Author(s): Duran, Derya; Sert, Olcay

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Student-initiated multi-unit questions in EMI classrooms

Derya Duran [a], Olcay Sert [b],*

[a] *University of Jyväskylä, Department of Language and Communication Studies, Athenaeum, Building A, FI-40014, Jyväskylä, Finland*
[b] *Mälardalen University, School of Education, Culture and Communication, English Studies, Box 883, Västerås, 721 23, Sweden*

A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

This conversation analytic study investigates student-initiated multi-unit questions (MUQs) in whole class interaction. Based on a corpus of 30 hours of videotaped interactions from teacher education classrooms in an English-medium instruction university, we demonstrate that students use MUQs to introduce topics, either by recontextualizing some aspect of the prior topic, or alternatively, without these cohesive ties, which requires more interactional work to achieve intersubjectivity. Findings reveal that MUQs render student professional concerns more relevant and salient, foregrounding those inquiries as a space for launching topics. Students bring up issues such as ways of handling particular situations through MUQs and contribute what they already know about the topic of the question, thereby confining the scope of the sought information. The study contributes to understanding how topic initiating practices are enacted through local connections where the student questions do display coherence with the immediately preceding discourse.

1. Introduction

Questions asked in classrooms have been subject to empirical investigation since the publication of first classroom discourse studies. The questions students pose, however, received relatively little attention. There is now a growing body of research that conceptualizes student-initiated questions as indicative of learner agency (Jacknick, 2009; 2011; Sert, 2017; Waring, 2011). Given that learner agency is linked to learning (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), different types of student-initiated questions and how they are managed by teachers in classrooms deserve closer analysis, as such analyses can reveal insights into the institutional dynamics of pedagogical interaction. Furthermore, given the diversity of pedagogical settings, future research on the linguistic, sequential, and epistemic design features of student-initiated questions can enhance our knowledge within the field of classroom discourse and in the broader field of education.

Against this background, the purpose of this study is to explore student-initiated information-seeking sequences in higher education classrooms. We specifically focus on multi-unit questions (MUQs), a type of student initiation that has not been fully explored in the field of classroom discourse. We demonstrate how the syntactic patterns of MUQs are formulated and occasion certain kind of sought information in an English-medium instruction (EMI) context.

MUQs can take many forms and serve different functions in various contexts, as will be discussed in more detail in section 2.1. For the purposes of the current study, we analyze how students draw on multi-unit turns, using presequences and (multiple) question(s) to seek responses for their professional concerns as teacher candidates. Extract 1 represents a case in point. We present the example here to demonstrate the typical sequential structure of the phenomenon in our corpus (but see Lindström, 2008 for an extensive qualitative analysis of MUQ types), in which a student-initiated MUQ unfolds following this basic pattern:

(1) A pre-sequence (Can I ask a question?)
(2) A wh-interrogative question (What was the difference between consulting and counselling?)
(3) An extended teacher turn + Understanding check (Okay?)
(4) Student marked acknowledgement (Okay, nodding)

Extract 1, below, shows a prototypical example from our corpus. Prior to the current exchange, the teacher (T) has talked about the voluntary nature of counselling. The segment starts when the focal student (Bir) brings up an issue regarding the just-prior explanations T has given.

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* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: olcay.sert@mdh.se (O. Sert).

Extract 1: Receive help, 26_02_15

```
01→  Bir:  can I ask a quest[ion.
           +raises hand
02   T:                     [su:re
03         (0.3)
04→  Bir:  er: how can we provide students to receive °help°.
           +gazes shift from slide to T
05         (0.6)
06   T:    er: usually we use different (0.3) er: strategie:s (0.4)
07         er: first we should inform them (0.8) what kind of services
08         provided (0.4) in the school (1.1) er: under title of of
09         course school counselling activities and in class (0.4) er:
10         if the classroom guidance (0.4) teachers (0.5) you are a:ll
                                                     +gesture twrd class
11         er: candi↑date of er: (0.5) classroom guidance tea↑chers
           ((21 lines omitted, where T elaborates on other strategies to provide help))
33         (0.8)((Bir nods))
34   T:    okay?
35   Bir:  °okay° ((smiles & nods))
36         ((T changes the slide))
```

Extract 1. Receive help, 26_02_15

Bir initiates a new sequence (can I ask a quest[ion.) without a prompt from T, which projects some kind of subsequent talk. T provides a go-ahead response, encouraging this student-initiated practice. Bir poses an information-seeking question (line 4), which is contingent upon an aspect of the prior teacher talk. Throughout lines 6-32, T provides an elaborate answer on various helping strategies available to the students in need, and makes the content available to the whole class while nesting a response directed toward the specific student (Bir) through gazing and pointing gestures (see Jacknick & Duran, 2021 for multimodal delivery of "doing teaching" and St. John & Cromdal, 2016 for dual addressivity). Following T's understanding check question 'okay?' (Koole, 2010), Bir produces a no-problem response 'okay' (Waring, 2012), accompanied with smile and nods, which is treated as a transition to the next segment of the lesson (line 36).

