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## **Effects of parents' corrective feedback on the pragmatic performance of L1 English-speaking Singaporean children**

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This study examines the effects of the various types of corrective feedback (CF) given during parent-child interaction on the pragmatic performance in English by three L1 English-speaking Singaporean pre-schoolers aged between 3 and 4. Analysis of 18 hours of audio-recordings of parent-child interaction shows that parents tended to vary their correction according to the type of the child's pragmatic lapse. Further, although most types of CF appeared to yield a relatively high amount of uptake (ranging between 62% and 85% of the time), clarification requests, confirmation checks and elicitations were more likely to lead to uptake than others. Findings also suggest that overall children succeeded in repairing their pragmatic behaviour only 33% of the time following parents' corrective feedback. This finding is possibly attributable to the early stage of pragmatic development of the children under observation. Factors related to the immediate context in which the CF occurred may also have constrained its effectiveness. These factors include the purpose and topic of interaction, the amount of relevance of the topic to the child's interest, and the opportunities for the child's uptake and repair allowed by the parent and other family members. These findings raise important pedagogical implications for parents and teachers in dealing with young children's pragmatic errors.

**Keywords:** language learning; pragmatic development; pragmatic competence; corrective feedback; caregivers' input; Singapore

### **Introduction**

Pragmatic competence, the knowledge of how to express one's meanings and intentions appropriately within a particular social and cultural context of communication, is essential for effective communication (Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980) and social competence (Becker, 1988). Previous research has shown that pragmatically effective children are more likely to gain popularity among peers (Place & Becker, 1991) and that teachers tend to form negative impressions of children with poor pragmatic skills (Becker, Place, Tenzer, & Frueh, 1991).

Early pragmatic skills emerge and develop through communicative experiences and social routines that take place in the home. In this process adults' input is believed to play a crucial role in socialising children into the socio-cultural rules of their speech community that govern their language usage (Ochs, 1996) The role of care-giver's input on language development, particularly corrective feedback (CF) given in response to

children's deviant language production, has been a topic of theoretical value and practical significance in child language acquisition research (Saxton, 2000, 2009).

Young children acquiring language are said to have access to two types of input which are traditionally referred to by researchers as positive and negative evidence (Saxton, 1995, 1997, 2000). Positive evidence provides models of what is possible in the language and negative evidence gives feedback about what is not possible<sup>1</sup>. Some theorists claim that positive evidence is the only necessary condition for language learning (see, for example, Krashen, 1981) and negative evidence, or corrective feedback, might even be harmful to language development (Truscott, 1999); others have argued for the importance of both types of input (Farrar, 1990, 1992; Saxton, 1995, 1997, 2000). More specifically, CF negotiated via interaction is believed to help to trigger children's noticing of their own erroneous language production (Long, 1996; Saxton, 2000), and thus, pushes them to subsequently adjust their responses (Long, 1996). This "modified" output is claimed to aid acquisition because it allows learners to test their hypotheses about language rules and gain metalinguistic awareness (Swain, 1985, 1995).

Although evidence of the impact of CF on children's acquisition of grammar has been available for some decades (see, for example, Baker & Nelson, 1984; Nelson, 1977; Nelson, Denninger, Bonvillian, Kaplan, & Baker, 1984), much less is known about the impact on pragmatics acquisition. Most early studies on the role of caregivers' feedback on children's pragmatic development found that caregivers employ a wide range of strategies for socializing pragmatic behaviour in children, such as modelling, prompting appropriate responses, and explaining pragmatic rules (Becker, 1988, 1994; Demuth, 1986; Heath, 1986; Schieffelin, 1986; Yifat & Zadunaisky-Ehrlich, 2008). The pragmatic information conveyed either explicitly or implicitly via these CF types serves to inform children of linguistic forms for meaning-making in particular social contexts, shared socio-cultural values and conventions, and the connection between particular language use and its socio-pragmatic meaning (Snow, Perlmann, Gleason, & Hooshyar, 1990). Through this process children gradually learn to become members of their cultural and speech community and develop "not only a language for communication but also a language for identification" (DuFon, 2008, p. 29).

Previous studies provide insights into the nature of caregiver's CF on young children's pragmatic behaviour but make little attempt to directly investigate the immediate effects of this feedback on children's pragmatic competence. Effects can be investigated in terms of whether children uptake the feedback and whether this uptake contains a successful repair, which may be more important to language learning than uptake that is still in need of repair (Lyster, Saito, & Sato, 2013). Becker (1988), in a rare study of the effectiveness of parents' teaching of pragmatic skills to English native-speaking pre-schoolers in family interaction exchanges, found that children improved their pragmatic performance following 59% of their parents' indirect corrective feedback such as clarification requests, hints, rhetorical questions and prompts. In contrast, direct comments on pragmatic errors led to only 35% of corrections.

