindy. My friends and I are going to clean
         the park tomorrow. Can you help us?
    Boy: Sure.

When it comes to the answer, moreover, the absence of the recipient's answer as (3) can leave learners an impression that the caller is supposed to be "a starter" of the talk on the telephone, although the real telephone conversation allows the recipient speak first. In case of (3), instead of wondering why the boy did not make a sound when answering the phone in the first line, the girl starts the conversation and smoothly requests the availability of Mark. It is not clear whether the authors took the summons-answer sequence for granted

and omitted. The issue is that, despite the possible assumption of each identity, this violation of the distribution rule can endanger the interaction in figuring out who the true caller or recipient is (Schegloff, 1968). Also infringement can make learners accustomed to unnatural interaction implicitly, letting them feel a sense of difference from the real talk-in-interaction. It is also shown in other ESL textbooks and considered problematic (Wong, 2002).

All recipients answer the phone with "Hello?" or "Hello," though other varied options are allowed in this sequence such as *yeah*, *hi*, and self-identification. The fixed illustration of the answer might be helpful for students to learn by rote and to survive in the second language speaking environment. But this would force the learners' selection of their own way of interaction in a formal way only, prohibiting them from being more friendly.

2. Identification-recognition

All telephone conversations in the textbooks contain the identification sequence. Canonically, the recognition is followed by the identification as (1). However, 12 of the data among 26 show the initial appearance of the caller's request to identification or his self-identification is not followed by the recognition from the recipient.

> (4) [Gyohaksa, Lesson 11, p.151]
> Minho: Hello?
> Cathy: Hi, Minho. This is Cathy. Why didn't you come to the basket-
>   ball game?
> Minho: Because I had to do my homework.
> Cathy: We lost the game. Will you come to the game tomorrow?
> Minho: Sure, I will.
> Cathy: Ok. Bye.

The absence of the recognition may imply the close relationship of the parties as they recognize each other by their voice samples. In the example (4), after Cathy identifies herself, Minho does not show his recognition and answers Cathy's question as the first response to the caller. From the line that Minho does not show any doubts on the caller's identity and gives the answer smoothly, Minho recognizes Cathy, and they have known for some time. How-

Table 2. The frequency of the expressions in the telephone conversation

Start by "May I speak to"	Start by the caller's self-identification	Start by the caller's recognition
21	8	1

ever, the conversation does not hint the closeness of the parties distinctively, just making readers assume their relationship. This type of limited illustration of the telephone identification-sequence would hinder students' to acquire the way to be friendly with English speakers. It might result from the various reasons of not being able to illustrate the sufficient lines of the telephone conversation or letting students practice the telephone conversation drills.

There are nine ways of producing the caller's first turn in the telephone conversation such as greeting term, answerer's name with rising intonation, answer's name with assertive or falling intonation, question about answerer's state of being, first topic or reason for the call, switchboard request, self-identification, question about identity of answerer and joke version (Schegloff, 1979). These nine types of the first turn can be narrowed down to six ways: switchboard request, greeting, other's name in rising intonation, other's name in falling intonation, the combination of greeting and other's name in rising intonation, and the combination of greeting and other's name in falling intonation (Schegloff, 1979). Meanwhile, the analysis of the textbooks reveals that two expressions are illustrated mainly: "*May I speak to X?*" and "*This is X.*" Although these two expressions are correct, these correct but formal expressions can result in the misunderstandings between by the parties in a close relationship (Wong and Waring, 2010).

3. Greeting

Some telephone dialogues do not illustrate the greeting exchange, supposedly due to insufficient lines to cover all sequence of the telephone conversation.

Table 3. The frequency of the greetings

No greetings	Greetings existed
7	19

Table 4. The frequency of the greeting by each participant

Only by the caller	Only by the recipient	By both
9	4	6

(5) [Didimdol(Lee), lesson 8. p.134]
Somin: Hello. Can I speak to Minho, please?
Minho: This is he. Who's calling?
Somin: This is Somin. Minho,
　　　　Would you like to go with me?
Minho: I'd love to.