By illustrating the structural forms and interactional practices as well as implications of these constructions for the subsequent talk (as briefly illustrated in Ext.1), this paper examines the complex nature of student-initiated MUQs, which includes the elaborateness of the turn such as prefaces, background statements, multiple questions, and follow-up questions. Specifically, the study is a microanalytic investigation of student-initiated MUQs for resolving knowledge gaps in EMI classrooms. There is a gap in the literature related to how an MUQ sequence, a typical feature of institutional discourse, is initiated by students (but see Duran, 2017). There is thus a need for research on how the design of the questions (i.e. syntactic patterns of MUQs) is constructed and occasions certain kind of sought information within an EMI context, where students and the teacher consider content knowledge acquisition to be the primary goal of those classes. More importantly, we aim to attend to the qualitative aspects of EMI - its situated delivery - which are still in need of closer investigation. Addressing the following research questions, the current study shows how student questioning can take many different formats in the service of various interactional practices:

1 How are MUQs structurally formulated by the students in whole class interaction?
2 What are the interactional functions of these MUQs?

2. Literature review

Using conversation analysis (CA), we explore student initiations that are constructed in the form of MUQs. The context of multi-unit turn construction is understood in our study as one in which students formulate their questions, comprised of more than one unit. Presequences of various sorts in certain types of complex questioning turns will be the focus of the next section, followed by student-initiated questions in educational settings.

2.1. Previous research on multi-unit questioning turns

Questioning is one of the central interactional practices in institutional encounters that demonstrates institution-specific goals as well as roles and identities of interactants. Research on question-answer sequences in educational, media, legal, and medical contexts has shown that in those institutional settings where the asymmetry of interactional rights is rather visible, one party who has more rights and responsibilities is in the position of asking questions (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Thornborrow, 2001). However, question design and content are critical with respect to the type of information obtained from participants. Unlike single-unit questioning turns (i.e. turns with one turn-constructional unit, TCU), questions are also designed in a multi-unit fashion. These questions are called as "multi-unit questions[1]" or "multi-unit questioning turns" (Linell, Hofvendahl & Lindholm, 2003). Linell et al. (2003) put forward two conditions for a turn to be considered as an MUQ: (1) it is comprised of two or more TCUs, delivered in one single turn or intervened with only receipts and acknowledgement tokens by the recipients, and (2) at least one TCU is constructed as a question, particularly, interrogative. Given that most questioning turns are constructed in single interrogative for-

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mats, we may ask ourselves which specific contexts favor the use of MUQs.

According to Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), many MUQs in interaction demonstrate a recurrent pattern composed of three parts: the first part "addresses the relation of a turn to a prior" turn; the second part is specific to the current turn; and the third part "addresses the relation of the turn to a succeeding" turn (p. 722). For instance, a student may say to the teacher: "You said receiving help is important. I am sometimes in need of help. So, how can I get help with my studies?". In this scenario, the first TCU connects the student's MUQ at talk with the teacher's prior talk. The second TCU is specific to the student's turn and the third TCU makes relevant an answer from the teacher in the next turn. Sacks et al. (1974) state that the turn taking system puts pressure on the speaker to complete parts of a turn at the first possible point either in a single TCU or in as few TCUs as possible. In this sense, TCUs in an MUQ are to be examined with reference to the functions they are serving (seeking information) as they are context-dependent, and thus the immediate interactional context is at play (Cunningham, 2012). In their comprehensive study (based on courtroom trials, police interrogations, and consultations in health care and social welfare offices), Linell et al. (2003) found that subsequent versions of a prior question accomplish various interactional practices such as a specification of the previous question, a synonymous reformulation of it, or a generalizing invitation to respond, which describes the multi-functional aspect of the questioning turns. The authors also classified two types of MUQs within a syntactic perspective. The first type is composed of the so-called framing questions (i.e. MUQs that contain "one or several statements (S) usually before but sometimes after the interrogative unit(s), ('question': (Q)"). The second type of MUQs "comprise exclusively a sequence of interrogatives (two or more Qs)" (p. 549).

The topic initiation function of the MUQs has been noted in several studies of institutional talk (Duran, 2017; Clayman & Heritage, 2002; Cunningham, 2012; Heritage, 2002a). In the field of broadcast interviews, Clayman & Heritage (2002) found that questions may be designed in various complex formats, including prefatory statements providing background for the question, multiple questions in so-called question cascades and turn increments. What is particularly important in their study is that while topic initiating questions are produced as multi-unit, or elaborated, follow-up questions are predominantly formatted in single-unit turns. Similarly, Vehviläinen (1999), drawing on counseling interactions in career guidance training, showed that in the initiation of a new agenda point, counsellors show a tendency to use more MUQs than single questions.