In an attempt to fill the above research gap, this study examines the effects on the pragmatic performance in English of three L1 English-speaking Singaporean pre-schoolers of CF given during parent-child interaction. More specifically, we seek answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the patterns of corrective feedback given by the parents on the pragmatic behaviour of their children?
  - a. What are the frequencies of the main types of feedback from the parents?

- b. Are there differences in the types of feedback given by the parents according to the types of pragmatic errors made by the children?
2. What is the relationship between parents' feedback type and children's uptake and repair?
  - a. What type of parents' feedback leads to the highest rate of children's uptake and repair? What type leads to the lowest rate?
  - b. How does the immediate context in which the feedback is given affect this rate of uptake and repair?

We define CF as any type of parental input that aims to transform and improve their child's inappropriate pragmatic behaviour (in line with the work of Chaudron, 1977). Uptake is defined as the discourse move made by a child in response to a parent's feedback, while repair refers to a child's successful adjustment of the inappropriate behaviour pointed out by a parent (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). It should be noted that while uptake may generally be related to a child's "perception about feedback at the time of feedback" (Mackey, Gass, & McDonough, 2000, p. 492), not all uptake moves are of equal value. Keeping in mind that uptake with repair may be more important to language learning than uptake still in need of repair (see above), both types of uptake moves are examined. Finally, following Hewings and Hewings (2005), we define the immediate context of CF as encompassing both linguistic (such as discourse moves that come before or after the CF) and non-linguistic elements (such as the purpose and participants of the interactional event where the CF occurs).

## **Methodology**

### ***Context***

The study reported in this paper is set in Singapore, a multiethnic and multilingual country where English plays pivotal roles in many formal and informal contexts. According to a survey, approximately 50% of Singaporean families speak predominantly English at home (Deterding, 2007). Among them, many families speak a local variety, widely known as Singapore Colloquial English or Singlish, a "unique blend" of English and local dialects such as Mandarin, Malay, Tamil, and others (Chew, 2014, p. 31). This variety has been found to significantly differ from other varieties of English in terms of grammatical realizations and use of pragmatic particles (Alsagoff & Ho, 1998; Goh & Silver, 2004; Gupta, 1992; Kwan-Terry, 1991; Wierzbicka, 2003).

The current study is part of a larger scale research project that observed eight middle-class English-speaking families of Chinese ethnicity with an aim to explore the effects of parent-child interaction on children's pragmatic development. The families had young children aged 2 to 4. Observations were conducted over a period of one year. Data from the first three participating families, which were collected in the first three months of that project, are reported in this paper.

### ***The Participants***

The predominant home language of the three families was the local variety of English described above. Their other home language, Chinese was used to a much lesser extent than English. For the children, therefore, English was the L1 and Chinese was the L2. The age and gender of the children are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The child participants

	Age at beginning (years; months)	Age at end (years; months)	Gender
Child 1	3; 7	3;10	Male
Child 2	3; 10	4;1	Female
Child 3	4; 10	5;1	Male

***Data collection***

Data on parent-child interactions were collected by means of audio-recording. Each family was provided with an audio-recorder and following the approach of Becker (1994) was asked to record typical conversations they had with their child at play-times, meal-times, bed-times, family times on weekends or any other times they felt appropriate. Although the parents were told to feel free to record their conversations whenever they felt it convenient, they were also asked to make at least one recording per fortnight. A research assistant visited every month to collect the audio-recordings. Visits were scheduled in advance by letter, email or SMS (according to family preference). In order to avoid inadvertently influencing the parents' behaviour and biasing the data, the parents were only informed of the broad purpose of the study. Following Becker's (1994) approach, they were told the researchers were interested in what they often did and talked about when they were together with their child. They were not told about the specific interest in CF and its effects.

