

# TALKING FOR WRITING: QUESTIONS IN PEER RESPONSE TO OUTLINE PRESENTATIONS IN AN L2 WRITING CLASSROOM

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## ABSTRACT

Questions are pervasive not only in ordinary conversation, but also in institutional interaction (Hayano, 2013). When deployed in institutional interaction, questions can serve as important resources and tools in pursuit of the institutional goals and practices, as has been shown for medical visits, courtroom interactions, broadcast news interviews (Heritage & Clayman, 2010), and educational contexts (Koshik, 2002; Lee, 2006). This paper examines *question* used by students asked to *respond to outline presentations* in an L2 writing classroom, focusing on the questions deployed in opening the response talk and giving advice while the response talk is underway. Drawing on conversation analysis as an analytical framework, this paper aims to show that the responders' orientation to less fulfilled assignments or problematic potential with the writer's presentation exploits questions, enacting their rights to critique. Also the question-answer sequence(s) involved in the previous talk function as an entry to advising talk, serving as resources and grounds for advice-giving. It is hoped that the findings can contribute to an understanding of the peer response on *text is being talk* and to draw more attention to peer response in the early stage of the writing process in L2 writing classrooms.

## INTRODUCTION

Collaborative learning (Bruffee, 1984) in L2 classrooms has been widely used in all areas of L2 learning. Particularly, in L2 writing classrooms, collaborative learning emerges from collaborative writing or peer response on students' writing. Although there are concerns about the value and effectiveness of peer response in L2 classrooms (Nelson & Murphy, 1992), many studies suggest that peer response is a crucial activity in the writing process and helps students to

cultivate a range of writing and even listening and speaking skills (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Lundstrom & Baker, 2008). As most studies on peer response in L2 writing classes are carried out with student writers' manuscripts in the writing or post-writing stage, less attention is paid to peer response that can be adopted in the prewriting stage.

This paper, thus, explores the early stage of the writing process by examining students' interaction during peer response to outline presentations in an L2 writing classroom. The analysis reveals that students assigned as responders display an orientation to less fulfilled assignments by the presenter, and thus deploy diverse questions—in checking, critiquing, or requesting—that opens the response talk. Moreover, their orientation to the problematic potential (as matters advisable) with the presentation beyond the assignments involves question(s)-answer(s)-advising sequences, in which previous question(s)-answer(s) sequences serve as grounds for the advising to be coming. Lastly, the delicacy transpired during the response talk, where a question may challenge the presenter or advising is attempted, is managed by the responders' rights to critique and the presenters' rights to claim on their epistemic primacy on the one hand and the responders' cautious approach—using mitigating practices—, as well as the presenter's engaging in advising talk or their treating the advice as *informing* on the other hand.

It is hoped that findings of this study can offer insights into the use of questions among peer interaction as interactional resources in pursuit of the pedagogical purposes. On the other hand, it can also provide an opportunity to consider dynamics of the peer response that can be implemented in such a way as to meet the contextual needs. Lastly, I hope this study can shed light on the early stage of peer response in L2 writing classrooms.

In what follows, I will briefly illustrate the key literature pertaining to this study: studies of peer response, response as post-presentation feedback, and the use of questions in institutional interactions, including advising contexts. Then a description of context and peer response activity is provided before the data analysis is presented. In the final section, a few considerations for pedagogical implications will be put forward, along with the limitations inherent in this study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Peer Response*

Peer response, or peer review<sup>1</sup> strongly supported for its effects by L1 composition scholarship has been increasingly studied for its impacts on writing and its nature in L2 writing classrooms (for a comprehensive overview, see Ferris, 2003 and Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014). In addition, a process approach, one of the frameworks behind peer response, encourages employing peer response at every writing stage (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014) through the entire writing process. Although there are still opponents of the value and effects of peer response in L2 writing, it is regarded as an important activity in L2 writing classes that allows L2 writers to have opportunities of cultivating a range of skills—collaborative interaction (Tsu & Ng, 2000; Villamil & Guerrero, 1996), different perspectives on the writing and perception of audience (Tsu & Ng, 2000), listening and speaking ability (Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994), modeling peers' writing, and critically evaluating writing (Lundstrom & Baker, 2008; Thompson, 2002)—pertinent to L2 writing development (for implications of peer response, see Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014; Hansen & Liu, 2005; Lundstrom & Baker, 2008; Kamimura, 2006; Rollinson, 2005). In particular, developing skills to critically evaluate writing may also help students effectively review writing and see problems with organization, logical gaps, or other defects (Lundstrom & Baker, 2008), thus providing opportunities for reflection on those issues discussed (e.g., organization or content) and/or on different perspectives of writing for both writers and reviewers.

Contributing to a body of literature on peer response and providing insights into its nature and pedagogical implications, studies on peer response in ESL/EFL contexts have been conducted addressing four main issues so far (Ferris, 2003; Kamimura, 2006): (a) students and teacher's perception on and attitude toward peer response (Nelson & Carson, 1998; Tsu & Ng, 2000); (b) learning outcomes (Kamimura, 2006; Lundstrom & Baker, 2008); (c) other

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<sup>1</sup> Peer review, peer feedback, or peer revision are all interchangeably used referring to peer interaction on students' writing (Hansen & Liu, 2005). Philip et al. (2014) refers to "peer review" as a cover term but this paper uses the term *peer response*.

contributory factors related to effectiveness of peer response, such as peer training (Min, 2006; Stanley, 1992); and (d) exploring the nature of the interaction during peer response (Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Villamil & Guerrero, 1996, ).

While most studies have primarily focused on peer response adopted in the writing or post-writing stage, little attention has been given to peer response in the early stage of writing, such as brainstorming or outlining, even though its pedagogical importance has been acknowledged (e.g., Hyland, 2002; Leki, 1998). Of the few, two recent studies (Frazier, 2007; Neumann & McDonough, 2015) reported that student writers benefit from peer response in the earlier stage of writing. Neumann and McDonough (2015) explored the relationship between peer interaction during structured collaborative prewriting discussion and students' written texts. They suggest considering more factors influencing students' writing, not only in the writing stage, but also in the earlier stage of writing, by showing that structured prewriting tasks lead to students' reflection on content and the organization of their ideas.

Frazier (2007), drawing on conversation analysis, analyzed the nature of peer interaction during students' report on work-in-progress on lesson plans. Frazier found that the report-giving activity accords in many ways to the structure of storytelling in daily conversation, and the institutional nature and aspects of interaction (e.g., interactants' goal orientation and the overall structure of the interaction with explicit opening and closing of the report proper) suggested by Drew and Heritage (1992). Frazier (2007) argues that "certain stages of the writing process may involve productive social interaction ... at least some initial and intermediate stages of process may occur while others are present and 'responding' and subsequent actions may be affected by these interactions" (p. 77). Further, he puts forward that if students are able to use conversational storytelling structure, group work may be designed to promote communicative competence in pitching students' ideas to their peers in ESL classes.

### ***Response as Post-Presentation Feedback***

When participants are engaging in giving feedback on their colleague's presentations, the feedback may be oriented to the future benefits that the presenter can obtain. Jacoby (1998) unearths the "comment sequences" that are packaged in post-runthrough feedback phases in conference talk rehearsals. In his study, the comment sequences, emerging as a recurrent interactional procedure in the runthrough activities, are revealed through four subsequences:

opening, complain, remedy and closing sequence. According to Jacoby, as comment sequences also involve suggestions of future-oriented remedies for post-runthrough complaints, they are also related to advice-giving sequences (e.g., Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Jefferson & Lee, 1981). The current study thus has in common with Jacoby's study in the way the entire activity is organized (e.g., presentation and feedback phase), the feedback phases open (e.g., orientation to problematic aspects opens the phase) and the problems are raised (e.g., using a question form).

Nonetheless, there are marked differences that distinguish the current study from that of Jacoby's. In Jacoby's study, the presentation is intended for the real one in the conference, and the comment givers raise complaints primarily with assertive or negative descriptions or assessments (even in question forms), followed by remedy suggested. Thus, the comment-givers are obviously oriented to helping to fix the complaints for the presenter, so as not to encounter trouble in the real scene. On the other hand, the responders in my study give feedback on writers' outlines and tend to be cautious as feedback givers. Thus they implicitly raise problematic aspects and the advice as remedy to address them is more contingently given or co-constructed by the interactants, thereby displaying an orientation to establishing the grounds for the advice.

Thus, although there are sequential and linguistic features in common with Jacoby's (1998), my study takes a different perspective in analyzing the interaction during the feedback phase, focusing narrowly on one interactional resource *question* that the responder students predominantly deploy. In the next section, I will thus discuss the versatility of social actions and interactional imports questions carry before going into my data and analysis.

### ***Questions and Advising***

Questions are powerful tools to carry out various social actions (e.g., request, offer, or criticizing or challenging) and control the interaction by imposing on recipients a range of constraints: by pressuring response to the question, by setting a topic or agenda, or by imposing a presupposition or preference of a projected response (Hayano, 2013). Sacks (1995) adds "as long as one is in the position of doing the questions, then in part they have control of the conversation" (p. 54). Many conversation analytic studies have examined questions, in terms of question designs, their interactional imports and the actions they are used to accomplish, in various contexts (Hayano, 2013).

