

The Overall Sequential Structure of Writing Tutoring Sessions

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Abstract

Several studies have shown tutoring interactions at writing centers. However, very few studies discuss the overall structure of writing tutoring sessions. The goal of this paper is to investigate the sequential structure of talk-in-interaction by tutors and tutees in writing tutoring sessions. Using conversation analysis, I examined five recordings of tutoring sessions with two groups of participants: native English speaking and non-native speaker tutors/tutees. The analysis focused on the organization of three major components: the opening, advice giving, and closing. This paper also reveals how the tutees maintain their knowledgeable and competent appearance in the advice sequences. Based on the analysis, I suggest teaching implications for ESL/EFL students and writing tutor training, including increasing students' awareness on the interactional features in tutoring sessions and enabling new tutor and trainees to be familiar with the organization of writing tutoring sessions with authentic data.

Introduction

Writing tutoring centers provide personalized education that facilitates students' success with their writing. The centers are increasingly present in many universities, colleges, and even in high schools. The common principles and practices in most writing centers are process-oriented and collaborative learning, which enable students to be "better writers" rather than providing just services for "better writing" (North, 1984, p. 438). How these principles and practices play out in reality is an important question for educators, students, and researchers interested in improving the quality of writing tutoring services. In this study, I explore the naturally occurring conversations in a writing center with two groups of tutees: native speakers and non-native speakers of English, to examine their interactional features. In particular, I focus on one aspect of tutoring interactions: the overall sequential organization, which includes the sequences of actions such as opening, advice giving, and closing. The paper concludes with a discussion of teaching implications for second language teaching and writing tutor training.

Writing Tutoring Session

The writing tutoring sessions are more "goal oriented than ordinary conversations"; they are more limited by the goals proposed, by time, "by the expectations of both tutor and tutee," and by the tutee's assumption about tutor's role as a writing expert (Reinking, 2013, pp.46-7). Heritage (2005) proposed that interactants orient to "their primary roles and statuses-relevant identities in the institutional setting" (as cited in Reinking, 2013, p. 48). According to Park (2014, p. 364), in writing centers, tutors and tutees develop 'asymmetrical reciprocity' on the process of learning while the imbalance in epistemic authority is fully acknowledged and deployed (Clark



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2001; Grimm 1999; Thompson 2009). Waring (2005, p. 141) also suggested the tutor and tutee may challenge each other in regard to expertise. She pointed out that the tutors hold a higher epistemic status only on the writing matter that they have formally trained, but they do not have expertise in the subject area in which the tutee had more training. The tutors also do not possess any power on grading unlike professors or teachers. Given that the tutors do not have absolute power over the tutees, the tutoring interaction reveals “great potential for negotiation” in advice episodes (Waring, 2005, p. 142). I will next review the literature on the interactional aspects of advice giving and receipt.

Advice Giving and Receipt

Waring (2005) suggested that tutoring session is a well-known place where the complexities of advice sequences are observed. Regarding the implications of advice giving, the activities of requesting and giving advice can be seen as highly problematic in terms of the issue of knowledgeability (Heritage & Sefi, 1992, pp. 367-8). On the one hand, requesting advice displays the advice requester’s lack of knowledge and competence on the issue or incapability of dealing with the problem on their own; on the other hand, the advice provider is portrayed as “knowledgeable,” “competent” and “authoritative” during the course of interchanging actions. (Heritage & Sefi, 1992, p. 367). As shown in a study of delivery and receipt of advice between health visitors and first-time mothers (Heritage & Sefi, 1992), the advice can be overtly delivered in the form of a recommendation (e.g. “I would recommend giving her ba:th every da:y,” p. 368), an imperative sentence (e.g. “No always be ve:ry ve:ry qui:te at ni:ght,” p. 369), and using a verb of obligation (e.g. “I think you should involve your husband as much as possible now,” p. 369). Advice is sometimes provided as a “factual generation” (e.g. “Lots of mum do to thuh (0.8) terries when they’re a bit older,” Heritage & Sefi, 1992, p. 369). Here, the advice provider offered the advice in a manner of expressing his expertise on the baby care.

An advice sequence can be initiated by an advice requester. Heritage and Sefi (1992, p. 373) proposed that advice can be overtly requested with an open or closed question, or can be implicitly solicited “by describing untoward state of affairs.” In their study, the overt requests for advice were less deployed by the first-time mothers since it displayed the “overt acknowledgement of limitation in mother’s knowledge and competence” (Heritage & Sefi, 1992, p. 373).