Another line of research on MUQs has focused on questions posed by the lay parties in institutional interaction (Cunningham, 2012; Lindström & Lindholm, 2009; Thornborrow, 2001). For example, in the context of doctor-patient interaction, Lindström & Lindholm (2009) demonstrated that patients tend to frame their questions as "wonderings" and "ponderings" (references to the cognitive activities), to claim uncertainty with regard to the act of questioning, its relevance and possible outcome. In a similar vein, as an example of how identities are positioned within public access media events, Thornborrow's (2001) study demonstrates that callers to a radio phone-in tend to utilize framing questions while hosts do not rely on this practice.

According to Linell and Bredmar (1996), a delicate topic might be difficult to handle interactionally when delivered in a normal single-unit questioning turn since some issues (i.e. smoking and drinking habits, sexually transmitted diseases) remain sensitive and have moral implications which never completely disappear. In their study, the authors illustrated the framing of delicate topics in conversation in prenatal midwifery visits, and thus demonstrated ways of dealing with sensitive situations which may involve face-threatening acts. They identified various ways in which delicate topics are managed by mid-wives talking to expectant mothers, which include indirectness and distancing, institutional routines (i.e. filling out forms) and depersonalizing topics. Considering the moral issues in medical contexts, their study shows how issues that stand out as special, that is, as delicate, are managed through complex negotiation. Specifically, vagueness, indirectness and mitigations characterise the treatment of those sensitive topics. In line with the existing research, our study will explore how MUQs, a typical feature of institutional discourse, are being delivered and handled when questioning is not accomplished straightforwardly via a single-unit utterance in counselling classes where delicateness of the pedagogical content is at play. In what follows, we review learner initiations in the form of questions in educational settings.

2.2. Student-initiated questions in pedagogical interaction

Student-initiated questions are one type of a broader phenomenon known as learner initiatives (Waring, 2011), defined as learners' attempts "to make an uninvited contribution to the ongoing classroom talk, where 'uninvited' may refer to (1) not being specifically selected as the next speaker or (2) not providing the expected response when selected" (p. 204). Since Waring's (2011) groundbreaking work on a typology of learner initiatives based on adult English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom interaction, studies on student questions as part of learner initiatives and how these initiatives are interactionally managed by teachers have increased. Recent conversation analytic classroom discourse research has shown that teacher-initiated triadic *multilogue* (Schwab, 2011) is now far from being the norm in classrooms. Students may become agents of their own learning (Jacknick, 2011) by taking initiatives to ask questions in the classroom, and in so doing, they expand ongoing topics of talk (Dolce & van Compernolle, 2020), seek advice (Park, 2012), and request teachers' clarifications and opinions (Rodriguez & Wilstermann, 2018). Student-initiated question sequences provide students with "learning tools that connect to the organisation of emotional and moral issues" (Merke, 2018, p. 298). Learner questions and other initiatives, according to Bobblett (2018), create "moments when opportunities for problem-solving and work on understanding may occur" (p. 263).

Classroom task instructions is one context during which teachers can provide interactional space for student questions. Based on their research into language, science, and social studies classrooms at a secondary school in Sweden, St. John and Cromdal (2016) showed that when learners asked questions during teachers' instructions, they countered the incoherence of instructions and led teachers "to fill in detail and clarify uncertainty so the instructions became more sufficient for tasks" (p. 272); a point confirmed also by Somuncu and Sert's (2019) findings on addressing non-understanding in instruction sequences. In contexts of teacher-fronted classroom interaction, Solem (2016) focused on interrogatives in student-initiated sequences. She demonstrated that interrogatives may or may not be treated as questions, but when they were, they request confirmation of understanding or clarification (also see Koole, 2010). Solem further argues that a student-initiated sequence "is a means by which students can explore and display their knowledge" (p. 32).

Studies into student-initiated questions as learner initiatives include those carried out in social studies lessons (İşler et al., 2019) as well as in English as an additional language classrooms (Donald, 2020; Sert, 2017; Tai & Brandt 2018). In a study carried out in a secondary school context, Sert (2017) conducted a micro-longitudinal analysis of a learner's question on the definition of a

concept and documented the interactional resources the teacher deployed in response to the student's question. Sert argued that the teacher's deployment of embedded correction, embodied repair, and embodied explanations following the learner initiative helped the student understand the meaning of the concept and later use it in a new context in the classroom. It is further suggested by the researcher that teachers' successful management of learner initiatives, including student-initiated questions, and emergent knowledge gaps, are part of teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence, defined as the ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning (Walsh, 2011).

Our review has shown that no study thus far has focused solely on student-initiated MUQs, which reveal institutionally relevant aspects of teaching and learning that need to be foregrounded in research on pedagogical practices. We argue that it is noteworthy to explore how, through MUQs, students raise issues latched on to the previous talk or brand new topics with which cohesiveness of the talk is not enacted completely. Secondly, student-initiated questions as learner initiatives have dominantly been investigated in language classrooms. Therefore, our study, held in classrooms for pre-service student-teachers where an additional language (English) is used as a medium of instruction and acquisition of content knowledge is considered to be the primary goal, can fill a research gap.