Studies of questions used in institutional contexts found that aside from the general features of questions aforementioned, institution-specific goals and practices bring to bear on how and for what questions are shaped (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Hayano, 2013; Heritage & Clayman, 2010). For example, studies of the doctor-patient interactions in medical visits indicate that doctors design their questions to set topical and action agenda (e.g., wh-question vs. polar question), embody presupposition, convey epistemic stance (e.g., declarative vs. interrogative question) or incorporate preference (e.g., favoring a *yes* response to a question asked about health outcome) through the question-answer sequences during the history-taking phase (Heritage, 2010; Heritage & Clayman, 2010). The questions posed during the phase served to gather information that is essential for accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment (Cassell, 1997), as well as to control the interaction in such a way that the information sought is confirmed or obtained (Heritage & Clayman, 2010).

Similarly, in educational contexts, questions are used as a crucial means to accomplish their own institutional goals or tasks. For example, questions are deployed for evaluating students' response (McHoul, 1978 as a pattern of QAE<sup>2</sup>) or for eliciting students' response and moving on class lessons with a "display question" (Lee, 2006) in classrooms, or for orienting students to a certain problem, as well as pointing to a possible solution for the problem about their writing or talk in writing conferences with RPQs<sup>3</sup> (reversed polarity questions, Koshik, 2002). Thus, questions can be versatile resources to implement social actions (e.g., checking, eliciting, or criticizing) and bring interactional imports (e.g., topicalizing, imposing presupposition or initiating sequences), in accomplishing particular institutional goals or tasks.

Questions, on the other hand, are also deployed as a means to deal with delicate issues emerging in certain institutional interactions, for instance, the contexts in which advising or counseling is given. Referring to Searle's (1969) definition of "advice," Waring (2007) defines "advising" as "any activity that one party conveys to another what the former believes is beneficial to the latter regarding some performance or behavior. It can take on labels such as remedy, proposal or solution" (p. 67). Hutchby (1995) earlier stressed that an essential feature of advising is assumed or established asymmetry, in that there is a tacit recognition between two

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<sup>2</sup> QAE stands for question, answer and evaluation (McHoul, 1978).

<sup>3</sup> RPQs refers to polar questions treated by recipients as conveying questioners' assertion of the opposite polarity to the grammatical form of the questions (Koshik, 2002).

parties that the advice-giver is more competent or knowledgeable than the advice-recipient. Hence, advice resistance is a routine problem encountered by advice givers (Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Silverman, 1997) in the context where advice is not invited (e.g., trouble telling in ordinary conversation; Jefferson & Lee, 1992) and even in the situation where the advice is actively sought (Pudlinski, 1998; Waring, 2005). Thus, the challenge is to deliver the advice in ways that minimize such resistance and address face issues (Waring, 2007). One of the practices dealing with such delicate issues is to fit the advice to the recipient's perspective by a set of question-answer sequences. The *stepwise entry to advice* (Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Vehviläinen, 2001) is a method to fitting the advice to the recipient by providing the advice-recipient with the relevance and grounds for advising. Heritage and Sefi's (1992) study shows that British health visitors' advice to first-time mothers is typically given in a "step-by-step approach"<sup>4</sup> (p. 379), in which, through chains of inquiries, a certain problem is indicated and developed among participants, and advising is, thus recognized as a relevant action by the mothers, whether the mothers perceive the advice as welcome or not. Vehviläinen's (2001) study in a university counseling context also reports that counselors recurrently use the inquiry-based stepwise approach to giving advice, in which they deploy questions to elicit students' opinion or to topicalize candidate advisable issues, followed by their subsequent advice grounded in the perspectives established in the prior turns.

In short, previous studies on advising in institutional settings (Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Kinnell 2002; Vehviläinen, 2001) suggest that an inquiry-based stepwise entry to advice is used as resources and grounds for the advice recipients to project the advice will be forthcoming and to acknowledge the advice as *informing* or not (Heritage & Sefi, 1992), so that delicate issues arising from the asymmetrical activities can, to some extent, be managed.

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<sup>4</sup> Stepwise entry to advising typically involves five steps, albeit variations: first, a general or a residual problem indicative question is raised by a health visitor; second, the problem-indicative response is produced by a new mother; third, a focusing inquiry into the problem is raised by the health visitor; a response detailing the problem is produced by the mother; and finally advice to address the problem is given by the health visitor (Heritage & Sefi, 1992).

## DATA

### *Context and Participants*

This study was conducted in a university EAP (English for Academic Purposes) writing class in the United States. The class, in which the researcher was the instructor, was designed to provide intermediate level students with basic academic writing skills and help them to deal with the writing assignments in their regular matriculated classes. The class met twice a week for 75 minutes. On the day of the study, 17 students were present.

For this activity, the students were divided into five groups, with three groups of three students and two groups of four students. It took the students approximately 43 minutes to complete the activity, albeit varying slightly from group to group. The groups were audio-recorded, and the recordings were transcribed using CA conventions (see Appendix A) (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984), except for one group (of four students) that made almost no contribution to the response talk and which also had low quality of the audio recording. All data presented in this paper label the participants by their roles assigned, either as a presenter (P) or a responder (R). Labels such as *G2+P1* can be interpreted as follows: G2 denotes the group number, in this case Group 2, and P1 denotes the order of presenter in the group, here a first presenter.

### *Activity of Peer Response*

As peer response in this study is implemented on students' presentation on writing, writers' verbal presentation is a warrant for the response to proceed. The entire activity is thus structured in the following way: A writer as a presenter verbally presents their writing (outline) and two or three reviewers as responders critique the writing and provide any suggestions on it within the limited time. Thus, the entire activity consists of a presentation and response phase, and the analytic focus of this study is on the interaction during the response phase. The purpose of the peer response implemented in such a way in this study was initially to provide students with opportunities to concisely and logically present the key components making up their outline and test its overall quality from their peers as *imagined audience* before writing up a draft. On the other hand, it was also to allow students to build a critical view of their peers' outlines and provide productive critique and suggestions. More emphasis, however, is placed on the



reviewers' (responders) role that often occurs in reaction to the teacher's task-giving remarks (e.g., *ask any questions, provide your suggestions, or criticize and attack any weakness of topic*). For clarity, the entire activity (presentation and response) will be called as *activity* and interaction during the response phase as *response talk*.

Before this activity, students were previously assigned to outline their paper and required to include key components—e.g., title, why they chose the topic, thesis statement (main idea), three subtopics, conclusion, which were also given in the handout as presentation guidelines—and asked to bring it to class for this activity. Just before the activity, instructions were given both orally by the teacher and in the written form (handout). Every student was given an instruction handout (see Appendix B) that includes guidelines for each role—what to do as a presenter or responder—For example, that presenters should present key components of their outline and that responders should productively criticize and provide suggestions on the presented outline in reference to the guidelines. A sheet of scratch paper was also given for the use of taking notes and writing suggestions (see Appendix C). The activity began with the teacher's request to select the first presenter and two responders after giving instructions (see Appendix D).

## DATA ANALYSIS

This study shows that the activity is in progress in a particular order and structure. For example, the transition from presentation phase to response phase is obviously signaled by the presenter's utterances<sup>5</sup>, mostly *that's it* or *that's all* or in a few cases, *is there any question* or *I think I'm done*, although there are a few cases in which there is no clear boundary between the presentation and response phase by responders' interrupting questions in the midst of the presentation. As the presentation closing utterance announces that the presentation part is officially closed and invites peers' response, it is sequentially the responders who are responsible for initiating the response talk, as a response to the first action of *giving the presentation*.

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<sup>5</sup> They are mostly placed after presenting *conclusion*, which thus serves as a preamble of closing.

**Questions Opening Response Talk**

Responders' orientation to (a) less fulfilled assignments or so called *what wasn't said* (e.g., main components as instructed to present) by the presenter or (b) the portion of presentation that has not accomplished the responders' uptake in any sense initiates response talk by raising a question. Thus the responders' opening utterance indexes an unstated or stated but not successful assignment by the presenter, implicating any problems with the presentation, thereby evoking the presenter's epistemic obligation to know and tell (Stivers, Mondada, & Steensig, 2011) and enacting the responders' rights to critique. This response-opening question serves not only as the response action to the presentation, but also as the action of initiating the response talk, thus shifting the interactional initiative from the presenter to the responders.

In the following segment, the question orients to a missing information that should have been informed (e.g., thesis statement) by the presenter, thus opening the response talk. This brings up a delicate situation for both the responder R1 and the presenter P.

Excerpt.1 G1+P2 (P: presenter; R: responders)

- ((...2 minutes 10 seconds omitted))
- 1 P: an::d (0.4)conclusion is >the fast fashion has  
 2 >both< advantages and disadvantages<  
 3 ?: °e:m°  
 4 (0.5)  
 5 R1: → So did you take ↓sides?  
 6 (1.1)  
 7 P: sorry?=  
 8 R1: =did you take <↓si:desi> what you thin:k (.)  
 9 fo- ah >fast fashion is good or bad?<  
 10 P: U:m (.) No:: °I° Just (.) SHow: the ad[vantage  
 11 R1: [°advantage°  
 12 P: >just disad[vantage<=  
 13 R2: [Eh:m  
 14 R1 =o↑Kay

In Excerpt 1, the second presenter P is presenting the conclusion of her outline in lines 1-2, which may be treated by both the presenter and the responders that P's presentation is almost close to an end.<sup>6</sup> As P's reporting of conclusion is completed in terms of propositional content

<sup>6</sup> The utterance *conclusion* serves not just as organizational closing of the outline, but also as a preamble to the closing of the presentation.

and grammatical forms of a TCU (turn-constructional unit) in line 2, this is treated as such by one of the responders, with an acknowledgment token “em” in line 3, indexing their uptake on what P has said to be the conclusion. After a pause (0.5 sec.) in line 4, R1’s utterance in line 5 initiates the response talk, signaling a shift of the phase from presentation to response and passing the interactional initiative to the responders.