Regarding advice receipt, Park (2014, p. 363) suggested that the interactants in the advice sequence orient to accepting the advice as the preferred response (Costello & Roberts 2001; Heritage & Sefi 1992; Silverman 1997; Stivers 2005). That is, acceptance tokens are rarely delivered with any delays and hesitations which project the progressivity in interaction (Park 2014; Pomerantz 1984; Sacks 1987; Schegloff 1979, 2007; Stivers & Robinson 2006). Once advice is offered, the advice recipients can deliver their acceptance, resistance, or rejection in diverse manners. As for advice acceptance, advice recipients utilized marked acknowledgement by seeing the advice as informative and undertaking it. The marked acknowledgement tokens can be: *oh* receipt, repetition of key advice element in prior utterance, *right* acceptance (Heritage & Sefi, 1992), and summary statement of the advice (Silverman, 1997, pp. 123-4). In regard to advice resistance, advice recipients deployed unmarked acknowledgement to avoid acknowledging it as new information and overtly accepting it (Heritage & Sefi, 1992). The

unmarked acknowledgement tokens can be expressed as *mm hm, yeh, that's right*, which show only minimal acknowledgment; and by passive resistance. (Heritage & Sefi, 1992). Advice providers often orient to the preferred response to close the advice sequence; advisors tend to reformulate the previous suggestion and provide a rationale when they confront the resistance (Park, 2014, p. 364). Another way of resisting advice is competence assertions. Competence assertions (e.g. *I know*) resist the advice by appealing that the information is already known and reject any implication of incapability dealing with the matter or lack of knowledge on the subject (Heritage & Sefi, 1992). Park (2014, p. 364) stated that the advice resistance is often perceived as dispreferred responses with delays, mitigations, and qualifications (Heritage, 1984; Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987).

A piece of advice recommends a course of future actions in the advice sequences (Heritage & Sefi, 1992, p. 368). An advice sequence has the following features: “future-oriented,” “imperative in form,” “containing modals of obligation,” and “factual generation” (Nguyen, 2012, p. 31, following Heritage & Sefi, 1992, pp. 368-9).

Problem Presentation

Another common practice in tutoring sessions is tutees' problem presentation. According to the study by Heritage and Robinson (2006), the patients presented their problems in diverse ways during a primary care medical visit: describing the symptoms, self-diagnosis, or illness explanations. However, once the physician initiated the next action such as information gathering, the patient was constrained by the physician's questions and lost their initiative. The study suggests that the general inquiry questions such as “What can I do for you?” and “How can I help you?” illustrate a “service” relationship (Heritage & Robinson, 2006, p. 92). These questions induced the immediate problem presentation from the patients. They also noted that general inquiry questions were most frequently used by the physicians. In the context of the tutoring session, one would expect the use of general inquiry questions to solicit tutees' concerns immediately and induce their problem presentation.

Research Questions

Although there have been some studies on the overall structure of writing tutoring sessions, none has a strong emphasis on the sequences of advice giving. Based on the literature reviews and my interests as a tutor at a writing center, I posed two questions to investigate:

1. What is the overall sequential structure of writing tutoring sessions?
2. What sequences of actions make up this overall sequential structure?

Methodology

Setting

The setting for the study was a writing tutoring center at a university in the Pacific. The goal of the writing tutoring center is to help undergraduate and graduate students working with their academic papers to become better writers. Besides the writing tutoring services, the center's resources also include individualized tutoring for various subjects (Math, Science, Statistics), online tutoring, workshops, and language partners (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish). The writing tutoring center consists of eight rooms divided into cubicles. Each tutoring session is

scheduled for a half-hour. All students coming in for tutoring walk in to the center, and are assigned a tutor at the front desk.

Participants

The five tutors are all native speakers of English, 3 females and 2 males, and all undergraduate students. Four tutors have worked for about one to two years and one tutor just completed her training two months before the data collection. The five tutees are 3 native English speakers and 2 non-native English speakers; 3 males and 2 females. The non-native speaker tutees are from Saudi Arabia and Japan, and both are graduate students. All participants were given pseudonyms in this paper.

Procedure

The tutors were requested to make a recording of one of their sessions for this study. Once a tutee walked in the tutoring center and was assigned a tutor, the tutee was asked to be a participant for the video recording session by the tutor. After the tutee approved the recording, the consent form was given to the tutor and tutee to sign and the recording was started. Since the recordings were arranged in an unanticipated manner for the participants, the recordings could not include the very beginning of the session such as *summon-answer*, and *greeting* before getting the tutee's permission. Since I myself was a participant-observer at the writing center, I will refer to my field observations to fill in the recording gaps where the beginnings were missing. After each recording ended, I tried to return to the participants so as to verbally thank both of them. I took the consent forms from each participant and gave them an extra consent form, which had information of the researcher and the course professor. The recordings were transcribed using a convention devised by Gail Jefferson (2004; see Appendix).