3. Data and method

The data for this study consist of 30 h transcribed video recordings collected at an EMI university in Turkey (also see Duran & Sert, 2019; Duran, Kurhila, & Sert, 2019;). The recorded lessons are based on a 'Guidance' course, offered to senior (4th year) undergraduate students at the Faculty of Education. The main aim of the course was to help teacher candidates become more aware of social, emotional and personal development. As such, the course was designed to cover topics such as interpersonal skills, growth of the whole person, life management and so on. Students, all second language users of English, were majoring in different educational fields, including Computer Education and Instructional Technology, Elementary Education, Foreign Language Education, and Secondary Science and Mathematics Education. The number of observed classrooms was two, with 37 female and 2 male students in the first, and 30 females and 9 males in the second class. The age of the students ranged from 21 to 26. Both classes were taught by the same teacher, an associate professor of Psychological Counselling and Guidance with over 20 years of teaching experience in the Department of Educational Sciences. Before the data collection took place, informed consent forms, approved by the university's Institutional Review Board, were obtained from the participants. Pseudonyms were assigned to the participants in the transcripts to preserve anonymity.

Two 'Guidance' classes were observed between February and May 2015. Recordings were made twice a week with three video-cameras placed in different parts of the classrooms to capture as much detail as possible. One camera was set at the back of the room with more focus on the teacher and presentation slides projected on the wall and two other cameras were located in the right and left corners to capture as many students as possible. The first author attended the lessons as a non-participant observer, sitting at the back of the room and taking field notes on the content of the lesson stages and the materials used throughout the session.

We employed a conversation analytic methodology (Sacks et al., 1974) for the current research. Conducting a study within a CA framework requires making recordings in a naturally occurring setting, transcribing the recorded data to identify interactional pat-

terns and building a collection of recurring patterns of interaction based on microanalysis of the data. Following a canonical guideline for doing CA analysis, we transcribed the data in detail, including suprasegmental and temporal aspects of interaction such as stress, silences, and intonation, as well as embodied resources (gesture, gaze, posture). Transcriptions were done following the conventions developed by Jefferson (2004) with slight alterations (see Appendix). We viewed the lesson videos multiple times while reading along with the transcripts, making some notes on the possible analytical interest among a variety of interactional phenomena. We narrowed the focus to student-initiated questions and isolated sequences of talk for each case. Our final collection included 102 cases in total. In the whole collected sequences, student information seeking was the main action; however, in certain situations, it was much less direct and elaborated. Moreover, students contributed what they already knew about the topic of the question, and thus restricted the scope of the sought information. Drawing on these observations, we analyzed the related cases more closely and noticed that 'student-initiated MUQs' could be an area of particular interest as a subset of the collection on student-initiated questions. Once the specific phenomenon of interest for analysis was noticed, we searched for similar instances to explicate the ways in which these episodes were similar and different, which yielded a collection of 11 cases.

4. Analysis

In this section, we provide an analysis of MUQs constructed by the students. The social action under investigation is mainly questioning, established through multi-unit turns. As stated previously, MUQs have mainly been observed and described in institutional interaction. Considering contextual resources, we argue that discourse cannot be understood without analyzing its contexts. Thus, the analyses of the following three extracts that include student-initiated MUQs will help us understand which specific situations favor the use of those inquiries given that most questioning turns are designed as single interrogative utterances in interaction.

Extract 2 demonstrates how a student uses recontextualization as a topic initiating practice by extracting some matter from the previous talk and introduces a new topic (i.e. teaching kids how to protect themselves from sexual abuse). In so doing, the student thus contextualizes her question based on the preceeding local context (students' presentation and the teacher's comments on it). Prior to the exchange, one student group performed a presentation on child abuse, followed by a Q and A session. The focus of this segment starts in line 8, from the point the student expands on her question, producing a multi-unit turn that details her inquiry.

Fer is selected as the next speaker to direct her inquiry to the presenters and produces a pre-announcement for her upcoming question only reserved for the teacher as the ratified addressee, not for the members of the group that delivered the presentation (line 4). In line 8, Fer sets a background for her forthcoming question by referring to previous teacher comments following the group presentation, which seems to explain why Fer solicits the missing information from T, but not from the group members. She also holds T accountable for providing a knowledgeable response (line 9), another pre-expansion for preparing the grounds for the upcoming question. Over lines 11-12, Fer claims insufficient knowledge regarding the issue. Despite the absence of a question form, "I don't know how to …" in her statement functions as a marker of uncertainty (Weatherall, 2011), produced as an "indirect how- question" (Sacks, 1992). Prefacing her question with the summative "so", Fer engages in an information-seeking sequence through wh-interrogative in lines 14-15, overlapped with