When one responder student rather immediately asks a question to the presenter who has just completed her presentation, the responder student displays an orientation to a certain exigency to address at that moment, and by implication there might be some delicacy to bring about.

R1’s question, “so did you take sides?” is heard to seek for P’s position on the topic serving as P’s thesis statement that is usually reiterated in the conclusion but that has not been verbalized until P’s presentation has reached almost completion. However, the question is designed to serve both to check on whether P took sides (but has not verbalized) and to request which side P takes, stemming from both R1’s knowledge about organization in argument essays and R1’s uptake of what has been said by the presenter P. Hence, “So” prefacing in R1’s utterance serves as a causal connection (Schiffrin, 1987) between what has been uttered and upon which what will be a conclusion. Also, this question insinuates an assumption that taking sides is necessary for the paper in constructing a thesis statement. Yet, when there is a discrepancy between both parties in understanding of constructing a thesis statement in argument writing, this question can challenge the recipient who has a different understanding of it.

After R1’s question to P in line 5, there is a pause (1.1) as an inter-turn gap in line 6, thus implying possible trouble source. The pause is possible indication that the recipient has trouble understanding the prior question that was addressed to her. P’s “sorry?” in line 7 confirms that she is having trouble with R1’s utterance, while not quite specifically locating what may be the repairable aspect of R1’s prior talk. Drew (1997) referred to this type of repair initiator as “open repair initiator,” leaving open what is the repairable trouble. Hence, the repairable trouble in here is not clearly located. According to Drew (1997), one sequential environment where this type of open repair initiator frequently arises is involving an inappropriate response to a prior talk. Hence, at a guess, the question, “did you take sides” might have been treated by P as an inappropriate or unexpected response at that moment. While the exact trouble source that puzzled P is not pinpointed, R1 attempts to repair his prior utterance that strives to solve two candidate troubles (lines 8-9): hearing and understanding problems. After P’s repair initiator, R1

first repeats the same utterance but in slower speed and with elongation and prosodic stress on the word “sides” (<si:des>). Such changes can be seen as attempts to resolve a possible hearing problem. Then, he paraphrases the utterance with alternative—possibly easier—terms, “good or bad” in place of “take sides” to fix another possible understanding trouble source.

The presenter P’s turn in line 10 as a response to R1’s question is comprised of strong, elongated negative answer “No::,” along with a pre-pausal “U:m” and a micro-pause—both of which are usually deployed to accommodate delays in the dispreferred response (Schegloff, 2007)—demonstrating that she did not take sides, further accounting that her argument was to “just show the advantage just disadvantage.” By doing so, she defends her position by showing that the main topic of her paper is focused on both sides, while also rejecting any assumptions made by R1’s question concerning taking a certain position about her topic as mandatory or necessary. P’s use of “just” with an emphasis on it in line 10 and the repeat of it in line 12 can be seen as an attempt to make her assertion distinctive from R1’s assumed claim, displaying her epistemic primacy (Stivers et al., 2011).

P’s claim on her position is then received with a series of responses by the two responders. First, R1 starts with a response in line 11 with his repetition of “advantage” overlapping with P’s “advantage” in an aligning gesture. The other responder (R2) produces a rather strong acknowledgment token “Eh:m” partially overlapping with P’s utterance “disadvantage” in line 13. Finally, right after P’s completion of her utterance in line 12, R1’s “okay” in line 14 serves as both an acceptance (Schegloff, 2007) of what P has said as the response to R1’s question and a closing of the question-answer sequence.

As shown in the above analysis, the response-opening sequence is initiated by the responder’s question oriented to the participants’ understanding of what the current institutional activity entails (i.e., presenter’s obligation to present their outline as instructed). Within this sequence, R1 invokes P’s epistemic obligation and reveals his own K+ epistemic status (Heritage, 2010) fueled by his organizational knowledge about academic argument writings and his rights to critique concerning the activity. Likewise, the presenter, P rejects the responder’s projection on taking sides on the topic and defends her proposition with her epistemic primacy such that the presenter has a primary right to make assertions about topic knowledge.

In the following segment, the question raised by a responder, is at first, heard to be oriented to the less fulfilled assignment, but is actually orienting to the problematic potential of the topic choice, and thus the responder R1 initiates the response talk, invoking a *legitimacy* issue.

## Excerpt.2 G2+P2

- 1 P: E(h)m i-is there any que-question?  
 2 R1: Ehm::  
 3 (3.2)  
 4 R1: → WHY did you choo:se this topic.=  
 5 P: =Ah:[:  
 6 R1: → [especially uh casino?=  
 7 P: =yeah because in my home university I ↑learned  
 8 >(a) a lot< about ↑it so=  
 9 R1: =A[H::[:]  
 10 R2: [AH::[:]  
 11 P: [I have] I have learned about this and (.) I know  
 12 I know the casino have a huge >effect so<  
 13 R1: Em[::  
 14 P [to tourism industry=  
 15 R2: =yea[h  
 16 R1: [yeah  
 17 P: to ea:rn foreign cost and (.) ↑realize (0.7)  
 18 th:e economic growth<sub>i</sub>  
 19 R1: Eh[em  
 20 R2: [°yeah°  
 21 P: [yeah like that.  
 22 (0.5)  
 23 R1: ↑Eh-em:  
 24 R2: em  
 25 P: that's point.

In Excerpt 2, as P announces that her presentation ends and invites responses with “is there any que-question?” in line 1, a question is raised by R1 in line 4 following her elongated “Ehm” and a pause (3.2 sec.), opening the response talk. R1’s question, “why did you choose this topic” in line 4 is first heard to be orienting to the part of the assignment that was not presented (e.g., why you chose this topic) and thus to request the missing information. This is treated by P as such and she promptly produces with “Ah:.”— indexing a change of epistemic status from K- to K+ (Heritage, 1984)—, indicating that she recognized what she did not mention during her presentation. However, the question implicitly conveys the *legitimacy* issue of the topic by

appending “especially casino” to R1’s first utterance in line 6, which in here conveys a negatively tilted meaning.

The ensuing response by P, however, not only fulfills the assignment undone, but also debunks the criticism on the topic choice implicated in the question, through the ways that she enacts and asserts her epistemic primacy (Heritage, 2002; Stivers et al., 2011). First, as a type of the conforming answer to *why*-question (Raymond, 2003), P initiates with “because” in line 7 and brings in the external resource of *authority* from “my home university.” Second, she displays that she is a knowledgeable person regarding the topic “casino” by uttering “I learned a lot about it” in line 8, enacting her epistemic primacy. Thirdly, the presenter P further elaborates on the “huge effects” casino brings to economy (lines 11-12, 14, 17-18), displaying her epistemic rights to claim about topic knowledge. Lastly, she, despite an answerer, closes the question-answer sequences by adding her upshot with an evaluative remark “that’s point” in line 25, displaying her epistemic authority (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Stivers 2005).

In reaction to P’s answer, “in my home university I learned a lot about it” (lines 7-8), two responders R1 and R2 promptly produce a strong, elongated acknowledgment token “AH:::,” almost concurrently in lines 9-10, indexing the change of state from uninformed to informed (Heritage, 1984). Thus, this response token indicates that the responders recognize that the topic of casino can be discussed as an academic topic and thus P chose the topic for her writing. By implication, the responders acknowledge the topic “Casino” as legitimate to address in their academic writing, in that P’s topic choice is grounded on P’s such recognition and her knowledge about the topic.

As the response-opening question is oriented to the unstated and problematic aspect of the topic selection, it may project a subsequent challenging situation the presenter encounters. However, as shown in the analysis, the delicacy implicated in the question is resolved both by the presenter’s display of her epistemic primacy and by the responders’ ratifying the topic choice with their strong acknowledgment.

However, although the presenter did accomplish his or her presentation fulfilling the assignment as instructed, certain information that has not accomplished the responder’s uptake leads the responder to raise an opening question by requesting the very information. The question indexes the problematic possibility transpired in the delivery of the information.

Excerpt 3. G1+P1 (P: presenter; R: responders)

- 1 P: Yeh, that's it  
 2 (0.5)  
 3 R1: °↑okay°  
 4 (1.2)  
 5 ((flipping sound))  
 6 R1: → .Hhhh Can you repea(h)t your thesis statement?=  
 7 P: =Thesis statement?=  
 8 R1: =yeah  
 9 P: e::h my thesis statement is that (0.5) e::m (3.2)  
 10 <there are many common features>  
 11 R1: °em°  
 12 P: of <western human rights,>  
 13 R1: °eh-m°  
 14 P: <and the asian human dignity> (.) uh there's  
 15 quotation mark human rights and human ↑dignity  
 16 R1: eh-hm  
 17 P: <human rights are still applicable to non-western  
 18 society despite (.) the ↑origin>  
 19 (.)  
 20 P: yeah maybe you can (.) see: (.) here; ((flipping  
 21 sound))  
 22 (1.5)  
 23 R1: °em°  
 24 (6.0)  
 25 R1: °thank you°

In Excerpt 3, the presenter (P) announces that his presentation has officially completed with “Yeh, that’s it” in line 1, handing over the next turn to speak to the responders. This is taken up by R1 as such and R1 acknowledges the official closing with “okay” in lower voice in line 3.

