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Module 1 Assignment

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“Certain strategies are commonly used in English for taking, holding onto, and relinquishing ‘the floor’ in conversation. Try to find example exchanges which illustrate these strategies (e.g. by recording and transcribing a very short piece of spontaneous, authentic conversation conducted in English – the staff room might be a good place). How many of these are used in the L1 of your students? If none, what forms are used to produce an equivalent effect? Discuss the implications for teaching conversational English in your own teaching context.”

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1. Introduction

This paper seeks to examine a modest sample of different strategies, employed during a casual conversation by native English speakers, to take, hold onto and relinquish 'the floor'. These will be compared with previous research findings. The strategies will be then be contrasted with those used by students in their native language (i.e. Japanese), and some pedagogical implications for teaching small conversation classes will be discussed.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Interaction in conversation

Brown (2000: 255-256) outlines the main processes in conversation: **attention getting, topic nomination, topic development** (including the use of **turn-taking** and maintaining the conversation through **clarification, shifting, avoidance** and **interruption**), and **topic termination**. These processes may apply to both interpersonal or interactional (social) exchanges and transactional (information) exchanges for goods and services, and conversations may include both types of exchanges (Shortall, 1996:124-125; Brown, 2001: 273-274; and Burns, 2001: 145).

2.2 Turn-taking

The first model for the organisation of turn-taking in conversation was proposed by Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974). Sacks *et al* observe that transitions in conversation with **no gap** and **no overlap** are common (1974: 700-701). In other words, there should be no (or minimal) silence and only

one person should speak at a time (Richards *et al*, 1992: 390). Shortall (1996: 129) points out that most speakers of English feel uncomfortable and embarrassed by long pauses and silences.

Sacks *et al* (1974: 703-705) suggest that turn changes are fundamentally decided by one of two processes:

- (a) the current speaker selects the next speaker; or
- (b) next speaker selects themselves.

Sacks *et al* (1974: 718-719) note that starting first is, “The basic technique for self-selection.” However, interlocutors usually negotiate turns because neither the order nor length of turns is fixed (Sacks *et al*, 1974; and Burns 2001:133). Research indicates five main categories of turn-taking which facilitate this negotiation, as presented in **Table 1**. These strategies will be explained in greater detail below (**Sections 2.2.1-2.2.5**).

Table 1: Taxonomy of turn-taking strategies to negotiate turns

Turn-taking strategy	Brief description	References
1. Gaze direction	Establishing eye-contact may indicate the end of a turn.	Sacks <i>et al</i> (1974) Novik <i>et al</i> (1996), Brown (2000)
2. Formal methods	Nominating a speaker by name or raising a hand to ask a question.	Sacks <i>et al</i> (1974)
3. Adjacency pairs	Questions require answers. Certain initiations have limited, predictable responses.	Sacks <i>et al</i> (1974) Richards <i>et al</i> (1992), Craig (1996), Shortall

		(1996), Burns (2001)
4. Prosodic features	Changes in intonation, pitch, stress, volume, rhythm, and tempo.	Sacks <i>et al</i> (1974), Shortall (1996)
5. Gesture and facial expression	Shifting in position, facial expressions and body language.	Brown (2000)

(Based on *Exploring Language: A Handbook for Teachers*, 1996¹)

Finally, Richards *et al* highlight important localised dimension of turn-taking:

The rules for turn-taking may differ from one community to another as they do from one type of SPEECH EVENT (e.g. a conversation) to another (e.g. an oral test). (1992: 390)

Shortall (1996: 129) supports this view with some personal observations, and Brown (2000: 256), citing Allwright (1980), adds that, “Turn-taking is another culturally oriented sets [*sic*] of rules that require finely tuned perceptions in order to communicate effectively.”

2.2.1 Gaze direction

Establishing eye-contact is one means by which interlocutors confirm that they have each others’ attention. *Exploring Language* further considers gaze direction to be the most important device for indicating turn-taking and observe the following key points:

While you are talking, your eyes are down for much of the time. While you are listening, your eyes are up for much of the time.

For much of the time during a conversation, the eyes of the speaker and the

listener do not meet. When speakers are coming to the end of a turn, they might look up more frequently, finishing with a steady gaze. This is a sign to the listener that the turn is finishing and that he or she can then come in.²

Novik *et al*, following earlier work³ on gaze, outline further observations:

Gaze plays a powerful and complex role in face-to-face conversation. People engaged in conversation may look at one another to monitor listener acceptance and understanding, to signal attention and interest, and to coordinate turn-taking [1, 5]. Conversely, they may look away to plan utterances or to concentrate on complex cognitive tasks. Beattie [2] found that gaze's role in turn-taking is context-specific: when the overall level of gaze is low, as in conversations between strangers [10] or when the discussion topic imposes a high cognitive load on the conversants [*sic*], gaze plays a more significant role. (1996: 1)

Lastly, Sacks *et al* (1974: 717) importantly point out that, whilst gaze direction may address a party, "... addressing a party will not necessarily, in itself, select him as next speaker."

2.2.2 Formal turn-taking methods

The next speaker may be nominated by name (or title), especially in conversations involving more than two interlocutors who do not have good eye-contact: it may help to avoid confusion.

Raising a hand to ask a question, for example, is common practice in schools. This social conditioning may find application in casual conversation as well as formal situations, such as meetings, lectures, and presentations.

2.2.3 Adjacency pairs

Richards *et al* define an adjacency pair as:

a sequence of two related utterances by two different speakers. The second utterance is always a response to the first. (1992: 7)

Conversation requires a certain degree of predictability (Nunan, 1999: 133-135 and 201-204). This is partly facilitated by adjacency pairs where, according to Shortall (1996: 131), the initial utterances restrict the possible number of responses, and Burns (2001: 134) concludes they enable speakers to, "... anticipate certain types of forms and meanings from one utterance to the next." Burns (2001: 133) also observes that question-and-answer is one of the most common forms of adjacency pair, but recognises there are many others, such as requesting and granting (or denying) the request, expressing gratitude and acknowledging it (Sacks *et al*, 1974). A conversation between two old school friends who have been out drinking provides a brief illustration:

Neil: Say, Rob, um, **could you lend us a fiver?**

Rob: **Yeah, alright then.** Here you are. Don't spend it all at once!

Neil: **Cheers, Rob.**

Rob: **Sure, no problem.**

[Author's Example 1]

Whilst Richards *et al* provide a narrow definition of an adjacency pair, Craig (1996) observes it can be expanded by an **insertion sequence**, which may be of varying complexity and include a number of turns, as shown by the interaction below:

Neil: Say, Rob, um, could you lend us a fiver?
 Rob: **What for?**
 Neil: **I'm starving and I want to get a kebab.**
 Rob: **Oh yeah? Remember you still owe me a fiver from last week!**
 Neil: **Yeah, course. But you know I'll pay you back as soon as I get paid.**
 Rob: Yeah, alright then. Here you are. Don't spend it all at once!
 Neil: Cheers, Rob.
 Rob: Sure, no problem.

[Author's Example 2]

2.2.4 Prosodic features

Exploring Language emphasises that the basic unit in conversation is the tone group. Sacks *et al* (1974: 721-722) stress the importance of 'sound production' in turn-taking organisation. For instance, recognising whether a phrase forms the first part of a longer construction, or is a complete utterance, is determined by intonation.

Rising intonation (ˆ) may indicate a question, as opposed to confirmation or emphasis accompanied by **falling intonation** (ˆ). A rising intonation during a turn will indicate that a turn is unfinished, as opposed to a falling intonation to signal its end.

Exploring Language also points out, "It is also possible to have a **fall-rising** pitch and a **rise-falling** pitch," and further explains the importance of intonation in turn-taking and indicating the speaker's attitude. Crucially, intonation patterns vary from one language to the next.

