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IDENTITY PERFORMANCE

THROUGH THE NEGOTIATION OF EPISTEMIC AUTHORITY:

AN ANALYSIS OF ESL TUTORING SESSIONS

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By

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Abstract

This paper explores the performance of identity, focusing on the process of negotiation of epistemic authority by observing the moments when participants' epistemic authorities converge and/or diverge. While participants display and construct their roles and identities in the interaction, the epistemic authority can be challenged, contested, and re-negotiated, with the potential of even redefining epistemic statuses (Mondada, 2013). Due to the unique interactional features of tutorial sessions, both the tutor and tutee use various rhetorical strategies to build a collaborative relationship, which can often lead to a transfer of control between tutor and tutee during tutoring sessions (Blau et al., 1998; Graesser et al., 1995). This study uses conversation analysis as a methodological approach to analyze the negotiation of epistemic authority in tutoring sessions for ESL composition students. By examining the sequential organizations when epistemic authorities are (re)negotiated, this study shows how participants orient to this shift in order to negotiate the challenged, diverged and converged, or competed epistemic authority. The findings of this study contributes to the understanding of complex dynamics in ESL tutoring sessions where learners can also play equally active epistemic roles in order to achieve his or her performance of identity, which is socially constructed by their membership categorizations.

Key Words: epistemic talk, epistemic authority, ESL writing, tutorial, identity performance, membership categorization

1.   INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In any forms of interaction, participants desire to express and preserve their own identities. The concept of identity can be understood as a variable that affects one's use of language, a device to interpret participants, one part of the context in interactions, or a display of one's membership to certain categories (Zimmerman, 1998, p.87). Regardless of how we define identity, it is evident that the notion of identity is crucial to the understanding of human behaviors and sources of interaction. During the process of performing one's identity in a particular interaction, epistemic talk can act as an indicator to explain and signify the performance of the identity. This study will focus on the dynamic negotiations of epistemic authority in terms of how the orientation of epistemic authority can appear and be negotiated in a one-on-one tutor and tutee interaction. The analysis contributes deeper insights into the tutor-tutee interaction and suggests strategies for negotiating displayed identities in a collaborative learning environment.

1.1 Tutoring as Collaborative Learning

Tutoring sessions are mostly viewed as an optimal approach for language learning due to the fact that it promotes active, self-motivated, and inquisitive learning that also contributes to learners being more sensitive and self-regulatory to their knowledge deficits (Gaesser, Person, & Maglian, 1995; Graesser & Person, 1994). Tutorials with ESL learners also have been discussed in association with tutor training programs and interactional frameworks for tutor-tutee communication. A number of research studies attended to the issue of effective approaches for tutoring ESL learners or non-native speakers; Thonus (2004) explored the different dynamics of

interaction in the tutoring session with NS tutees and NNS tutees. According to Blau et al (1998), both tutor and tutee appear to use various rhetorical strategies in the interaction, influenced by the collaborative relationship and learning environment. On the line of discussion regarding collaborative and active learning in tutoring sessions, Graesser et al (1995) have emphasized on the transfer of control from the expert to the novice learner in one-to-one tutoring sessions. Together, findings show that tutorials are oriented to the learners' needs, collaboratively building knowledge with learners, and placing more responsibility on the learners in the task of learning.

In light of the importance and effectiveness of one-to-one tutorial sessions, the tool of Conversation Analysis (CA) allowed a new possibility to detailed analyses, providing insightful perspectives to the discussion of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) – known as CA for SLA (Waring, 2009; Markee & Kasper, 2004). By observing moment-by-moment actions and practices in order to study how participants make senses of their naturally occurring conversation, CA for SLA can be considered as a powerful tool to understand teacher-learner interaction, providing precise explanations to traditional SLA studies (Kasper & Wagner, 2011). The methodological tool of CA drew more attention to the interactional exchanges in ESL tutoring sessions, adding more insightful comments to the phenomenon of CA for SLA. Seo and Koshik (2010) reported that gestures can be considered as a repair initiator, engendering repair in ESL tutoring conversation with and without accompanied verbal response. In their longitudinal investigation of revision talk in one-on-one ESL writing conferences, Young and Miller (2004) discovered changes of participation over time where both learners and instructors showed mutual co-construction of roles. In the face of ongoing researches of ESL tutorials, there is a relatively small number of studies providing detailed analyses of tutor-tutee exchanges in ESL tutoring sessions.

We often ask how and what we should do to effectively tutor ESL learners in order to provide a rich environment for active and collaborative learning. In order to do so, it is crucial to closely observe and deeply analyze the source of complex dynamics in ESL tutoring sessions. The tool of CA will enable us to explore how the interactional dynamics are dealt with between the tutor and the tutees in order to answer the question: why do ESL tutors and tutees often encounter moments of communication breakage during tutoring sessions?

1.2 Identity Performance and Learning

The notion of "identity" has been widely acknowledged and explored in the recent few decades. Despite the fact that the term "identity" has been continuously discussed, the multiple layers of this complex concept have not been fully uncovered while the term has grown into use of defining numerous learners' behaviors and classroom interactions. A number of different fields of study attempted to define and explore identity and its construct in the area of human cognition and social science. While psychologists viewed identity as an individually determined mindset, sociolinguists viewed identity as a product of social group and social construct (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). The idea has soon developed into viewing identity as part of a discourse and human interaction.

According to the literature in psychology, identity is considered as a projection of self. An individual's identity is understood as a "self-interpreting subject," regulating one's mind and then being displayed to others (Taylor, 1989). Psychologists explored the phenomenon of identity as a unified internal process, believing the self-fulfillment nature of one's mind. On the other hand, sociolinguistics viewed the construct of identity in the system of social group and community. According to the Social Identity Theory (SIT), identity is considered as an "intersubjective",

outlined by the social-cognitive process of membership (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). Researchers focusing on the sociolinguistics approach paid more attention to the analysis of identity through the lens of "ingroup" and "outgroup" phenomenon.

When the notion of identity reached the discursive view of analysis, identity began to be considered closely into human interaction and the discourse of interactions. Researchers were convinced to the idea of identity constructed by discourse and ideology; the historically structured set of ideology functions as the regulatory power influencing one's identity. The idea of identity in discourse and interaction created a wide spectrum of exploring the nature of identity through approaches such as critical discourse analysis, discursive psychology, narrative analysis, conversation analysis, or ethnomethodology.

In the approach of Conversation Analysis (CA), Garfinkel (1967, Cited by Benwell & Stokoe) introduced the notion of identity as a performance or an accomplishment in a sequential organization of talk-in-interaction. The emergence of CA began bringing wider insights to the understanding of identity by closely analyzing talk-in-interaction in a sequential environment and exploring how interlocutors shift themselves in response to the demands of the interaction. Schegloff (1992) also highlights how identity is relevant when it is clearly demonstrated and linked to particular actions in talk. Zimmerman (1998) refers to this notion as "identity-as-context", emphasizing the importance of identity as playing a crucial role to understand the broader concept of social interactions. Accordingly, by analyzing the orientation of certain identities in social interaction, one could have more precise and developed context information of the larger form of social structure.