After a pause (1.2 sec.) and the ensuing flipping sound, R1 raises a question as a repair initiator, opening response talk in line 6. R1 begins her turn with laughters, possibly implying a delicate situation (Haakana, 2001) to be forthcoming. Ensuing the laughter, R1 then requests P to repeat his thesis statement. By using the word “repeat,” R1 acknowledges the fact that P has already disclosed his thesis statement in his presentation, whereas she is asking for a clarification with P’s thesis statement, implying that there was any problem with R1’s complete uptake of it.

After a delaying token “e::m” and a slightly long pause (3.2 sec.), which implies that P has trouble responding to R1’s question immediately, P repeats his thesis statement, but this time in slower speed from his initial utterance in line 9. This suggests that P thought of the candidate

problem source to be repaired as understanding problems. However, he further makes an attempt to resolve any remaining problems, by showing his written outline to R1 in line 20 when there is no uptake produced by R1 in line 19. While R1 produces her uptake with “em,” “eh-m,” or “eh-hm” (line 11, 13, 16) as P is repeating his thesis statement, the fact that there is no uptake by R1 even when P has completed his repetition of his thesis statement indicates that there is still problem to be resolved. Thus P’s utterance “maybe you can see here” serves to resolve any problems (e.g., failure of uptake on the last sentence of the thesis statement and/or presumably R1’s taking notes) either residual or contingently emerging.

By showing the written version of the thesis statement, P is able to resolve any remaining problems with R1’s uptake on the thesis statement. In addition, by showing the written form instead of offering another spoken version, P is able to proffer R1 the genuine source of the thesis statement that can allow for taking notes in her handout.<sup>7</sup> R1’s “thank you” in line 25 thus heard to announce that the business at hand—achieving uptake of the thesis statement and/or writing something about it—settled, thereby closing the first response sequence as a repair sequence.

To summarize, the responders’ orientation to (1) what wasn’t said as instructed or (2) what has not accomplished the responders’ uptake on the part of the assignment exploits questions as their interactional resources, initiating the response sequence. Through the opening sequence, the responders enact their rights to critique, invoking the presenters’ epistemic responsibility (Stivers et al., 2011), while the presenters display their epistemic rights to the topic knowledge. Thus, the response talk opens up the arena where the nature of the peer response can emerge, develop and be negotiated.

### ***Questions Serving as Grounds for Advising: Preface or Resources for Advising***

The question-answer sequence(s) deployed during the response talk tend to act as resources and grounds for subsequent or consequent advice giving. Particularly, questions oriented to the problematic potential with the presented outline beyond the assignment mostly conclude with advising talk. Although there are some incidents involving giving-advice without any prefatory practice, many advising incidents in this study, involve question-answer sequence(s) in the

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<sup>7</sup> At a best guess, the pause (6.0 sec.) in line 24 before uttering “thank you” in line 25 may have served as time for R1’s taking notes in the given handout.



course of the advising action. Particularly two patterns in which advising is grounded in question-answer sequence(s) are analyzed: (a) a variation sequence of the stepwise entry to advising (adapted from Heritage & Sefi, 1992) structured as Question-Response-Advising (QRA), in which the initial question works as the preface of advising to warrant the relevance and grounds for the advice-giving, and (b) a set of question-answer sequence(s) is followed prior to advising, where the chain(s) of question and answer contingently serve as both resources and grounds for advice-giving.

**Question used as the preface of advice-giving.** Particularly when the responders come up against issues with problematic potential areas as candidate advisable matters with the presentation in their view, they initiate a question focusing on the issue. Responders' orientation to the problematic areas is sometimes recognized by the presenter as such, but also at times is taken up in a different manner by the presenter. And then without acknowledging or uptake remarks to the response completed by the presenter, the responders take turns by an attempt to give advice. Thus, the initial question in the Question-Response-Advising sequences serves as the preface to advising talk subsequent to the response. The pattern of QRA sequences is as follows:

Step 1: Question (orienting to problematic potential as matters advisable)

Step 2: Response (response treating the issue as problematic or not)

Step 3: Advising

A responder's question oriented to an issue that was said during the presentation but that is nominated as a candidate problematic issue initiates question-answer-advising sequences.

Excerpt. 4 G4+P2

((4min 19sec omitted)

- 1 P: em that's it eHH
- 2 (2.5)
- 3 R1:1→ e::m (0.6) I'd like to as:k em (0.5) how to stop
- 4 the overpopulation?
- 5 P: 2→ ah, so like I said, maybe the family planning which
- 6 is (.) control (.) birth rate, controlling birth
- 7 rate, bi:rth
- 8 R1: aha ↑birth rate.
- 9 P: >birth rate Yeah< so (.) to control >birth rate<
- 10 we have to:: give rights to the woman in the poor
- 11 countries because (.) they have no choice- they have
- 12 no right so (.) they have to they °like° they when

13 they >get old enough< they have to go to >marry  
 14 with some< (.) >they have to go to marry with<  
 15 a man because family >doesn't have enough money<  
 16 so they have to give the their (.) children to °the°  
 17 money they can they want some money as a (0.5) how  
 18 can I sa(h)y (.) as a:: (.) gratitude for the (.)  
 19 house <which get that child or woman↑>  
 20 (.)  
 21 P: so::  
 22 ((teacher interruption saying “go ahead”))  
 23 P: so::  
 24 R1: I think=  
 25 P: =Em  
 26 R1: (.) can I say [my opinion?  
 27 P: [Ye  
 28 R1: e[m  
 29 P: [Yes  
 30 R1:3→ I think (.) e::m giving them an eh education might  
 31 be  
 32 P: Yes °(the)° also  
 33 R1: the ((clicking her tongue))(.)  
 34 P: key is=  
 35 R1: yea[h  
 36 P: [ehm

In Excerpt 4, as P officially closes her presentation with her utterance “that’s it,” R1 raises a question “I’d like to ask how to stop the overpopulation” in line 3 addressing an issue—solution of overpopulation—that is part of P’s supporting ideas presented. In response to R1’s question, P takes multi-unit turns (lines 5-7 and 9-19), through which he first offers a conforming answer to the question by saying “family planning which is controlling birth rate” (lines 5-7), which has already been mentioned during P’s presentation, as indicated by P’s utterance “like I said.” P’s answer then goes further on from “how to control birth rate” to “to give rights to the women in poor countries” to the *dowry* issue (lines 15-19), implying that P treats R1’s question as a request for providing more or clearer information on “controlling birth rate” that P had mentioned before.

As P’s elongated “so” in line 21 is interrupted by the teacher, he then reiterates it in the same way in line 23, which is heard as an attempt to close his extended answer, as well as an invitation to R1’s response either as acknowledgment or uptake. However, without any acknowledgement or uptake token, R1 surfaces her attempt to give advice in line 24 with “I think,” but abandons

the attempt, instead requesting permission for speakership to express her opinion (line 26), displaying she is cautious in giving advice. As the request is accepted by P's overlapping confirmation "Ye" (line 27) and "Yes" (line 29), advising talk is collaboratively constructed between R1 and P (lines 30-36), through the following steps: (a) R1 utters "education" as the keyword for an additional solution of fighting against "overpopulation" (lines 30-31); (b) P produces "yes" and then appends "also" to the incomplete utterance of R1 in line 32, implying his treating R1's proposal as an additional solution; (c) R1 produces "the" and clicks her tongue, displaying she is still delivering the advice with caution in line 33; (d) P completes the utterance with "key is" in line 34; and finally, (e) in line 35, R1 displays her aligning with P with "yeah," which is acknowledged by P with "ehm" in line 36.

Thus, this collaborative advising talk shows how both the responder and the presenter have accomplished their situated roles as an advice-giver and advice-recipient, managing presumable delicate issues effectively. R1 delivers the advice in three ways. She, first poses a question focusing on a candidate issue advisable, yet it was not treated by P as such, and P's response thus serves as grounds for ensuing advice-giving. Second, R1 insinuates that P's more elaborated answer than before may not be what R1 expects to hear from P about the "solution to overpopulation," by not producing any acknowledging or uptake remark even when P's answer comes to an end and P implicitly invites R1's uptake. Lastly, R1 displays that she is very cautious in the course of delivering the advice (a) by abandoning an attempt to display her opinion to ask for a chance for speakership before the delivery of the advice, (b) by producing hesitating markers ("e:m" or "eh") and less assertive modality "might" in the delivery of the advice, and (c) by inviting P to first complete the advice.

Likewise, P as the advice-recipient displays that he is aligning with R1 in the course of action. That is, he treats R1's advice as "informing" and confirms that he has comparable thinking (Waring, 2005) to R1's suggestion on the additional solution (e.g., by uttering "also" and "key is") by actively engaging in constructing and completing the advising talk.