Extract 2: Sexual abuse, 25_03_15

```
01    T:     [any other questions?
                    +Fer raises hand
02    Ham:   [almost every year our
03    T:     okay you have qu- there are some of the questions
              +orients to Fer
04→   Fer:   hocam I wanna ask something to you
              my teacher
05    T:     to me? ((gestures toward herself))
06    Fer:   ye:s=
07    T:     =okay
08→   Fer:   we said that children (.) may not know their rights
09           and we should ex↑plai:n them they have rights also
10    T:     yeah.
11→   Fer:   but (0.2) I don't know how to ex↑plai:n the (0.2)
12           sexual er: ab↑u:se is↑sue:s to a chi:ld
13    T:     uh-huh uh-huh ((nods))
14→   Fer:   so how should we teach them to protect themselves
15           from [this °issue?°
16    Sim:        [(interaction)
17    T:     okay (0.4) [normally
18    Sim:             [actually ((raises hand))
19    T:     huh? ((nods at Sim))
20    Sim:   there was a video
                    +Fer orients to Sim
21           ((Fer & Sim maintain mutual gaze))
22    Sim:   amir khan °I don't know [(---)°
              +Fer's gaze  +Sim orients to Fer
               back to T
23    Fer:                           [because they don't know
24    Fer:   anything about sexu↑ality: (0.5) and °(---)°
25    T:     o↑kay so er: there are prog↑ra:ms depending on
26           their a:ge of course er:: depending on their
27           a:ge level and deve↑lopmental level (0.4) er:
28           (0.7) mostly we er: ex↑plai:n the (0.2) the
29           li↑mits (0.2) the boun↑darie:s of the chi:ld
      ((During 56 lines, T provides an extended stretch of talk on sexual abuse))
86           is it (0.8) maybe helpful °for you?°
              +orients to Fer
87    Fer:   yes ((nods))
88    T:     yeah but there is also video: er: facebook or any
                 +points at Sim
89           other social ↑media: that you can easily see: er:
90           it's quite ↑wonderful one (0.7) I really like it
91           very short one I can send you the link as well
```

Extract 2. Sexual abuse, 25_03_15

Sim's contribution, unintelligible to us. T attempts to provide a response, overlapped with Sim's self-selection (line 18) and thus nominates her, seated in Fer's vicinity, as the next speaker.

Sim mentions the availability of a video (line 20), a peer-produced knowing positioned response (Jakonen, 2014), during which Fer shifts her gaze from T to Sim. In line 22, Sim continues her turn while Fer's gaze shifts to T before Sim completes her talk, which indicates that Fer seems to seek a response specifically from T. Lines 20-22 are an interesting example of the participants' use of gaze regarding complex negotiations of knowledge rights between the teacher and the students. In line 23, Fer overlaps with Sim's inaudible talk. In so doing, Fer seems to not pay attention to Sim's contribution to solicit the missing information, and thus treats T as the institutionally-assigned default individual with primary epis-temic status in the classroom. Designing her turn possibly as an explanation for why the video Sim has mentioned is not a proper way to protect children from sexual abuse as children "don't know anything about sexuality", Fer seems to seek for a more appropriate response from T. Over lines 25-85, T elaborates on the topic through examples, explanation and anecdotes. Inter-estingly, T starts her response with the final concern (how to explain the sexual abuse to a child) and moves on to children rights,the starting point of the question under focus. This observation is in line with what Sacks (1987) has suggested as a general rule in responding to multiple questions: "where two ques-tions are produced, and you are going to have two answers, then the order of the answers is the reverse of the order of the ques-tions" (p. 60). Although the current case does not consist of mul-

tiple questions but one complex question, as two concerns exist in the MUQ, by responding to the second concern first, T preserves the adjacent positioning between the questions and answers. T refers to the video on child sexual abuse Sim has previously mentioned (line 88) and the sequence closes when T praises the video and offers to share the video link with the class.

In Extract 2, MUQ is simply constructed as follows: The first construction unit is composed of setting a background by referring to prior teacher talk (lines 8-9), the second unit represents a claim of insufficient knowledge via a negative epistemic stance marker (lines 11-12), and wh-interrogative morphosyntax (lines 14-15) builds the end point of the particular MUQ. The inquiry is about a delicate issue: child sexual abuse, and the student addresses ways of professionally handling a particular situation through an MUQ. The example also brings some insights into co-participant's talk in seeking a response. Instead of the peer as a likely knower, the student considers the teacher as having the primary epistemic authority, which is demonstrably invoked by her gaze shift from the peer to the teacher in line 22 and her overlapping turn with the peer's in line 23.

The following case (Extract 3) illustrates another topic initiating practice, produced as two questions in a narrowing "question cascade" (Clayman & Heritage, 2009). The extract shows how the initial question formulated as a basic unit is ensued by a follow-up question aiming at more specific information on the matter at hand (spiritual wellness). Prior to the interaction, the students have calculated their scores on different types of wellness (physical, spiritual, etc.), followed by a teacher-led post-task reflective discussion. The segment starts when T invites more students to share their experiences regarding the activity.