***Data analysis***

The data set consists of 6 audio-recordings (of approximately one hour) per family. The recordings were transcribed by a research assistant and cross-checked by the second author. In the first round of analysis, episodes containing interaction exchanges involving parents' CF on their child's pragmatic behaviour were identified. In general, these episodes showed that parents' CF in all three families focused on four common areas of their child's pragmatic behaviour, namely (1) speech acts use; (2) observation of conversational maxims; (3) observation of turn-taking rules; and (4) norms of verbal behaviour (see definitions and examples in Appendix 1). Secondly, a detailed analysis was done to examine (1) patterns of parents' corrective feedback given in response to the child's inappropriate pragmatic behaviour in the areas identified above and (2) whether the feedback subsequently led to modified output by the children (measured in terms of their rates of uptake and repair). Both analyses used coding schemes adapted from existing literature on interactional feedback (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Panova & Lyster, 2002). Data were coded independently by both authors and their assistant, and cross-checked to ensure inter-coder agreement. Appendices 1, 2, and 3 present the taxonomies of children's inappropriate pragmatic behaviour, patterns of parents' CF and of children's responses. The illustrative examples are taken from our own data.

It should be noted in relation to data coding that unlike grammatical errors, pragmatic failure can be less clear-cut and more challenging to identify. This is because pragmatic rules are often more fluid and what is considered appropriate or inappropriate may depend on the particular socio-cultural context of communication and dynamics of the interaction (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Additionally, the issue of identifying pragmatic

failure in our study is further complicated by the fact that our participants were essentially bilingual speakers (although they used their other home language less). Their pragmatic performance was probably governed by a “unique symbiosis of pragmatic rules and expectations of both languages” (Kecskes, 2014, p. 80). Therefore, instead of adopting a monolingual perspective on the issue, we relied on the parents’ own identifications. In other words, we coded only the episodes where the parents made an attempt to correct the child. We acknowledge, however, that in so doing we may have missed errors that the parents had overlooked.

## Results

This section will present results related to our research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data are used where appropriate.

### *Research Question 1: What are the patterns of corrective feedback given by the parents on the pragmatic behaviour of their children?*

Among the 9 main types of CF given, explicit corrections, clarification requests and elicitations were used most often while recasts and modelling were employed least often (Table 2). When looking at the occurrence of CF types according to the type of errors made by the children (Table 3) it can be seen that lapses in observing manner, quality and quantity maxims, as well as norms of behaviour were the four types of pragmatic errors which tended to be attended to most frequently by the parents in this study. Correction of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic errors as well as of violations of turn-taking rules in conversations, on the other hand, was rare. It also seems that the CF types given by the parents varied according the types of error the child made. For example, clarification requests tended to be used most frequently to respond to lapses in observing the manner maxim, while elicitations were used most frequently to respond to the violation of the quantity maxim. For non-conformity to the expected norms of behaviour and non-observance of the quality maxim, explicit corrections were the most frequently used CF type. Modelling was used almost exclusively for correcting the socio-pragmatic errors and repetitions were used more frequently to negotiate meaning when the manner maxim was infringed.

Table 2. Frequencies of occurrence of CF types

CF type	Raw count	Percentage
1. Recast	5	1
2. Clarification request	104	24
3. Confirmation check	34	8
4. Meta-pragmatic	30	7
5. Elicitation	99	23
6. Explicit correction	115	26
7. Repetition	35	8
8. Modelling	9	2
9. Other	5	1
Total	436	100

Table 3. Frequencies of occurrence of CF types according to error type

	Norms of behaviour	Quantity maxim	Quality maxim	Relevance maxim	Manner maxim	Socio- pragmatics	Pragma- linguistics	Turn-taking	Total
1. Recast	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	5
2. Clarification request	1	16	10	4	72	0	1	0	104
3. Confirmation check	3	2	17	1	11	0	0	0	34
4. Meta-pragmatic	8	0	4	2	11	5	0	0	30
5. Elicitation	5	47	9	14	14	10	0	0	99
6. Explicit correction	50	3	37	7	10	5	0	3	115
7. Repetition	2	1	2	11	15	3	1	0	35
8. Modelling	0	0	0	0	0	8	1	0	9
9. Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
Total	69	70	79	39	137	31	3	8	436

**Research Question 2: What is the relationship between parents' feedback type and children's uptake and repair?**

Regarding the relationship between parents' feedback types and children's uptake and repair (Table 4), apparently confirmation checks, clarification requests, and elicitations tended to lead to the most uptake. Meta-pragmatic comments yielded less uptake than the above strategies but more than repetitions and explicit corrections. Results of a chi-square test showed that different types of CFs were associated with significantly different amounts of child response [ $\chi^2(N=381, df=5)=18.49$  at  $p=.002$ ]<sup>2</sup>. Despite this difference, all the CF types seemed to lead to a notably high amount of uptake.