As shown in the excerpt above, the question focused on the candidate advisable issue within the presentation, which was not treated by the presenter as such, serves as prefatory to the advising talk. As the question is treated by the presenter in a different way, the subsequent response provides grounds for the ensuing advising talk. Also the question-answer-advising sequences are unpacked in the way that participants display an orientation to their rights either as

a responder (e.g., rights to critique or suggest) or as a presenter (e.g., rights to claim on topic knowledge). In addition, they display their orientation to managing the delicacy emerging when advising is attempted. Thus the advice-giver's caution and the advice-recipient's alignment with the advice-giver are brought into play in and through the advising talk.

On the other hand, a responder's orientation to a problematic aspect in the presentation in the responder's view can be confirmed in other way by the presenter's subsequent response, thus leading to advising talk.

Excerpt. 5 G1+P2

- 1 R1: and I think (.) you mention about (0.8) the Fast  
 2 fashion is like >the< circle=  
 3 P: =ehm  
 4 R1: (is) °very fast° (0.3) that means the product (.)  
 5 that's very SH-SHO::rt life cy[c]le  
 6 R2: [Eh-h[m  
 7 P: [yeah (sorry)  
 8 R1:1 → you see the (0.9)thing that is >advanTageous and  
 9 disadvanTageous?<  
 10 ?: °.h(hh)°  
 11 P: 2 → uh, (fast) cycle is eh (pitched) because um people can  
 12 uh choose uh right about a variety of (clothes)(.)  
 13 (because) (.) (purse, chain, flares)(1.5)°kinds of°  
 14 clothes term so (.) so  
 15 R2: °eh::m°  
 16 P: there's (1.2) many:(0.8) Designs,  
 17 R2: ↑Eh-e:m  
 18 P: in the fast fashions, retailers (0.6) so: you can  
 19 choose (1.1)the clothes (what) [>you want<]  
 20 [((timer rings))]  
 21 P: you can find  
 22 (0.5)  
 23 R2: °eh:[m°  
 24 R1: 3 → [Maybe you can change fast (.) the term fast  
 25 °(side°) eh to what you like (.) u:m (0.7) more  
 26 Options, (1.2)  
 27 R2: eh:m  
 28 R1: for the (.) ↑customers,  
 29 P: ye[ah  
 30 R2: [yeah-yeah-yeah  
 31 R1: ma[ybe it makes  
 32 P: [it's better  
 33 ((teacher instruction before the entire class))  
 34 R1: makes it more=

35 P: =Thank you

In Excerpt 5, in lines 1-2 and 4-5, R1 attempts to frame the term “Fast fashion” as “the product that’s very short life cycle,” while placing an elongated, strong stress on short (“SH-SHO::rt”), implying his orientation to formulating the gist of what might be problematic aspect with Fast fashion. After the partially overlapped acknowledging tokens by other responder R2 (“Eh-hm”) and the presenter (“Yeah”) are produced in line 6 and 7, R1 raises a question in line 8 designed to ask pros and cons of the fast fashion reformulated by R1. This question, however, is treated by the presenter as R1’s orientation to problematizing the consequences of the “very short” life cycle that Fast fashion brings and thus produces her response in counter-argument to R1. She hence responds focusing on the advantages in customers’ side that fast fashion can bring, through multi-unit turns (lines 11-14, 16, 18-21). After a pause (0.5 sec.) in line 22, whereas ensuing R2’s acknowledging “eh:m” in lower voice is produced in line 23, no acknowledging or uptake remark is produced by R1. Instead, in lines 24, R1 initiates advising talk (lines 24-35) with a mitigating preface “maybe.” R2 goes on by suggesting changing the term “fast” to a different one that can convey “more options for customers” as the presenter said in her response. Thus, P’s response to R1’s question, on the contrary, acts as grounds for ensuing R1’s advice.

R1’s advice is acknowledge by R2 (line 27) and R1 continues his utterance in line 28 with “for the customers,” which is acknowledge by the presenter (line 29) and agreed upon by R2 (line 30) with “yeah-yeah-yeah,” partially overlapping with P. R1 utters the final part of his advice in line 31, saying “maybe it makes,” which is overlapped by P’s “it’s better” as P is jumping in to construct the last part of the advice in line 32. After the teacher’s instruction before the entire class, R1 attempts to complete his utterance that was abandoned by the teacher’s interruption, saying “makes it more” in line 34 but P’s prompt “thank you,” possibly deterring the probable remaining utterance by R1 in line 35, implies that P considers R1’s advice to be finished and shows that she wants to move on. Thus P’s “thank you” serves as an advice accepting remark, as well as a sequence closing remark.

Thus, R1’s orientation to the problematic aspect, in his view, with the Fast fashion, first formulates the gist of what P has said, to problematize that aspect and then raises a question to elicit the presenter’s perspective on the issue. The presenter’s response, however, serves as

accentuating the problematic aspect with Fast fashion in a different way (e.g., the problem with the term “fast”), thereby P’s response serves as grounds for R1’s advising to be forthcoming. Hence the initial question by R2 functions as a preface of the advising talk, while the response by P plays a role to warrant the subsequent advising.

However, in the following segment, the responder’s orientation to the problematic potential in her view (e.g., lack of solution) is implicated in her question. This is treated by the presenter as such and advising talk is constructed by the presenter’s more active involvement.

Excerpt. 6 G1+P3

- 1 R3: 1→ will you intend to ( ) mention so↑lution for  
 2 sweatshops?  
 3 P: 2→ A1: because my co:ncclusion is they are you can’(t)  
 4 change a harsh situation (.) so:: should I-should  
 5 I do that?  
 6 (0.5)  
 7 P: it’s better?  
 8 R3: 3→ if there is any uh (1.0) °solution°, it’s better to  
 9 add but=  
 10 P: =↓Eh-↑eh  
 11 (0.7)  
 12 R3: if no:t (0.4)  
 13 P: ah I’ll suggest solution but in conclusion this is  
 14 no way (.) (compromising both carefully navigating)  
 15 ?: e[h  
 16 P: [to like that  
 17 ?: °em°  
 18 P: (.)tlk((clicking her tongue)) so my  
 19 subtopic third is like (.) the solution of the  
 20 sweatshops, (2.0) I think >it’s better.<  
 21 R1: eh::m

In this excerpt, R3 raises a question in lines 1-2 designed as a polar question (e.g., “yes/no question”) asking whether P intends to mention “solution for sweatshops” in her paper. This question also embodies a presupposition that P did not mention “solution” to sweatshops in her outline. Thus the question indexing “solution” that was not mentioned by the presenter during her presentation can be a dispreferred action to the presenter by insinuating that the questioner may be in K+ position (Heritage, 2010) relative to the recipient about the organizational knowledge. To this question, P produces her response (lines 3-5) that is commonly shown in

dispreferred responses (e.g., with a delay and account; Pomerantz, 1984; Schegloff, 2007) but that brings about further complicated sequential and interactional imports.

P first initiates her turn in line 3 with “Al:,” which is heard to serve as a delay marker (e.g., well), and thus seems to serve as a preface of a dispreferred response. P’s ensuing utterance (lines 3-5) “because my conclusion ... you can’t change a harsh situation” indexes the presupposition embodied by the question, thus serving as an account for why the “solution” was not mentioned in her outline and simultaneously serving to implicate that she concedes that she has not considered the “solution” in her paper. After a micro-pause, P utters a question “should I do-should I do that?” after producing elongated and stressed “so:” (lines 4-5), which serves as an inferential connection between two propositions (Blakemore, 2002); one, P did not mention solution for some reasons and two, P should mention solution in her revision?

P’s question here serves as a counter which is produced in nonanswer responses, to initiate a new sequence and to reverse the direction of the sequence (Schegloff, 2007). Thus P’s such utterance serves to hand over the speakership to R3 by inviting R3’s answer and to avoid her directly answering the question.<sup>8</sup>

As there is no immediate response from R3 in line 6, P utters “it’s better?” in line 7 changing the question in two different ways: form and meaning to convey. The interrogative form is changed to a declarative question form, to seek confirmation and the meaning carried is from seeking confirmation on whether the presenter is obliged to mention solution, to requesting confirmation on whether it is better to mention solution. Thus P’s question can invite R3’s response to resolve two state of affairs at hand: one, whether or not to include the solution and two, whether it is better to include the solution.

R3’s ensuing turn is designed to accomplish several jobs, initiating advising talk (lines 8-21). R3 initiates her turn with *if*-construction by which the account for ‘why it’s better to mention solution to sweatshops’ is first delivered and then her confirmation serving as advice is delivered as an answer to P’s question. Particularly, as Stivers (2011) reports that the most common type of confirmation to a polar question is partial or full repeat of the question, and here, R3 gives her confirmation with a full repeat of P’s question and the addition “to add” to it, making her utterance as a complete TCU.

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<sup>8</sup> This appears to manage the delicacy in that “yes” response may project P’s elaboration to come with it, whereas “no” answer may threaten R3’s face (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

However, instead of closing her turn here, she appends “but” to her utterance in line 9, indexing an opposite case to be coming. After P’s prompt acknowledgment with “Eh-eh” in line 10 and a pause (0.7 sec.) in line 11, R3 utters “if not” with an elongation on “no:t” and an ensuing pause (0.4. sec.) in line 12, implying there is no more to come. As this is treated by P as such, in response to R3’s advice, P takes multi-unit turns (lines 13-14, 16, 18-20), verbalizing how her writing would be revised in organization, specifically by producing a compromised resolution to deal with her present organization of the conclusion and then by pronouncing the candidate title for her new subtopic three (lines 18-20). Furthermore, P adds her assessment on her new candidate organization with “I think it’s better” in line 20. Thus P shows her complete acceptance of R3’s advice not only by expressing how her current outline would be changed reflecting the advice, but also by producing her evaluative remark on the would-be revision.