Nil initiates a pre-expansion (Schegloff, 2007) for a forthcoming inquiry, and using "actually" in turn-initial position, she marks the contradiction between what T expects (student explanations) and what she aims to do (ask a question). Nil poses her question (line 5), followed by almost a second of silence. This is the first time the issue of spiritual wellness in particular has been the focus of the discussion. T produces a stretched "a::hh", which implies that "the speaker now (at last) sees the significance of something which has eluded" her before (Aijmer, 1987, p. 65). That is, the use of "a::hh" is an indication of a reaction to the information whose significance has been elusive before, and thus indicates the teacher's realization of "spiritual wellness", not explained or been the focus in the class but raised by the student for the first time.

Nil issues a follow-up question (line 9), which does additional work as her initial inquiry is further specified through a turn-increment (Couper-Kuhlen & Ono, 2007). On an abstract level, the turn sequence of Extract 3 has the form of a *Statement* (line 3) + *Question* (head-general) (line 5) + *Question* (specific) (line 9). Throughout lines 10-17, T elaborates on the concept with its boundaries. A variety of interactional resources point towards T's orientation to delicacy in talk such as self-repairs, pauses (Linell & Bredmar, 1996), repetition of words, conditionals, and smiles. As predelicate sequences often involve such features of abandoned utterance attempts, hesitations, pauses and self-repairs, such disfluency components serve to delay the introduction of the sensitive issues (Schegloff, 1980), which is a way to suspend the progress of recognizably delicate turns-in-progress. In line 25, Nil comments on her own spiritual wellness level, which conveys that if spiritual wellness would have referred to religion merely, she would have had a problem with it. T validates Nil's inference with an acknowledgement accompanied with laughter tokens.

In Extract 3, formulating her MUQ in a narrowing "question cascade" (Clayman & Heritage, 2009), the student particularizes components of the unit to secure a response. The identification of her inquiry (spiritual wellness –> kinds of spiritual wellness) demon-

strably needs additional work when her initial question is further specified through a new turn-constructional unit, i.e. an increment. In the treatment of the questions, T provides a lengthy explanation with features of indexing delicacy (i.e. abandoned utterance attempt, pauses, repetition of words, use of conditionals, and smiles), thus indicating that one way to display delicacy is through hesitation of some sort (Lerner, 2013).

Our final example (Extract 4) illustrates a stretch of MUQs that is not coherent with the preceding discourse. As the student inquiry does not relate to the prior talk, more contextual information needs to be provided. The questioning practice is thus simultaneously grounded in student personal experiences to secure a precise response. Prior to the extract, T has elaborated on counselling activities for smooth transitions from childhood to adolescence.

Sel frames her upcoming question with a reference to cognitive activity (I wondered something), which projects topics touched upon for the first time (Lindström & Lindholm, 2009). Sel initiates the first inquiry via wh-interrogative morphosyntax (when do you think a person can define himself herself (0.4) er: truly), and formulates the second one (or is there a true approach (0.5) about defining °himself herself°) in polar interrogative. Notice that Sel reformulates the initial question by fitting it into a more scientific context (is there a true approach?), thereby reworking a potentially unclear question to secure a response. While the first question inquiries on the "opinion of the teacher" about defining oneself, the second one delves into a kind of "scientific theory" on the matter as opposed to particularizing or generalizing nature of "question cascade" proposed by Clayman & Heritage (2002) in MUQs. Following a visible disengagement from Sel, T produces an "oh-prefaced" response (line 9), indicating that the question might be problematic in relation to its relevance or presuppositions (Heritage, 2002b) since Sel launches an untouched issue. In line 12, Sel attempts to elaborate on her turn, latched by the teacher's repair in the form of an explicit clarification request (line 13) to maintain intersubjectivity by furnishing Sel with opportunities to give additional information. Over lines 14-18 and 20, Sel relates her inquiries to her own personal experiences. Grounding in her own life, Sel personalizes her question (line 23) and reasserts her question in a shortened way via emphatic production accompanied with air quote gestures, followed by laughter (line 24). Interestingly, the use of air quotes and laughter might problematize the information she seeks (true time to define oneself), and thus indicates the very mismatch between what she asks for and the non-type conforming answer, i.e. a response that "departs from the constraints embodied in the grammatical form" of the question (Raymond, 2003, p. 946) T has provided in lines 9-10. From line 26 onwards, T engages in an extended explanation turn by providing details of how an exact time for self-defining is nonexistent.