Data Analysis

After transcribing the recordings, I analyzed the transcripts following the principles of conversation analysis (CA) and with my research questions in mind. CA is an approach to the study of analyzing language and social interactions (Wong & Waring, 2010). CA researchers investigate actual conversations ranging from informal talk “between friends, acquaintances, co-workers, or strangers” to more formal talk (institutional talk) such as “classrooms, doctor-patient consultations, courtroom proceedings, radio talk programs, interviews, and so on” (Wong & Waring, p. 4, 2010). In this paper, the transcripts were analyzed in a recursive manner to discover the primary components in a tutoring session which falls in the domain of institutional talk, to describe interactional features constituting each component, and to find out how tutors and tutees orient themselves to the components.

Findings

From the five writing tutoring sessions analyzed, I found that the overall structure of the tutoring sessions is composed of three major components; opening, advice giving, and closing. Each component consists of interactional features as stated in the outline below. This schema is greatly influenced by the literature reviews of the dilemma of advice (Heritage & Sefi, 1992), overall sequences in pharmacy consultation (Nguyen, 2012) and writing tutorial interactions (Reinking,

2013). The main achievement for tutors is to provide advice or help regarding tutees' problems. Thus, I put more emphasis on the main component, advice giving, by categorizing it into more detailed patterns. The summary of how sequences are organized in a writing tutoring session is the following:

1. Opening
 - a. Summon-answer
 - b. Greetings
 - c. Preliminary institutional business
 - d. Small talk
 - i. itemized news inquiry
 - ii. setting talk
2. Advice giving
 - a. Tutee-initiated advice
 - i. tutee's question
 - ii. problem presentation
 - b. Tutor-initiated advice
 - i. bare advice
 - ii. problem noticing-advice giving
3. Closing
 - a. Pre-closing
 - i. Tutor-initiated assessment inquiry & advice giving
 - ii. Tutor-initiated assessment & advice giving
 - iii. Tutee-initiated assessment & advice inquiry
 - iv. Announced closing
 - v. Assessment & appreciation
 - vi. Appreciation
 - vii. Joke
 - viii. Invitation for questions
 - b. Terminal exchange

Opening

In the opening of social encounter, the interactional tasks prototypically construct “mutual reciprocity (via a summon-answer sequence),” “identification (via identification or recognition sequence),” “greeting each other (via an exchange of greeting),” and ‘*howareyou*s’ (Schegloff, 1968, 1986) sequence (Bolden, 2009, p. 307). Reinking (2013) further elaborated that openings may include “a summons-answer sequence, a greeting sequence, an identity check or introduction sequence, small talk, preliminary institutional business, an invitation to begin the tutorial, and a request for or disclosure of background information” (p. 63). Heath (1981, p. 76) pointed out that the opening of institutional setting has “interactional vehicles,” which moves the conversation to the main agenda. Reinking (2013, p. 61) suggested the openings of writing tutoring sessions are more inclined to be shorter than the ones of everyday conversation since tutoring is explicitly

“goal oriented.” Based on the five tutoring recordings and my field observations, the tutors and tutees co-constructed the following sequential structure in the opening sequences:

- Summon-Answers
- Greetings
- Preliminary institutional business
- Small talk
 - Setting Talk
 - Itemized news inquiry

The openings of the writing tutoring sessions tended to end when the problem inquiry was first initiated by a tutor; that is, when both interactants started to orient to a focal object in tutoring. Then, the conversation moved out of openings and launched an incipient action.

Summon-Answers

A summon (Schegloff, 1968) could be a request to see a tutor in the writing center. Tutees can summon a tutor by making an appointment through a phone call or walking in to the center. Under this study at the writing center, tutees were required to stop by the front desk to be assigned a tutor. Once a tutee signed in with a front desk staff (summon), the staff went to a tutor who was available and had her/him take the tutee into her/his cubicle (answer). The recordings do not include the very beginning encounter of the tutoring session such as *summon-answer* since the consent form was given and signed by both participants later in the interaction.

Greetings

Greeting sequences were initiated when the tutors first met the tutees at the front desk to take them to their cubicles. As mentioned earlier in the *summon-answer*, these sequences were not recorded since they occurred before the participants signed the consent forms.

