

A Discourse- Analytic Study of Clarification Requests in Educational Context

Prof. Dr. Riyadh Tariq Kadhim Al- Ameedi

University of Babylon/College of Education for Humanities/ Department of English

Lecturer Zaidoon Abdul RazaqAbboud

University of Basrah/College of Education for Humanities/ Department of English

Abstract

This paper sheds light on the use of different forms and readings used by speakers to facilitate mutual understating. These different forms and readings are presented by Purver in his theory of clarification (2004a). The most common forms and their interpretations are investigated in the educational context. The influence of sex and role variables on using clarification requests (henceforth CRs) is also examined. The study aims to investigate the applicability of Purver's theory of clarification to Educational discourse and check the influence of the 'role' and 'sex' variables on using CRs in such a type of discourse. It is hypothesized, among other things, that CR is a powerful tool that can be used in the educational setting to facilitate mutual understanding and that during the teaching/ learning process students use CRs more than teachers.

Keywords: CR/ grounding/ clarification initiator/ natural discourse/ utterance-anaphoric/ professional context.

1. Introduction

Clarification can be defined as "an explanation or more details that makes something clear or easier to understand" (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary & thesaurus). It is an interpretation that removes misunderstanding which may occur in discourse. Therefore, it makes speakers' utterances easy to understand by speakers' interlocutors. Stoyanchev et al. (2014:1) state that "without clarification, dialogue participants risk missing information and failing to achieve mutual understanding." To achieve such a mutual understanding, the clarification initiator uses different CRs forms. Purver et al. (2002: 1) believe that CRs are common and essential in conversation and although they take different forms and readings, they still concern "the content or form of a previous utterance that has failed to be fully comprehended by the initiator."

Speakers are, sometimes, uncertain about the intended meaning of their interlocutors due to certain factors like interruption, ambiguity, mishearing, or misunderstanding. Speakers request clarification differently trying to achieve a mutual understanding. This can be achieved through the process of grounding, “the process of achieving mutual understanding between participants in a conversation” (Traum and Allen, 1992:1). Whenever they encounter a problem in understanding, speakers use CRs to make the discourse understandable as far as they can. Consequently, whenever there is a breakdown or misunderstanding in human communication, one of the solutions to make a communication easygoing is the use of CRs. Gabsdil (2003:1) points out that “establishing mutual knowledge or grounding is a vital part of the communicative process.” Interlocutors always try to manage, ground or fix problems they encounter during discourse using certain methods or ways to make communication comprehensible (Schlöder 2014:41). Since it is difficult to have a conversation that is perfect, this makes CRs a suitable area to be investigated. Benotti (2009:196) remarks that “recently, it has been proposed that clarification should be a basic component in an adequate theory of meaning”.

Purver presented his theory of CRs (2004) in which he identified different forms and readings used by clarification initiators to make their discourse comprehensible. This study adopts this theory of clarification to analyze CRs used in the educational setting. The influence of the ‘role’ and ‘sex’ variables on using CRs in natural discourse is also investigated in this study.

The study aims to:

1. Investigate the applicability of Purver’s theory of clarification to natural discourse.
2. Analyse CRs in an educational setting using the same theory of clarification (2004a).
3. Investigate clarification forms and their readings in order to get a better understanding of human discourse.
4. Investigate how discourse factors like speakers’ role and sex affect human’s use of CR in the educational setting.

It is hypothesized that:

1. CR is a powerful tool that can be used in the educational setting to facilitate mutual understanding.
2. Students use CRs more than teachers during the teaching/ learning process.
3. CRs are influenced by factors like the role and sex of the speakers.
4. There is a relation between the number of discourse turns and the number of CRs used in the educational setting.

The corpus of this study is taken from the British National Corpus (BNC). The (BNC)

includes different settings among which is the educational setting that constitutes the professional context under investigation. Data are gathered manually, unlike those used in Purver's theory (2004a) for which he uses ClaRIE dialogue system for the analysis of the corpus.

2. Purver's Clarification Theory

Interrogative constructions play an important role in generative grammar since the mid 1960s. Ginzburg and Sag highlighted this importance in Government and Binding (GB) as well as in the paradigm of Minimalist Program. They focus their work on the integration of syntax and semantics. They do not believe in comprehensive account of grammar, rather, they believe in the fact that one can depend on parts or choices of subsets linguists make in interpreting phenomena in language(s) they discuss and the selection process depends on fragmentary proposals.

The investigation tools used in the work of Ginzburg and Sag (2000) are the Head – Driven Phrase Structure Grammar (henceforth HPSG) and the situation semantics as well. Their work is mainly built on the grammatical constructions followed in Sag (1997) and the “comprehensive semantics for interrogatives developed in Ginzburg 1992, 1995 a,b.” (Purver, 2004a:2).