Seeing the empirical power of CA, researcher began to recognize identity as a resource to participants, and started to associate identity with social construct. Widdicombe (1998) defined

identity as a socially embedded activity, which should be considered as a resource to participants rather than as a resource to researchers. Considering identity as a resource in talk-in-interactions, Markee and Kasper (2004) stated that identities are deployed by members on a moment-by-moment basis, where members construct identities by "orienting to the sequential turn-taking" (p.496). According to Sacks (1992), participants in an interaction are members of a set of categories, meaning they are representatives of one category or another, by stored knowledge referencing to those categories. These categories (e.g., gender, race, religion, occupation, and so on) are 'inference-rich', that they are strongly linked to particular actions and characteristics the society carries with each particular category. In other words, categories and the Membership Categorization Device (MCD) can be powerful resources to explain and justify each individual's behaviors and actions constructed by their social identities (Widdicombe, 1998).

Given the notion of membership categorization and how people formulate knowledge by reference to certain categories, we can assume that learners' and teacher's identities in classroom interaction are displayed through their performances and achievements, which are the results of the available categories they choose to carry as an agent in a moment-by-moment basis (Sacks, 1992; Markee & Kasper, 2004). This study exhibits details of the accomplishments and performances from both tutor's and tutee's socially constructed identities when the participants orient to different categories for themselves and for positioning each other.

1.3 Epistemic Talk and the Negotiation of Epistemics

In respect to the discussion of identities, Heritage and Raymond (2005) describe the specific and local characteristics of identity; identity is locally contextualized to persons, groups, and cultures. They connect an individual's desire for positive face – approval and appreciation – to an

embodied face process in those situated and local interactions. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), one's desire for positive face is embodied in the interaction as an expression of one's social and cultural identity. Heritage and Raymond assert that the management and organization of interaction of face process are strongly related to participants' knowledge and information; one's accessibility to knowledge and experiences will distribute one's rights to "organize practices of speaking", which brings the discussion to territories of knowledge and epistemic talk.

The concepts in epistemics have been widely discussed by the introduction of various terms such as stance, status, authority, primacy, access, and so on. These various terms and approaches towards the concept emphasize the booming interest and importance of epistemic talk. Before we further explore this notion of epistemic talk in the analysis, it is essential to clarify several terms that contribute to the discussion in this study.

Participants' relative access to certain territories of knowledge positions them into an epistemic status of more knowledgeable (K+) or less knowledgeable (K-), which itself can vary in gradient (Heritage, 2012). Heritage (2012) described epistemic status as a relative and relational concept that is related to one's accessibility to certain domain of knowledge. Kamio (1994) introduced a theory of "territories of information," indexing the degree of interactants' relative closeness to the territory of information. In most instructional ESL classroom settings, the teacher is assumed to be more knowledgeable (K+) while the learners are considered as less knowledgeable (K-).

Epistemic stances can change on a moment-by-moment basis in sequential talk-in-interactions. In contrast to an epistemic status, which is strongly related to the features of social relativity and relationship, an epistemic stance is a moment-by-moment expressed relationship (Heritage 2012). For instance, an expert (i.e., teacher) can display an 'unknowing stance' to a

novice (i.e, learner) due to a trouble of hearing, thus asking "what did you say?" In this brief

moment, the expert will express a less knowledgeable (K-) epistemic stance while still positioned

as the more knowledgeable (K+) participant when speaking of epistemic status. In addition, the

teacher in a classroom setting might approach this matter pedagogically by expressing an

'unknowing (K-) stance' in order to elicit or elaborate certain knowledge to learners (Heritage,

2012).

Depending on how participants orient to certain categories of membership in a particular

interaction, an alternative positioning of epistemic authority can emerge. Heritage and Raymond

(2005) refer this as the "socioepistemic rights"; based on one's knowledge domain and

experiences by referring to one's associated category, one has the relative (K+) epistemic rights

to express an evaluation or assessment to prior claims. While an epistemic status is more likely

to be static, an epistemic stance is dynamically changeable and an epistemic authority can be

challenged, contested, and re-negotiated with the potential of even redefining epistemic statuses

(Mondada, 2013).

This study attempts to uncover instances when participants in tutorial sessions encounter

interactional dilemmas and how they go about orienting to these dilemmas in order to reach the

goal of intersubjectivity. The data analysis reveals that when the orientation of epistemic

authority shifts from the traditionally presumed tutor (K+) – tutee (K-) epistemic status,

participants need to find a way to accept or negotiate the orientation of epistemic authority in

order to meet the ground of common understanding. The procedures of negotiating epistemic

authority illustrate how participants reach an agreement of identity performance through a

delicate process of negotiation. This study also brings our attention to the potential flexibility of

tutor (K+) – tutee (K-) epistemic statuses through the negotiation of epistemic authorities.

2. DATA ANALYSIS

2.1 Data Collection and Method of Analysis

The data comprise 300 minutes of video recorded one-to-one tutoring sessions collected from tutorial sessions provided to international students taking a freshmen ESL composition course (ESL 015: Composition for American Academic Communication 2) at the Pennsylvania State University. The study is a single case analysis with a data collected from a tutee named Zixin (pseudonym) and a female tutor who was enrolled in a TESL master's program at Penn State University. The tutee Zixin is a Chinese male freshman who had previous exposure to an ESL instructional environment by attending high school in the United States. During the first week of ESL composition course, Zixin was advised by his instructor to take a one-credit worth of tutorial sessions. While getting individual help for writing through the tutoring sessions, the tutee was also required to complete 12 tutoring sessions in order to earn his one credit. The tutor was a first-year master's student assigned to tutor few ESL students as a requirement of a course called "Internship" in her MA TESL program. After each tutoring session, the tutor was responsible for completing and posting a tutoring journal in an online forum; the Internship course also had a seminar every 2-3 weeks to discuss and improve issues in tutorial sessions. It is essential to note that the tutor is also the one conducting this data analysis. A total of ten recordings of a 30-minute-long session were collected and video recorded, fully transcribed in Conversation Analysis conventions (Appendix 1), and then analyzed for each turn-by-turn organization.

2.2 Presumed Epistemic Status: Tutor (K+) – Tutee (K-)

The common conceptualization of learning environment often positions the teacher as a more knowledgeable expert participant (K+) while the non-expert learners are positioned as the less knowledgeable participant (K-). Considering the inference-rich device of membership categorization (Sacks, 1992), the tutor and the tutee in tutorial sessions orient to categories and appeal to make it relevant in the interaction; oftentimes they are prone to their socially constructed roles, which are an expert instructor and a non-expert learner. Using such common knowledge of categories as a reference, participants often position the tutor as the knowing (K+) participant and the tutee as the not knowing (K-) participant. In writing tutorial sessions, the tutor will be positioned as having a higher epistemic status, which is often displayed in situations when the K+ tutor explains concepts to the K- tutee or leads the session towards certain direction within a pedagogical goal.