Pitch, stress, volume rhythm and **tempo** most noticeably changes with strong emotions. In turn-taking, an increase in loudness may be used to hold onto a turn or interrupt, whereas fading out relinquishes the floor. **Rushing** over what would otherwise be a transition-relevant place (e.g. a natural break or end of a tone group), is recognised as another means to hold onto the floor (Sack *et al*, 1974; and Shortall, 1996: 130).

2.2.5 Gesture and facial expression

Within any culture there are a large number of established means of **non-verbal communication** which can be used to take turns in conversation: for example, waving to attract attention, pointing to indicate direction, gesturing to indicate someone else should proceed or go first, facial expressions, and so on. Brown (2000: 262) adds that, “Every culture and language uses body language, or **kinesics**, in unique but clearly interpretable ways.”

2.3 Back channel cues

Back channel cues are used to describe the **feedback** given by interlocutors while someone is speaking. They include interjections and comments or **minimal responses** (e.g. *uh-huh, yeah, okay*) as well as “... smiles, headshakes, and grunts which indicate the success or failure in communication.” (Richards *et al*, 1992: 137) Carter and Nunan (2001: 218) add that, “[**backchannelling** shows] ... that the speaker is being attended to and is encouraged to continue.” In other words, the listener is encouraging the speaker to hold onto the floor, as

opposed to taking the floor themselves. Carter and Nunan also note that backchannelling may be referred to as **listenership cues**.

2.4 Overlap

Overlap describes instances when two people are speaking at the same time, often due to **simultaneous starts**, **interjections** (e.g. *Mm*, *Yeah?*) or **interruptions**. The degree of overlap differs from one community to another, and social views about its appropriateness also vary considerably. In some situations, interruptions may be the only way to take a turn, for instance, in a lively or heated discussion or argument Shortall (1996: 129-131). Burns (2001: 133) further states that, “Overlapping turns may mark areas of disagreement, urgency or annoyance and a high degree of competition for turns.”

Sacks *et al* (1974: 720) also account for **second starters** or **subsequent starters** and acknowledge the existence of techniques, including the use of volume and **second-starter suppression**.

2.5 Taking the floor

According to Sacks *et al* (1974: 719), the use of **pre-starts** or **turn-entry devices** enable a next-turn’s beginning to address the issue of overlap and thus take the floor smoothly, “... without requiring that the speaker have a plan in hand as a condition for starting.” Sacks *et al* further observe that, “Appositional beginnings, e.g. *well*, *but*, *and*, *so* etc., are extraordinarily

common.” Appositional beginnings also include **false starts** and **repetition**, and use of **natural fillers** and voiced **hesitation devices**.

2.6 Holding onto the floor

Holding onto the floor describes means to indicate that a turn has not been completed. Rising intonation, increased volume or speed, hesitation devices, and natural fillers are mechanisms commonly associated with holding onto the floor, as described above. Specific stock phrases, such as *That's a good question*, may also be used to buy time, or to avoid answering a question.

Repetition and **choice of structure**, such as using relative pronouns that might usually be omitted from conversation (e.g. *It's uh, it's the place **that**. um, ... we went to three years ago*) may also help a speaker to hold the floor and gain thinking-time in which to formulate their next utterance, together with **lengthening of sounds** (e.g. *So:::, I thought ...*). Lastly, **sequence markers** or **continuity expressions** (e.g. *And, Then, Another thing*) are also used to indicate that a turn is not complete (Shortall, 1996: 130).

Sometimes more direct approaches are necessary, for example, to deal with an interruption as another speaker seeks to participate in or even dominate the conversation. Such approaches are termed **regaining the floor**, and include stock phrases (e.g. *Now, where was I?* and *As I was saying?*) and repetition.

2.7 Relinquishing the floor

Using the first part of an adjacency pair (**Section 2.2.3** above) or asking a **tag question** is a common way to relinquish the floor. The completion of a turn may also be indicated by intonation (**Section 2.2.4** above), non-verbal mechanisms (**Section 2.2.5** above), or an **uncompleted sentence**.

Sacks *et al* (1974: 718) identify the tag question as a **post-completer** or **exit device** to which they attribute, “special importance, for it is the generally available ‘exit technique’ for a turn.”

Pope (2003) considers **uncompleted sentences** to be “a sign of very fluent and cooperative talk”. These often incorporate lengthened sounds and rising intonation to indicate turn-taking.

3 Research and research methods

3.1 Recording and transcribing a spontaneous, authentic conversation

A casual conversation between three native speakers was recorded and transcribed (**Appendix 1**). **Appendix 2** provides a key to the transcript. The two original subjects, Jane and John, requested that their true identities remain anonymous. I, ‘Bob’, am both recorder and, inadvertently, a participant: Jane, unexpectedly, turned and talked to me so I became involved in the recording. The conversation was recorded using a handheld video camera. Just prior to recording, Jane had mentioned she ‘needed a Japanese boyfriend’.

3.2 Spontaneity and authenticity of the recorded conversation

The conversation was spontaneous insomuch as it was unscripted and conducted immediately after seeking the participants' permission. Furthermore, the conversation was created whilst it was in progress and was, therefore, spontaneous (Brazil, 1992: 4).

In order to add validity to the transcript, the participants were sent a final copy and requested to confirm that:

- a) the transcript is an accurate representation of the conversation;
- b) the conversation was not pre-planned or scripted, and therefore spontaneous;

In addition, they were asked for their feedback on whether or not they felt their behaviour changed and, if so, to what extent (as suggested by Swann, 2001).

Finally, it should be noted that the recording and transcript serve primarily as a means to provide specific examples of turn-taking strategies, about which extensive research and writings already exist.

4 Turn-taking strategies found in the author's research

The short, spontaneous, casual conversation recorded and transcribed for the paper provides examples of the turn-taking strategies outlined in **Section 2.2** and **Table 1**. In addition, another turn-taking strategy was discovered and termed a **post-completer** (**Section 4.6** below). These are illustrated in **Table 2** and discussed further in **Sections 4.1-4.6** below. **Sections 4.7-4.11** address

other specific examples of turn-taking strategies.

Table 2: Comparison of turn-taking strategies in the literature and recorded, sample conversation

Turn-taking strategy	Predicted in the literature	Exhibited in recorded and transcribed sample
1. Gaze direction	Yes	Yes
2. Formal methods	Yes	Yes
3. Adjacency pairs	Yes	Yes
4. Prosodic features	Yes	Yes
5. Gesture and facial expression	Yes	Yes
6. <i>Post-completer, 'but'</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>

4.1 Gaze direction

The significance of eye-contact and gaze direction in turn-taking, apparent from the outset of the video recording, is demonstrated in **Extract 1**.

Extract 1: Evidence of gaze direction used in turn-taking

Speaker	Transcript	Strategies	Functions and analyses
1. John:	[Grinning and looking at Jane] D'you get the feeling that you're trying to, uh, avoid this issue about the Japanese guy??	Facial expressions and gaze direction. First starter. Adjacency pair.	Getting attention. Taking the floor. Topic nomination
2. Jane:	[Looking away briefly] Yes, {yes. [Impatiently but smiling resignedly]	Gaze direction. Facial expression, word stress and falling	Avoidance (temporary). Relinquishing the floor (almost immediately).

		intonation.	
3. John:	[Re-establishing eye-contact] {What exactly is it that you find attractive in a Japanese man?	Gaze direction. Rushing. Adjacency pair.	Regaining or holding onto the floor. Topic development.

The transcript provides recurring evidence of the importance of gaze direction, but due to its complexity, it has been given only a brief attention. In short, it can be seen to facilitate getting attention, as well as taking, relinquishing and holding onto the floor.

4.2 Formal methods

Following on from **Extract 1**, the dialogue in **Extract 2** shows that gaze direction combined with formal methods (i.e. Jane addressing Bob by name) are used but not always ‘immediately successful’ in selecting the next speaker.