Purver (2004a:243) produces a prototype dialogue system (Clarie System) that can produce and interpret the most important types of CRs (see Purver (2004b)). In this system, he depends on the HPSG. This system depends extensively on the process of grounding which can interpret users' CRs suitably and general system of CRs (where necessary) as well. It starts with GoDis dialogue system (a prototype dialogue system for information-seeking dialogue, see Larsson et al. (2000), and Task oriented Instructional Dialogue Toolkit (TrindiKit) together with “a starting point for information state (IS) and dialogue move engine (DME)...” This prototype system stands as a concept, i.e. it lacks many elements that could present, in full, a dialogue system such as lexicon, grammar, and inferential capability (See Purver(2002) and Purver et al. 2003b). Schlangen (2005: 1) believes that “modelling dialogue, that is, designing formal systems that produce aspects of natural conversation, is a challenging task.” Clarification is essential in both human-human dialogues and human-machines dialogues as well. Stoyanchev et al. (2014:1) state that in Spoken Dialogue Systems (SDS) clarifications are very different from those used in natural human interaction (See Rieser, 2004). They add that “speakers asked *targeted* questions using contextual information” in human-human dialogue while in Spoken dialogue System they ask *generic* ones like *Please repeat* or *Please rephrase*. In this case, the speaker in human- human dialogues employs clarification strategies that are different from those used in human-machine dialogues.

Purver et al. (2003a:3) say “ in theory, a perfect dialogue system should be able to interpret and deal with clarification requests (CRs) made by the user in order to elicit clarification of some part of a system utterance, and be able to request clarification itself [sic] of some part of a user utterance.” Purver (2004b:1) states that “dialogue systems generally have the capability of indicating inability to recognize or understand an entire user turn (or inability to do so to a reasonable degree of confidence), and will usually be able to produce outputs like “*I did not understand what you said. Please rephrase*” or “*You want to go to Paris, is that right?*”

CRs are common in human conversation. They can take various *forms* and can be intended by the speaker making the requests (the CR *initiator*) to request various types of clarification information (i.e. they can have various *readings*), but have in common the fact that they are in some sense *utterance-anaphoric* – they concern the content or form of a previous utterance that has failed to be fully comprehended by the initiator, (Purver, 2002:174). Ginzburg (2009a:4) states that:

The basic criterion for adequacy of a theory of meaning is the ability to characterize for any utterance type the update that emerges in the aftermath of successful mutual understanding and the full range of possible clarification requests otherwise - this is the early 21st century analogue of truth conditions.

Paul (2006: 4) highlights the appealing aspects of Purver's model in that this model deals with a wide range of CR forms. He also mentions that CRs and their answers are considered as regular ask and assertion moves respectively. Paul (2006: 4) states that the difference between “CRs from other ask moves is not the type of dialogue act that is being performed, but rather the fact that this act happens to concern a previous utterance.” DeVault and Stone (2007: 1) state that the accurate meaning of an utterance can be obtained “in part through its relationship to what has come before.”

In natural dialogue, hearers often face difficulty in interpreting speaker's utterance. In this case hearers tend to request clarification. The need to request clarification occurs in case where there is interference in communication such as “noisy environment, poor telephone connection, or impaired language proficiency of communication partners (such as a child or new language learners.” Al -Raheb (2006:2) mentions that some other reasons for requesting clarification like problems with consistency, cognitive aspects of context, and physical aspects of context as well. Generally, “as there are different kinds of CRs and indeed different possible interpretations of utterances(Purver et al. 2003a, Purver et al. 2003b, Purver 2004b),

clarification can be initiated for different reasons and in different forms." (Al -Rehab, 2006:1). Healey et al. (2003) state that "requests for clarification are critical for maintaining mutual-understanding in dialogue and have received attention from both the formal semantic (e.g. Ginzburg and Cooper, 2001 and 2004) and conversation analytic traditions (e.g. Schegloff, 1987)." Rodr'iguez and Schlangen (2004:107) point out that "One of the most developed classifications of CRs is the one presented in (Purver, 2004a). However, Purver's classification relies mainly on the surface form of the CRs."

Ginzburg (2009b:16-17) states that Schegloff (1987) points out that generally one can ask for clarification about anything in a previous utterance. However, general corpus studies of CRs as well as task oriented ones show that there are four main categories of CRs.

These four categories are:

1. Repetition: CRs that request the previous utterance to be repeated.
2. Confirmation: CRs that seek to confirm understanding of a prior utterance.
3. Intended Content: CRs that query the intended content of a prior utterance.
4. Intention recognition: CRs that query the goal underlying a prior utterance.

2.1. Clarification Forms

According to Purver (2004a:64-68), CR has the following different forms:

1. Non-Reprise Clarifications (non)

This form is associated with the nature of the information being requested by the CR initiator. Phrases like "*do you mean. . .*" ., "*did you say. . .*" are examples of this type (CR is shown in bold in all examples):

(1) (P.64)

Cassie: You did get off with him?

Catherine: Twice, but it was totally non-existent kissing so

Cassie: **What do you mean?**

Catherine: I was sort of falling asleep.

2. Reprise Sentences (lit)

Speakers can repeat previous utterances in full to form CR. This repetition need not be verbatim.

(2) (P.64)

Organdy: I spoke to him on Wednesday, I phoned him.

Obina: **You phoned him?**

Orgady: Phoned him.

3. WH-Substituted Reprise Sentences (sub)

Here, the sentence is repeated in full and the element under question is replaced by a *wh*-phrase:

(3) (P.65)

Unknown: He's anal retentive, that's what it is.

Kath: **He's what?**

Unknown: Anal retentive.