Preliminary Institutional Business

In the writing center, tutors are obliged to uphold the policies and constraints in the center as a representative. Thus, preliminary institutional business generally occurs during the tutoring services. The provided excerpts are from the opening of each tutorial. In all excerpts, “Tut” stands for “Tutor” and “Tte” stands for “Tutee.” Excerpt 1 illustrates the preliminary institutional business in opening sequences.

Excerpt 1. Opening: Preliminary institutional business (with native speaker tutee)

- 1 → Tut: here you go
2 → ((Tutor hands tutee the form and pen))
3 Tte: it's alright man I got mine
4 ((Tutee takes out his pen and signs form))
5 Tut: okay
6 ((Tutee is filing out the form))
7 Tte: I don't know how it is. It's how it works out. (XXXX)
8 Tut: that was the just uh (0.4) a new thing hah
9 Tte: yeah °(its all good)°
10 ((Tutor takes the forms and hands it to a person off screen))
11 Tut: have a seat

12 ((The person off screen says "thank you guys"))
 13 Tut: alri::ght.
 14 Tte: let me (1.0)
 15 Tut: okay so::
 16 Tte: get my stuff out
 17 → Tut: what is this for?

The tutor hands the consent form to the tutee and the tutee signs the form (lines 1-6). In line 7, after signing in the consent form, the tutee expresses his doubt about the recording. This may indicate the tutee did not receive a sufficient explanation about the procedure. The tutor downgrades the tutee's suspicion to possibly make the procedure going smoothly by using *just*, laughter and providing an account for his doubt (line 8). In line 12, the researcher takes the consent forms from both the tutor and tutee. In line 15, the tutor signals the incipient speakership by saying *okay* and uses *so*-prefacing (Bolden, 2009) to wrap up the opening so as to move the conversation into the main business. Then, the tutor utilizes a general inquiry to inquire about the tutee's reason (or problem) for coming to this tutoring session (line 17). This evokes the "service relationship" between them (Heritage & Robinson, 2006, p. 92).

Small talk

Small talk, 'phatic communication' (Malinowski, 1994), is utilized "to establish rapport and maintain relationship" (Reinking, 2013, p. 69). In the opening of the tutoring sessions, two out of the five tutors initiated small talk before getting into the tutoring business. Each tutor produced *setting talk* (Wong & Waring, 2010; Maynard & Zimmerman, 1984) and *itemized news inquiry* (Button & Casey, 1985, pp. 5-6) in the opening. Excerpts 2a and 2b are examples.

Excerpt 2a. Opening: Setting talk (with non native speaker tutee)

18 (4.0)
 19 → Tut: yea sorry that chairs broken [and I'm not [sure why
 20 Tte: [yea [yea
 21 Tut: but its so small its kind of infuriate(hh)ing(hh) .
 22 (5.0)
 23 Tut: Okay. (0.4) Umm (0.6) are we officially on paged cause we're
 24 ((Tutee is talking to person out of screen))
 25 (14.0)
 26 ((Tutor is talking to person out of screen))
 27 Tut: anyways, okay u[hh]mm so what kind of topic here what
 28 umm (0.2) this is for?

In Excerpt 2a, the tutor employs setting talk to elicit a small chat with the tutee in the opening sequences (lines 19 to 21). Since there is no response from the tutee (line 22), the tutor starts continuing her turn in line 23. Both participants speak with a person out of screen (lines 23 to 26). In line 27, the tutor shifts their focus to the tutoring with the disjunctive marker, *anyways* (Crow, 1983, pp. 141-143) and leads the conversation to the core agenda with the discourse marker *so*, and problem inquiry.

Excerpt 2b. Opening: Itemized news inquiry (with non native speaker tutee)