Extract 2: Example of formal methods used in turn-taking

Speaker	Transcript	Strategies	Functions and analyses
4. Jane:	(1.9s) That’s a good one. [Nodding and looking sideways]	Stock phrase. Gesture and gaze direction.	Buying time, perhaps deciding whether or not or how to answer John’s question.
5. John:	[Laughs]		
6. Jane:	(2.9s) Their sense of uh responsibility.] [Turning slowly to face John]	Falling intonation. Gaze direction.	Relinquishing the floor.
7. John:	[Raises his eyebrows and tilts his head back] (2.3s)	Facial expression and gesture.	Taking the floor. Holding onto the

	Okay, [speaking and nodding slowly] okay. {So,	Repetition and slower speed. Pre-starter.	floor. Buying time.
8. Jane:	[Turning to Bob] {He's not buying that, Bob.	Gaze direction. Naming.	Addressing the next speaker.
9. Bob & Jane:	[Laugh]		
10. John:	No, no. [Gently shaking his head and smiling] Well, {wh, wh	First starter, gesture and facial expression. Pre-starter.	Taking the floor. Perhaps trying to regain the floor (from Line 7).
11. Bob:	{Nah. Actually, neither am I, [laughing] <u>but</u> .	Adjacency pair. Rejoiner. <u>Post-completer*</u> .	Taking the floor. <u>Relinquishing the floor.</u>

*See Section 4.6 below.

4.3 Adjacency pairs

Appendix 4 illustrates the significance of adjacency pairs in the recorded conversation: as noted in **Section 2.2.3**, question-and-answer sequences are the most prevalent form (Burns, 2001). Even following a narrow definition of an adjacency pair (Richards *et al*, 1992, **Section 2.2.7** above), it is notable that they account for more than a third of the number of turns. The transcript also contains four, not insignificant, examples of insertion sequences, the longest of which is shown in **Extract 3** (lines 48-54) below.

Extract 3: Example of an adjacency pair and insertion sequence

Speaker	Transcript	Functions and analyses
47. Jane:	[Still looking at John.] Bob, why d'you like Japanese women? [Pointing at John then putting her	Asking John a question. This is the first part of the adjacency pair.

	hand on her chin] ...	
48. Jane:	[Turning to Bob.] ... I'm gonna turn the tables now! [Laughing]	An 'aside' to Bob
49. John:	{Bob? [Turning and looking surprised at Bob]	Expressing surprise and seeking clarification
50. Bob:	{Ah, that's a good question {bu::t he's not Bob. [Laughs]	Answering Jane's initial question and correcting.
51. John:	{Bob? [Looking back at Jane]	Expressing surprise and seeking clarification
52. Jane:	{Bob? [Touches her forehead] Sorry, John. [Touches John's shoulder and laughs with embarrassment]	Expressing surprise. Apologising and feeling embarrassed.
53. John:	Bob? [Laughing and looking back at Bob]	Joking.
54. Jane:	John, sorry.	Apologising again, probably because John has not acknowledged her first apology: apology-acceptance being an adjacency pair itself
55. John	<i>Me? Why do I like Japanese women? They're hot! ...</i>	Asking rhetorical questions and answering the original question, completing the adjacency pair.

Using **rhetorical questions** and **rephrasing** can be seen to give the speaker time to formulate an answer to complete an adjacency pair, as well as return to a previous topic (i.e. regain the floor) even after a notably long insertion sequence. Simply saying, "*They're hot!*" would have broken Grice's maxim of relevance and caused confusion (Grice, 1967).

4.4 Prosodic features

It was noted in **Extract 1** (lines 1-3) that John rushed over his opening question in order to hold onto the floor and develop the topic. In the following **Extracts 4-6**, different intonation patterns are used to indicate the completeness of a short utterance, the continuance of a turn, and questions as opposed to statements.

Extract 4: Example of falling intonation (˩) to show a statement versus rising intonation (˩) for a question

Speaker	Transcript	Functions and analyses
22. Jane:	... their own little world, I guess, like.]	Falling intonation to complete the turn and relinquish the floor.
23. John:	Their own little “wa”? ˩ [Hand-gestures an enclosed world]	Rising intonation when asking for further explanation.

Extract 5A: Example of a question with rising intonation (˩)

Speaker	Transcript	Functions and analyses
25. Bob:	{So::: how d’you become a part of that little world?	
26. John:	Yeah? ˩	Rising intonation marking a question. This may also be considered a back channel cue to support Bob’s question.
27. Jane:	[Turning towards John] Sorry?	
28. John:	How would you become a part of their little world?	

Extract 5B: Example of emphasis with rise-falling intonation (「 」)

Speaker	Transcript	Functions and analyses
68. John:	... and taking care of their man, you know what I mean! Yeah. 「 」 ...	Rise-falling intonation to emphasise the illocutionary force of the statement.
69. Bob:	Uh.	Backchannelling to support the speaker.
70. John:	That's what it's all about! [Nodding] ...	
71. Bob:	Mm.	Backchannelling to support the speaker.

Extract 6: Evidence of rising and falling intonation patterns to signal turn continuance and turn end

Speaker	Transcript	Functions and analyses
55. John:	Me? 「 Why do I like Japanese women? 「 They're hot!	Rising intonation to signal rhetorical questions.
56. Jane:	[Nodding]	
57. John:	They're 「 they have a certain serenity about them.」	Rising intonation to indicate continuance. Falling intonation to mark the completion of the turn.
58. Jane:	[Nodding and turning towards Bob]	
59. John:	And also, 「...	Rising intonation to show continuance.
60. Jane:	[Turns back toward John]	
61. John:	... uh, they're, um, 「 they're very beautiful.」	Rising intonation accompanying a hesitation device to hold onto the floor. Falling intonation completing the turn.
62. Jane:	[Nods]	
63. John:	[Shrugs]	

Evidence of how changes in volume accompany holding onto and relinquishing the floor is shown below in **Extract 7**.

Extract 7: Evidence of changes in volume in turn-taking

Speaker	Transcript	Strategies, functions and analyses
24. Jane:	Yeah, like, work-wise:::, school-wise:::, you know, they take care of, you know, their family, > {and their::: < parents.	Hesitant answers and a reduction in volume (>) are perhaps indicative of Jane relinquishing the floor. The increase in volume (<), is possibly to address the interruption and enable Jane to complete her turn.
25. Bob:	{ So::: how d'you become a part of that little world?	The use of the lengthened pre-start appears to create more time to interrupt, gain the others' attention and take the floor more smoothly.

Other prosodic features, such as rhythm and pitch, have not been analysed and are beyond the scope of the paper.

4.5 Gesture and facial expressions

Throughout the conversation, gestures and facial expressions were recorded as means to complement and, perhaps, facilitate turn-taking in their own right. Throughout **Extract 6** above, Jane, in a purely listening role, shows support for John, the speaker, by facing him and nodding silently, encouraging him to continue speaking and elaborate his answers. Finally, when John has no more to say, and has already indicated that to be the case (line 61), he merely shrugs (line 62).

Extract 8 below, highlights the range of non-verbal communication apparent in even a short section of the transcript

Extract 8: Examples of non-verbal communication in turn-taking

Speaker	Transcript	Functions and analyses
42. John:	[Raises his hand to his chin]	Indicating a question is going to be asked. (See also, line 15, Appendix 1)
43. Jane:	[Turns to John]	Perhaps anticipating John's question.
44. John:	[Points towards Jane] Maybe, do you find this for::: { all Asian men	Directing the question at Jane.
45. Jane:	[Raises her left hand in front of her chest and John] < {How's this?	Visually signalling an interruption which is accompanied by an increase in loudness (<).
46. John:	Okay, go ahead. [Gesturing with his upturned palm in front]	This is a common gesture amongst speakers of English.
47. Jane:	[Still looking at John] Bob, why d'you like Japanese women? [Pointing at John then putting her hand on her chin] ...	Jane's pointing addresses John. Her gesture of putting her hand on her chin is almost identical to John's gesture in line 42.