In Extract 4, the lengthy negotiation (two different multi-unit sets >> first: lines 5-7 & second: lines 14-18, 20, 23, 24) might have resulted from the nature of the inquiry. First, knowledge-seeking is related to an untouched topic, and thus cohesiveness of the talk is not enacted as it does not sequentially build on previous talk. Second, the inquiry is constructed as a double-question multi-unit turn (lines 5-7), introducing the topic from different angles; however, both formulations do make a reference to 'defining' and 'trueness.' The second question is clearly not a more narrowed down version of the first, but the inclusion of two questions might be related to Sel's treating her own turn as potentially ambiguous, and thus in need of extra work. Also, the inclusion of inapposite terms ("an exact time to define oneself" and "a true approach to define oneself") may contribute to production of the non-type-conforming response (lines 9-10) and clarification request (line 13) from the teacher as she in a way addresses the specific problematic

Extract 3: Spiritual wellness, 04_03_15

```
01    T:    any other ex↑plana:tion?
02          (9.0)((T scans the class))
03→   Nil:  actually I am ask some >question<
                      +raises hand
04          ((T walks toward Nil))
05→   Nil:  what is (0.2) actually spiritual °wellness?°
                +gaze to handout          +gaze to T
06          (0.7)
07    T:    a::hh
08          (0.6)((T looks at the handout))
09→   Nil:  and (0.7) what kind of (.) °spiritual wellness?°
10    T:    ahh: it has
11          (1.1)((T gazes to up & steps back))
12          it's ↑not only re↑lated to: re↑ligion (0.2) o↑ka:y (0.3)
13          if you be↑lie:ve i:n (0.6) er: the pur↑pose of life (0.2)
14          okay? (0.5) the mea↑ning of your existence (0.5) if you
15          de↑fi:ne yourself in that wa:y (0.8) er: (0.4) being a
16          be↑liever actually be↑lieving your↑se:lf na↑tu:re go:d
17          (0.4) any kind of religio:n (0.6) it's up to you: actually
18    Nil:  °okay°
19    T:    okay?
20          ((Nil nods))
21    T:    it's ↑no:t only religious thing okay?
                +orients to the class
22          ((T shifts gaze to Nil))
23          (3.2)((T scans the class))
24          ((T smiles at Nil))
25    Nil:  then I don't have any problem
26          (0.6)
27    T:    $ohh okay$
```

Extract 3. Spiritual wellness, 04_03_15

components of the inquiry. On an abstract level, the first multi-unit turn has the structure of *Statement + Question + Question* (lines 5-7). Following the clarification request, the second multi-unit turn is constructed via *Statement* (lines 14-18 & 20) + *Question* (line 23) + *Question* (line 24). As typically observed in our dataset, the teacher engages in an elaborate response in a multi-turn construction unit, indexing how the design of the question (framed and interrogative) shapes the treatment of the inquiry (a detailed and extended telling sequence).

Summary of analysis

The analyses offered in this section demonstrate how student-initiated MUQs are designed in order to launch topics which have (not) been in focus in the prior talk. Students rely on framing and contextualizing practices before issuing their questions. The MUQs are of different types; consisting of one or more statements followed by one or more questions as well as represented by a turn, comprised of two questions with different kinds of relations. We thus have distinguished between different types of MUQs in syntactic terms. The way these questions are constructed (using background statements, prefaces and multiple questions) by the students and the way the teacher manages (producing a multi-unit turn that details her response) these knowledge-seeking activities clearly show how participants co-construct learning opportunities through these questions based on a wide range of topic initiating practices.

5. Discussion and conclusion

This paper set out to explore the design of the student-initiated MUQs in an EMI setting, where the acquisition of content knowl-

edge is considered as a primary goal. The central tenet of our analysis has been that we asked "why that now?"; Why that question on that topic?, Why are they framed?, Why are they synactically constructed in this way?. We thus have demonstrated how students bring up issues through contextualization and recontextualization, grounding their inquiries on personal experiences (Ext. 4) and extracting matter from the preceding local context (Exts. 1, 2, 3). The analysis has illustrated that interactional practices of each MUQ serve different functions such as setting the ground to establish the relevance of the upcoming question via statements (Ext. 2), securing a precise response through a follow-up question (Ext. 3), and providing contextual background information to maintain intersubjectivity (Ext. 4). This diversity is one of the reasons why these questions should not be treated as a single category (Svennevig, 2013), but TCUs in an MUQ should be understood in reference to the parts dependent on the immediate interactional context. However, as emphasized throughout the paper, the overarching aim of these less direct and elaborate student questioning sequences is to raise topics (not) latched on to the prior talk.

According to Sacks et al. (1974), many MUQs at talk display a recurrent pattern which consists of three parts that occur in the following order: the first part "addresses the relation of a turn to a prior" turn; the second part is specific to the current turn; and the third part "addresses the relation of the turn to a succeeding" turn (p. 722). In our data, only Extract 2 displays conformity to this pattern: The first TCU connects the student's MUQ at talk with the teacher's prior talk (lines 8-9). The second TCU is specific to the student's turn (lines 11-12) and the third TCU makes relevant an answer from the teacher in the next turn (lines 14-15). Note that the number and functions of TCUs are dependent on the immediate interactional context, and this might be the