4. Reprise Sluices (slu)

This form is an elliptical *wh*-construction ... in which a bare *wh*-phrase is used to reprise a particular phrase in the source utterance. (P. 65)

(4) (P.66)

Sarah: Leon, Leon, sorry she's taken.

Leon: **Who?**

Sarah: Cath Long, she's spoken for.

5. Reprise Fragments (frg)

In this form, to reprise a particular phrase in the source utterance a bare fragment is used. (P:66)

(5) (P.66)

Lara: There's only two people in the class.

Matthew: **Two people?**

Unknown: For cookery, yeah.

Catriona: God I hope I don't look like big Kath <unclear> blessing if you did.

Jess: **Blessing?**

Catriona: Mm.

Jess: What you would like to look like her?

“A similar form was also identified in which the bare fragment is preceded by a *wh* question word” (P.67).

(6) (P.67)

Ben: No, ever, everything we say she laughs at.

Frances: Who Emma?

6. Reprise Gaps (gap)

This form “consists of a reprise of (a part of) the utterance *immediately preceding* this component” (P.67).

(7) (P.67)

Laura: Can I have some toast please?

Jan: **Some?**

Laura: Toast

Reprise gap differs from reprise fragment in that firstly, it does reprise whatever immediately precedes it, rather than the phrase itself. In example (7) a reprise fragment CR would involve reprising that word (e.g. “*Toast?*”), whereas a reprise gap CR involves reprising the previous word (“*Some?*”). Secondly, since there is no intonational information in the British National Corpus (BNC), no significant misunderstanding regarding gap-CRs was found in Purver’s study (P.67)

7. Gap Fillers (fil)

A speaker uses this form “to ask about or suggest material which might fill a gap left by a previous incomplete utterance.” (P.68). Therefore, it is used either because an utterance has been left hanging by a previous speaker or because the CR initiator interrupts.

(8) (P.68)

Sandy: if, if you try and do enchiladas or

Katriane: Mhm.

Sandy: erm

Katriane: **Tacos?**

Sandy: tacos.

8. Conventional (wot)

This occurs when there is a complete breakdown in communication. Examples of this type are “*What?*”, “*Pardon?*”, “*Sorry?*”, “*Eh?*” (P.68)

(9) (P.68)

Anon 2: Gone to the cinema tonight or summat.

Kitty: **Eh?**

Anon 2: Gone to the cinema

9. Other

Purver (2004a:35) states that “we do not know what other readings and forms there may be, or how realistically implementable the grammar is.” This suggests that there are other types of sentences that cannot fall under Purver’s (2004a) categorization of forms and readings. Thus, he (P.55) adds that “it is not clear ... what other forms and readings might exist.”

2.2 Clarification Readings

Purver (2004a:69) presents the following clarification readings.

1. Clausal (cla)

The basic content of this type is the “*content of the conversational move* made by the utterance being clarified: asking a question, asserting a proposition etc.” (P.69)

It can be paraphrased as

“Are you asking/asserting P?”

“Is it X about which you are asking/asserting P(X)?”

or *“For which X are you asking/asserting P(X)?”*

This of course depends on whether the question being asked is a yes/no or wh-question. “It follows that the source utterance must have been partially grounded by the CR initiator, at least to the extent of understanding the move being made.” (P. 69)

(10) (P.69)

Orgady: I spoke to him on Wednesday, I phoned him.

Obina: **You phoned him?**

Orgady: Phoned him.

“Are you asserting that you phoned him?”

2. Constituent (con)

Here, the content of *a constituent* of the previous utterance is being clarified. It corresponds to:

“What/who is ‘X’?”

“What/who do you mean by ‘X’?”

or *“Is it Y that you mean by ‘X’?”*

(11) (P.70)

Frances: She likes boys called Leigh, named Leigh, Leigh [name], [name], Leigh [name] <pause> Bill Leigh [name], B J.

Ben: **B J.**

Frances: She, she's writing a note

Ben: **B J?**

Frances: you know Ash, B J

Ben: What?

Frances: B J.

Ben: Don't mean nothing.

Frances: You know B J, it stands for blow job right.

“What do you mean by ‘BJ’?”

“What is a ‘BJ’?”

3. Lexical (lex)

It resembles the clausal reading, “but is distinguished from it in that the *surface form* of the utterance is being clarified, rather than the content of the conversational move.” (P. 70)

This reading takes the form

“Did you utter X?”

or *“What did you utter?”*

“The CR initiator is attempting to identify or confirm a word/segment in the source utterance, rather than a part of the semantic content of the utterance.” (P.70)

(12) (P.70)

Anon 6: here that Sassafras has been <pause> named potentially unsafe for consumption. So, don't put any in your mouth.

Margaret: **Saxa-what?**

Anon 5: Saxafrall [sic] that's a plant!

“What X did you utter ‘Saxa-X’?”

4. Corrections (cor)

This can be paraphrased as

“Did you intend to/should you have uttered X (instead of Y)?”

It is similar to the lexical reading in that “it queries surface form rather than semantic content, but is distinguished by the fact that it queries a possible replacement or substitution of one part of the original form with another.” (P.71)

(13) (P.71)

Anon 3: Last year I was fifteen for the third time round.

Grace: Yeah.

<laugh> Fifteen for the _rst time round.