As shown in this analysis, the initial question focused on the candidate advisable matter by the responder serves to orient the presenter to the desirability of the “solution” incorporated into the question. Thus, the presenter’s counter question invites the presenter, who is presumed to be more knowledgeable about the organization, to confirm *including the solution* in terms of the quality of organization and thus the presenter shows her accepting the advice as informing, by expressing how her current organization can be revised, reflecting the advice given by R3.

While the previous question and answer sequences serve as an entry to advising talk, the following section shows that advising transpires contingently following a chain of question-answer sequence(s) where problematic aspects are emerging.

***Questions serving as resources and grounds for advising.*** In the second pattern in which advising incidents occur, the previous question-answer sequence(s) serve as resources from which problematic aspects are emerging and thus the responders’ orientation to them leads to advising talk. Thus, advising talk transpires contingently, with the previous question-answer sequences serving as grounds for doing so.

In the following segment, an advising incident appears to be initiated by a previous question-answer sequence in which the issue of *taking sides* was addressed between the presenter and one responder R1. In this case, the presenter’s position on her topic as *showing both advantages and disadvantages of Fast fashion* had been officially announced. After the sequence is closed, a different responder R2 begins her turn with an account for another candidate advice, orienting to the problem that was manifested in the previous talk.



## Excerpt. 7 G1+P3

1 R1:1→ =did you take <↓si:des;↓> what you thi:nk (.)  
 2 fo- ah fast fashion is >good or bad<  
 3 P: 2→ U:m (.) No:: °I° Just(.)SHow: the ad[vantage  
 4 R1: [°advantage°  
 5 P: >just disad[vantage<=  
 6 R2: [Eh:m  
 7 R1 =o↑Kay  
 8 (4.2)  
 9 ?: (yes)  
 10 (4.1)  
 11 R2: → .tlk uh: I think uh like (.) <balance-wise;↓>  
 12 P: ↓eh-↑hm=  
 13 R2: =if you have three benefits, versus two  
 14 disadvan[tages;↓  
 15 P: [Yea:h  
 16 R2: seems like, there's mo(h)re ☺ bene(h)fits ☺  
 17 P: Yea:h  
 18 (.)  
 19 R2: °yeah°  
 20 P: °I° think so  
 21 R2: so[;,  
 22 P: 3→ [I Will Add[more  
 23 R2: [Yea:h  
 24 P: One More  
 25 R2: yea:h three three  
 26 P: yeah

Following the question-answer sequences between P and R1 (lines 1-7), there is an ensuing pause (4.2 sec.) in line 8 and an additional pause (4.1 sec.) in line 10 after an unidentified participant's "yes" in line 9. And then, in line 11, R2 prefaces her attempt to display her opinion on P's presentation with "I think" and continues to bring up a problem within P's outline with "balance-wise" that references the organizational problem in P's outline. P responds with "eh-hm" as a continuer (Jefferson, 1984) in line 12 prompting R2 to continue her turn. R2 goes on in lines 13-14 to elaborate why "balance wise" is on the table now with *if* construction, "if you have three benefits, versus two disadvantages."<sup>9</sup> This directs P to her own utterance during her earlier presentation where she mentioned "three benefits" and "four disadvantages." P's partially overlapped and slightly loud, elongated "Yea:h" in line 15 is heard to display P's

<sup>9</sup> As P uttered "three benefits" and "four disadvantages" in her presentation, the background of this utterance is thus not so clear, whether it is from R2's incorrect remembrance or her attempt to give a comparable example.

uptake on it. Ensuing R2's turn continuing with "seems like, there's more benefits" in line 16 is designed to deal with two businesses at hand. On the one hand, R1's utterance implicitly indicates the discrepancy between P's claim *showing both advantage and disadvantage* understood as both sides being equally addressed and the actual organization of the claim "three benefits and four disadvantages" addressing more disadvantages. It thus leads the presenter to explicitly recognize that R2 brought the *balance* issue to indicate the gap in her writing which P acknowledges with "Yea:h" in line 17. On the other hand, R2 deals with the delicacy that can emerge in the situation with such mitigating device as a less assertive phrase "seem like," laughter ("mo(h)re") and smiley voice ("bene(h)fits") in the delivery of the utterance. After a micro-pause in line 18, R2's "yeah" in lower voice in line 19 is heard as affiliating with P. P then concedes with "°I° think so" in line 20, indicating her understanding and acknowledging of R2's comments.

R2, however, goes on further to address the problem with "so" in continuing tone in line 21, when P prompts to self-articulate the solution to the problem, interrupting R2's turn in line 22. And thus advising talk is initiated and co-constructed involving the presenter seizing the initiative (lines 22-26). The solution to address the balance issue is first produced by the presenter to whom the advice is addressed with "I will add more" in line 22. The responder R2 then displays her alignment with P with "Yea:h" in line 23, overlapping with P. The presenter P specifies the solution with "one more" in line 24 and R1 also displays her alignment with P with elongated "yea:h" and then provides the upshot of the solution with "three three" in line 25. Finally, P acknowledges with "yeah" in line 26, which serves as closing of the advising sequences.

As shown in the analysis, the previous question-answer sequence(s) can function as a resource and grounds for another responder to unfold other advising talk, in that the problematic aspect is noticed during the prior talk. Thus the previous question-answer sequences in here served as a preliminary to another preface of the advising sequences, namely *pre-pre's* (Schegloff, 2007). R2 first displays her claim of understanding of what the presenter has said through the preliminary advising sequences. In other words, R2 utters her understanding of prior talk as accounts before an advice is launched and thus the accounts serve as the preface of advising. Waring (2007b) reports that in peer tutoring, accounts deployed before advising function to identify a problem in the writing and in doing so, invite the recipients to formulate

the advice itself. Thus the pre-advising accounts can effectively manage face issues by avoiding the delicate action of explicit advice giving (Waring, 2007b).

Thus, the responder's attempt to give advice, in this example, has been implemented through the preliminary stage designed to deal with the business at hand. Her accounts involve prefacing the reference to the problematic aspect, exemplifying and manifesting the problem, while inviting the presenter's response with slightly rising tone in her utterance (lines 11, 14), using mitigating practices (e.g., "I think" or "seems like" or laughter particles and smiley voice) and finally, letting the advisee go on articulating the advice.

On the other hand, the presenter displays herself as an attentive listener, as well as an active advice-recipient by responding to the advice through acknowledging, displaying her uptake, conceding and even uttering the solution by herself, while revealing her comparable thinking (Waring, 2005) with the advisor. Thus the advising talk is contingently grounded from the previous sequences and co-constructed by the advice giver and the advice-recipient, with the delicate issues being managed.

Unlike the previous talk, in which the problematic aspect is markedly revealed, in following excerpt, the prior chains of question and answer sequences serve to provide information sought by the responders. Yet, the responders' unresolved problem of understanding of the presenter's topic leads to advising talk, and thus the prior question-answer sequences, from which the problematic aspects emerge, act as resources and grounds for the advice. This segment, particularly shows that when the responders have limited access to the presenter's outline, they deploy *wh*-questions to request information possessed by the recipient, in order to receive type-conforming or specifying answers to the question: e.g., *why*-interrogatives make a reason answer relevant and the answer specified (Raymond, 2003).

Previously, P presented her outline for approximately 1 minute. After a clarification question about the term *aquaculture* was discussed among participants, the responders ask questions in attempt to access the presenter's topic *aquaculture production*.

Excerpt. 8 G4+P1

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | R2:1→ Ehh (1.5) Why-why (did) you <u>choose</u> (.) this <u>topic</u> ?    |
| 2 | P: 2→ em, <u>beca:use</u> (.) the (.) now the overfishing is <u>very</u> : |
| 3 | <u>serious</u> and <u>s[o,the]re</u> might not be enough <u>fish</u> ( )   |
| 4 | R2: [eh::m]  |
| 5 | P: <u>so</u> we need to culture some fish (is) for uh for a                |
| 6 | >short of< <u>fo<u>o</u>d</u>  |

7 (1.0)  
 8 P: Yeah  
 9 R1: e:[m:  
 10 R2: [ah:  
 ((4 lines omitted, in which R1 and P exchange laughter  
 and R1's attempt to continue her utterance is then  
 thus abandoned))  
 15 R1:1→ [what is a (.) ah: main problem on the issue,  
 16 like because  
 17 we have (.) huge cheap↑  
 18 P: ↑Yes  
 19 R1: we can catch (.) many ah much fish as most  
 20 P: yeah  
 21 (.)  
 22 P: so::  
 23 R1:1→ so how-how do we how do you think we can stop  
 24 overfishing  
 25 (.)  
 26 P: e:h[m  
 27 R1 [like regulator law o:r  
 28 P: 2→ if there's I think, if there's enough fish in the  
 29 market  
 30 R1: ↓eh-↑Hm  
 31 P: for human too=  
 32 R1: =em  
 33 P: (.) is then they don't need to catch too many fish  
 34 R1: Ah:: they-they they catch too ma-much fish  
 35 P: yeah  
 36 R1: Ah::  
 37 ?: ehh  
 38 R1: Although there is enough fish in the market  
 39 (0.4)  
 40 P: e:h[m:]  
 41 R1: [em] (0.8) they uh (.) cat<sup>o</sup>ch too<sup>o</sup>  
 42 ((teacher interruption giving instructions))  
 43 R1: <sup>o</sup>overfishing?<sup>o</sup> ((writing sound))  
 44 (3.5)  
 45 P: 2→ em I think that because (0.5) nowadays, we go buy to  
 46 eat sashimi  
 47 R1: em  
 48 and that's why we catch many salmons or  
 49 other (.) eh (.) ↑tuna  
 50 R1: em  
 51 and if we culture many tunas for them to eat they might  
 52 not need to cach the fish in the ocean.  
 53 (.)