4.6 Post-completer, *but*

In **Extract 2** (line 11, **Section 2.7.2** above) *but* may initially appear to be a conjunction marking an uncompleted sentence. However, intonation indicates otherwise, and there is no characteristic lengthening of sound. Uncompleted sentences are like adjacency pairs in that they usually require a response. In contrast, the post-completer *but*, with falling or fall-rising intonation at the end of a sentence, is a feature of speech used to signify the end of a turn. Even though it is more typically found in Australian English, as opposed to British English, I acquired this after prolonged exposure from close Australian friends

whilst growing up.

4.7 Back channel cues

The transcript reveals fewer verbal back channel cues than non-verbal (e.g. silent nodding). **Extract 5B** (lines 69 and 71) illustrates just two examples of verbal back channel cues. **Appendices 1** and **3** identify seven instances of nodding, almost entirely by Jane. In both **Extracts 5B** and **6**, back channel cues encourage the speaker to continue talking.

4.8 Overlap

The ‘no gap and no overlap’ rule established by Sacks *et al* (1974) is applicable to the recorded conversation in which only two measurable gaps occurred, lasting 1.9 seconds and 2.9 seconds. Although a quarter of the **turns** were marked by overlaps, none were longer than one utterance or **tone group**, and most were notably brief (**Appendix 3**).

Extract 3 contains a high frequency of overlaps as all three interlocutors seek to negotiate meaning, and John and Bob also joke about Jane mistaking their names. Interruptions and second-starter suppression (**Section 2.4** above) are observed in **Extract 8**, where Jane interrupts John (lines 44-45), and John, in fact, relinquishes the floor. This reflects a high degree of competition for the floor.

4.9 Taking the floor

The transcript provides a wealth of examples of all three interlocutors taking the floor. **Extract 9** provides a sample of strategies previously discussed, and shows appositional beginnings are commonplace.

Extract 9: Evidence of taking the floor

Speaker	Transcript	Strategies	Functions and analyses
7. John:	[Raises his eyebrows and tilts his head back] (2.3s) Okay, [speaking and nodding slowly] okay. {So,	Facial expression and gesture. Repetition and slower speed. Pre-start.	Taking the floor. Holding onto the floor. Buying time. Self-selecting and perhaps indicating he is going to ask a question.
8. Jane:	[Turning to Bob] {He's not buying that, Bob.	Overlap	Virtually a simultaneous start.
9. Bob & Jane:	[Laugh]		
10. John:	No, no. [Gently shaking his head and smiling] Well, {wh, wh	First speaker. Pre-start. False start.	Taking the floor. Self-selecting and perhaps trying to regain the floor (from Line 7) to ask the question previously envisaged.
11. Bob:	{ Nah. Actually, neither am I, [laughing] but.	Interruption. Adjacency pair. Rejoiner.	Taking the floor and responding to Jane from line 8 and John from line 10.
12. John:	[Laughs]		
13. Jane:	Hey, you're <i>half Japanese!</i> [Looking at Bob]	First speaker. Pre-start	Taking the floor
14. All:	[Laugh]		

15. John:	But, wh , why do you find them particularly responsible? [Looking at Jane, raising his hand to his chin]	First speaker. Pre-start. False start. Adjacency pair.	Taking the floor or regaining the floor from line 7. Developing the topic.
16. Bob:	Ye:::ah?	Back channel cue	Supporting John's question.
17. Jane:	[Raising a smile, looking at John.] You're putting me on the spot now! [Smiling]	Stock phrase. Adjacency pair.	Seeking to avoid the question or buy time.
18. John:	Well , if you want something else, introduce another topic! Take the floor woman! <i>Take the floor!!</i> [Laughs]	First speaker. Pre-start.	Taking the floor.

4.10 Holding onto the floor

It appears from the transcript that some paralinguistic features, such as nodding (lines 4 and 7, **Extract 2**) or raising a hand (lines 42 and 47, **Extract 8**), together with facial expressions, indicate when a person is thinking and intending to speak. Other techniques employed to hold onto the floor are illustrated below in **Extract 10**.

Extract 10: Examples of techniques used to hold onto the floor

Speaker	Transcript	Strategies, functions and analyses
20. Jane:	I don't know! I, uh, just find that they're responsible::: within their::: little:::, I don't know, ...	Natural fillers (<i>I don't know, uh</i>), repetition and lengthening sounds (:::) help Jane to hold onto the floor.

21. John:	[Raises his eyebrows and slightly inclines his head]	Non-verbal back channel cues to elicit more information.
22. Jane:	... their own little world, I guess, like.	Repetition (<i>their</i>) and natural fillers (<i>I guess, like</i>) used to hold the floor.
23. John:	Their own little “wa”? [Hand-gestures an enclosed world]	Adjacency pair: question seeking elaboration.
24. Jane:	Yeah, like , work-wise:::, school-wise:::, you know , they take care of, you know , their family, > { and their::: < parents.	Natural fillers (<i>like, you know</i>), repetition and lengthening sounds (:::) help Jane to hold the floor. The increase in volume (<) and use of the continuity marker (<i>and</i>) enable her to complete her turn even when faced with an interruption.

The transcript does not include any notably long turns: John’s opinion in **Extract 6** and Jane’s opinion in **Extract 10** provide the longest examples. This is not surprising due to the nature of the conversation being light and casual, yet embarrassing at times, resulting in shorter turns.

4.11 Relinquishing the floor

In addition to adjacency pairs, prosodic features and non-verbal means of relinquishing the floor, the transcript offers examples of tag questions and uncompleted sentences (**Extract 11**).

Extract 11: Examples of tag questions and uncompleted sentences used to relinquish the floor

Speaker	Transcript	Strategies, functions and analyses
80. John:	Yeah. Why d’you think I’m saying what I’m saying, right?!	Tag question relinquishing the turn: it may be rhetorical.

81. All:	[Laugh]	
82. Bob	Covering <i>all</i> the bases!	
83. John:	<i>All the {bases!!</i> [Raising his eyebrows and tilting his head back]	
84. Bob & John:	[Laugh]	
85. Jane:	{When are you going back to Canada? [Pointing at John]	Adjacency pair seeking information.
86. John:	I'm not. Actually, I'm not planning on going back to {Canada.	Adjacency pair giving corrective information.
87. Jane:	But you're going back {in December, right?	Tag question seeking confirmation or clarification.
88. John:	{Ah::: I'm going go back in uh September.	Re-clarifying answer.
89. Jane:	For one month or{:::?	Uncompleted sentence seeking confirmation or clarification.
90. John:	{Yep. Uh, from August uh my last teacher training gig is on 26 th ...	Confirming answer.
91. Jane	[Starts nodding]	Back channel cue.
92. John:	... and from there I'll head back. {What about you?	Rephrasing to confirm. Adjacency pair seeking information
93. Jane:	[Continues nodding] {For one month?	Interrupting to seek reconfirmation.
94. John:	For one month. [Nodding]	Re-confirming and assuring.
95. Jane:	Uh, I'm thinking about going back end of July	Adjacency pair giving information.
96. John:	End of July til:::?	Uncompleted sentence seeking further information.
97. Jane:	[Tilting her head side to side] It depends.	Qualified answer.

The use of uncompleted sentences, common overlaps, clarifying and

confirming reflect a highly cooperative dialogue as Jane and John seek to exchange information accurately and avoid confusion.

5 Turn-taking strategies in the transcript compared with Japanese

The features of turn-taking discovered in the transcript are summarised and compared with those which occur or have an equivalent strategies in Japanese (Table 3).