In the excerpt (5), the caller starts the talk by requesting the availability of Minho, and the recipient provides the self-identification and asks the caller's identity. Then, the caller identifies himself and recognizes the answerer. While both of the parties do not produce any greetings, this sequence continues prior to the anchor position by the caller. From the invitation that the caller offers to the answerer and the following willingly-offered answer by the recipient, they have acquainted each other with a favorable impression. However, the overt absence of the greeting exchange in (5) hampers to figure out the intimacy of these parties' relationship. And this type of phenomenon in other telephone conversation without greetings in ESL textbooks is reported previously (Wong and Waring, 2010).

(6) [Cheonjae, Lesson 10, p.137]
Beth:　　Hello? May I speak to Jessica?
Jessica: This is Jessica speaking.
Beth:　　Hi, Jessica. This is Beth. Did you finish the math homework?
Jessica: Yes. I did my homework all afternoon.

When it comes to the frequency of each participant's greeting, there are different distributions as table 4. As the example of (6), after the recipient offers her self-identification, the caller produces her greeting, recognition, self-identification, and the anchor position. Then, the recipient responds with the answer upon the caller's question without the return greeting. While this type of telephone conversation is smoothly presented, withholding the return greet-

ing is to avoid the mistaken recognition as the dialogue (7) (Schegloff, 1986).

(7) [Schegloff, 1986, p.115 – modified from Wong and Waring, 2010]
01   ((ring))
02   Susan: Hello,
03   Janet: Hi Susan?
04   Susan: Yes,
05   Janet: This is Janet. Weinstein.
06   Susan: Janet!

At the end of the summons-answer sequence, the caller, Janet, produces the greeting and tries to identify the recipient. Then, the recipient finally produces the recognition of the caller in line 06 after the caller provides her full name. This proves that the recipient withholds the return greeting in line 04 prior to her complete recognition of the counterpart. However, the greeting by one side from the textbook does not include this type of context. The caller's *Hi* in (6) is not returned although they are not at risk to misunderstand each other on the basis of the next line: the recipient, Jessica, is not surprised at Beth's calling and just answered the Beth question. In the same vein, although the return greeting is not ruled, the omission of the return greeting out of the context should be avoided to teach the appropriate talk-in-interaction.

As for the frequency of the greeting expressions, *Hi* is dominant in all greeting sequence. As *Hi* is considered to be used between the acquaintances, it does not show any awkwardness. As the issue in preceding sequence the study mentioned, the greeting sequence is also stuck to a single expression, prohibiting students from having a variety of options depending on the interactional context that they will have.

4. How-are-you

The dominant absence of *how-are-you* sequence is deviated from the canonical sequence of the opening in the telephone conversation. In addition, while

Table 5. The frequency of *how-are-you* sequence

No HAY	HAY existed
22	4

one of the differences between the greeting and *how-are-you* sequence is that *how-are-you* sequence is illustrated to be reciprocal (Wong and Waring, 2010). Only one out of four *how-are-you* sequences in table 5 is reciprocated.

> (8) [Dusan(Kim), Lesson 10, p.144]
> Anna'sdad: Hello.
> Bora:　　　Hi, Mr. Brown. This is Bora, Anna's friend.
> Anna'sdad: Hi, Bora. How are you?
> Bora:　　　I'm good, thank you. May I speak to Anna, please?
> Anna'sdad: Sure. Hold on.

The excerpt (8) demonstrates that Anna's dad produces *how are you*, after he recognizes his daughter's friend, Bora. Then, Bora responds with *I'm good* and the expression of the gratitude. However, she did not produce the second *how are you* and directly turns to the anchor position, asking his daughter's availability. And the next turn smoothly continues as Anna's dad shows his willingness to put his daughter on the phone. Even though the second *how-are-you* is not required, it is regarded important in that one of the ways to be internationally fluent is to show the same interest on the counterpart. In this sense, the absence of the caller's second *how are you* inserting the illustration *how-are-you* exchange can be helpful for non-native students from the perspective of the enculturation of English native speakers.

How-are-you sequence does not show – as same as other sequences – any variation, although other types of the first pair part are possible to be produced such as *how are you doing*? Or *how have you been*. In addition to the first pair part, the second pair part also displays the monotonous distribution.