54 P: yeah  
 55 R1: ehm e[hmhm  
 56 P: [that's findin(h)[g. h]hh  
 57 R1: [eHH↑]  
 ((11 lines omitted, in which R1 asked another question  
 "which country catches fish the most?" and P answered  
 this question with "Japan"))  
 69 (4.2)  
 70 R2:3→ uh::(.) I thi:nk (1.5) uh::(2.5) I think you should  
 71 add the ((clearing throat))(1.0) e:m (2.0) th:e  
 72 (1.0) (add the) little's more (.) about wha-what is  
 73 (0.8) overfishing an:d (0.4)  
 74 P: °ah° okay  
 75 R1: eh more de[tail?  
 76 R2: [solution of overfishing overfishing °like°  
 77 P: oKay

In this excerpt, the chains of *wh*-questions are deployed by the two responders, thus constructing a series of question-answer sequences. In line 1, R2, following a laughter—possibly, implying a dispreferred action to come—and a pause (1.5 sec.), asks a question with *why*-interrogative, “why (did) you choose this topic?”<sup>10</sup> As a response to this question, P begins with “because” as the preface of conforming answer to *why*-question (lines 2-3), which conveys the problems behind her topic (as upshot of her answer, “overfishing is very serious.” There “might not be enough fish” due to overfishing and subsequently “short of food” in the future). And then the rest part of P’s answer includes a solution (“we need to culture some fish”), using “so” as a causal connection (Schiffrin, 1987) in lines 5-6. As there is no uptake or acknowledging by the responder(s) to the end of the answer in line 7, P produces emphatically “Yeah” in line 8 indicating that her answer has ended. Ensuing receipt tokens “e:m: by R1 and “ah:” by R2 are produced, respectively, (lines 9-10), both of which are heard as uptake of what P has said as the reason why she chose the topic.

Then the other responder, R1 raises another question (line 15). R2 first asks “what is a main problem on the issue,” in continuing tone and then elaborates his question, conveying his understanding of what P has said as “we have huge cheap fish and can catch as many fish as we can, so what is the main problem behind your topic?”—reformulated for comprehensibility (lines 15-17 and 19). Yet P does not treat this as complete, thus acknowledges it with “yeah”

<sup>10</sup> Why P chose the topic was briefly mentioned during her presentation.

(line 20), instead of giving an answer. After a micro-pause in line 21, P invites R2 to continue his turn with elongated “so” in line 22 and R2 raises a different question this time asking “how do you think we can stop overfishing” in lines 23-24. As there is no answer from P—a micro-pause—in line 21, P’s utterance “eh:m” in line 26 is treated by R1 as perturbation implying P has trouble answering. R2 thus provides a candidate answer (“regulator law o:r”) that pursues to elicit P’s answer in line 27. P, then, initiates her answer in line 28 with *if*-construction for formulating a hypothetical condition through which her answer is provided (lines 28-29, 33-34). This implies that the question raised by R2 may not have been an aspect considered by P for her paper and P thus needed some time to come up with the answer.

In this vein, P displays her less assertive position with the answer, inserting “I think” mid-utterance, instead of continuing to finish *if*-clause (line 28). P’s answer goes on in lines 31 and 33-34, with R1’s “eh-Hm” (line 30) heard as a continuer and “em” (line 32) heard as an uptake token. As P’s answer is heard as complete in line 33, R1 goes on to display his uptake with “Ah:.” which indexes an epistemic change from K- to K+ (Heritage, 1984). And then R1 produces the gist of what he understands P to have said, “they catch too much fish” (line 34), indicating that R1 construes P’s answer as the problem behind P’s topic, instead of the solution to overfishing, the actual answer sought by R1’s question. R1’s utterance is treated by P as a request for confirmation, and P confirms with “yeah” (line 35). R1’s ensuing “Ah:.” in line 36 is heard as third position “oh” (Heritage, 1984) that implies that his first question asking “main problem on the issue” in the previous talk is informed. However, as R1’s continuing upshot “although there is enough fish in the market” is produced, which is also heard to ask for confirmation from P, there come a pause (0.4 sec.) in line 39 and P’s “e:hm:” as perturbation in line 40, which indicate any trouble P might have had in producing her response to R1. This is treated by R1 as such and thus after R1’s “em” overlapping with P’s “ehm” and the ensuing pause (0.8 sec.), R1 utters the first part of his upshot attenuating, “they catch too” in *sotto voce* previously confirmed by P as correct (line 41).

After the teacher’s interruption with giving task instructions, R1 utters “overfishing” in a low voice, accompanied by writing sounds (line 43). At this point he may have been writing “overfishing” in his handout while saying it out. After a pause (3.5 sec.) in line 44, P further elaborates her answer—*if we culture many tunas for people to eat, they might not need to catch the fish in the ocean*—in an attempt to resolve R1’s misconstruing her answer that was told in

the previous question-answer sequences, through multi-unit turns (lines 45-46, 48-49, 51-52). When there is no uptake or acknowledging remark from R1 (line 53), P herself utters “yeah” in line 54 indicating that he has ended his current turn. Without a gap, R1 responds with “ehm” and laughter in line 55, and P responds with a closing remark “that’s findin(h)g” overlapping with R1’s laughter and P’s laughter in line 56. R1 also responds with laughter in line 57, displaying his accepting the invitation to laughter by P. This serves as the closing of the question-answer sequences.

After the 11 lines have been omitted, the other responder R2, following a long pause (4.2 sec.), initiates giving advice with “I think”—*I think you should add little more about what is overfishing*—in line 70, displaying difficulty formulating her utterances through a number of perturbations such as “eh::,” “em,” elongation of utterances (“th:e” or “an:d”), and mid-turn pauses through lines 70-73. While R2 produces a sentence final continuer “an:d,” implying there is more to come followed by a short pause, P utters “ah” in lower voice followed by “okay” (line 74), implying that she accepts the advice as informing (Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Waring, 2007a). R2’s “an:d” and a pause (0.4) is treated by R1 as an attempt for word search and R1 proffers with “more detail?” in line 75. Yet R2 utters “solution of overfishing” as the second proposal, overlapping with R1’s utterance in line 76. P accepts this second advice with “okay,” (Schegloff, 2007; Waring, 2007a), which also act as a closing (Schegloff, 2007) of the advising sequences (line 77).

This excerpt shows that as responders have limited access to the presenter’s outline, they deploy *wh*-questions—that set broader agenda than polar questions (Heritage, 2003)—to request information. Such action of the responders can either be attributed to the teacher’s instruction or questions that stem from their actual interest. In the excerpt above, given that advising involves issues (e.g., more about overfishing and solution to overfishing) that were discussed rather implicitly<sup>11</sup> during a series of question-answer sequences, it implies that the responders still have a problem understanding what the topic (e.g., aquaculture production) is about in terms of *why overfishing* and *why aquaculture*. In that sense, R2’s advice is grounded from what she has

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<sup>11</sup> As shown in the excerpt, the presenter’s answer is not addressing the very question raised by the responder R1, even though her second time answer includes more direct answer. Furthermore, P’s answer starts from the premise that overfishing is a serious problem and culturing fish is the solution to address the problem. Thus R2’s advice indicates insufficient background information about overfishing and other solutions to address overfishing as matters advising.

understood from the presenter's responses to the questions and thus suggests providing a little more information about what overfishing is and its possible solutions. Hence, R2's advice involves what may serve as the background information or the rationale (so called "hook") for P's topic *aquaculture production* in her paper, such that one of solutions to cope with overfishing is aquaculture production.

Thus the analysis shows that the chains of *wh*-question-answer sequences here serve not only for information gathering purposes, but also serve as resources and grounds for advice giving as the responders display they have still problems fully understanding P's topic. Hence advising is attempted contingently as problematic aspects emerge during the response talk.

The examples above demonstrate that advice giving is attempted through a series of steps involving question-answer sequence(s), in which the question serves to elicit the presenter's perspective on the issue as problematic and the subsequent response allows advising to be forthcoming, serving as the warrant for the action on the one hand. On the other hand, the previous question-answer sequence(s) also serve as resources, from which problematic aspects emerge and thus also function as grounds for the advising talk.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has shown how the interactional resource *questions* are deployed by the participants in opening response phases and giving advice during the peer response to outline presentations. As comment givers' orientation to problematic aspects with presentations launches into feedback phases in Jacoby's study (1998), the responders in this study show that they are primarily oriented to whether the presenters fulfilled their assignments during their presentations. Thus what was not presented as instructed or what has not achieved the responder's uptake of the assignment during the presentation phases allows the responders to employ questions opening the response phase. Using questions also allows the responders in part to take control over the interaction (Sacks, 1995) by deploying interactional features questions bring (e.g., imposing various types of constraints on the recipients or implementing various initiating actions (Hayano, 2013)). Hence, the responders open response talk by implementing various social actions of checking, requesting or challenging, while enacting their rights to critique and simultaneously



evoking the presenter's epistemic obligation (Stivers et al., 2011), in pursuit of the goal of the activity.