Anon 3: **Third.**

Grace: Third time round.

Anon 3: Third time round.

Corrections can have clausal or constituent sub-type too: paraphrases such as *“Did you intend to assert P(X) (instead of P(Y))?”* and *“Did you intend to refer to X (instead of Y)?”* can be considered as CRs. (P.72)

3. Corpus Analysis

3.1 Introduction

This study attempts to apply Purver's theory of clarification to natural conversation in one of the professional context; the educational context. Search for clarification forms has been done manually by the researchers to make sure of the exact form under investigation instead of using certain electronic search engines. Some of these dialogues are classified as being demographic (non – context governed dialogues) including dialogues of everyday life subjects while the others as being context – governed domain including business, educational radio interviews and the like. Readings

of clarification forms are made according to those mentioned by Purver with some modifications on certain readings.

Table (1): CR Markup Scheme

<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Possible Values</i>	<i>Example</i>
rform	non Non-Reprise lit Literal Reprise sub WH-Substituted Reprise slu Reprise Sluice frg Reprise Fragment gap Reprise Gap fil Gap Filler oth Other	A: “Did Bo leave?. B:What did you say” A: “Did Bo leave?. B:Did BO leave?” A: “Did Bo leave?. B:Did WHO leave?” A: “Did Bo leave?. B:Who?” A: “Did Bo leave?. B:Bo?” A: “Did Bo leave?. B:Did Bo . . . ?” A: “Did Bo B:... . leave?”
rread	cla Clausal con Constituent lex Lexical cor Correction oth Other	“Is it Bo iyou're asking if ileft” “Who do you mean by `Bo'?” “Did you say `Bo'?” “Did you mean to say `Mo'?”
rsource	- (any sentence number)	

3.2 Corpus of the Study: Description

The corpus of the study consists of Teacher- Student conversations. They are taken from the British National Corpus (BNC). This study checks the frequency of CR forms in the educational setting and the form that is dominant in this setting. It tries to find out how much important CRs are, and how they can be interpreted, in such setting.

3.3 The Educational Setting : Analysis

This context can be classified into three types of sub contexts: 1. Teacher- Student 2. Student –Student 3. Teacher –Teacher 4. Students- Teacher.

Form Type: *Reprise Sentences (lit)*

Context:

Table (2): Setting Information (1)

Setting Information for F7E	
<s>-units 570 to 595	
Locale:	Ralph Gardner high school

Activity:	discussing maths lessons agenda for mathscorriculum
Placename:	Northumberland: North Shields
Speakers (other than unknown):	<u>PS1LS</u><u>PS1LT</u><u>PS1LU</u><u>PS1LV</u><u>F7E</u><u>PS000</u>

Table (3): Speakers' Information (1)

(1)

Speaker information for PS1LT (of file F7E)	
Name:	Cath
Number of turns:	165
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Female
Education:	Unknown
Additional information:	
Occupation:	teacher
Role:	unspecified

(2)

Speaker information for PS1LS (of file F7E)	
Name:	Alan
Number of turns:	187
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Male
Education:	Unknown
Additional information:	
Occupation:	teacher
Role:	unspecified

(3)

Speaker information for PS1LU (of file F7E)	
Name:	Judith

Number of turns:	143
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Female
Education:	Unknown
Additional information:	
Occupation:	teacher
Role:	unspecified

The Speakers: Cath / Alan

CR Initiator: Judith

Example (14):

Cath 7 Yeah, I I just wondered because there are some of them that don't have any relevance to national curriculum and I <-|-> want to <-|->

Alan 8 <-|-> Why?

Cath 9 I just thought maybe, you know, sort of miss them out <pause><-|-> do level one.

Judith 10 <-|->**Do another type?**

Cath 11 Do level one and level two, the ones that you you have to do <pause> and if there's any time left at the end of the year do the ones that <pause> that <-|-> you missed out.

Reading Type: Clausal

Are you asserting that I 'do another type'?

Analysis:

The CR Initiator here does not repeat the previous utterance in full. Instead, he makes a change by replacing part of the original utterance by some other synonymous words (anaphora). The repetition here is not verbatim. The meaning of the previous utterance is still preserved though different words have been used. This also indicates that at least part of the original utterance has been grounded by the CR initiator. The CR Initiator understands part of the previous utterance, but he intentionally makes certain changes in the wording just to make sure of what he heard.

Form Type: *Conventional(wot)*

Context:

Table (4): Setting Information (3)

Setting Information for JAA	
<s>-units 690 to 732	
Locale:	Classroom
Activity:	Lesson Demonstration, question-and-answer.
Placename:	Nottinghamshire: Mansfield
Speakers (other than unknown):	<u>PS427PS428PS429PS42APS42BPS42CPS42DPS42EPS42F</u>

Table (5): Speakers' Information (3)

(1)

Speaker information for JAAPSUNK (of file JAA)	
Name:	Unknown speaker
Number of turns:	105
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Unknown
Education:	n/a
Additional information:	
Occupation:	N/A
Role:	other

(2)

Speaker information for PS427 (of file JAA)	
Name:	mr h a redfern
Number of turns:	156
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Male
Education:	Unknown

Additional information:	
Occupation:	schoolteacher
Role:	unspecified

The Speaker: Unknown speaker

CR Initiator: Mr. Haredfern

Example (15):

<u>Unknown speaker</u>	268	Space.
<u>mr h a redfern</u>	269	Well <unclear> yes you're in space.
<u>Unknown speaker</u>		<laugh>
<u>mr h a redfern</u>	270	Pardon?
<u>Unknown speaker</u>		<unclear>
<u>mr h a redfern</u>	271	Well hardly ever <unclear> our watch.
<u>Unknown speaker</u>	272	Orbit.
<u>mr h a redfern</u>	273	Orbit.