Upon *how-are-you*, one upgrade and four neutral answers are found. Due to the small number of results in this sequence, the responses are not varied and not reliable. A characteristic of the response is that two of the responses end with expressing his gratitude, *thank you*. This type of demonstration was not

Table 6. The frequency of the answers upon how are you

good	Great	fine
1	1	3

revealed in other ESL textbook analysis (Wong. 2002). While showing one's gratitude can leave a good impression, being too formal can harm one's social relationship, particularly between close friends.

5. Anchor point

Among 26 conversations, five of them finish before the anchor position. The rest of the conversations start their anchor positions just as the canonical telephone beginning – after the telephone opening sequence. The analysis reveals that the initiation of the anchor position is mostly dominated by the caller. This is explainable by the fact that the caller normally has the reason for the call and take actions to satisfy his/her request.

To figure out the distribution type of the anchor position is thought to be important by its sensitivity in sequential environments. To be specific, at the anchor point, the topic shift from the opening sequence to the topic initiation occurs (Button and Casey, 1984), and presenting another topic requires the

Table 7. The frequency of the anchor point

No anchor points	Anchor points existed
5	21

Table 8. The frequency of each party's participation in the anchor point

By the caller	By the recipient
16	5

Table 9. The number of the announcement and pre-announcement at the anchor position

Announcement	Pre-announcement				
Request, invitation, Rejection	Itemized news inquiry	News announce-ment	Topic initial elicitor		Pre-topical sequence By the recipient
			What's up?- by the recipient	You know what? – by the caller	
8	1	6	4	1	1

interactional and mutual collaboration of the participants (Button & Casey, 1985). Thus, the pre-announcement serves the major two roles in evaluating the potential news-worthiness of the topic and preparing the situation that the news is not worthwhile to the recipient (Terasaki, 2004). In this sense, the production of strong moves in topic presentation by the topic initiator can be harmful in the sequence which requires interactional and mutual agreement.

Thus, the telephone conversation is analyzed on the basis of various methods of announcement and pre-announcement. Among 21 anchor position, eight of them immediately start the announcement after the opening sequence of the telephone conversation without pre-announcement. Meanwhile, other 13 dialogues is preempted by a variety of pre-announcement such as topic initial elicitor (Button & Casey, 1984), itemized news inquiry (Button & Casey, 1985), news announcement (Button & Casey, 1985), Pre-topical sequence (Maynard & Zimmerman, 1984).

The textbook analysis above, however, reveals that rather strong moves are dominantly produced in the anchor position: direct announcement and news announcement.

> (9) [Didimdol(Lee), lesson 8, p.134]
> Steve: Hello. Is Hani there?
> Hani: This is Hani speaking.
> Steve: Hi, this is Steve. Can you help me with my math homework, Hani?
> Hani: No problem.

In the excerpt (9), after the caller completes his greeting and self-identification, he directly initiates the request of helping his homework without any hints of his request in his prior turn. Then, the recipient accepts the request without having a time of hesitation or consideration. Since requests give an impression to force the counterpart to accept the thing that cannot benefit him/her, they tend to be delivered in a delayed and mitigated way (Wong and Waring, 2010). However, the way to request by the caller in the previous excerpt is achieved in a form of the invitation or offer which benefits the recipient. While ESL learners' pragmatic problem in pre-announcement is reported,

(Bernsten, 2002) the same problem is expected from Korean ESL learners. Thus, the lack of illustration of pre-announcement in the textbooks is worried to be exposed to and deliver an inappropriate type of interactional practice.

Meanwhile news announcement is considered as the less stronger move than the direct announcement. But, it is also regarded to be the "strong" move among a variety of topic initiation methods, and this is the reason why the closing sequence avoids the news announcement (Button & Casey, 1985).

> (10) [Cheonjae, Lesson 10, p.130]
> Girl: Hello? Can I speak to Mark?
> Boy: This is Mark speaking.
> Girl: Hi, Mark. This is Cindy. My friends and I are going to clean the park tomorrow. Can you help us?
> Boy: Sure.