1 ((Tutor is looking at the camera))
2 → Tut: So when do you graduate?
3 ((Tutor looks at student))
4 Tte: Hopefully, (1.0) next year?
5 Tut: Oh okay, okay.=
6 Tte: =may ninth hopefully.
7 → Tut: yea my friend umm (1.0) she's social work(0.5) Her name
8 is miko?
9 Tte: °°miiko? °°
10 Tut: °do you know miko? ° She was social work ↓like she
11 graduated ↓like
12 Tte: yea I know miko
13 Tut: yea [she graduated really early
14 Tte: [she was the president of the club=
15 Tut: =really?
16 Tte: yeah I guess.
17 (3.0)
18 Tut: yeah she graduated really early like in one year
19 (1.0)
20 Tut: yeah
21 (13.0)
22 ((Tutor is looking at the camera))
23 → Tut: and then umm soeun?
24 (3.0)
25 ((Tutor looks at tutee))
26 Tut: the °korean lady?°=
27 Tte: =yeah
28 Tut: yeah yeah yeah=
29 Tte: =(alright) my best friend.
30 Tut: ↑oh hah hah
31 Tte: yeah, we are the only international student
32 Tut: oh hah hah I miss her. She used to work here[but
33 she's gone
34 Tte: [ummhmm
35 Tte: yeah
36 Tut: yeah
37 Tte: she came back
38 Tut: ↑what?
39 Tte: yeah now she is here
40 Tut: ↑↑Oh:::
41 Tte: she's looking for a job
42 Tut: oh that's good
43 Tte: ummhmm
44 Tut: yeah
45 (0.8)
46 ((Tutor looks at the camera))
47 ((Tutor looks at tutee))
48 tell her I said hi
49 Tte: I will.
50 ((Tutee points to tutor))

51 what's your name?
 52 Tut: uh John
 53 Tte: John oh
 54 Tut: yeah
 55 ((Tutor points to the name tag on shirt))
 56 Tte: okay
 57 Tut: yeah hah hah (1.0) °yeah° °°okay.°°
 58 (2.0)
 59 Tte: °°okay°°
 60 (1.0)
 61 Tut: so:(1.0) what essay is this?
 62 ((Tutor pulls paper toward his side of table))

In Excerpt 2b, the tutor seems not in a rush to move to the tutoring business. One notable aspect is that the tutor initiates several related topics to sustain small talk with the tutee by targeting a specific newsworthy item related to the recipient (recipient-design) and seeking for a common topic for them, namely, their mutual friends.

In line 2, the tutor shows his interest in a recipient-related event (graduation) by deploying itemized news inquiry. Even though the tutee provides the curtailed response in line 4, the tutor maintains the topic by using the acknowledgement token in line 5. Indeed, in line 6, the tutee elaborates further. In lines 7 to 8, the tutor uses a stepwise topic shift to introduce a new focus about their possible common friend, Miko, (“yea”: acknowledgement token as a pivot).

The long pauses might indicate the closing of the current topic (lines 17, 19, and 21); however, in line 23, the tutor initiates a related topic about another possible common friend, Soeun. This topic is developed by both the tutor and tutee until line 49, with the tutor producing topic expansions in several places (lines 26 and 32). Finally, with several pauses (lines 57, 58, and 60), the small talk closes and the tutor launches the first orientation to the tutoring business with a *so*-prefaced problem inquiry concerning the focal object of the encounter (line 61). With this and the body orientation (line 62), the tutor projects the upcoming core action of their meeting.

Advice giving and receipt

A major part of the recorded writing tutoring sessions displays advice giving and receiving sequences. I categorized the advice sequences occurred in the writing tutoring sessions into two types: tutee-initiated advice sequence and tutor-initiated advice sequence.

Tutee-initiated advice sequences

In the course of tutoring, tutees requested advice or presented a problem to seek advice. I provide four tutoring excerpts with three native English speaking tutees and one tutee who is a non-native speaker. Although the tutees requested for advice, the following excerpts show that they maintained their knowledgeable and competent appearance by utilizing a closed question, suggesting a solution to the advice provider, asserting knowledge or competence (e.g. *I know*), and giving an account for the request for advice.

Before Excerpt 3a, the tutee receives a piece of advice from the tutor about the style of synthesis essay.

Excerpt 3a. Tutee's question (native speaker tutee)

101 → Tte: I had °another que-° I just thought like[soo
 102 Tut: [yea
 103 → Tte: when it comes to like synthesis, so is it like
 104 (1.0) would you be like synthesizing all the way
 105 through or would you be like, like you, you,
 106 you'd like kind of like set your background okay so
 107 this is what I'm talking about these are (.) the
 108 things I'm talking about (0.2) and like maybe give
 109 your opinion here and there and then you go into it
 110 or like along the way like, you, do that, that's
 111 what I'm wondering.
 112 Tut: what do you mean go into it . like you get
 113 into [umm,
 114 Tte: [like synthesizing.
 115 Tut: well I think just by combining the authors ideas
 116 with your ideas.
 117 Tte: that's considered syn[thesizing.
 118 Tut: [yeah.
 119 Tte: °oohh okay. [I got it°.
 120 ((Tutor turns the monitor toward her to read))