Reading Type:*Lexical*

What did you say?

Analysis:

This utterance indicates a complete breakdown in communication. It also indicates that the CR Initiator could not hear what the speaker has already said and that the CR Initiator needs to get more information by maintaining the communication. The CR Initiator's use of 'Pardon' represents that the CR Initiator wants the speaker to repeat what she has just said. The speaker's verbatim repetition of his previous utterance confirms the breakdown in communication between them.

Form Type:*Wh –Substituted Reprise Sentence (sub)*

Context:

Table (6): Setting Information (5)

Setting Information for F7E	
<s>-units 570 to 595	
Locale:	Ralph Gardner high school
Activity:	discussing maths lessons agenda for mathscorriculum

Placename:	Northumberland: North Shields
Speakers (other than unknown):	<u>PS1LSPS1LTPS1LUPS1LVF7EPS000</u>

Table (7): Speakers' Information (5)

(1)

Speaker information for PS1LV (of file F7E)	
Name:	Ian
Number of turns:	84
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Male
Education:	Unknown
Additional information:	
Occupation:	teacher
Role:	unspecified

(2)

Speaker information for PS1LS (of file F7E)	
Name:	Alan
Number of turns:	187
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Male
Education:	Unknown
Additional information:	
Occupation:	teacher
Role:	unspecified

(3)

Speaker information for PS1LU (of file F7E)	
Name:	Judith
Number of turns:	143
Standard header information:	

Sex:	Female
Education:	Unknown
Additional information:	
Occupation:	teacher
Role:	unspecified

(4)

Speaker information for PS1LT (of file F7E)

Name:	Cath
Number of turns:	165

Standard header information:

Sex:	Female
Education:	Unknown

Additional information:

Occupation:	teacher
Role:	unspecified

The Speakers: Cath / Alan

CR Initiator: Judith

Example (16):

Cath 300 <-|-> I can't <-|-> do the <-|-> presentation.

Alan 301 <-|-> you know <-|-><unclear>

Cath <laugh>

Alan 302 Aye.

Judith 303 **What presentation?**

Cath <laugh>

Alan 304 <-|-> Aye.

Ian 305 <-|-> Don't <-|-> know about a presentation.

Judith 306 Yeah, I don't anything about a presentation.

Alan 307 Mhm, well you will when you're sitting in front of the staff tomorrow so don't

Reading Type: *Clausal*

What 'presentation' you are asserting?

Analysis:

The element in question 'I can't do the presentation' is substituted by a wh – question 'What presentation?'. The CR Initiator uses this type of clarification to refer to the misunderstanding that he underwent in this utterance. Part of the original utterance was not clear to the CR Initiator. Therefore, he substituted that particular part with a wh –word to reflect his need for more information or repetition of the original utterance.

Form Type: *Reprise fragments (frg)*

Context:

Table (8): Setting Information (7)

Setting Information for JAA	
<s>-units 690 to 732	
Locale:	Classroom
Activity:	Lesson Demonstration, question-and-answer.
Placename:	Nottinghamshire: Mansfield
Speakers (other than unknown):	<u>PS427PS428PS429PS42APS42BPS42CPS42DPS42EPS42F</u>

Table (9): Speakers' Information (7)

(1)

Speaker information for PS427 (of file JAA)	
Name:	mr h a redfern
Number of turns:	156
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Male
Education:	Unknown
Additional information:	
Occupation:	schoolteacher
Role:	unspecified

(2)

Speaker information for PS42E (of file JAA)	
---------------------------------------------	--

Name:	Alan
Number of turns:	5
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Male
Education:	Unknown
Additional information:	
Occupation:	school pupil
Role:	unspecified

The Speaker: Alan

CR Initiator: Mr. Haredfern

Example (17):

Alan 468 Hello how are you?

469 Can I borrow some books?

mr h a 470 **Books?**
redfern

Alan 471 And some <unclear>.

472 Those blue ones that are down there on <-|-> your <unclear><-|->.

mr h a 473 <-|-> Oh yes of course.
redfern

474 <-|-> Of course yes feel free.

Reading Type:*Clausal*

Are you asserting 'Books'?

Analysis:

The CR initiator repeats part of the previous utterance that is not very clear to him. He first echoes 'Books?' just to get confirmation on that particular information. Part of what the speaker has just said is grounded by the CR Initiator while the other part is not. Therefore, the CR Initiator uses this bare fragment 'Books?' to reflect that he hears that part of the utterance, but he is not sure the speaker wants to confirm that word. Therefore, he asks the speaker to give him more clarification about this particular word only.