Table 4. Types of CF and amount of uptake<sup>3</sup>

Type of CF	No uptake		Uptake		Total
	Raw count	%	Raw count	%	
1. Recast	2	40	3	60	5
2. Clarification request	17	16	87	84	104
3. Confirmation check	5	15	29	85	34
4. Meta-pragmatic	7	27	19	73	26
5. Elicitation	17	18	78	82	95
6. Explicit correction	34	38	55	62	89
7. Repetition	11	33	22	67	33
8. Modelling	3	33	6	67	9
9. Other	4	80	1	20	5
Total	100		300		400

Nonetheless, although all the above CF strategies seemed to yield a high amount of uptake, most of this uptake (i.e. between 63% and 77%) still needed repair, as can be seen from Table 5. Results of a chi square test show that there was no significant difference among the different CF types in terms of the amount of child's repair they elicited ( $p>.05$ ). When looking more closely at what children said when they provided uptake that needed repair, they mostly responded with the same error or a different error. In addition, although confirmation checks yielded a relatively high amount of uptake, most of them consisted of simple acknowledgements ("yes" or "no") of what the adult said (see Table 6). When looking more closely at what the children said when they provided uptake that contained a repair, most of their responses consisted of self-repair rather than incorporation (Table 7).



Table 5. Type of CF and type of uptake <sup>4</sup>

Type of CF	Uptake in need of repair		Uptake with repair		Total
	Raw count	%	Raw count	%	
1. Recast	2	67	1	33	3
2. Clarification request	55	63	32	37	87
3. Confirmation check	22	76	7	24	29
4. Meta-pragmatic	13	68	6	32	19
5. Elicitation	52	67	26	33	78
6. Explicit correction	40	73	15	27	55
7. Repetition	17	77	5	23	22
8. Modelling	0	0	6	100	6
9. Other	0	0	1	100	1
Total	201		99		300

Table 6. Types of uptake moves that needs further repair

Type of CF	Acknowledgement	Same error	Different error	Off target	Hesitation	Total
1. Recast	0	2	0	0	0	2
2. Clarification request	0	26	21	6	2	55
3. Confirmation check	7	15	0	0	0	22
4. Meta-pragmatic	0	9	1	3	0	13
5. Elicitation	0	11	35	3	3	52
6. Explicit correction	6	7	15	4	8	40
7. Repetition	1	13	2	1	0	17
8. Modelling	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	14	83	74	17	13	201

Table 7. Types of uptake moves with immediate repair

Type of CF	Repetition	Self-repair	Incorporation	Total
1. Recast	1	0	0	1
2. Clarification request	0	32	0	32
3. Confirmation check	0	7	0	7
4. Meta-pragmatic	0	6	0	6
5. Elicitation	0	24	2	26
6. Explicit correction	0	14	1	15
7. Repetition	0	5	0	5
8. Modelling	1	5	0	6
Other	0	1	0	1
Total	2	94	3	99

Further, a review of how the immediate context in which the CF was given may have affected its receptivity shows that these interactional events include a number of factors that may have affected a child's rate of uptake following a parent's feedback. Four unfavourable factors impeded the child's successful uptake of the CF and two favourable factors may have increased the chances of uptake from the child. These factors are illustrated below with extracts from the data.

#### *Unfavourable factors*

*Unfavourable factor 1: topic continuation by the parent following the CF, thus leaving the child with no chance to uptake*

In the following extract from the data, the mother asked the child what made the child choose the cookie over the biscuit offered to her. As the child did not provide the reason (infringing the maxim of quantity), the mother probed her with a question (line 01). However, before the child had the chance to formulate her answer, the mother picked up another cookie and started to talk about it (line 03).

Extract 1 (Child 3, random chat – at breakfast)

01 M: Why do you like this cookie?

02 C: Because I like...

03 M: What's this? Honey nuts. You like honey nuts? ←

04 C: Yeah!

*Unfavourable factor 2: lack of wait time given by the parent following the CF, thus depriving the child of the chance to self-repair*

In the following extract the child gave an unclear answer in line 03 (infringing the maxim of manner) so the mother requested clarification (line 04). However, she did not wait for the child to provide the answer before giving it to her.