Table 3: Comparison of turn-taking features observed with those in Japanese

Turn-taking strategies	Examples in the transcript	Evident in Japanese
1. Gaze direction	Yes	Yes
2. Formal methods	Yes	Yes
3. Adjacency pairs	Yes	Yes
4. Prosodic features	Yes	Yes
5. Gesture and facial expression	Yes	Yes
6. Verbal back channel cues (i.e. minimal responses)	Yes	Yes
7. Non-verbal back channel cues	Yes	Yes
8. Simultaneous starts	Yes	Yes
9. Interruptions	Yes	Yes
10. Second-starter suppression	Yes	Yes
11. First-starter	Yes	Yes
12. Pre-starts	Yes	Yes
13. False starts	Yes	Yes
14. Stock phrases for holding or regaining the floor	Yes	Yes
15. Repetition	Yes	Yes
16. Rhetorical questions for regaining the floor	Yes	Yes
17. Choice of structure for holding onto the floor	Yes	Yes
18. Lengthening of sounds	Yes	Yes

19. Continuity expressions	Yes	Yes
20. Natural fillers and hesitation devices	Yes	Yes
21. Tag questions (post-completer)	Yes	Yes
22. Uncompleted sentences	Yes	Yes
23. Post-completer (e.g. <i>but</i>)	Yes	Yes

It is clear from the table that all of the observed twenty-three strategies are evident in both English and Japanese. This supports the view that basic rules of turn-taking are similar across languages: pointing to the, “growing body of conversation analysis research on ... Japanese,”⁴ Carroll shares personal beliefs that:

... participants from other cultures engaged in casual conversation orient to the same basic rules of turn-taking as do, say, Americans, British English speakers or Australians. (2000: 105)

Nevertheless, the cultural anomalies highlighted by Shortall (1996), Brown (2000), and Allwright (1980) warrant further consideration. By examining the key similarities and differences (**Sections 5.1-5.9**), it is hoped that pedagogical implications will become more apparent.

5.1 Gaze direction

Gaze direction generally appears to carry the same implications in Japan. However, the frequency and maintenance of eye-contact is governed by different social conventions. For instance, gaze might be directed at chest-level as a sign of respect, whilst prolonged eye-contact could be considered disrespectful towards someone of higher social status, if not rude

(Brown, 2000: 263).

5.2 Formal methods

Although the actual forms of address in English and Japanese differ, the use of names or titles, and gestures, such as waving, are comparable devices for attracting attention and taking-turns.

5.3 Adjacency pairs

There is a plethora of adjacency pairs in Japanese and English, many performing identical functions (e.g. *Thank you* and *You're welcome*). There are also adjacency pairs which exist in English but not in Japanese (e.g. *Bless you* and *Thank you* when someone sneezes), and vice versa (e.g. *yoroshiku onegaishimasu* which performs multiple functions, such as expressing gratitude following a request).

5.4 Prosodic features

Rhythm and stress appear to be less salient features of Japanese language, which is **mora-timed**, compared with English, which is **stress-timed** (Richards *et al*, 1992: 356).

Although falling intonation is employed in Japanese conversation to mark the completion of an utterance, as suggested by Hayashi (2004: 361), questions in Japanese are often marked by a question-particle (e.g. *ka* or *no*) so intonation may not have as significant a role. Intonation is, however, used at times to

distinguish questions from statements, as exemplified below.

Umi: 食べた？「
 Tabeta?
 Ate?
 Did you eat?
Manabu: うん。食べた。」
 Un. Tabeta.
 [Affirming sound *un*]. Ate.
 Uhuh, I ate.

[Author's Example 3]

5.5 **Gesture and facial expression**

Native Japanese, too, can be observed using similar gestures for interrupting: a raised hand in front of the face (usually accompanied by a bow); and the gesture for *Go ahead* or *After you* is essentially the same as in English.

Shrugging and raising one's hands to indicate *I don't know* are not used in Japanese but Japanese speakers may show uncertainty by silently tilting their head to the side.

5.6 **Back channel cues**

Like English, Japanese has numerous minimal responses (e.g. *un*, *hai*) to encourage the speaker. Nodding by native English speakers often implies affirmative acknowledgement, understanding or agreement. In contrast, nodding, often silently, is also used in Japanese culture to signal that one is merely listening. This difference can cause confusion between native English

speakers and Japanese listeners (Quinn, 1996: 142-144; *Journal*, 2005b).

5.7 Taking the floor

The first-starter rule equally applies to Japanese and English conversation, and false starts and repetition are not uncommon. Japanese uses particles such as *ne* and *ano* in casual situations as pre-starts (equivalent to *Hey* and *Say*), as illustrated below:

Young boy: ね、ね。僕もアイス欲しいよ！
Ne, ne. Boku mo aisu hoshii yo! [Tugging his sister's skirt]
Hey, hey. I too ice-cream want [emphasising particle *yo*]
Hey, hey. I want an ice-cream too, you know!
Sister: はい、はい。ちょっと待って、ね。
Hai hai. Chotto matte, ne.
Yes, yes. A little wait, [tag question particle *ne*]
Yeah, yeah. Wait a little, eh?

[Author's Example 4]

Overlaps due to simultaneous starts and interruptions also occur in Japanese but perhaps less often, as implied by Carroll (citing Maynard, 1997; Bobip, 1976; and Scollon, 1985), who recognises the claim that:

... in Japan, people do not compete for turns with the same vigor, and that pausing, in other words, silence, is not universally seen negatively. (2000:104)

5.8 Holding onto the floor

Japanese uses a range hesitation devices and natural fillers, and sounds can be

lengthened (e.g. *e:::to*, *un*, *maa*, *sa:::*), as evidenced in Tanaka (2001). Shortall shares some personal experience of Japanese exchanges and suggests that:

... silence is an integral part of the turn-taking process. ... holding onto a turn is relatively easy, but ... relinquishing a turn often involved a pause before another person would take over. (1996: 129-130)

5.9 Relinquishing the floor

Tag questions are conveniently formed in Japanese by adding the particle *ne* (Hubbard, 1992) or tags such as *deshou (ka)* or *janai (ka)* to the end of an utterance. Japanese speakers may also leave sentences unfinished, indicating that their turn is over. Hazel and Ayres (1998: 93)⁵ also suggest this is more prolific in Japanese conversation.

Japanese speakers sometimes use the word for *hai* (yes) or *un* (an affirming sound) to signal the end of a turn. These appear to occur more typically at the end of a longer turn, such as giving an opinion (*Journal*, 2005c), and might be termed post-completers.

6 Pedagogical implications in the author's context

6.1 Teaching context

Regular lessons are 40-minutes with a maximum of four students, focusing on listening and speaking skills. Lesson language, textbook activities and instructions may be read following oral presentation. Writing is incidental to

the lesson and teachers usually write notes for the students. Students take classes in either their own level or the one immediately above. There are eight ability levels, ranging from absolute beginner to advanced-level. Students have in-house produced textbooks, the *Diplomat* series, and lessons follow a proscribed format, *The Diplomat Approach*.

Students may also attend conversation lounge-type classes, *Voice*, which may or may not have a specific focus, activities or tasks. The principle aims are for students to develop their fluency, use what they know and experience a more natural speaking environment.

6.2 Gaze direction

Eye contact facilitates smooth communication and the negotiation of meaning: Hayashi (2004: 345) observes that there is, “a need to check the recipient’s understanding,” when an utterance is produced. Students sometimes need reminding and encouragement to do this, especially those who are shy, nervous, or lack confidence (*Journal*, 2005b).

6.3 Prosodic features, facial expressions and gestures

Exploring Language briefly suggests that teachers should encourage learners to reinforce their meanings with facial expression and gestures in order to prevent miscommunication due to a ‘wrong’ intonation pattern. Gestures can be actively taught in class, in isolation and with corresponding expressions.

Listen and repeats focusing on intonation and stress give students an opportunity to practice and obtain feedback on their delivery (Crystal, 1984). Students have reported practicing their intonation and use of stress to be fun, challenging, informative and useful.