In Excerpt 1, the tutor is explaining the structure of a comparison and contrast essay, which is a new assignment the tutee needs to work on for his ESL composition course. Before this exchange, the tutor and tutee were brainstorming ideas in order to select a topic for his essay. After about a 12-minute-long conversation, the tutee decided to write his comparison and contrast essay about two different automobile companies: Mercedes-Benz and BMW. In this excerpt, the tutor displays a clear K+ epistemic authority by leading the interaction.

[Excerpt 1]

```
1    *TTR:    let's say if you have a <topic>
2             °>i can< give you an example°
3             °°of a <topic>°°
4             [(3.0)]
5    *TTR:    [((TTR mumbles))]
6    *TTR:    °↑ah: o↓kay.°
7             {°>baseball and ↑basketball.<°
8             {((TTR begins writing on a notebook))
```

```
9              (1.1)
10    *ZIX:    um hmm
11             (1.5)
12    *TTR:    {it's like that,
13             {((TTR writes on a notebook))
14             (1.0)
```

The tutor begins her explanation about the structure of a comparison and contrast essay by using baseball and basketball as an example (lines 1-12). She also uses her notebook as an additional visual resource to help the tutee's understanding. Observed by the tutor's dominant turn-taking, she is displaying her accessible knowledge to the domain of writing a comparison and contrast essay. This display of the tutor's K+ epistemic authority becomes more explicit in the continuing exchanges in Excerpt 2.

In Excerpt 2, the tutee ZIX (Zixin) is evidently orienting to the tutor's category of K+ epistemic status, providing short responses with a minimum number of turns (lines 7, 30, 43, 48). This can indicate that the tutee Zixin is also aware of his epistemic status as a less knowledgeable (K-) participant and accepted the tutor's orientation to her category as possessing more expert knowledge in writing. The tutee provides responses to signal affirmation, but also these responses are in a short and simple form (i.e., "uh-hmm", "yes", etc.), acknowledging the tutor's epistemic rights as having more access to the knowledge domain of writing skills.

The tutor uses the category "we" when she first begins to explain the structure of a comparison and contrast essay (line 1), referencing herself as a member of a group of "expert writers" who possesses accessible knowledge on how to write a comparison and contrast essay. The tutor also often uses "you" in her explanation (lines 10, 22, 25, 34, and 52) in order to orient to Zixin's role as a novice writer of his paper. Furthermore, the use of "you" can also signal the

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tutor's positioning of herself as the one who delivers knowledge while the tutee is positioned as a

receiver of the knowledge. In her explanation, the tutor also asks a question in a softer voice and

provides the answer herself (lines 46-47), which connotes that she is not seeking an answer.

Instead, she is rather using the teaching strategy of "thinking aloud" in order to enhance her

explanation, which also could be a display of her epistemic status as a teacher.

[Excerpt 2 (cont. of 1)]

```
 1  → *TTR:    {how we ↑usually formulate is
 2                {((TTR looks down at the notebook))}
 3                (1.1)
 4    *TTR:    one way is to go
 5                {with the differences and similarities.
 6                {((TTR writes on the notebook))
 7  → *ZIX:    YEs.
 8    *TTR:    >so when it goes to the<
 9                ↑essay form, (0.5)
10  →           you will >pretty much go<
11                {>with the< intro:,
12                {((TTR writes on the notebook while speaking))
13    *TTR:    (0.5) °sometimes° the difference
14                difference similarity,
15                (0.1) or similarity difference difference
16                °or difference° simlarity difference,
17                (1.5)
18    *TTR:    or (.) difference >similari↑ty similari↑ty<
19                (.) >YEAh<=
20                =it goes >pretty much< in that way
21                (1.0)
22  → *TTR:    and then you go °↓(with)° (0.4)
23                conclusion (some↓thing)
24                (1.3)
25  → *TTR:    OR: an a↑nother way you can go is
26                {u:m by point, (0.9)
27                {((TTR writes on the notebook))
28    *TTR:    by point,
29                (0.5)
30  → *ZIX:    um hmm
31                (0.8)
32    *TTR:    so (.) instead of focusing on the difference
33                or °>some of the<° similarities,
34  →           (0.4) you can say that um (0.5)
35                u:m <basketball> (.) u:m and baseball
36                (1.3) um (.) they have ↓rules
37                (1.6)
```

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```
38   *TTR:   same rules, >or different rules.<
39           (1.4)
40   *TTR:   there are: (0.5) players.
41           {(1.4)
42           {((TTR moves both hands))
43 → *ZIX:   yeah
44   *TTR:   °players.°=
45           =or (0.6) u::m (0.7)
46           °what else could be.° (0.5)
47           fans. (0.4) °um°
48 → *ZIX:   yeah=
49   *TTR:   =similar fans or different fans °(or)°
50           (1.1)
51   *TTR:   >those are like< two ways
52 →         you can go:,
53 →         °or° (.) and that's your choice.
```

Interestingly, after a long explanation of the essay's structure, the tutor positions the tutee into taking a role of an active learner (line 53), by telling him that how he structures the essay is his choice.

We can expect such exchanges commonly occurring in both classroom settings and tutorial sessions. As suggested by Sacks (1992), categories produce the organization of knowledge, the activities in the interaction, and are inference-rich to suppose participants' engagement in the exchanges. Widdicombe (1998), however, cautioned that hasty categorization can cause "inferential problems" such as socially controlling one's behavior or understanding one's action by the virtue of commonly expected practices of certain categories. Considering the unique epistemic setting and learning environment in writing tutorial sessions, we should be aware of those moments when the control of interaction shifts from the tutor to the tutee. In the event of such shift of roles, the change of orientation to participants' epistemic authorities is the moment with the potential of epistemic statuses being redefined – and the presumptive behaviors for categories cannot be employed.

2.3 Transfer of Epistemic Authority: Inviting K-

As discussed by Heritage (2012), even though the tutor possesses more expert knowledge (K+) in ESL composition, the tutor can display an "unknowing" stance with a pedagogical purpose of inviting the tutee (K-) to become the expert (K+). This often involves the membership categorization of positioning the tutee as a writer while the tutor is categorized as a reader with less knowledge (K-) to the piece of writing. Moments when the K+ participant displays a K-epistemic stance can often involve the teacher's pedagogical purpose, as in this particular writing tutorial session, the tutor displays a K- epistemic stance in order to encourage the tutee's active involvement to the writing task (Excerpt 3).

[Excerpt 3 (cont. of 1-2)]