Moreover, the responders' orientation to problematic aspects involves advising talk that occur subsequently or consequently following question-answer sequence(s). As the problematic potential with the presentation is registered as a candidate advisable matter in the responders' views, the responders' choice of interactional resource tends to be cautious to establish warrant for the upcoming advising. Thus, the responders employ questions as prefatory to advice giving, and thus construct the question-response-advising (QRA) sequences, as a variation of the stepwise entry to advising (Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Vehviläinen, 2001). Also, the previous question-answer sequences act as resources for advising to transpire contingently as problematic aspects are noticed or unpacked during the sequences. In either case, the question-answer sequence(s) play a crucial role in providing grounds for advising talk to be unfolded.

Lastly, as the participants encounter delicate situations during the response talk (e.g., when challenging questions are raised or advising is attempted), they enact their own rights as a responder or as a presenter, as well as they show caution in managing the delicacy arising in the course of action. Thus, not only are questions used for inviting the presenters to display their epistemic rights on topic knowledge or for eliciting the presenters' elaborated response that serves as warrant for advising, but other practices are also employed, such as the responders' mitigating resources (e.g., *I think, maybe, seem like, or might* or using accounts before advising) when they are giving advice, and the presenters' advice receipt displaying their treating advice as *informing*.

This paper, thus have demonstrated how questions can be deployed as a useful interactional resource during the peer interaction in the institutional setting. A wealth of conversation analytic studies that have examined questions in the institutional contexts, focusing on interactions between experts and novice, have witnessed questions as significantly important resource in pursuit of institutional goals or tasks (Hayano, 2013). Particularly in educational settings, questions are deployed by teachers for students' comprehension check (McHoul, 1978), for eliciting students' response and moving on class lessons (Lee, 2006), or for indicating a problem, as well as pointing to a possible solution for the problem about students' writing or talk in writing conferences (Koshik, 2002). Hence examining how questions are employed during peer interaction in the institutional contexts can provide an insight into the vignette where peer

learning may occur, and can also expand the scope of the interactional imports the questions can carry in such peer interaction.

Moreover, as this paper is the first attempt to examine the peer response implemented in such a format *post-presentation feedback* in the early stage of writing process, a few pedagogical implications can be discussed. First, different types of peer response can be devised and implemented to meet contextual and/or contingent needs, including students' experience of academic genres, their contingent needs for writing (e.g., relative weakness in their writings or a common writing genre in need), their language proficiency, and the teacher's perspective on students' writing (e.g., prioritized writing skills). The activity involves response to *text is being talk*, thus implemented as *talking for writing*, and can help students to summarize the gist of their outline by consummating the brief text with their verbal competence, as well as to develop their communication competence through implementing such various social actions as arguing, defending, requesting, elaborating, or advising. This may also lead students to pay more attention to listening to what is being said by their peers for the next stage, where they take turns to respond based on the information transferred by such.

Second, as shown in the analysis, the responders display an orientation to the presenter's assignment. Thus such guidelines for the assignment, to some degree, can be helpful for student writers to focus on main components to address in their papers, while serving as a checklist by respondent students during presentations. In that sense, peers can serve as gatekeepers or sometimes *being a teacher* to check on whether main components are addressed in their paper, to request what was missing in the outline, or to advise what might be better for their paper. Thus this type of activity may function as a gateway into producing a better writing manuscript in terms of overall quality of organization, e.g., a well-constructed thesis statement, background information as rationale for the topic, or coherence established among supporting ideas. Third, the scope of *collaborative learning* (Bruffee, 1984) may be further broaden to embrace the aspects of interactional asymmetries (e.g., questioner-answer or advice giver-advice recipient) emerging in peer interaction. Thus, teachers in ESL/EFL contexts may consider in designing classroom activities how to exploit such asymmetrical features in pursuit of the institutional goals or tasks.

Last but not least, the teacher intervention can get students on board during activities by providing timely or clear task instructions (e.g., for presenters or responders in each phase or for

the entire class or a certain group) and by monitoring overall activities (e.g., timing or helping transition from phase to phase).

However, as this study is only relying on audiorecorded data, there must have been salient moments that were not captured. In other words, audio data inherently have limitations that are incapable of accessing nonverbal or embodied resources deployed during the response talk. In particular, participants' writing maneuvers, gestures, facial expressions, and other nonverbal resources are beyond the purview of the analysis in this study. Hence, the study did not reveal all the ways the interaction was being unpacked. For instance, one responder's orientation to writing maneuvers brought to her a different interactional resource, *repetitional response*, thus contributing to a different type of interaction during the presentation phase. Also relatively long pauses may imply the participants' orientation to writing as instructed.

The structure of the peer response implemented in this study may further limit opportunities to see other aspects beyond the guidelines or orient the students to locate surface problems (e.g., whether or not the presenter reported key components), instead of more crucial factors influencing overall quality of writing (e.g., well-constructed thesis statement, overall coherence, or organization of conclusion). In addition, the structured peer response may confine the scope of the interaction within a certain boundary, and thus there might not be plentiful room for discussion or negotiation among participants during the interaction which can proffer participants more interactional resources to deploy.

The teacher's rather harsh words (e.g., *criticize*, *attack weakness of topic*) used as task-giving remarks may have rendered responder students' attempt to give premature advice in some cases: e.g., in excerpt 5, R1's advice for changing the term "Fast" was drawn from his lack of knowledge about "Fast fashion" that is actually a term commonly used in fashion industry. Thus, the teacher may need to give heed to word choice in task-giving remarks.

Therefore, further studies, considering the aforementioned limitations, might be projected for examining different contexts, the relationship between early stages of peer response and subsequent writing outcomes, or a linkage of peer response between pre-writing stages and writing or post-writing stages. In particular, studies with different students who are more competent in commanding academic language and/or more familiar with academic genres may provide comparable insights into the value and the effect of peer response that can, to some extent, be generalized into the early stage of peer response.

As a closing remark, I hope that the findings of this study, albeit grounded in a small set of data, can provide an opportunity to grasp the nature of the peer response implemented in such a different way *speaking for writing* and pay more attention to peer interaction as peer learning situated in the early stage of the writing process in L2 writing classrooms.

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**APPENDIX A:**  
**TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS**  
**(Atkinson & Heritage, 1984)**

- (0.8) Time gap in tenths of a second
- (.) Brief time gap
- (L) Letters inside such parentheses indicate the transcriber's best estimate of what is being said.
- = Latching of utterance segments
- [ ] Overlapping talk
- (( )) Transcriber comment
- : Elongated sound
- , Continuing intonation
- . Falling or final intonation
- ? Rising intonation (not necessarily a question)
- ˊ Slightly rising intonation
- Cut-off of word/sound
- Under Emphasis
- CAP Increased Volume
- line of interest discussed in text
- Decreased volume
- ↑ Marked rise of pitch
- ↓ Marked fall of pitch
- <> Decreased speed
- >< Increased speed
- .hh Hearable in-breath
- hh Hearable out-breath or laughter
- (h) laughter while speaking
- ☺ Smiley voice

**APPENDIX B:  
THE HANDOUT OF ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS**

Each group reads the following instruction. Each group will have 3 or 4 rounds of this ‘present-respond to topic outline’ activity.

I. Follow the steps with your group members to make sure of the clarity and coherence of your outline.

1. Assign a role for each presentation: one presenter and two responders in your group.

2. The roles of each are as follows:

Presenter: Present your topic clearly for 5 minutes based on your outline below and then faithfully answer your peer’s questions. You may put down some fresh thoughts during the response.

2-1. title

2-2. why you chose this topic and what you want to find from this

2-3. 3 references to use

2-4. thesis statement (main idea or your argument)

2-5. 3 subtopics and supporting points (supporting ideas and details) for each subtopic

2-6. conclusion

Responder I and Responder II:

Productively criticize the presentation for 10 minutes after listening to the presenter and making notes of questions to ask upon:

- a. Whether the main idea is well constructed by a topic and controlling idea (e.g., Wage gap in gender affects job performance in the workplace. or What belief or philosophy is infused into the Myth? or The Olympics can contribute to Economic Growth.)
- b. How relevant or coherent the main idea and 3 subtopics are
- c. How coherent or persuasive each subtopic and supporting ideas are
- d. Whether the 3 references are appropriately used to support the topic
- e. Ask any other questions that came to mind (e.g., clarification)
- f. Write down on the paper any suggestions.

**APPENDIX C:**

**THE HANDOUT FOR THE USE OF TAKING NOTES AND WRITING SUGGESTIONS**

Name of Presenter:

The topic of the presenter:

Name of Responder:

What to be supplemented or improved in your thought:

**APPENDIX D:****THE ORAL INSTRUCTION GIVEN BY THE TEACHER BEFORE THE ACTIVITY**

*One student in each group presents his/her outline for 5 minutes upon guidelines given in the handout, while other two students as responders listen to the presentation, taking some notes of interesting things or questions to ask during the response phase. After the presentation is finished, two responders respond to the presenter's presentation for 10 minutes, trying to productively criticize any weakness of the outline and provide any suggestions as well, relying on the guidelines given in the handout.*