In line 101, the tutee initiates the preliminary question for advice. The tutor recognizes the projected question and provides the acknowledgement token *yea* (line 102). Then, the tutee implicitly requests advice by proposing the course of actions in his question (lines 103-111). The tutee deploys a polar question (yes/no) to elicit the tutor's support for the proposed actions (lines 104-106). After the 0.2 second pause, the tutee offers the tutor a solution to his problem (lines 108-110), and he leaves his uncertainty of the matter at the end (line 111). In this way, the tutee exhibits independent knowledge or competence in the issue rather than showing insufficient knowledge and needing someone's assistance during the advice sequences. In line 115, the tutor offers her advice in response to the tutee's question. The tutee accepts the tutor's advice by providing a summary statement of the advice (line 117). In line 119, the tutee continues the advice acceptance by treating it as informative with the marked advice receipt, *oh* marker (Heritage & Sefi, 1992). Then, the advice sequence seems to be closed and the interactants orient to the next activity. This excerpt shows that tutees, while seeking advice, also do interactional work to demonstrate their competence and knowledge during advice uptake.

Excerpts 3b, 3c, and 3d show another method by tutees to initiate advice sequences, namely, by presenting their problems. Excerpt 3b involves a tutee who is a native speaker. Prior to Excerpt 3b, the tutor and tutee have a small chat.

Excerpt 3b. Problem presentation by tutee (native speaker tutee)

29 → Tte: anyway (0.4) umm so this this (0.7) an annotated bib right?
 30 ((Tutee is raising his arm and gazing at the tutor))
 31 Tut: yeah
 32 Tte: [so what can I tell
 33 Tut: [so basically its basically you searching for your
 34 sources okay?
 35 Tte: °mm hm°

36 Tut: for your essay for your argument that basically you're
 37 just giving them a synopsis here like a brief step in
 38 to what [that source is
 39 ((Tutor explains it with his hand motion))
 40 Tte: [oh I remember that
 41 ((Tutee showed his hand motion))
 42 Tte: it's the summary [that
 43 Tut: [yeah [yeah like a summary how is it
 44 Tte: [like yeah yeah
 45 Tut: Useful to your to your paper what are you going to use
 46 it for °you°- you know is it is it something that you
 47 could= (0.7) you could find because XXXX
 48 Tte: =yeah
 49 Tte: ive done tons of these before [I just hh don't
 50 remember [like yeah
 51 Tut: [oh
 52 Tut: [you just did it

In line 29, the tutee shifts toward another topic, an annotated bibliography, with the disjunctive marker *anyway*. The nonverbal action reinforces the tutee's uncertainty about the assignment (line 30). In response, the tutor orients to the tutee's problem presented and offers his advice by suggesting the future course of action (lines 31 and 33-39). In line 40, the tutee responds with a marked acknowledgement, *oh* marker after the given advice and exhibits his knowledge on the problem as saying he just forgot about this. It is important to note that the tutee continues displaying his knowledge on the annotated bibliography (lines 42 and 44) and in line 49, the tutee mentions his past experiences working with the annotated bibliography, reinforcing that he forgot about the matter rather than being ignorant. In this way, the tutee presents himself as having experience and knowledge with the issue. In line 52, the tutor goes along with his display by acknowledging the tutee's past experience.

Excerpt 3c involves a tutee who is a non-native speaker. Before Excerpt 3c, the tutor goes over grammar on the tutee's paper and offers advice for the mistakes.

Excerpt 3c. Problem presentation by tutee (non-native speaker tutee) & advice account

1 Tte: this is one thing= °xxxx° uh::
 2 ((Student flips through the pages of paper))
 3 Tut: =mm hm
 4 → Tte: (8.0) yeah (0.8) so in here uh: (1.0) you put a period here=
 5 Tut: =mmm hmm
 6 → Tte: (0.6) in another sentence=
 7 Tut: =yeah that way um cause it kind of (0.3) it (0.5) there was
 8 like umm it was (0.3) it kind of felt like (0.4) too long
 9 so um I kind of wanted you to split it up in different
 10 ((Tutor's phone goes off and tutor quickly silences it))
 11 umm (1.0) in different- (1.0) °xx° im just going to put this on
 12 do not disturb umm (1.0) yeah there was kind of like a (0.4)
 13 it kind of felt like a run on so I kind of wanted you
 14 to split it up into two sentences
 15 Tte: so because I (0.7) I'm going to split it up (0.5) in two
 16 sentences (0.5) there both sentence=