```
 1     *TTR:   so keep that in mind, (.)
 2             WHEn (0.7) you're trying to: (.)
 3             compare and contrast.
 4             bi em doubleyu and (0.2) mercedez
 5             (0.5)
 6  →  *TTR:   >°how should i< get° approach
 7             (0.4)
 8     *ZIX:   right.=
 9  →          =u:m (1.8) there will be: (0.6)
10             the: (1.2) the (.) engine, (1.0)
11 →           like (0.1) the different engine,
12             (0.6)
13     *TTR:   °°different engines°°
14             (1.1)
15     *ZIX:   ye↓ah (1.7) the ah the ah
16 →           (2.0) °hmm° (1.8) <like different>
17 →           type of aerodynamic system,
```

After the tutor's explanation about the structure of a comparison and contrast essay (See Excerpts 1-2), the tutor invites the tutee (K-) to display more epistemic authority in the topic of his own essay (line 6). The tutee accepts the invitation in the beginning, and starts to provide his ideas for outlining the essay (lines 9-11 and 16-17). Sacks (1992) described the mechanism of

members making knowledge and formulating new knowledge by pulling out a piece of information from a member who has experienced certain event and putting a name to the category. The tutee applies the knowledge he formulated by the representative of the category – the expert writer tutor – and makes that new knowledge relevant by using the same strategy of outlining his essay as the tutor has modeled (See Excerpts 1-2). The tutee mentions different engines (line 11) and types of aerodynamic system (line 17), indicating that he took the point-by-point approach mentioned by the tutor in Excerpt 2. He lists some possible points he can compare and contrast as the tutor listed rules, players, and fans in her explanation; this makes it possible for the tutee to accept the tutor's invitation of being positioned as the K+ epistemic authority (lines 9-11). This particular organization of knowledge also supports Widdicombe's (1998) argument of treating identity as a resource to participants.

At this moment, the tutor orients to the tutee's accessible knowledge to the topic he has chosen (line 6) and the tutee accepts this categorization as a writer of his essay by listing the points he would like to include in the essay (lines 9-11 and 15-17). Zixin's knowledge of cars as a member of an automobile club also contributed to the transfer of epistemic authority while both participants are orienting to the categories of writer and reader in the sequence of interaction.

Similar to the interaction in Excerpt 3, the tutor with K+ epistemic status can intentionally transfer the epistemic authority to the tutee in order to encourage the tutee's active participation and to rearrange the power structure of the relationship in the particular interaction (Excerpt 4). Before Excerpt 4 begins, the tutor finishes reading the tutee's first draft of an analytic essay, which is an essay assigned to students for analyzing causes or effects of certain issues in the society. In this excerpt we can see the tutee categorizing the tutor as an evaluator of his essay while the tutor tries to position the tutee as the evaluator of his own essay.

[Excerpt 4]

```
 1     *TTR:   >oKay<(1.2)
 2  →          uh::mm i can <see that you (.) got>
 3             (1.0) {pretty much the basic} structure,
 4                   {((TTR nods))}
 5             for an analytic es↓say
 6             (1.4)
 7  →  *TTR:   >what do you< ↓think
 8             (0.9)
 9  →  *ZIX:   um: (1.4) alright,
10     *TTR:   hhh (.) okay,
11  →          (0.5) in what way?
12             (1.0)
13     *ZIX:   i mean like <the structure:>
14             <the sou:rce>
15     *TTR:   uh hmm
16     *ZIX:   at least they're related i guess
17  →  *TTR:   uh hmm
18             (2.0)
19     *ZIX:   the >LANguage probably<
20             would be >something like< problem=
21             =like >right here<
22             (0.8) the FIRst sentence
23             (0.5) it was >GEttin me,<
24             so i >TRIed to< say:
25             (0.5) you (.) new- (.) NEtherLAnd and the world?
26     *TTR:   uh hmm?
27  →  *ZIX:   so >this is SOMEWHEre< i wanna change,
```

After the tutee shows the tutor his first draft of his analytic essay, the tutor provides

descriptive feedback while using a first-person voice "I", which connotes the tutor's attempt to

categorize herself as the reader of the essay rather than an evaluator (line 2). The tutor asks the

tutee's opinion or evaluation of his first draft, using a form of question in order to transfer the

epistemic authority to the tutee (line 7). At first, the tutee does not fully accept the tutor's

invitation of transferring the epistemic authority, but responds with a very generic form of

evaluation (line 9). In line 11, the tutor takes an approach of re-inviting K- tutee by asking why

the tutee, as a writer, considers the essay "alright". Zixin begins to provide more comments to his

own evaluation as a writer and the tutor encourages the transfer of epistemic authority by

providing confirmation (i.e., "uh-hmm") to the tutee's evaluation (line 17). The tutor's short

confirmation response signals the tutee's K+ epistemic authority as having the epistemic rights to

express and evaluate the turn-taking design (Heritage & Raymond, 2005). This led to Zixin's

more active and dialogic evaluation. In line 27, Zixin begins to mention the changes he wants to

make as a writer of the essay; this displays his control of the interaction and tutoring session as

possessing more epistemic authority and "socioepistemic rights".

Although writing tutorials can be challenging because of the dynamic transfer and

negotiation of epistemic authorities, ESL writing tutorial sessions are considered more

challenging because of the language barrier. Tutees will often display discomfort or reluctance to

accept such invitation of K+ epistemic authority due to the lacking of available language

resources. However, Excerpt 5 illustrates an example of effective transfer of epistemic authority

supported by sufficient resources of language when the tutee takes control of the interaction.

Here, the tutoring session began with the tutee describing the topic he decided for his analytic

essay, which is analyzing the causes of an incident when a Dutch psychologist named Deiderik

Stapel fabricated his scholarly data. Zixin begins to explain his topic to the tutor because the

topic he was planning to work on in the previous tutoring session was different. While making a

decision of which topic he would like to examine, Zixin has done some online research before

the tutoring session.

[Excerpt 5]
```
1     *TTR:   °okay,° (0.9)
2             <an:d (0.6) YOU're> (0.9)
3             trying to use that case,
4             or something similar to that,
5   →  *ZIX:   I WANna do it
6             (xx) is good.
7             because (.) you know (0.7)
8             >bacause< (0.4) you- from (xxx)
```

16