Extract 2 (Child 3, random chat – at breakfast)

01 C: Can you...can you open for me?

02 M: Open? What you want me to open?

03 C: Because I want some eat...eat.

04 M: Eat what? This is <little bear cookie – name for the cookie>. Say <little bear cookie>. ←

*Unfavourable factor 3: immediate provision of the correct answer by another family member before the child had the chance to self-repair*

In extract 3 below, the mother was getting the child (C1) to recount an event that had occurred to them recently. Since the child was leaving out some names (infringing the maxim of quantity), the mother probed her further with the question “Who else in our family?”. The child provided the wrong name (infringing the maxim of quality); thus the mother continued to probe her (line 03). However, since an older child (C2) was also present in the conversation and wanted to provide the answer for the targeted child, the latter failed to respond to the feedback (lines 06 – 13).

Extract 3 (Child 3, random chat – at breakfast)

01 M: Who else in our family? Let meimei <younger sister> say.

02 C1: Yew Mee.

03 M: In our house? Yew Mee stay in our house uh?

04 C1: Yeah.

05 M: No.

06 C2: I know I know. ←

07 M: Who is that?

08 C2: I know.

09 M: Drive, drive you to school.

10 C2: I know I know. ←

11 C1: Say, say, say. ←

12 C2: I want to say. ←

13 C1: I ask jiejie <elder sister> to say. ←

*Unfavourable factor 4: the child's lack of continuing interest in the topic, which may have shifted his or her attention away from the parent's feedback*

In extract 4 the mother and the child (C1) were talking about their upcoming holiday in Hong Kong. The topic was initiated by the mother. As the child failed to provide a relevant answer (line 02) to the mother's question (line 01), the mother subsequently corrected her (line 06). However, the correction did not seem to catch the child's attention since the child appeared to have something else on her mind at the time and decided to shift the topic (line 07).

Extract 4 (Child 3, random chat – at breakfast)

01 M: No, ok, what you are going to do there?

02 C1: Need to, need to, need to see the Singapore.

03 C2: No.

04 C1: No?

05 C2: No, I know.

- 06 M: No, you are going another country, so you are going Hongkong, so you won't see Singapore any more, you go there to sightseeing.  
07 C1: Mummy, we Disney land cannot go holiday. ←

### *Favourable factors*

#### *Favourable factor 1: when the purpose of interaction was orientated more towards teaching and learning*

When the context was one of teaching/learning, for example, during shared book reading, there were more instances of uptake from the child than during a random chat (as illustrated above). In extract 5 the father and the child were reading the book *Five Little Mice* and they were reading each sentence as a line in a song. When the child's reading/singing needed to be clearer (i.e. a lapse in observing manner maxim) (line 02), the father reacted with an explicit correction (line 03). The father's corrective feedback was followed by an uptake and self-repair from the child (i.e. partly repeating in line 04 what he said earlier in a louder and clearer manner before moving on to the next line), albeit with an error in the form ("pat" to mean "cat").

Extract 5 (Child 2, shared book reading – at bedtime)

- 01 F: Only one little mice... mouse came back.  
02 C: One little mouse went out to play and eating crumbs along the way.  
03 F: Sing it loud and clear please.  
04 C: And eating crumbs along the way. Out came kitty pat. ←

Also in a shared book reading context, the child seemed to understand the need to do the uptake of the parent's feedback, especially when the feedback was related to the content of the book, such as characters or events in the story, so that their book reading process could move forward. In extract 6, the father made an explicit correction and some clarification requests (line 03) when the child made a pragmatic error by giving what appeared to be an irrelevant response (line 02). The father's CF was followed by the child's uptake which helped the reading process to move forward.

Extract 6 (Child 2, shared book reading – at bedtime)

- 01 F: Oh, because of the story ar? Mmm. Which part of the story?  
02 C: Mmm. Inside and outside.  
03 F: No, not the book. I mean which part of the story. Like, ok, is it the part where he is dreaming? Is it because he is dreaming... or is it because the baby is born... or is it..  
04 C: The baby is born. ←  
05 F: Orh, it's because the baby was born, is it? (Book reading continues.)

#### *Favourable factor 2: when the topic of interaction was initiated by the child*

When the topic was initiated by the child, it seemed more favourable than when the topic was initiated by the parent, as seen in extracts 3 and 4. Perhaps this is because it was of greater relevance to the child's interest and need. In extract 7 the child initiated the topic about some water he noticed on the windscreen but he infringed the manner maxim as his message was ambiguous (lines 01 and 03). The father responded with clarification requests (lines 02 and 04) that were followed by the child's uptake but with the same error (line 03) in the first instance, and another uptake with self-repair (line 05) in the second instance.

Extract 7 (Child 2, random chat – during a car ride)

- 01 C: Daddy you see. ←  
 02 F: See what, Boy?  
 03 C: You see. ←  
 04 F: See what?  
 05 C: The water is moving.