After the caller completes her turn with her self-identification, she produces the announcement that she and her friends plan to clean tomorrow, immediately leading to the request in the next turn without giving the recipient a moment to respond. Although these multiple TCUs include the pre-announcement, it does not serve the roles as mentioned above: the caller does not make statements to measure the potential news-worthiness of the topic or to prepare the case of the recipient's indifference on the request. And this sequence illustrates the evidence that the pre-announcement is considered "strong" move. In this way, promoting the strong moves in the anchor position in the textbooks is not considered effective in organizing the topic, particularly in making request.

Upon several types of announcement, most of requests are accepted while two requests are rejected, and the response of a request ends the dialogue without the following sequence. While 18 requests or invitations are accepted, eight of them are accepted by *sure*, and five of them by *sounds great* or *sounds interesting*. This same pattern of responding across the publications would lead the textbook dialogue to be isolated from the reality where other responses – such as rejection or hesitation – are found. Also the fact that only two of the requests are rejected, and most of them are willingly accepted with the

responses like *sure* or *sounds great* is regarded as the reflection of the simpli-fied environment of the textbook situation. Although memorizing expressions or drills can be an effective way to learn the second language, being alienated from the real talk-in-interaction is doubtful on improving learners' capability of dealing with the real-life interaction. This issue will be mentioned in the following discussion section.

IV. Conclusion

The investigation above confirms that none of the telephone conversation follows the four telephone opening sequences. Since the real-life telephone conversation is not always accord with the canonical sequences, the omission of the four telephone openings may not cause a critical problem. However, as native speakers, themselves, coordinate "their identities, intimacies, problems and agendas" with four basic opening sequences (Schegloff, 1986), learners need to be exposed to and acquire this discourse competence. Developing this type of pragmatic competence should be promoted from the perspective of building communicative competence (Hymes, 1972), which supports improving students' interactional competence as well as grammar or processing.

In terms of the role of the interlocutors, the real-life telephone can demon-strate a variety of cases: the caller might lead the talk, the answerer might lead the talk, or both might lead the talk equally. Meanwhile, on the basis of the analysis of the amount of each sequence, mostly the callers in the text-books seize the initiative more than the recipients in every sequence: in the starting point, identification, greeting, and *how-are-you* sequence. The identi-fication or *how-are-you* sequence can be started dominantly by the caller due to sequential environments: it is the caller who approaches and takes actions to the recipient for his/her affair. However, this asymmetrical relationship be-tween the parties is not reported in the starting point and greeting.

Speaking of the recipient's response upon the caller's first pair part, the recipients mostly respond with the minimal answer such as *sure* and *sounds interesting*, rarely producing the first pair part. This type of recipients' ten-dency does not reflect the intimacy of the parties or the recipient's sincere

intention to help the caller. The recipient might be in a more passive position in that the recipient who picks up the phone stands in a more passive position than the caller. But, with the consideration of the casual talk between friends, describing the recipient in a passive way can distort the relationship of the parties in the telephone conversation and limit learners' application of the textbook dialogue in the real talk-in-interaction with English speakers.

The last issue in textbooks is the textbooks repeat the same types of expressions with the limitation of revealing diverse types of social interactions that are possible in the talk-in-interaction. Not only expressions but also the same pattern of the conversation is witnessed in identification and recognition sequence such as "*May I speak to X*" and "*This is X.*" In "the threshold level," it is recommended to memorize essential expressions to deal with the daily situations (Van Ek, 1976). However, after those learners in the middle school already completed their four-year-English-course in their elementary years, they should be exposed to also naïve speakers' various types of mutually agreed interactions and capable of dealing with the interactional practice of the target language.

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ABSTRACT

The Analysis of the Beginning of the Telephone Conversations from the Middle School English Textbooks in Korea

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This study aims at analyzing the beginning sequence and the anchor point of the telephone conversations in the English textbooks for Korean middle school based on the telephone conversation study in Schegloff(1986). Furthermore, it is discussed whether the beginning sequence of the telephone conversation in the English textbooks follows the native speakers' unique features found in Schegloff's previous research(1986). Throughout the investigation, the distributions in the English textbooks contrasts sharply with the canonical pattern, and these differences might hinder the L2 learners to be exposed in the real talk-in-interaction.

Key Words   conversation analysis, telephone conversation, English textbook