```
 9  → *ZIX:   >i kind of like< analyze like (0.7)
10            beCAUse maybe he's in (depression),
11            (the idea) like (0.8) stress?
12            so that's why
13            he got it, (0.4)
14            and ALSO it's: (0.5)
15            it's a (simple) sci↓ence
16            (0.5)
17    *ZIX:   you don't really colLEcting (.)
18            the REal data. (.)
19            it's ALL aBOut like
20            (1.4)
21    *ZIX:   it's thROugh a (x).=
22            =cuz i- i r- i r- (0.4)
23 →          i took the psychology so (0.8)
24            a LOt of (.) the time (.)
25            they do like approximately
26            (maybe it would be) li:ke (0.4)
27            they just (xxxxxx),
28            (0.8)
29    *TTR:   okay,
30    *ZIX:   sO (1.5) LIke that case is easy to
31            fraud in the data
```

Apparent from the number of turns by Zixin, his partial research about the topic provided more language and knowledge for him to rely on when giving explanations to the tutor. Not only his experience of doing prior research formulated knowledge for him to accept the K+ epistemic authority, but his categorization of a Psychology course student makes relevant epistemic authority in the interaction. The tutee explicitly expresses his experience of taking a Psychology course (lines 23-27), which categorizes him for possessing knowledge to this specific area of interaction. Additionally, he uses the pronoun "I" (lines 5 and 9) to denote his power as a writer and to express what he wants and likes for his own essay. During the entire sequence, the tutor only provides brief confirmation responses; the tutee takes most control of the interaction as not only being the writer with preferences, but also as a student who previously took a psychology course and having background knowledge to the specific case of Deiderik Stapel.

In addition to the transfer of epistemic authority from the tutor to the tutee, Excerpt 5 also exhibits more utterances produced by the tutee because of the language support allowing him to claim his K+ epistemic authority. The detailed analysis of changes in epistemic authority on the basis of membership categorization made visible of how participants come to achieve their identity in the moment-by-moment interaction.

2.4 Competition of Epistemic Authority: Competing K+

There are constant changes and transfers in the orientation of epistemic authority where the tutor might be expected to have the K- epistemic authority or the tutee is supposed to lead the conversation due to the setting of tutorial sessions. The divergence of epistemic authority can emerge when each participant perceives the situation differently; both participants might recognize the situation as one in which their K status is higher than the other. When there is a disagreement of expected practices in the mechanism of membership categorization, participants might encounter a moment of epistemic competition. According to Mondada (2013), the moment when "category-bound activities" make visible of the competition of epistemic stances, participants' epistemic statuses are also "situatedly negotiated, reproduced or contested". In Excerpt 6-7, the tutor and the tutee encounter a competition of epistemic orientation while brainstorming ideas for a topic of his comparison and contrast essay.

The tutee suggested several options before this interaction such as exploring the field of machinery or cars. After deciding to explore the topic about sports cars, the tutor has requested specific details and the tutee mentions "special features" in each sports car (lines 1-7). The tutor, who categorizes herself as knowing more (K+) about the structure of a comparison and contrast

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essay, makes an attempt to help the tutee to narrow down his topic by suggesting that he choose

two different sports cars (lines 8-9).

[Excerpt 6]

```
 1      *ZIX:   WELL: (0.7) every sports car
 2   →          they have like a: good feature
 3              °i mean um like°
 4              their specialty °i° guess.
 5              (0.8)
 6      *ZIX:   so each one has each special↓ty:
 7              (0.5)
 8   →  *TTR:   >would YOU< like to (.) choo:se
 9   →          two: different sports car?
10              (0.8)
11   →  *ZIX:   U:MM (1.4) YE::a:h i me(h)an
12   →          (0.9) °sports ca[r:°
13      *TTR:                   [there are
14   →          ↑other ways to apporach to it,=
15   →          °or:° (0.4) two different (0.5) companies,
16              (1.2) producing sports↑cars,
17              (1.4)
18      *ZIX:   °(two different com:panies.)° (.)
19              °hmm° (.)
20      *TTR:   you know: like the history: of (0.5)
21              how these two different companies (0.5)
22              produced (0.6) >various types of<
23              sports cars=
24              =°>that's possible.<°
25              that would be a: huge area
```

The tutee, on the other hand, displays his epistemic authority of knowing more about the subject

'cars' and plans for his own essay by repeating his previous statement (lines 11-12). The tutor

also insists on the same position by suggesting two specific subjects to explore (lines 14-15)

which could indicate the tutor's orientation to her K+ epistemic authority and epistemic rights

ans an expert in ESL composition.

The conversation continues in Excerpt 7 when the tutee expresses his uncertainty of the

tutor's suggestion about two different sports car companies. Zixin's display of negative

assessment (line 2) of the tutor's suggestion signals his orientation to the epistemic rights to

make decisions of the topic for his own essay. This overlaps with the tutor's attempt to complete

the tutee's utterance when she assumes that the tutee was trying to admit his lack of knowledge

in sports cars (lines 6). The tutor's undertaking of completing Zixin's utterance displays her

presumption that she has the K+ epistemic authority to lead the direction of this interaction.

[Excerpt 7 (cont. of 6)]

```
 1     *ZIX:   <companies are> (.)
 2  →          >i'm not sure< with the compa°↓nies°
 3             (0.9) cuz (0.4) UHhm
 4             (1.2) i:: really don't know (0.6)
 5             [and
 6  →  *TTR:   [a lot about (sports cars)?
 7  →  *ZIX:   YE:ah i mean
 8     *TTR:   °okay,°
 9  →  *ZIX:   cuz (.) I- >i meant< there's: a
10             (1.6) different feauture,=
11             =but <ther:e are:>
12             (0.8) i >don't know really< su- pecific
13             what (.) they're gonna sell,
14             (1.1) u:h (0.6) ↑i guess ah
15             (1.8)
16     *TTR:   is there any: [specific
17  →  *ZIX:                 [↑we can do
18             we can do like dr- (0.8)
19             different (.) country types of >car i guess,<
20             (0.8)
21     *TTR:   °uh hmm,°
22     *ZIX:   >you know like< eh ↓ah=
23     *TTR:   =different types of °°coun[tries°°
24     *ZIX:                             [>YOU KNOW LIKE<
25             japanese c↓ar:s
26     *TTR:   °uh [hmm,°
27     *ZIX:       [american car=
28             =germany c↓ar:
29     *TTR:   °uh hmm,°
30             (1.7)
31     *ZIX:   SO (2.7)
32             BY country ah
33             (1.1)
34     *TTR:   hhmm::
```

In lines 9-14, Zixin repairs his incomplete utterance marked by the phrase "I mean" after

admitting his lack of knowledge about sports car companies. Lee (2008) portrayed the process of

learners using communicative competence as a resource in order to orient to the goal of common understanding. In this description, the learner makes a decision to "let it pass" when the teacher made a wrong attempt to repair a learner's pronunciation error because this was changing the direction of the interaction. By using the exchange of turns as a resource, Lee asserts that the learner interpreted the interaction and made a decision to achieve a common goal of the interaction, which was not the orientation to a student's pronunciation error. Similarly, the tutee's acceptance to his lack of knowledge about the companies appears to be Zixin's decision to "let it pass" (Lee, 2006, p. 362) since the goal of the interaction to him is generating various ideas for his comparison and contrast essay. It is also possible to interpret line 17 as a moment of Zixin reclaiming his epistemic status as the owner of his essay by changing the direction of the conversation.

As observed in the sequential talk from Excerpts 6 and 7, participants might orient to the epistemic authority with the inference that they have more expertise or epistemic rights in reference to certain categories. Depending on the categorization each participant orients to, the interaction can be led towards different directions by two different participants taking control. This causes epistemic competition, which can become troublesome and threatening to participants who are trying to reach the goal of common understanding.

On the other hand, there are moments when both participants expect the other participant to orient to a K+ epistemic authority by positioning themselves as possessing K- epistemic authority. The competition of epistemic authority also occurs in these cases because the tutor and the tutee are orienting to different epistemic authorities (Excerpt 8).

[Excerpt 8 (cont. of 4)]