Similarly, extract 8 is initiated by the child. It is from a conversation between Child 1 and his mother during their play time together. The child initiated the interaction by asking his mother to pass him a game, but his request was not clear enough for the mother to understand (i.e. infringing the manner maxim). This subsequently led to an extensive sequence of negotiation of meaning between the mother and the child until the communication breakdown was finally repaired (line 15). Despite the child's repeated failure to repair his own speech throughout the conversation, it was clear that he had made constant efforts to address the CF so that the mother could understand and comply with this request.

Extract 8 (Child 1, random chat – during playtime)

- 01 C: Mommy <can you give me the> police? ←  
 02 M: <huh>?  
 03 C: Police ←  
 04 M: What police?  
 05 C: (Unintelligible) ←  
 06 M: Which police?  
 07 C: Police ←  
 (The same question and answer continue over the next 7 lines)  
 14 M: Where police? Game ah?  
 15 C: Ya ←

### **Discussion and conclusion**

Our study has sought to find out (1) the patterns of corrective feedback provided by the parents according to types of pragmatic errors made by the children; and (2) the relationship between parents' corrective feedback and children's uptake and repair. Regarding the patterns of CF, it was found that among 9 corrective feedback types identified in all three families, explicit corrections, clarification requests and elicitations were most frequently used. In contrast, recasts and modelling were the least used CF types. Most probably, the high frequency of explicit corrections, clarification requests and elicitations was linked to the fact that these CF types were often used by the parents to address children's lapses in observing the maxims of quality, manner and quantity (respectively), which occurred most regularly among all error types in the data. The low frequency of modelling, on the other hand, was probably attributed to the fact that this CF type was often employed by the parents to correct sociopragmatic errors, which were scarce in the data. The findings also indicate that the CF types given by the parents tended to vary according to the types of errors the children made. These findings then extend those of previous studies which only identified the different types of CF given by caregivers in response to children's pragmatic behaviour without comparing the frequencies of use and matching CF types with error types (see, for example, Becker, 1988, 1994; Demuth, 1986; Heath, 1986; Schieffelin, 1986; Yifat & Zadunaisky-Ehrlich, 2008).

With respect to the relationship between parents' CF and their children's uptake and repair, it was found that although most types of CF appeared to yield a relatively high

amount of uptake (between 62% and 85% of the time), clarification requests, confirmation checks and elicitations were more likely to lead to uptake than other types. Meta-pragmatic comments elicited a lesser amount and repetitions and explicit corrections less still. These findings can be explained in terms of the nature of CF. Since confirmation checks, clarification requests and elicitations require the child to respond, we would expect them to lead to a high amount of uptake (for further discussion on this point see Panova & Lyster, 2002). Explicit corrections, on the other hand, aim to indicate the inappropriate answer rather than to push the child to repair and this may explain the lesser amount of uptake. Similarly, meta-pragmatic comments provide explanations about where the children go wrong rather than requiring them to respond and are, thus, less likely to yield a great amount of uptake. Repetitions, similar to recasts, have a less clear corrective illocutionary force, thus probably being noticed as non-corrective restatements of what is said by the child rather than hints about the inappropriateness of the child's response, especially when it is addressed to less proficient and less cognitively advanced language learners such as the young children in our study.

Importantly, the data shows that despite the high amount of uptake, much of it was unsuccessful. Overall the children succeeded in repairing their pragmatic behaviour in only 99 out of 300 CF moves (33%), following parents' corrective feedback. Even when the children were able to successfully repair their inappropriate behaviour, most of their responses comprised self-repair rather than incorporation. This means that although the children were capable of correcting the error in response to parents' feedback that did not supply the correct form, they failed to extend their responses. These findings should not come as a surprise given the early stage of pragmatic development of the children in the study. Other research demonstrates that children may acquire the basics of their L1 grammar by the time they reach an age of 4 or 5 but pragmatic competence takes longer (Goh & Silver, 2006; Safont-Jordà, 2013). For the bilingual children in our study, the task of pragmatics acquisition may also be complicated by interaction of the two different pragmatic rule systems (Kecskes, 2014; Safont-Jordà, 2013). The findings affirm Becker's (1988) claim that feedback on pragmatic behaviour can lead to some adjustment in children's output and provide additional insight in terms of singling out the effects of particular CF types on children's uptake rate.