Form Type: *Non - Reprise Clarification (non)*

Context:

Table (10): Setting Information (9)

Setting Information for F7R	
<s>-units 430 to 455	
Locale:	school classroom
Activity:	religious studies lesson year seven (eleven year olds) school lesson
Placename:	Essex: Essex
Speakers (other than unknown):	<u>PS1MLPS1MM</u>

Table (11): Speakers' Information (9)

(1)

Speaker information for PS1ML (of file F7R)	
Name:	N/A
Number of turns:	161
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Female
Education:	Unknown
Additional information:	
Occupation:	teacher
Role:	unspecified

(2)

Speaker information for F7RPSUNK (of file F7R)	
Name:	Unknown speaker
Number of turns:	171
Standard header information:	
Sex:	Unknown
Education:	n/a
Additional information:	

Occupation:	N/A
Role:	other

The Speaker: The Student

CR Initiator: The Teacher

Example (18):

Unknown speaker 252 I could have wrote better

PS1ML 253 Oh shout at me I'm a bit deaf over here

Unknown speaker 254 I could have wrote better, I could of done much better illustrations

PS1ML 255 Right, so you could of written, when you say you could of written better, **what do you mean?**

Unknown speaker 256 Hand write better

PS1ML 257 So you could, the handwriting could of been neater, fine and then you want to pay some attention to your illustrations in the future, that's good, come on then shout at me, it's the only time you're allowed.

Reading Type: *Constituent*

What did you mean?

Analysis:

The CR Initiator here looks for clarification since she uses this type of clarification in which she makes the information being requested very explicit. The CR Initiator asks about the content of the previous utterance. The word 'written' was not very clear to the CR Initiator, so she asks about what the speaker means when he utters 'written'. Therefore, the question is about the semantic content of the previous utterance.

4. Discussion of Results

It seems that there is a clear relationship that holds between using a certain type of clarification form within the educational context. In this educational setting, conventional forms (31.76%) is used more than other forms. Reprise Fragment form scored (19.04%) while both of Reprise Sentences and Wh- Substituted Reprise Sentences are used 10 times (15.87%). None of the Reprise Gap form is used in the educational setting.

Table (12): CR Forms and their Frequency of Occurrence and Percentages in Educational Setting

	Clarification Forms	No.	%
1	Non – Reprise Clarification (non)	4	6.349
2	Reprise Sentences (lit)	10	15.873
3	Wh- Substituted Reprise Sentences (sub)	10	15.873
4	Reprise Sluices (slu)	4	6.349
5	Reprise Fragments (frg)	12	19.047
6	Reprise Gap (gap)	0	0.00
7	Gap Fillers (fil)	1	1.5873
8	Conventional (wot)	20	31.746
9	Others	2	3.1746
Total		63	

The following table shows that in the educational setting, male teachers use CRs only 11 times while female teachers use them 14 times. This indicates that female teachers use CRs in their teaching process more than male teachers. On the other hand, male students use CRs 29 times while female students use them only 2 times. This indicates that male students tend to use CRs in their learning process more than female students. Generally speaking, males use CRs in the educational setting more than females.

Table (13): The relationship between the role and the sex of the speaker in the educational setting

Role	Male	Female	Total
Teacher	11	14	25
Student	29	2	31
Row total	40	16	56

As far as the influence of role variable on using CRs in the Educational setting is concerned, it can be said that teachers use CRs more than their immediate interlocutors, i.e. students. This is illustrated in the following table.

Table (14): The Relationship between the Role of the Speaker, the Number of CRs Used, and the Professional Setting

CR Initiator	CR No.
Teacher	25
Student	31

The educational setting shows that students use CRs more than teachers and unknown/ unspecified speakers. This is clearly exhibited in the following table; the

highest percentage of using CRs has been scored by students (5.43% out of 92 turns) followed by teachers (3.10% out of 161 turns) and finally unspecified speakers scored (1.57% out of 317 turns).

Table (15) : Percentages of CRs Used by Speakers in the Educational Setting

Session	Reference	CR Initiator	Role	Turn No.	CR No.	%
1	FMK PS1T3	Elizabeth	Teacher	144	2	1.38
	FMK PS1T4	Peter	Student	140	1	0.71
2	F7E PS1 LT	Cath	Teacher	165	2	1.21
	F7E PS1LU	Judith	Teacher	143	4	2.79
	F7E PS1LV	Ian	Teacher	84	1	1.19
	F7E PS1LS	Alan	Teacher	187	1	0.53
3	KPX PS58N	Ben	Student	123	4	3.25
	KPX PS58M	Zoe	Student	78	2	2.56
	KPX PSUNK	Unknown Speaker	other	317	5	1.57
	KPX PS58K	Robin	Student	370	17	5.31
	KPX PS58P	Oliver	Student	61	2	3.27
4	F7R PS1ML	N/A	Teacher	161	5	3.10
	F7R PSUNK	Unknown Speaker	other	171	1	0.58
5	JSV PS4RK	N/A	Teacher	240	2	0.83
6	F7S PSUNK	Unknown speaker	Other	84	1	1.19
7	JAA PS427	Mr. Haredfern	Teacher	156	4	2.56
8	JJS PS47E	Berkam	Pupil	92	5	5.43
	JJS PS47D	N/A	Teacher	183	1	0.54
	JJS PS47G	N/A	Unspecified	47	1	0.52
	JJS PSUNK	Unknown speaker	Other	192	1	0.52
	JJS PS47M	N/A	Teacher	118	3	2.54

It is to be mentioned that the role of some speakers in some sessions is not specified however the setting itself can suggest what kind of role such speakers play in the discourse i.e. a teacher or a student.