A *Diplomat Zone D* lesson for high beginners introducing sequencers emphasises appropriate intonation and lengthening of sounds to indicate the continuance of a turn. Other lessons include specific aims to foster interaction skills, such as *showing interest, maintaining the conversation, showing that you don't want to talk*, and, for high intermediates, *Diplomat Zone F* introduces *interrupting for clarification* and *politely correcting someone*.

6.4 Formal methods

Teachers encourage students to address each other and themselves on a first name basis. However, students are introduced to titles and polite forms of address, and learn to use them together appropriate language and register for certain situations.

6.5 Adjacency pairs

Even though adjacency pairs are too vast in scope to be fully addressed, the importance raising learners' awareness is implied by Flynn and Dowell (1999:550), who speculate that:

The difference between a good communicator and a poor communicator may relate to one particular aspect – for example, the ability to recognize the

pragmatic aspects of adjacency pairs.

Appendix 4 illustrates an awareness-raising task which was used in a *Voice* class. In regular classes, question-and-answer matching tasks, appropriate-response drills, and conversation-sketching all help to raise students' awareness of adjacency pairs and their ability to use them.

6.6 Other turn-taking strategies

Table 4 summarises the strategies that can be taught and practised in the classroom. Most of these are featured in *Diplomat* and given close attention in class (*). Once learners are aware of certain language features, they may be more likely to notice them. For example, Carroll (2000:101) observes that students often insert Japanese fillers and hesitation devices into English conversation. Gently but persistently encouraging students to substitute English forms has had varied but observable success, typically with high beginners and intermediate students (*Journal*, 2005e).

Table 4: Turn-taking strategies in English and Japanese

Turn-taking strategies	English examples	Japanese examples
1. Taking the floor		
a. Pre-starts*	So ..., But ..., Well ..., Say ..., Why ...	でも (<i>demo</i>)、まあ (<i>maa</i>)
b. Rejoiners*	Me too.	私も (<i>watashi mo</i>)
2. Holding onto the floor		
a. Natural fillers and hesitation devices*	Uh, err, um, you	えー (<i>ee</i>), あー

	know	(aa), あのう (anou)
b. Stock phrases*	Let me see ...	ええと。。。 (eeto)
c. Structure and grammar	[relative clauses]	[use of particles]
d. Lengthening of sounds*	We::ll	ええーと (ee::to)
e. Sequencers and continuity expressions*	And, Then	そして (soshite)
f. Repetition and rephrasing	In other words	
3. Regaining the floor		
a. Repetition and rephrasing	n/a	n/a
b. Stock phrases*	Anyway, going back to what I was saying just now ...	先の話に戻るな んだけど。。。。
4. Relinquishing the floor		
9. Tag questions*	... right?, ... yeah? ...eh?	ね (ne)、でしょう (deshou)、じゃな い (janai)
10. Uncompleted sentences	Today or ...?	今日か。。。 (kyou ka...)
11. Post-completers	Yeah, ... but.	はい (hai)、うん (un)
5. Feedback / back channel cues		
	Uhuh, yeah, okay, really, oh, for sure	ええ (ee)、そう (sou)、そうですか (sou desu ka)、お お (oo)、確かに (tashikani)

***Specifically featured in *Diplomat* textbooks**

6.7 Back channel cues: help or hindrance?

Lastly, a number of intermediate and high level students have expressed:

- a) surprise at the frequency of verbal back channels in English; and
- b) feeling a pressure to speak, or anxiety and stress, when native-English interlocutors use minimal responses, from their perspective, too often.

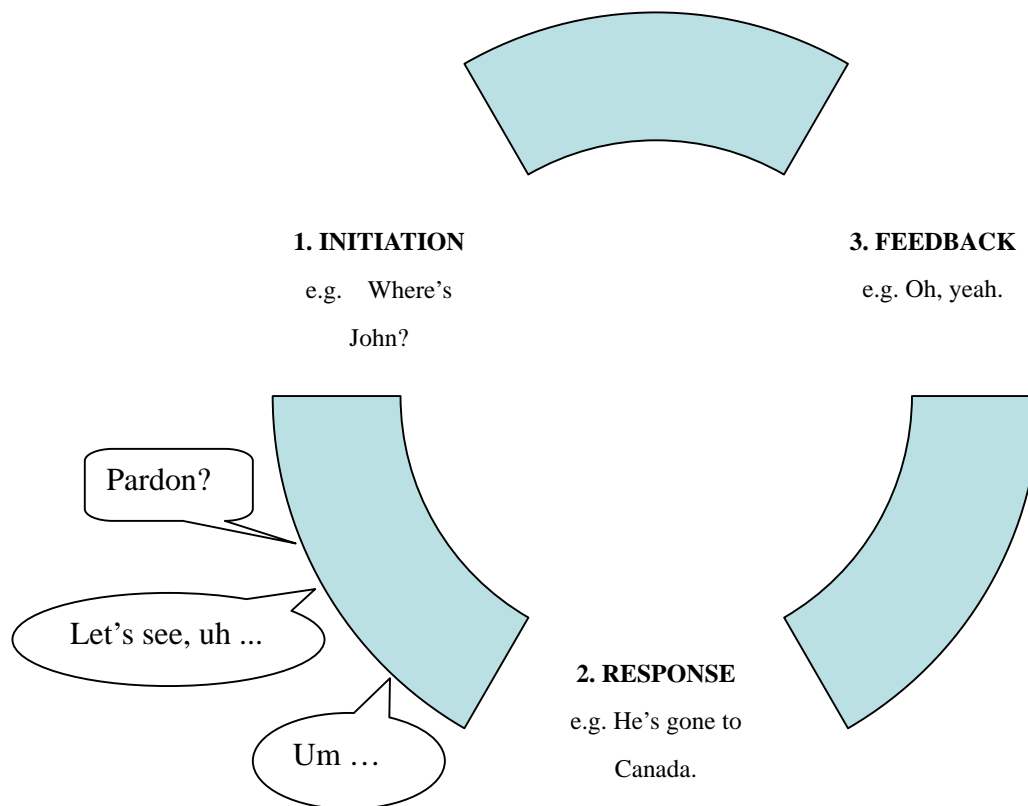
(*Journal*, 2005c; and 2000d)

The immediate implications would include being more aware, as a teacher, of one's own use of minimal responses which, although intended to offer support, may in fact have adverse affects on student production. Reducing the amount of minimal responses and using more non-verbal cues (i.e. nodding) may, therefore, help to reduce learner stress, and promote learning as suggested by work on *The Affective Filter* (Krashen and Terrell, 1983).

Secondly, it may be beneficial to simply tell students about this cultural difference to raise awareness.

Thirdly, presenting students with the 'communicative cycle' [**Figure 1**] in class, and teaching appropriate feedback, students have notably begun to sound more natural and make the transition from question-and-answer to dialogue much more successfully (*Journal*, 2005e). Communication problems can also be easily illustrated to students, together with when to use appropriate repair strategies, such as *Pardon?*, and hesitation devices.

**Figure 1: The Communicative Cycle - Beyond question and answer:
the IRF sequence in student-to-student interaction.**



7 Conclusion

This paper has reviewed some of the literature on turn-taking strategies then compared these to those actually found in a short, spontaneous and authentic casual conversation between native English speakers. Strategies for taking, holding onto and relinquishing the floor in English have been contrasted with those in Japanese and some pedagogical implications in the author's teaching context have been considered.

Defining who exactly has 'the floor', and establishing precisely when, is a complex matter which is not clearly addressed in the literature reviewed.

Similarly, a working definition of ‘the floor’ seems ‘fuzzy’ at best. It has also been suggested by the author that ‘regaining the floor’ might be considered both taking the floor and holding onto the floor (from a previous turn). Research and discussion might be further aided if a consensus on terms were reached.

Despite the limited findings of this paper, it has been demonstrated that turn-taking strategies perform one, two or three functions. These are summarised in **Table 6** below.