17 Tut: =they're from the same
 18 source=
 19 Tte: =from the same source [so how to (0.8) should I
 20 Tut: [yeah
 21 Tte: like (cabinist) (0.4) britain
 22 Tut: [oh >no no no< I think it's fine yeah
 23 Tte: [or
 24 it's fine then right there
 25 Tut: yeah
 26 Tte: its not (0.8) plagiarism or something= no (0.5) i'm afraid of
 27 Tut: =yeah its not yeah
 28 Tte: doing that hah hah
 29 Tut: yeah i'm afraid of them (0.3) plagiarism too

In line 1, the tutee initiates problem presentation with the use of the prospective indexical *this* (Goodwin, 1996) to project further telling. In line 2, the non-verbal action reinforces the projection of problem presentation as the tutee is searching for something through his paper. The tutor, in line 3, shows a *go-ahead* (Schegloff, 2007) to let the tutee know he is ready for the problem presentation. The tutee presents the problem, which has to do with the tutor's previous correction of his essay by inserting a period to break up a sentence into two (lines 4-6). The tutor treats this as a request for an explanation and provides an account for the correction (lines 7-14).

The tutee, however, provides an account for his problem presentation: the insertion of the period may cause a loss of the linkage to the citation (lines 15, 16 and 19). The tutee's displayed independent knowledge about the issue of plagiarism can be seen in the fact that even after the tutor has assured him that the insertion of the period is fine (line 22) and the tutee has acknowledged the advice (line 24), the tutee still seeks for the tutor's confirmation that the period insertion will not lead to plagiarism (lines 26 and 28). In lines 27 and 29, the tutor agrees with the tutee's perspective, possibly expressing an alignment with him. In this excerpt, the tutee showed delayed display of independent knowledge after advice giving while the tutees in excerpts 3a and 3b indicated immediate knowledge display after the given advice.

Excerpt 3d illustrates the opening part of a tutoring session in which the tutor initiates the session with a general service offer, and the tutee presents a problem in response to initiate advice-giving by the tutor.

Excerpt 3d. Problem presentation by tutee (with native speaker tutee)

1 ((Tutee is filling out a form))
 2 (14.0)
 3 ((Tutor hands a paper to a person)) (5.0)
 4 → Tut: alright so what are we going to work on today
 5 → Tte: umm so I just need to go over pretty much a majority
 6 of my umm it's a- art research argument essay for my
 7 writing twelve hundred class umm and I have majority
 8 of it done and so I kind of touch up on it and then
 9 see if there anyways that I can incorporate the rest
 10 of the stuff that I >worked over briefly< umm im also
 11 kind of struggling on where I need to put my thesis or
 12 if I should fix my thesis at all [cause it kind of
 13 Tut: [okay
 14 ((Tutor nods))

15 Tte: sounds a little bit umm jumbled so im tryna help it
16 fit what my papers really kind of strength entail [and
17 Tut: [okay
18 ((Tutor nods))
19 Tte: then theres a couple places I have highlighted that im
20 not sure if (0.8) umm it fits like its correct umm or if the
21 ((Tutor nods))
22 Tte: grammar should change or stuff like that so [I kind of
23 Tut: [okay
24 Tte: just have some different stuff in there as well
25 Tut: so have you gotten any feedback from your professor
26 Tte: umm he is giving it back to us next tuesday
27 Tut: okay
28 ((Tutor nods head))
29 Tte: so he will be giving back to me as well. Umm we did
30 peer editing last class so I have the one that was
31 peer edited [and then
32 → Tut: [is there anything that you're kind of
33 particularly concerned about= (0.9) that you want to work
34 Tte: =umm
35 Tut: on
36 → Tte: I don't think maybe just transitions like I feel like
37 my paragraphs they kind of flow but not [enough to
38 Tut: [okay
39 ((Tutor nods))
40 Tte: write about them to sound all like they're all flowing
41 into one paper umm and then just if mostly my thesis
42 and then where I should incorporate it cause he was
43 kind of saying like at the end of (0.4) your paper might
44 sound good as like it comes together and explains like
45 how you feel about everything but at the same time
46 other people were kind of saying oh maybe you can put
47 it like after your first introduction paragraph and
48 Tte: [stuff like that [so
49 Tut: [yeah (0.4) [so I think (0.8) that what he was
50 saying is like so your intro- your thesis does go at
51 the end of your introduction= so it should be the last
52 Tte: =right
53 Tut: thing in your introduction but I think what doctor
54 favo was suggesting was that you bring it back up
55 Tut: [again in the con[clusion to remind readers why you've
56 Tte: [okay [umm hmm
57 ((Tutee nods head))
58 Tut: told them all of [this information= and to kind of
59 Tte: [right =yeah
60 Tut: draw it all together
61 Tte: okay that makes sense
62 Tut: okay ((Tutor starts reading paper))