```
 1     *TTR:   umm:: <let's SEe.>
 2             just <through the overall construction,>
 3             (1.0) [i::]
 4  → *ZIX:        [what would] you ↓give
 5             like scale
 6             like >from one to ten,<
 7             (2.1)
 8  → *TTR:   i would not,
 9             Hh[hhh
10    *ZIX:     [why
11             (0.7)
12  → *TTR:   >cuz it's< not a good idea?
13    *ZIX:   >alright< it's ju[st
14    *TTR:                    [>but um<
15             (0.5)
16  → *TTR:   u[m:]
17  → *ZIX:    [I WOULD] like to hear it like
18             [your judgment.]
19  → *TTR:   [hhhhh]
20             (0.9)
21  → *TTR:   u::[mm
22    *ZIX:       [it's ok↓ay
23  →           it's okay if you give me sixty or (.) fifty.
24             [(xxx)]
25  → *TTR:   [hahah]
26             (0.9)
27  → *TTR:   [u:m well ↑i-]
28  → *ZIX:   [cuz i'd- i really don't] care.
```

Here in Excerpt 8, the tutor and tutee are continuing a conversation from Excerpt 4 after

reading the tutee's first draft of his analytic essay. The tutee asks the tutor to evaluate his first

draft (lines 4-6), which shows the tutee's expectation towards the tutor's category as an evaluator

and an expert in writing. The tutor refuses (lines 8 and 12) the tutee's membership categorization

and orientation to her epistemic rights to assess his essay by telling him it is not a good idea (line

12). The tutee again expresses his orientation to the tutor's expert knowledge as a writing

instructor (line 17-18) while the tutor continuously displays unwillingness and discomfort to the

tutee's orientation by using hesitation markers and laughter (lines 16, 19, 21, 25 and 27). By

displaying her hesitation to be positioned as a K+ participant, the tutor is indicating that the tutee

should take more control of this interaction as the writer of the essay rather than requesting for an evaluation from the tutor. Interestingly, Zixin also repeatedly mentions how he does not care about the type of the tutor's evaluation (lines 23 and 28), but he does really want the tutor's evaluation (line 17). It can be inferred that while Zixin displays his willingness to access to the tutor's domain of knowledge, he is also using a strategy of softening in order to make the tutor's process of evaluation easier. Clearly, Zixin is doing a lot of work in order to receive the tutor's evaluation while the tutor does not show her willingness to provide an evaluation. In this case, the diverged orientation to each other's epistemic authority seems to cause a breakage and dealy in the conversation due to the competition between participants' K- epistemic authorities.

As observed in previous Excerpts 6-8, participants' different orientation to the territory of knowledge is often caused by conflicting categorizations of one's and another's membership, which results in the competition of epistemic authorities. These competitions of epistemic authorities become visible in the form of "mismatch" in sequential talk-in-interactions. More importantly, the mismatch and breakage of interaction require more work of turn taking and negotiation between participants in order to align those divergences of epistemic authorities.

2.5 Challenging Epistemic Authority: Contested K+ and K-

Typically, tutor training programs emphasize on the tutors' roles of orienting to the tutees' needs and encouraging learners' active voice in the process of learning. This is often done by the tutor's pedagogical design of turn-taking where the tutor with K+ epistemic authority invites the tutee to take control of the interaction (See section 2.2). However, from time to time, the unplanned orientation to a participant's epistemic authority can challenge both participants' performance of identity in a talk-in-interaction. Excerpt 9 illustrates how the abrupt and

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unexpected transfer of epistemic authority can trouble both participants in the interaction. The

tutor and the tutee are continuing the discussion from Excerpts 1-3 where they are trying to

outline his comparison and contrast essay after he decided his topic to be Mercedes-Benz and

BMW. The tutor has provided information about the basic structure of a comparison and contrast

essay and asked Zixin which kind of approach he would like to take for outlining his essay. Zixin

is mentioning several features of a car he can compare and contrast with the point-by-point

strategy. In this particular exchange, we can see Zixin orienting himself as the more

knowledgeable (K+) participant as the writer of the essay and a member of an automobile club.

[Excerpt 9 (cont. of 1-3)]

```
 1     *ZIX:   type of aerodynamic system,
 2  →          (1.5)
 3  →  *TTR:   ((TTR looks up to see ZIX))
 4  →  *TTR:   °°what's {that?°°}
 5                      {((TTR places RH to her chin))}
 6                      {((TTR looks at ZIX))}
 7     *TTR:   (.) h(hh)
 8     *ZIX:   OH. (.) that's ↑A (0.5)
 9     *TTR:   Hhh
10     *ZIX:   o↓kay (0.5)
11             that's ↑the PARt like (.)
12             you kn↓ow <when you:> (.) when you
13             try to: like  drive really fast, (0.9)
14             so the aerodynamic trying to
15             (1.0) u:m (1.2) like make a (0.4)
16             make a: (.) par- (.) the:
17             like when ↑you (0.5) se- (hit in certain) speed,
18             the the (0.7) the aero (0.9)
19             start like a (fracture) power, (0.6)
20     *ZIX:   so:
21     *TTR:   uh
22     *ZIX:   then you- >you need to<
23             start (passing with) the air,
24             the air, (0.6)
25             >like make sure< (0.2) when the aero like (1.0)
26             go through the car's like (.) low,
27             it's like smoo:th and like
28             (0.5) make sure i'm still gonna (run)
29             (0.5) and uh (0.9)
30             YEAh.
```