Finally, some effects of the immediate context of interaction on whether the children noticed the CF to uptake and correct the error were identified. These contextual factors include the purpose of interaction (e.g. whether CF took place within a language/literacy learning context or random chats), the amount of immediate relevance the topic had to the child's need and interest, and the opportunities for the child's uptake and repair that were allowed by the parent and other family members. Although previous research has established the relative effectiveness of the different CF types on language acquisition in general, little research has empirically investigated how the immediate interactional context affects the salience of the CF and its noticeability or uptake by the child (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Sheen, 2004). The current study, it is hoped, has made a significant contribution in this area although due to its limited scale these findings must be considered tentative and worthy of further research.

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## Notes

1. Although in their original terms, positive evidence refers exclusively to non-corrective input, many researchers have recently pointed out that CF may also provide positive evidence, e.g., in the case of recasts and explicit corrections. In other words, depending on the manner in which the CF is provided, different types of linguistic evidence may be manifested (see Lyster & Saito, 2010).
2. Recasts, modelling and CF belonging to the category “others” (see Table 4) were excluded from the Chi square test because of their low frequencies of occurrence. The Chi square test requires at least 5 counts in each of the cells “No uptake” and “Uptake” to yield correct results. The above three categories of CF did not meet this requirement.
3. & 4. In these tables we have excluded ambiguous instances where, due to the poor quality of the recordings, it was impossible to decide whether there was a child’s uptake following a parent’s feedback. Thus the total counts for each CF move in these tables are fewer than those shown in Table 3.

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**Appendix 1: Types of inappropriate pragmatic behaviour**

(Adapted from Yifat & Zadunaisky-Ehrlich, 2008 with examples taken from the present study)

Areas that need feedback	Definition	Example
1. Speech act use		
(i) Socio-pragmatic norms	The child violated the socio-cultural conventions governing a particular usage of language, e.g. address terms, making a request, etc.	It was the bed time. The mother was putting the child to bed but he was busy playing with his iPad and did not say good night to his father.  Mother: Say good night to daddy. Say good night to daddy. Eh. Say good night to daddy. Victor, Victor. Say good night to daddy. Child: Good night daddy.
(ii) Pragma-linguistic usage	The child wrongly used linguistic resources for expressing intention/meaning	The child wrongly used the word “please” when saying good night. Child: Good night mommy please. Mother: ((laugh)) Good night, Victor.
2. Discourse maxims and management	Note that here we were only concerned with instances where the child infringed a maxim due to limited pragmatic knowledge and excluded instances where the maxim was flouted in order to convey an implicit message or intentionally violated.	
(i) Quantity maxim	The child provided more or less information than needed.	Mother: Oh okay. Then what are you going there by? Walk? Walk there? Child: No. Mother: Huh? Child: no response Mother: But how are you going there? Walk there? Take taxi? Take MRT? Child: Actually, there can be stars on water, too. Father: Really, how come? Child: Sometimes stars on the water. Father: Hmm really?
(ii) Quality maxim	The child’s response lacked truth-value.	Mother: What kind of food do you want to serve them? Child: Balloon. Mother: no, food, food. Not balloon. Food. Mother: Did you sleep this afternoon? Child: No, yes. Mother: No, yes? Child: Yes or no? Mother: I’m asking you.
(iii) Relevance maxim	The child responded irrelevantly to the topic.	Mother: So what are you going to do there? (question addressed to Child 1) Child 2: I know Mother: Let <younger sister> answer.
(iv) Manner maxim	The child responded in an ambiguous manner.	Mother: Yellow
(v) Turn-taking	The child disregarded the rules of turn-taking.	Child: See, black also dark, which one! Mother: Don’t shout!
3. Norms of behaviour	All other linguistic or non-linguistic behaviours that were considered inappropriate and corrected by the parents.	

**Appendix 2: Patterns of parents' corrective feedback**

(Adapted from Becker, 1988; Panova &amp; Lyster, 2002 with examples taken from the present study)