Table (16): Clarification Forms and their Numbers Used by each Speaker in the Educational Setting

Reference	CR Initiator	Role	Sex	CR No.	CR Forms
FMK PS1T3	Elizabeth	Teacher	Female	2	frg/lit
FMK PS1T4	Peter	Student	Male	1	frg
F7E PS1 LT	Cath	Teacher	Female	2	Fil/wot
F7E PS1LU	Judith	Teacher	Female	4	Wot/wh-sub/lit/new
F7E PS1LV	Ian	Teacher	Male	1	wot
KPX PS58N	Ben	Student	Male	4	4 wot
KPX PS58K	Robin	Student	Male	17	12 wot/ 1 wh-sub/2 lit/1 frg/1 slu
KPX PS58P	Oliver	Student	Male	2	Wot/ frg
F7R PS1ML	Ps1ML	Teacher	Female	6	2 lit/ 1 slu/ 1 new/2 non
JSV PS4RK	Ps4RK	Teacher	Male	2	Non/ new
KPX PS58M	Zoe	Student	Female	2	lit/ slu
F7E PS1LS	Alan	Teacher	Male	1	frg
KPX PSUNK	Unknown Speaker			5	Wh-sub 5
F7R PSUNK	Unknown Speaker			1	non
F7S PSUNK	Unknown Speaker			1	slu
JAA PS427	Mr. Haredfern	Teacher	Male	4	1 lit/1 Non /1 frg/ 1Wh sub
JJS PS47E	Berkam	Pupil	Male	5	4 frg / 1 New
JJS PS47D	N/A	Teacher	Male	1	lit
JJS PS47G	N/A	Unspecified	Female	1	frg
JJS PSUNK	Unknown speaker	other	N/A	1	frg
JJS PS47M	N/A	Teacher	N/A	3	2 Wh sub /1 new

CRs are of considerable value in clarifying natural discourse, particularly in the educational setting. They can be of use to teachers and students as well. Teachers can use CRs in the educational setting to clarify ambiguous utterances that students utter and students can use CRs for the same purposes when they speak to their teachers.

5. Conclusions

The conclusions that are arrived at are as follows:

- 1.The role of clarification requests is very clear in making utterances more comprehensible and in resolving misunderstanding that may occur during the educational discourse.
- 2.It is found out that CRs proved to be a very powerful tool that can be utilized in the Educational setting to facilitate mutual understanding.Students use clarification requests more than teachers during theteaching/ learning process.
- 3.As far as the relation that holds between the number of CRs and the professional context under investigation is concerned, it is proved that the number of clarification used in the Educational setting is of great value in discourse.
- 4.Furthermore, the corpus analysis has revealed the fact that both of the role and sex variables have a great influence on using clarification forms.Male teachers use clarification requests less than female teachers.
- 5.Finally, the corpus analysis proves that there is no consistent proportional relationship that holds between the number of turns in a discourse and the number of CRs in that discourse.

References

- Al- Raheb, Yafa (2006) Representing Clarification Dialogues in Speaker/ Hearer Model. American Association for Artificial Intelligence (www.aaai.org)
- Benotti, Luciana .(2009). “Clarification Potential of Instruction.” In Proceedings of SIGDIAL 2009: the 10th Annual Meeting of the Special Interest Group in Discourse and Dialogue, pp. 196–205, Queen Mary University of London.
- British National Corpus (BNC). Available at: <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>
- Cambridge Advanced English & Thesaurus. Aavailable at: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>
- DeVault, David and Mathew Stone .(2007). “Managing Ambiguities Across Utterances in Dialogue.” In Decalogue, NJ.
- Gabsdil, Malte .(2003). “Clarification in spoken dialogue systems.”In Proceedings of the AAAI Spring Symposium. Workshop on Natural Language Generation in Spoken and Written Dialogue, pp. 28–35.
- Ginzburg, Jonathan (1995). “Resolving questions” In Language and Philosophy, 18(5):459– 527.
- Ginzburg, Jonathan .(2009 a). The Interactive Stance: Meaning for Conversation. CSLI Publications.
- Ginzburg, Jonathan .(2009 b). “Questions and internalizing relevance.” Fall 2009

Workshop in Philosophy and Linguistics, University of Michigan.