```
31   *TTR:   >so there's like< certain (1.0)
32           °particle (.) that°
33           °does that?°
34   *ZIX:   that's that's like a shape of the car
35           [>you know< (.) [so (0.4)
36   *TTR:                   [{°°ah:°°
37               {((TTR looks up the ceiling))
38   *ZIX:   that's why >you you< see
39           like the a (0.5)
40           like the cars like smooth like that
41           (0.6)
42   *ZIX:   °uh.°
43           (0.5)
44   *ZIX:   then you try to stay low
45           especially the sports car
```

When Zixin mentions the term "aerodynamic system" in line 1, the tutor displays an orientation

to her K- epistemic authority. The long pause in line 2 and her eye gaze moving from the

notebook to Zixin followed by a very small and soft voice in line 4 indicates the tutor's lack of

knowledge to the term 'aerodynamic system' displayed in a form of self-talk.

The tutor unexpectedly encountered a moment where she does not have closer access to the

knowledge domain to respond to the tutee's utterance due to her limited experience compared to

Zixin. The tutor's reaction of saying "what's that?" in a very small volume while displaying an

inquisitive position by placing her hand to hold her chin followed by an out breath of laughter

(lines 4-6) demonstrates her strategic reaction of saving face. In other words, even though she

has invited the tutee to orient to a K+ epistemic authority, the tutor was expecting to sustain her

K+ epistemic status. However, at this moment when the tutee mentions the term "aerodynamic

system", the tutor found both her epistemic authority and epistemic status being challenged

which was shown by her self-talk and laugher.

The tutee responds back with difficulties of explaining the term to the tutor. From lines 8 to

30, Zixin begins to explain the meaning of an aerodynamic system with multiple pauses in each

utterance, frequent use of hesitation markers (i.e., "um" or "like"), and by often self-repairing his utterances. At this moment, both participants' epistemic authorities are being contested. Even though Zixin is positioned as a K+ participant in a certain extent, the orientation of epistemic domain changed from his essay to the terminology 'aerodynamic system', which caused difficulties in the interaction. The contested epistemic authority was soon converged when the tutor asks a question to clarify her understanding (lines 31-33), which supports her redefining her K+ epistemic status a tutor. Finally, the tutee is able to provide an effective explanation by mentioning the vocabulary "shape" (line 34), which instantly leads to the tutor's reaction of understanding (lines 36-37). Encouraged by the tutor's positive feedback, Zixin manages to accept his K+ epistemic authority and begins to provide examples to support his explanation with even more details (lines 38-45).

As illustrated in Excerpt 9, even though the K+ participant – considerably the tutor with higher epistemic status – invites the K- participant with a pedagogical purpose in order to orient to the tutee's epistemic rights, there are contingencies that challenge participants' epistemic authority and moreover, their epistemic status. The form or the degree of such challenges can influence participants' reaction, causing participants to display confusion or expressions of surprise in order to encounter and align the sequence design.

In Excerpt 10, participants' epistemic authorities confront a challenging moment when Zixin was asked to explain his new writing assignment, which is an analytic essay. In the beginning of the session, the tutor expressed his desire to brainstorm ideas for his upcoming writing assignment. He tries to describe the nature of this genre of writing in order to ask the tutor's guidance of selecting an appropriate topic for his essay. Zixin tries to explain the activity he has done in class in order to explain the nature of his new assignment. The tutor asks whether

his instructor has assigned a topic to students or not and the tutee is trying to provide more

explanations. As having access to the epistemic experience because Zixin is categorized as a

member of his course, Zixin seems to comfortably accept his K+ epistemic authority at the

beginning of interaction (lines 1-3).

> *[Excerpt 10]*

```
1  → *ZIX:    oKay (.)
2             SO you just LIke
3             we: (.) actually analyzed
4             (0.4)
5    *TTR:    °uh hmm°
6             (0.4)
7    *ZIX:    hi:s: top- (.) hi:s paper.
8             AN:d we HAve to do the research
9             based on that.=
10            =so
11   *TTR:    uh hmm
12            (0.6)
13   *ZIX:    ↑he gave to like
14            a (team) (xx) like
15            he said (.) you >can (go to)<
16            (0.4) YOu just kind of
17            (0.5) analyze (0.8) WHY
18            he did that to (hide),
19   *TTR:    uh hmm,
20   *ZIX:    why he: (.) faked his
21            data, (.)
22            so (.) like from his perspective
23            so- he just like (cheating) us
24            (0.4)
25   *ZIX:    °(he-)° like we can do: (an:d)
26            (1.6)
27   *ZIX:    this one <is the uh>
28            (0.9)
29 → *TTR:    SO he (0.5) he <also gave you>
30            the data?
31            (1.0)
32   *ZIX:    >>NO no no no no<<
33            th- (.) the- the arti↓cle
```

Based on Zixin's long description about the activity he has done in class (lines 1-27), the

tutor asks a clarification question (lines 29-30), which was answered by the tutee's strong

negative reaction (line 32). When the tutor tries to clarify her understanding, the pause and

slower pace indicates her uncertainty understanding Zixin's explanation while orienting to the

tutee's K+ epistemic authority. By repeatedly saying "no" in a fast pace (line 32), the tutee seems

to be fully oriented to his K+ epistemic authority and tries to self-repair (line 33) in order to

clarify his explanation.

The interaction continues in Excerpt 11 where the tutor and tutee takes multiple turns in

order to reach a common understanding. Throughout the exchanges from lines 1 to 35, the tutor

uses repetition and asks confirmation questions in order to understand the details of the

assignment while the tutee describes the in-class activity in order to illustrate the nature of the

new assignment.

[Excerpt 11 (cont. of 10)]

```
 1     *TTR:   so that's just the topic.
 2             he [gave.]
 3     *ZIX:      [yeah]=
 4             =yeah [it's just like]
 5     *TTR:         [and so]
 6     *ZIX:   (a) [guy: that]
 7     *TTR:       [like]
 8             (0.7)
 9     *TTR:   wi[th]
10     *ZIX:     [professor]
11     *TTR:   about the topic you have to: (1.4)
12             analyze it based on da↓ta °right?°
13             (0.4)
14     *TTR:   >°whatever data you find°<
15     *ZIX:   ↑UHM (.)
16             >NO no no no no no °no°<
17             UH (.) just forget about data=
18             =cuz (0.6) like we're reading a topic
19             (.) about a: (.) profes↓sor
20             (0.6)
21     *ZIX:   <WHO: has (.) faked> (0.5) his data.
22     *TTR:   °uh hmm,°
23     *ZIX:   so <we: are> going to analyze
24             (0.6) WHY this happened.=
25             =an:d (0.9) FRom (.) couple perspectives
```