Extract 4: Defining yourself, 11_03_15

```
01   T:   do you have any question? any comment?
02        (1.2)((T scans the class & Sel raises hand))
03   T:   yes ((gesture toward Sel))
04        (1.4)((T walks toward Sel))
05→ Sel:  I wondered something (0.4) er: when do you think a person
06        can define himself herself (0.4) er: truly or is there
07        a true approach (0.5) about defining °himself herself?°
08        (1.2)((T's gaze to up))
09   T:   ohh: it- it based on the experiences of the person (0.4)
          +gaze upwards          +gaze to Sel
10        individual's characteristics at the same time
11        (0.3)
12   Sel: I am=
13   T:   =can you broaden the question.=
14→ Sel:  =I am from early childhood education department we have
15        some activities to er: (0.4) direct children (0.3) about
16        philosophing theirselves (0.6) er: but (0.6) er: I am
17        >thinking about myself< (0.4) I am really deeply
18        different person now er: compare (0.6) high school years
19   T:   uh-huh ((nods))
20→ Sel:  and maybe I'll be more different (0.3) er: five years later
21        (0.4)
22   T:   su:re
23→ Sel:  then how can I er: make decision about myself
24        when (0.6) the true time
          +hand forward     +air gestures
25        ((Sel laughs))
26   T:   there is no true time there is no exact time °okay?° (0.4)
27        so er: it depends on individuals' personal exploratio:ns
28        individuals' characteristi:cs (0.5) background er:
29        characteristics (0.5) the opportunities available in
30        the environment
          ((During the following 22 lines, T elaborates on how defining oneself is a never-
          ending process and how they enrich kids' repertoires))
```

Extract 4. Defining yourself, 11_03_15

reason why the other extracts do not demonstrate the three-part patterns proposed by Sacks et al. (1974). More precisely, according to Sacks et al. (1974), the turntaking system exercises pressure on the speaker to formulate the turn parts at the first possible completion (in a single TCU or in as few TCUs as possible), which may explain why majority of our examples do not conform to the pattern. Considering the frames of these new and brand-new topics launched by the students, we have found that some issues require complex negotiation as they stand out as delicate. Linell et al. (2003) maintain that "the general and simple answer to the question why speakers use MUQs seems to be that speakers try to do two (or more) things that are not straightforwardly compatible and cannot be easily expressed in and through a single-unit utterance" (p. 566). This finding is in alignment with ours as the considerable amount of interactional work done by the students seems to be addressing this issue – i.e. they bring up sensitive topics such as "sexual abuse of children" (Ext. 2) which would be difficult to ask otherwise, in a single-unit turn straightforwardly.

In this study, we have demonstrated how the ways students formulate their questions reflect the content-oriented focus in EMI classroom discourse – i.e. questions are delivered from a professional mindset, bringing up issues related to practical concerns, guidelines for conduct, ways of handling specific situations. The study thus demonstrates how professional mindset is fostered in students both through the design of questions (students as the facilitators) and through the extended teacher response turn, as these MUQs do more than a request to fill in the knowledge gap by inviting elaborate talk from the teacher. In this sense, these questions seem to facilitate the emergence of a professional ethos for student-teachers, which is characterized by enhanced awareness of expert qualities in counseling with real-life implications. The empirical findings can be used as a resource for helpful pedagogical practices through which teachers provide their students participatory rights, thereby gauging students' knowledge states to facilitate learning in the classroom.

Appendix 1. Transcription conventions

(1.8)	Numbers enclosed in parentheses indicate a pause. The number represents the number of seconds of duration of the pause, to one decimal place. A pause of less than 0.2 s is marked by (.)
[]	Brackets around portions of utterances show that those portions overlap with a portion of another speaker's utterance
=	An equal sign is used to show that there is no time lapse between the portions connected by the equal signs. This is used where a second speaker begins their utterance just at the moment when the first speaker finishes
::	A colon after a vowel or a word is used to show that the sound is extended. The number of colons shows the length of the extension
(hm, hh)	These are onomatopoetic representations of the audible exhalation of air
.hh	This indicates an audible inhalation of air, for example, as a gasp. The more h's, the longer the in-breath
?	A question mark indicates that there is slightly rising intonation
.	A period indicates that there is slightly falling intonation
,	A comma indicates a continuation of tone
-	A dash indicates an abrupt cut off, where the speaker stopped speaking suddenly
↑↓	Up and down arrows are used to indicate that there is sharply rising or falling intonation. The arrow is placed just before the syllable in which the change in intonation occurs
Under	Underlines indicate speaker emphasis on the underlined portion of the word
CAPS	Capital letters indicate that the speaker spoke the capitalized portion of utterance at a higher volume than the speaker's normal volume
°	This indicates an utterance that is much softer than the normal speech of the speaker. This symbol will appear at the beginning and at the end of the utterance in question
> <, <	'Greater than' and 'less than' signs indicate that the talk they surround was noticeably faster, or slower than the surrounding talk
>	
(would)	When a word appears in parentheses, it indicates that the transcriber has guessed as to what was said, because it was indecipherable on the tape. If the transcriber was unable to guess what was said, nothing appears within the parentheses
$C'mon$	Dollar signs are used to indicate a smiley or jokey voice
→	Highlights point of analysis
+	Marks the onset of an embodied action (e.g. shift of gaze, pointing)
(())	Describes embodied actions within a specific turn and time

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