- Ginzburg, Jonathan and Robin Cooper .(2001). “Resolving Ellipsis in Clarification”.In Proceedings of the 39th meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics, Toulouse.
- Ginzburg, Jonathan and Robin Cooper.(2004). “Clarification, ellipsis, and the nature of con- textual updates in dialogue.”In Linguistics and Philosophy, 27(3): pp. 297–365.
- Healey, Patrick, Matthew Purver, James King, Jonathan Ginzburg and Greg Mills. (2003). “Experimenting with Clarification in Dialogue.” In Proceedings of the 25th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (CogSci 2003). Boston, MA.
- Larsson, Staffan, Peter Ljungl’of, Robin Cooper, ElisabetEngdahl, and StinaEricsson .(2000). GoDiS - an accommodating dialogue system. In Proceedings of ANLP/NAACL- 2000 Workshop on Conversational Systems.
- Paul, Piwek .(2006). “Perspectives on Dialogue : Introduction to this Special Issue.” In Research on Language and Computation. 4 (-2-3) P.p. 143-152.
- Purver, Matthew (2002). “Processing unknown words in a dialogue system.”In Proceedings of the 3rd SIGdial Workshop on Discourse and Dialogue, pp. 174–183, Philadelphia.Association for Computational Linguistics.
- Purver, Matthew (2004a). The Theory and Use of Clarification Requests in Dialogue.Ph.D Thesis. London: University of London.
- Purver, Matthew .(2004b). “CLARIE: The Clarification Engine.” In J. Ginzburg and E. Vallduv’i, editors.In Proceedings of the 8th Workshop on the Semantics and Pragmatics of Dialogue (Catalog), pp. 77–84, Barcelona, Spain.
- Purver, Matthew, Jonathan Ginzburg, , and Patrick Healey .(2002). “On the means for clarification in dialogue.” In Proceedings of the 2nd SIG dial Workshop on Discourse and Dialogue, pp. 116–125, Aalborg. Association for Computational Linguistics.
- Purver, Matthew, Patrick Healey, James King, Jonathan Ginzburg and Greg Mills (2003a). “Answering Clarification Questions.” In Proceedings of the 4th SIGdial Workshop on Discourse and Dialogue, pp. 23-33, Association for Computational Linguistics, Sapporo, Japan, July 2003.
- Purver, Matthew, Jonathan Ginzburg, , and Patrick Healey .(2003b). “On the means for clarification in dialogue.”In Smith, R. and van Kuppevelt, J., editors, Current and New Directions in Discourse & Dialogue, pp. 235–255.Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Rieser, VerenaTeresa .(2004). “Confidence-Based Fragmentary Clarifications on Several Levels for Robust Dialogue Systems.”Unpublished M.A. Thesis.University of Edinburgh.

- Rodríguez, Kepa J. and David Schlangen .(2004). "Form, Intonation and Function of Clarification Requests in German task-oriented spoken dialogues."In Proceedings of the 8th Workshop on the Semantics and Pragmatics of Dialogue (CATALOG'04). Barcelona, Catalonia.
- Schlangen, David .(2005). "Modelling dialogue: Challenges and Approaches." In KünstlicheIntelligenz 3/05: 23–28.
- Schlöder, Julian J. (2014). "Uptake, Clarification and Argumentation."Unpublished MSc Thesis.The Universiteit van Amsterdam.
- Stoyanchev, Svetlana, Alex Liu, and Julia Hirschberg .(2014). "Towards Natural Clarification Questions in Dialogue Systems."In The Questions, discourse and dialogue symposium at AISB.
- Traum, David R, and James F.Allen .(1992). "A "Speech Acts" approach to Grounding in Conversation." In Proceedings International Conference on Spoken Language Processing.ICSLP92.PP. 37-40. Available at : <http://people.ict.usc.edu/~traum/Papers/92.traum-allen.ICSLP92.pdf>

دراسة تحليل الخطاب لطلبات التوضيحي في السياق التعليمي

الأستاذ الدكتور رياض طارق كاظم العميدي

جامعة بابل / كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية / قسم اللغة الانجليزية

م. زيدون عبد الرزاق عبود

جامعة البصرة / كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية / قسم اللغة الانجليزية

الخلاصة

يبين هذا البحث أهمية استخدام 'طلب توضيحات' في السياقات التعليمية. اعتمد الباحثان نظرية Purver لتحليل طلبات التوضيح في هذه السياقات. تم استخدام الأشكال (Forms) والقراءات (Readings) التي عرضها Purver في نظريته كأدوات لغرض التحليل. وكانت المتغيرات مثل "الدور" (Role) و "الجنس" (Sex) أيضاً قيد الدراسة. فقد تمت دراسة تأثير هذين المتغيرين على استخدام 'طلب توضيحات' في الخطاب أيضاً فيما يتعلق بالسياقات التعليمية المذكورة في أعلاه.

يشتمل البحث على خمسة فقرات. الفقرة الاولى عبارة عن مقدمة للبحث ومقدمة عن النظرية. تشتمل هذه الفقرة ايضا مشكلة الدراسة، وفرضيات الدراسة و بيانات الدراسة، وأهمية الدراسة.تتناولت الفقرة الثانية الجانب النظري وتناولتالفقرة الثالثة تحليل المحادثات المستخدمة في السياقات التعليمية وفقا لاشكال والقراءات المذكورة في نظرية Purver (٢٠٠٤) .وتتضمن الفقرة الرابعة نتائج الدراسة و مناقشة هذه النتائج . فقد تم احتساب وتقييم أشكال (Forms) وفقا لتكرار وقوعها. وتم التحقيق أيضا من المتغيرات 'الدور' و 'الجنس' و مناقشتها في هذا الفصل مع بيان تأثيرها على استخدام 'طلبات التوضيح' في الخطاب.وبينت الفقرة الخامسة الاستنتاجات التي توصل اليها الباحثان في هذه الدراسة .