

teacher to do something for them. Following Brown and Levinson (1987), students may use politeness strategies to avoid or reduce the degree of the face-threatening acts when asking questions in class.

According to several researchers, students' questions are most frequently preceded by teachers' questions (West & Pearson, 1994, p. 307; Ayaduray & Jacobs, 1997, p. 562). That is to say, the teacher's questions will elicit student's participation in class since teacher questioning allows time for the students to think about the content and offers opportunities for students to ask questions (West & Pearson, 1993, pp. 307-

4 <in the question number four> you said denying' (0.3)
 5 so how c(hh)an hh. we know exactly=

In line 1, T invites students to ask questions. After her turn ends, no one takes a next turn right away, which results in the brief pause in line 2. Student X, in line 3, then initiates a turn and responds to the teacher's invitation with a question. Thus, as has been found in previous research (West & Pearson, 1994; Ayaduray & Jacobs, 1997) one of the contexts for the students' questions is the teacher's invitation for questions, followed by a short pause.

Regarding the manner of the student's question, Student X requests the floor before asking his question. In line 3, he looks at T and raises his hand, the classroom convention for students to request a turn to talk (Paltridge, 2006, p. 115). He does not speak until T nods her acknowledgement and approval. X's permission-seeking action seems to orient to the fact that although there is an invitation for questions at the moment, any student can potentially respond, and thus X needs to self-select before actually initiating a turn.

It is noteworthy that before X asks his question, he issues a preliminary (Schegloff, 2007) in line 4 by referring back to what the teacher said earlier, "in question number four, you said denying." The student's use of reported speech ("you said") makes his

reference to the teacher's previous turn explicit. The question is also prefaced by "so," marking it as an upshot of what the teacher has said (Schiffrin, 1987). In other words, the preliminary grounds the upcoming question in the context of a specific detail from the ongoing discourse of the class.

To summarize, this example shows that a student can ask a question after the teacher's invitation for questions and a short pause. The student may then seek permission to ask his question, use a preliminary and then asks his question as an upshot of what the teacher has previously said.

In the following excerpt, the class was looking at a transcript of a grammar class in which the teacher in the data was talking about gerunds

18 of talks, but here he's bringing it both together and some of you
 19 mentioned it's a metaphor, but it's not this is just the MERGING
 20 of those two and again that is part of the contextualization cue,
 21 that's more fine: more sophisticated but yeah what he's doing here.
 22 he's using one type of classroom talk embedded in another. he's
 23 using the content talk in uh management and again by the French
 24 talk, it's unusual, people don't usually do that, that's why
 25 it's funny. he's using the emphasis WAITING and TO WAIT to indicate
 26 that I'm borrowing the content. this is not just by accident that
 27 I'm using it, I'm emphasizing it. so that's a contextualization cue
 28 to tell the students yes, I'm mixing codes I'm using the content in
 29 "management talk". and they're tired of waiting, all of these are
 30 content talk but he's using it to "manage."
 31 (0.1)
 32 ! Y: ["so"
 33 ! D: [what's a gerund.
 34 T: OH good question YES can somebody explain?
 35 J: °(xxx) verb plus ai en gee ((ing°
 36 D: what is it? ((
 37 T: yes(.) vee plus [ai en gee
 38 D: [oh: that's a gerund
 39 T: =but not all the time though [(0.1) like uh:: line five (.) flight
 40 D: [oh
 41 one

1 T: ask people who learn grammar rules before they can communicate
2 [first
3 ! H: [excuse me ((Y uh (0.1)
4

It is interesting to see that at the end of line 2 when T lowers her voice, student L seems to project T's turn completion and initiates a turn, resulting in overlapped speech with T's

Skilton, E. & Thomas, M. (1993). "So what are you talking about?" The importance of student questions in the ESL classroom. (2), 81-99. Retrieved October 15, 2011

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falling intonation
rising intonation
slightly rising intonation