Table 6: Turn-taking strategies and their functions

Turn-taking strategies	Taking the floor	Holding onto the floor	Relinquishing the floor
1. Gaze direction	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Formal methods	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. Adjacency pairs	Yes	Yes	Yes
4. Prosodic features	Yes	Yes	Yes
5. Gesture and facial expression	Yes	Yes	Yes
6. Verbal back channel cues (i.e. minimal responses)		Yes	Yes
7. Non-verbal back channel cues		Yes	Yes
8. Simultaneous starts	Yes		
9. Interruptions	Yes	Yes	
10. Second-starter suppression	Yes	Yes	
11. First-starter	Yes		
12. Pre-starts	Yes		
13. False starts	Yes		

14. Stock phrases for holding or regaining the floor	Yes	Yes	
15. Repetition		Yes	
16. Rhetorical questions for regaining the floor	Yes	Yes	
17. Choice of structure for holding onto the floor		Yes	
18. Lengthening of sounds	Yes	Yes	
19. Continuity expressions	Yes	Yes	
20. Natural fillers and hesitation devices	Yes	Yes	
21. Tag questions		Yes	Yes
22. Uncompleted sentences		Yes	Yes

In conclusion, whilst the best methods and approaches by which to teach turn-taking strategies remain to be investigated, it is suggested that increasing awareness and proficiency using these strategies further develops learners' communicative competence. Continuing to put into practice the findings of this paper appears to be a first sensible measure to achieve this, together with reflective teaching and action research.

**APPENDIX 1: Transcript of a casual conversation between three native
English speakers**

1. John: [Grinning and looking at Jane] D'you get the feeling that you're trying to, uh, avoid this issue about the Japanese guy??
2. Jane: [Looking away briefly] Yes, {yes. [Smiling resignedly]
3. John: [Re-establishing eye-contact] {What exactly is it that you find attractive in a Japanese man?
4. Jane: (1.9s) That's a good one. [Nodding and looking sideways]
5. John: [Laughs]
6. Jane: (2.9s) Their sense of uh responsibility. [Turning slowly to face John]
7. John: [Raises his eyebrows and tilts his head back] (2.3s) Okay, [speaking and nodding slowly] okay. {So,
8. Jane: [Turning to Bob] {He's not buying that, Bob.
9. Bob & Jane: [Laugh]
10. John: No, no. [Gently shaking his head and smiling] Well, {wh, wh
11. Bob: {Nah.
Actually, neither am I, [laughing] but.
12. John: [Laughs]
13. Jane: Hey, you're *half Japanese*! [Looking at Bob]
14. All: [Laugh]
15. John: But, wh, why do you find them particularly responsible? [Looking at Jane, raising his hand to his chin]
16. Bob: Ye:::ah?
17. Jane: [Raising a smile, looking at John.] You're putting me on the spot

- now! [Smiling]
18. John: Well, if you want something else, introduce another topic! Take the floor woman! *Take the floor!!* [Laughs]
19. Bob: [Laughs]
20. Jane: I don't know! I, uh, just find that they're responsible::: within their::: little:::, I don't know, ...
21. John: [Raises his eyebrows and slightly inclines his head]
22. Jane: ... their own little world, I guess, like.
23. John: Their own little "wa"? [Hand-gestures an enclosed world]
24. Jane: Yeah, like, work-wise:::, school-wise:::, you know, they take care of, you know, their family, {and their::: parents.
25. Bob: {So::: how d'you become a part of that little world?
26. John: Yeah?
27. Jane: [Turning towards John] Sorry?
28. John: How would you become a part of their little world?
29. Jane: I don't know. [Turning to Bob] I dunno, Bob. Can you tell me?
30. John: [Laughs]
31. Bob: No, I've got no idea. [Beginning to laugh] I've never become part a little world of a Japanese guy [laughing] before! [Laughing and coughing]
32. All: [Laugh]
33. Jane: [Shaking her head] You gu:::ys are gonna use this one day against me. I know::: this, okay? Play it on my wedding or something.

34. John: Would {that be something else?! [Turning to Bob, smiling]

35. Bob: {Hey! That's a pretty good idea! [Laughing]

36. All: [Laugh]

37. Jane: Hey! [Points at Bob]

38. Bob & John: [Continue laughing]

39. Jane: I'm giving you ideas! It's not good! [Looks away]

40. Bob: Yeah, you're arming us as well! [Chuckling]

41. Jane: Oh dear.

42. John: [Raises his hand to his chin]

43. Jane: [Turns to John]

44. John: [Points towards Jane] Maybe, do you find this for:: { all Asian men

45. Jane: [Raises her left hand in front of her chest and John] {How's this?

46. John: Okay, go ahead. [Gesturing with his upturned palm in front]

47. Jane: [Still looking at John.] Bob, why d'you like Japanese women?
[Pointing at John then putting her hand on her chin] ...

48. Jane: [Turning to Bob.] ... I'm gonna turn the tables now! [Laughing]

49. John: {Bob? [Turning and looking surprised at Bob]

50. Bob: {Ah, that's a good question {bu:::t he's not Bob. [Laughs]

51. John: {Bob? [Looking back at Jane]

52. Jane: {Bob? [Touches her forehead] Sorry,
John. [Touches John's shoulder and laughs with embarrassment]

53. John: Bob? [Laughing and looking back at Bob]

54. Jane: John, sorry.

55. John: Me? Why do I like Japanese women? They're hot!

56. Jane: [Nodding]

57. John: They'::re::: they have a certain serenity about them. ...

58. Jane: [Nodding and turning towards Bob]

59. John: And also, ...

60. Jane: [Turns back toward John]

61. John: ... uh, they're, um, they're very beautiful.

62. Jane: [Nods]

63. John: [Shrugs]

64. Jane: {INAUDIABLE [Turns to Bob]}

65. Bob: {And there's no shame about becoming a housewife and mother in Japan.

66. John: No shame *at all* ...

67. Jane: [Turns back to John, nodding]

68. John: ... and taking care of their man, you know what I mean! Yeah. ...

69. Bob: Uh.

70. John: ... That's what it's all about! [Nodding] ...

71. Bob: Mm.

72. John: ... And you're gonna use this against me too someday!

73. All: [Laugh]

74. Bob: Man in Japan's got it *good*!

75. All: [Laugh]

76. John: No, but I don't think, I uh, I, uh, I not just Japanese women, I like women, so [shrugs] ...

77. Jane: [Turns to Bob, nodding]

78. John: ... it just so happened that I ended up with a Japanese girl.

79. Jane: [Turning to Bob] You can use this against him one day too.
[Pointing at Bob]

80. John: Yeah. Why d'you think I'm saying what I'm saying, right?!

81. All: [Laugh]

82. Bob: Covering *all* the bases!

83. John: *All the {bases!!* [Raising his eyebrows and tilting his head back]

84. Bob & John: [Laugh]

85. Jane: {When are you going back to Canada? [Pointing at John]

86. John: I'm not. Actually, I'm not planning on going back to {Canada.

87. Jane: {No, no, no.
But you're going back {in December, right?

88. John: {Ah::: I'm going go back in uh September.

89. Jane: For one month or{:::?

90. John: {Yep. Uh, from August uh my last teacher training
gig is on 26th ...

91. Jane: [Starts nodding]

92. John: ... and from there I'll head back. {What about you?

93. Jane: [Continues nodding] {For one month?

94. John: For one month. [Nodding]

95. Jane: Uh, I'm thinking about going back end of July

96. John: End of July til:::?

97. Jane: [Tilting her head side to side] It depends.

END OF TRANSCRIPT (Total time: 2m56s)

APPENDIX 2: Key to the transcript

[]	Non-verbal information and sounds.
{	Start of overlap.
(1.9s)	Timed pause in seconds.
... ...	Continuance of a turn.
:::	Lengthened/drawn out sound.
<i>Italics</i>	Emphasis or stress.