```
26   *ZIX:    that (.) why this behavior (.)
27            caused (0.8) uh (.) why something causes (0.4)
28            °behavior°
29   *TTR:    °uh huh,°
30   *ZIX:    so
31            (2.2)
32   *ZIX:    (three) reason maybe
33            just to make the (xx)
34            >you know< (we'll) analyze
35            this stuff and
36   *TTR:    um hmm,
37            (0.7)
38 → *ZIX:    um (1.6) WELl it's hard to
39            (.) for you: to
40            give me some ideas.
41            because <you didn't read the:>
42   *TTR:    article,=
43            =yeah. well?
44   *ZIX:    the ah=
45 → *TTR:    =you can tell me,
46            (0.4)
47   *TTR:    [>but um<
48 → *ZIX:    [yeah but
49            I- (.) i didn't r- read it either.
50   *TTR:    um [hmm,
51   *ZIX:       [because
52            I (.) i only (.) i only (.)
53            <got this assignment> yesterday.
```

In lines 38-41, the interactional orientation shifts when the tutee acknowledges the tutor's K-epistemic authority, considering the fact that the tutor has limited epistemic experience to the in-class activity and the article distributed in his class. As mentioned earlier in Lee's (2006) study, it seems as if Zixin is again "letting it pass" based on a decision that the goal of this interaction is not to describe his activity in class. The display of Zixin's decision in lines 38-41 also displays his positioning of his epistemic rights to lead the moment of interaction. The tutor then takes a pedagogical approach by preserving her K- epistemic authority, but stating Zixin's responsibility to orient to his K+ epistemic authority (line 45); the tutor's pedagogical response functions as a re-establishment of her K+ epistemic status and her membership in the category of teachers. This

is immediately followed by the tutee admitting his K- epistemic authority (line 48). With the responsibility of epistemic rights fallen on his shoulder, Zixin soon orients to his K- epistemic authority by mentioning his lack of knowledge and experience to the subject (lines 48-53).

Based on the series of interaction detailed in Excerpts 9 to 11, it is observable that the epistemic authority between the tutor and the tutee can not only be challenged when the participant expected to be more knowledgeable (K+) confronts troubles, but also when the participants in the interaction are unexpectedly oriented to certain territory of knowledge. In these situations where epistemic authorities are unexpectedly contested or challenged, participants work through a process of negotiation in order to reach an agreement of orientation to epistemic authorities. Evidently, the complex processes of negotiation between the tutor and the tutee prove how interactants in tutorial sessions need to be aware of the flexible and local nature of epistemic talk and identity performance through membership categorizations.

3. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Tutorial sessions, especially in the settings of ESL writing tutorials, the performance of identity might be achieved differently compared to other social interactions or even classroom environments. Due to the unique circumstances of tutoring sessions allowing and encouraging more active learner involvements in addition to the tutor's noviceness, both the tutor and the tutee may have troubles establishing their roles in the interaction and can easily fall into interactional dilemmas. This study used the methodological tool of CA for a detailed analysis attending to the question of how tutors and tutees encounter and deal with communication breakage and interaction dilemmas in ESL writing tutorial sessions.

This study employed the tool of CA in order to uncover the complex and dynamic processes of negotiation between the tutor's and the tutee's epistemic authorities, which are made visible by the display of membership categorization in the moment-by-moment interaction. The participants' identities are performed and achieved within the relevance of interaction, and these identities are constructed by the member's accessible knowledge ascribed to certain categories. Participants construct their identities in a moment-by-moment fashion by utilizing the interactional resource, which includes the participants' locally relevant identities (Rine & Hall, 2011; Kasper & Wagner, 2011). In other words, by closely observing the moments of transfer in the interactants' orientation towards epistemic authorities, it was apparent to recognize each interactant's locally relevant category that represents the mechanism of identity achievement in ESL tutorial sessions.

The premise of epistemic talk between a tutor and a tutee presupposed the tutor as the more knowledgeable (K+) participant while the tutee is considered as the less knowledgeable (K-) participant in the interaction. While this study also offered instances that advocate these presumed epistemic statuses, a detailed conversation analysis allowed the opportunity to explore other instances when the conventional epistemic statuses were potentially changeable due to the flexibility of epistemic authorities.

When the presumed epistemic status does not apply to the course of interaction, participants react and respond differently but work towards the goal of reaching an agreement. There are pedagogical moments when the tutor (K+) would invite the tutee (K-) to orient to his membership categorization of having closer access to the domain of knowledge. This mostly occurred with the tutor's intention to encourage dialogic interactions and the tutee's active control as a writer. This invitation is not always well-accepted, which can be a moment when the

divergence of epistemic authorities appears. In these moments, both participants can be threatened by the contested epistemic authority, seeking for an agreed orientation to the membership categorizations. Also, participants might have contradicting expectations or perceptions when positioning self and each other's epistemic authority, which can cause a competition between two epistemic authorities. When the alternative positioning of epistemic authority does not align, participants constantly exchange turns for negotiation, elaboration, and rearrangement. During these complex and dynamic processes of negotiating epistemic authorities, both participants' epistemic statuses are being re-negotiated, which can lead to a process of re-positioning their epistemic statuses.

Through the analyses in this study, there are a few concluding remarks I would like to address. First, the interactional dilemmas in tutorial sessions seem to occur due to the "inferential problems" of membership categorization. Participants assume and expect certain actions and practices when applying categories to self and others; this can potentially lead to a disagreement of orientation to participants' "socioepistemic rights." Second, in regard to these disagreements, the divergences of epistemic authority come to be treated as resources to participants, guiding them to make senses of those relevant resources in order to achieve common understanding in the interaction. Watson (1997) mentioned how participants "conjoint their orientation" to both sequential and categorial relevances – referring the sequential and categorial phenomenon to "two sides of the same coin." While participants produce utterances to make their categories relevant to the structure of sequences, they also monitor the relevancies of both categorial and sequential utterances. As Widdicombe (1998) emphasized, participants' identities and categories are available for use to those who are part of the interaction. Third, series of data analysis present the potential of epistemic statuses' changeability. Mondada (2013) stated that epistemic statuses

are situated phenomenon by observing the (re)elaboration of epistemic stances and authorities in guided visits. Supporting Mondada's statement, it was noticeable how participants re-claim or re-establish their epistemic authorities when their epistemic authorities were being challenged or contested. This indicates that participants had the need to re-establish their identity in order to re-negotiate their epistemic status. It is important to note that this opens up a possibility to shed new lights on co-participation and learning opportunities in ESL instruction by raising awareness to the negotiation of epistemic talk and membership categorizations.

This study adds on to the discussion of recent CA for SLA movement; using the tool of CA made possible of uncovering the complex and flexibly changeable nature of epistemic talk and its relation to identity performances. The findings of this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics in ESL tutoring sessions where learners also play equally active epistemic roles by utilizing interactional resources in order to display one's category of membership. Moreover, illustrations of the dynamic negotiation processes between the tutor and the tutee exhibit how epistemic authority is not fixed, but can be re-elaborated and redefined, which will provide guidance to ESL writing tutors and tutor training programs for more effective interaction in ESL tutorial sessions.

Appendix A

Transcription Conventions

[ ]	Overlapping speech.
{ }	Overlapping speech with gesture.
↑↓	High/Low pitch intonation.
→	Features of talk that are relevant to the current analysis.
Under<u>lin</u>ing	Emphasis and stress.
CAPITALS	Hearably louder speech than the surrounding speech.
°i know it°	'Degree' signs enclose hearably quieter or softer speech.
(0.4)	Numbers in parentheses measure pauses in seconds.
(.)	A micropause, hearable but too short to measure.
((stoccato))	Description of nonverbal conducts.
she wa::nted	Degrees of elongation.
hhh	Aspiration (out-breaths); laughter.
finished,	'Continuation' marker; slight rise in pitch at the end of the utterance.
y'know?	Stronger, 'questioning' intonation, irrespective of grammar.
yeah.	Falling, stopping intonation.
bu-u-	Cut-off of the preceding sound.
>he said<	Speeded-up talk.
<this is a>	Slower talk.
solid.= =we had	Latching.
sto(h)p i(h)t	Laughter within speech is signalled by h's in round brackets.
(be about)	Uncertain utterances. Surrounds the transcriber's best guess.
(X)	Unintelligible syllables; the number of Xs represents the number of unintelligible syllables.

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