CF type	Definition	Example
1. Recast	Reformulation of the child's incomplete/ inappropriate utterance with or without expansion.	Mother: Is it nice? Child: En (Chinese, meaning "Yes" in English) Mother: Yes. Child: Yes.
2. Clarification request	Question that sought clarification of the meaning that was not well expressed by the child. The aim of the question was to elicit the child's reformulation of his or her own inappropriate utterance.	Child: Daddy, what is that? Father: What is that? Which one? Child: This one.
3. Confirmation check	Question to confirm and check that what the child said is understood correctly.	Father: Look at the picture. Who says "oink"? Is it a chicken that says "oink"? So what animal says? Child: Sheep. Father: Sheep go "oink" ah? Child: En.
4. Meta-pragmatic comment	Comment on the inappropriateness of the child's utterance/ behaviour.	Mother: Okay, so no talking during breakfast time. Child: What's this prata? Mother: Shhh.
5. Elicitation	Question that prompted the child to reformulate his/ her inappropriate/ incomplete utterance or to modify his/ her inappropriate behaviour.	Mother: So what you want to do in Hongkong? Child: Eat. Mother: Eat. What do you want to eat? Child: Umm, rice.
6. Explicit correction	Statement that explicitly signalled that the child's response/ behaviour was incomplete/ inappropriate.	Mother: Why you want to go? Child: Because need to go. Mother: Need to go? We can don't go wah. We can stay in Singapore.
7. Repetition	Repetition of the inappropriate/ incomplete utterance with a rising tone to raise the child's awareness of the problem.	Child: Daddy nice or not? Father: Daddy nice? Child: no, this flower nice or not?
8. Modelling	Providing the response the child should give but before the child had the opportunity to produce or omit the behaviour.	Mother: You want to ask Mama to go, you must invite Mama. Must say "Mama, you want to go to Hello Kitty Land with us?" Child: To call? Mother: Yes, you call lah.
9. Others	All other instances that are not identified to belong within one of the above categories.	Child 1: Can I say? Mother (speaking to Child 2): So what else, what else? Are you excited? Child 2: huh, excited (The mother purposefully ignored child 1 to implicitly uphold her turn to speak.)

**Appendix 3: Patterns of children’s responses to feedback**

(Adapted from Lyster & Ranta, 1997 with examples taken from the data of the present study)

Uptake moves	Definition	Example
1. Without uptake	Feedback failed to be acknowledged and/ or noticed. Feedback was followed immediately by parent-initiated topic continuation or child-initiated topic continuation.	Mother: Then what do you say before you eat your meal? Child: No, no. Mother: Nothing ah? You say “Join us”. How do you say that? Child: da-da-da-da (singing)
2. With uptake  (i) needs repair	Feedback leading to child response. Including one or more of the following types of child responses: - acknowledgement of feedback (the child simply said “yes” or “no”), - same error (the child produced the same error again), - different error (the child failed to correct the original error and in addition produced a different error) - off target (the child responded by circumventing parent’s feedback) - hesitation (the child hesitated in response to parent feedback)	<p>Acknowledgement: Father: Can you chew and swallow your food? Don’t keep food in your mouth for too long. What were you trying to say? Child: Open at so many toys. Father: Oh, ok so all these actions that you made ((imitating)) with the (unintelligible) is to tell me you have so many toys outside is it? Child: Yes.</p> <p>Same error: Child: Crabs have the same feet. Father: Same feet? What do you mean? Child: It’s the same. Crabs have same feet.</p> <p>Different error: Child: I want a drink. I said I want a drink. Father: Next thing to tell me: What drink do you want? Child: What drink do you want?</p> <p>Off target: Child: Just now we play play girl (a long exchange in which the mother tried to clarify what the child meant but the child repeatedly produced the same phrase “play girl”) Mother: Playgroup or play girl? Child: Play girl Mother: Who is that? Child: It’s red colour</p> <p>Hesitation: Father: Why weren't you listening? That's not nice. Child: I told you I don't know! Father: You know, if people are listening and watching you, then you also sh...eh, don't do that, it would spoil it ar... Child: I don't know (getting impatient) Father: That's not nice Ryan. Hmm? Because other people are listening to you and you are not listening to them. That's not nice.</p>

- (ii) with repair Including one or more of the following types of child responses:
- repetition (the child repeated parent's feedback),
  - incorporation (the child incorporated repetition of the correct form in a longer utterance),
  - self-repair (the child corrected the error in response to parent feedback that did not supply the correct form).
- Repetition:  
 Father: Is it nice?  
 Child: En.  
 Father: Yes.  
 Child: Yes.
- Incorporation:  
 Mother: Ah. What do you sing? Before you have your lunch? Or your break.  
 Child: Don't have.  
 Mother: No, you must sing ma. Say <thanks teachers>. <Thanks what>.  
 Child: <thanks> no. <Thanks> teacher Trisha.  
 Then <thanks teacher> Yi Ping. Then <thanks> teacher Wong.
- Self-repair:  
 Mother: Meimei, have you finished your prata?  
 Child: En. (Chinese, meaning "yes")  
 Mother: En?  
 Child: No.