APPENDIX 3: Quantitative analysis of the transcript

1.	Number of turns	60
2.	Number of overlaps	15
2a.	Overlaps of one word or less	8
2b.	Overlaps of three words or less	12
2c.	Overlaps of more than one tone group	0
3.	Number of adjacency pairs (broad definition)	26
3a.	Adjacent question-and-answer sequences	16
3b.	Adjacent statement-and-response sequences	6
3c.	Question-and-answer split by an insertion sequence.	4
3d.	Number of adjacency pairs (narrow definition, i.e. not including those split by an insertion sequence)	22
4a.	Number of verbal back channel cues	4
4b.	Occurrences of nodding as a back channel cue	7

APPENDIX 4: Adjacency pairs classroom research task

(Taken and adapted from Shortall, 1996a: 131)

Appendices 4.1 illustrate some common adjacency pairs. Whilst the responses are not completely fixed, they are limited in scope and function. This worksheet was given to two intermediate students. The students alternately read out the first half of each adjacency pair and the other tried to respond appropriately, and continue the conversation if desired. Where there was uncertainty, they worked together to complete the right-hand column. The students were able to complete most of the adjacency pairs, as shown in *italics* in **Appendix 4.2**. The remaining responses were then taught and some alternative suggestions given.

Contrasting the students' responses with those of a native Canadian (**Appendix 4.3**) and the responses predicted by the author (**Appendix 4.4**), non-native speakers can be seen to develop an awareness of adjacency pairs and the conventions of a second language.

The two students commented afterwards that they had found the task interesting, enjoyable, and instructional, especially with respect to the responses to 'starting a conversation' (i.e. conversational opening gambits) [see lines 6 and 24], 'cheering', and 'sneezing' [lines 16-18] (*Journal*, 2005a).

APPENDIX 4.1:Adjacency Pairs – Worksheet

Hi.	
I'm (Bob). What's your name?	
Nice to meet you.	
Good morning.	
How are you?	
What's up?	
That's a lovely blouse!	
That's very kind of you!	
How would you like to pay?	
Here you are.	
Thanks.	
After you ... Ladies first ...	
(No.) Please, go ahead ...	
I insist	
Cheers! Good health!	
Hip-hip!	
Achoo / Atishoo	
Bless you!	
Excuse me?	
Excuse me.	
Sorry.	
Here's a little something ...	
Can I open it now?	
Guess what?	
It's a secret!	
Promise?	
Sorry, I have to go.	
Call me!	
Don't forget!	
Take care!	
See you / Bye / Goodnight	

APPENDIX 4.2:Adjacency Pairs – Answers from two intermediate students*

Hi.	<i>Hello.</i>
I'm (Bob). What's your name?	<i>My name is (Keiko).</i>
Nice to meet you.	<i>Nice to meet you too.</i>
Good morning.	<i>Good afternoon.</i>
How are you?	<i>Fine thank you.</i>
What's up?	
That's a lovely blouse!	<i>Thank you!</i>
That's very kind of you!	<i>Thank you.</i>
How would you like to pay?	<i>By credit card.</i>
Here you are.	<i>Thank you.</i>
Thanks.	<i>You're welcome.</i>
After you ... Ladies first ...	<i>Thank you.</i>
(No.) Please, go ahead ...	<i>Thank you.</i>
I insist	
Cheers! Good health!	<i>Cheers!</i>
Hip-hip!	
Achoo / Atishoo	
Bless you!	
Excuse me?	<i>Yes?</i>
Excuse me.	<i>Excuse me..</i>
Sorry.	<i>That's OK.</i>
Here's a little something ...	<i>Thank you.</i>
Can I open it now?	<i>Yes, of course.</i>
Guess what?	
It's a secret!	<i>OK.</i>
Promise?	
Sorry, I have to go.	<i>Why?</i>
Call me!	<i>OK.</i>
Don't forget!	<i>OK.</i>
Take care!	<i>Thanks.</i>
See you / Bye / Goodnight	<i>See you/ Bye-bye.</i>

***Answers left blank were unknown.**

APPENDIX 4.3:Adjacency pairs – Answers from a native Canadian

Hi.	Hi.
I'm (Bob). What's your name?	Jane.
Nice to meet you.	Nice to meet you too.
Good (morning/afternoon/evening).	Good (morning/afternoon/evening)
How are you?	Um, so-so. How about you?
What's up?	Not much. You?
That's a (lovely dress)!	Why? Thank you!
That's very kind of you!	Not at all.
How would you like to pay?	Cash.
Here you are / Here you go.	Thank you.
Thank you / Thanks.	You're welcome.
After you ... / Ladies first ...	Thank you.
(No.) Please, go ahead ...	Thank you..
I insist	OK. Thanks.
Cheers! Good health!	Cheers!
Hip-hip!	Hooray!
Achoo / Atishoo	Bless you!
Bless you!	Thank you.
Excuse me?	Yes?
Excuse me.	Sorry.
Sorry.	That's OK.
Here's a little something ...	Really?!
Can I open it now?	Sure, go ahead!
Guess what?	What?
It's a secret!	Do tell!
Promise?	I promise.
Sorry, I have to go.	Oh, so soon?
Call me!	Sure.
Don't forget!	I won't.
Take care!	Thanks. You, too.
See you / Bye / Goodnight	See you.

APPENDIX 4.4:Adjacency pairs – Some possible answers predicted by the author

Hi / Hello.	Hi / Hello.
I'm (Bob). What's your name?	My name's (Brian).
Nice to meet you / How do you do?	Nice to meet you too / How do you do?
Good (morning/afternoon/evening).	Good (morning/afternoon/evening)
How are you?	(Fine thanks). How about you?
What's up?	(No much). Yourself?
That's a (lovely dress)!	Why? Thank you!
That's very kind of you!	Not at all.
How would you like to pay?	Cash / Credit card.
Here you are / Here you go.	Thank you.
Thank you / Thanks.	You're welcome / No problem.
After you ... / Ladies first ...	Thank you / No, after you ...
(No.) Please, go ahead ...	Thank you / No, I insist.
I insist	Well, OK. Thank you.
Cheers! Good health!	Cheers!
Hip-hip!	Hooray!
Achoo / Atishoo	Bless you!
Bless you!	Thank you.
Excuse me?	Yes?
Excuse me.	Sorry.
Sorry.	That's OK.
Here's a little something ...	For me? You shouldn't have!
Can I open it now?	Sure, go ahead!
Guess what?	What?
It's a secret!	OK.
Promise?	Promise.
Sorry, I have to go.	OK / Really? Why?
Call me!	OK / I will / Definitely / Of course.
Don't forget!	I won't.
Take care!	Thanks. You, too.
See you / Bye / Goodnight	See you (soon) / Speak to you (tomorrow).

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Footnotes

¹ *Exploring Language: A Handbook for Teachers* is for teachers in New Zealand. It focuses on oral, written and visual language, examining principles and learning approaches. The New Zealand curriculum specifies a need to recognise different varieties of English. Hence, it is also a valuable resource offering insight into learning and teaching English to speakers of other languages. *Exploring Language* is reproduced by permission of the publishers [Learning Media Limited](#) on behalf of Ministry of Education, P O Box 3293, Wellington, New Zealand, © Crown, 1996. It is now out of print and cannot be ordered, but is available online at:

http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/resources/resources/exp_lang/home.html

² http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/resources/resources/exp_lang/turntaking.html

³ See Argyle, M., and Cook, M. *Gaze and Mutual Gaze*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976; Kendon A. "Looking in conversations and the regulation of turns at talk: A comment on the papers of G. Beattie and D. R. Rutter et al". In *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 17, pp. 23-24, 1978; Beattie, G. "The role of language production processes in the organization of behavior in face-to-face interaction". In B. Butterworth (ed.) *Language Production*, Vol. 1, pp. 69-107, 1980; and Rutter, D., Stephenson, G., Ayling, K., and White, P. "The timing of looks in dyadic conversation". In *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 17, pp. 17-21, 1978.

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