After the tutee fills out the consent form and the tutor hands it to a researcher, the tutor offers a general service inquiry for this tutoring session (line 4). The tutee initiates a problem indicative

response (lines 5-12). The tutee presents her problem by describing her past course of actions; possibly projecting her knowledgeability on this assignment (lines 5-10). Then, she ends her turn with stating her problem (lines 11-12) although the problem is presented rather tentatively (“or if I should fix my thesis at all”). The tutee continues to bring up another concern with grammar and vague issues (“some different stuff in there as well”) until line 24. It appears that there are multiple and unclear problems being presented at the moment. In line 25, instead of providing advice, the tutor seeks verification of a detail in the tutee’s narrative, namely, whether she has received feedback from her teacher on the paper. After the tutee’s reply (lines 26-31), it still seems unclear which of the many problems the student needs help with. This may be why the tutor issues a specific problem inquiry to enter advice-giving (lines 32-33). In lines 36 to 48, the tutee provides the detailed description of a specific problem, transitions. With the problem being made clear, the tutor offers her advice with multiple turns that her thesis should go at the end of her introduction paragraph (lines 49-60). The tutee accepts the advice with the marked acknowledgement (lines 52, 59, and 61) and nonverbal action (line 57). In line 62, the tutor recognizes the tutee’s advice acceptance and ends the advice sequence with *sequence-closing third* (Wong & Waring, 2010).

In this excerpt, the advice sequence is initiated by the tutee’s problem presentation. However, we have seen that when the problem is not made clear, the tutor then uses problem inquiry to pinpoint the student’s need and launch advice-giving. The tutee exhibits knowledge of her assignment when requesting advice and shows a direct acceptance of the advice. This may indicate the tutee might perceive the tutor as more knowledgeable in the subject matter than her, but she tries to maintain her competent position in the action.

Tutor-initiated advice giving

During the tutoring actions, the tutors in the data offered their own advice in two methods: giving bare advice and noticing a problem with a tutee’s writing. The tutors tended to orient to the next activity once the advice offered was accepted by the tutees.

Bare advice is the most basic type of advice sequence; it has “only the advice for a future course of action without additional information about that action” (Nguyen, p. 34, 2012). Before Excerpt 4a, the tutor is reading the paper aloud and going over the grammar.

Excerpt 4a. Bare advice (with nonnative speaker tutee)

1 ((Tutor is reading the tutee’s paper aloud))
 2 → Tut: so then what I would do here is (0.5) khm mmm you want
 3 something called like parallelism [when you’re writing=
 4 Tte: [°mm° =°mm°
 5 Tut: umm so you have (0.4) f- umm (0.3) is fluent speaking= and
 6 Tte: =mm
 7 Tut: then accomplish the task= these are two kind of like(0.8)
 8 Tte: =mm
 9 Tut: different like (0.4) they work together= but they are
 10 Tte: =mm
 11 Tut: formatted in different ways= so what I would say here
 12 Tte: =mm
 13 Tut: is the aim of TBLT is (0.5) umm I would maybe say <to> (0.4)

14 <speak> (1.4) <fluently>= (20.) and to accompli- sorry so that
 15 Tte: ah: =mm ((Tutee nods))
 16 Tut: would go here and to accomplish the task [for learners
 17 Tte: [ah: ((Tutee nods))
 18 Tut: so that way umm they're just kind of (0.4) matching [up
 19 Tte: [ah okay
 20 ((Tutee nods))
 21 Tut: both= (0.3) yeah
 22 Tte: =mm
 23 ((Tutor continues reading the paper))

In lines 2 to 3, the tutor initiates by giving a piece of advice about parallelism in writing. The tutee recognizes the incoming advice and provides acknowledgement tokens, *mm* (line 4). The tutor continues her advice giving until line 21. The tutor advises the tutee to change *speaking* from a form of gerund to a form of to-infinitive, *to speak*, to create a so-called parallelism effect. Until line 22, the tutee continuously produces the acknowledgement token, *mm* as she is listening to the advice so as to claim “hearing-understanding” (Jefferson, 2002, p. 1353) and invite continuation (Schegloff, 1982). The tutee accepts the advice as informative with the marked acknowledgement *ah* and a nod (lines 15, 17, 19, and 20). Then, the tutor soon perceives the acceptance of advice and moves onto the reading activity.

The other way to give advice in a tutoring center was observed through a problem noticing-advice giving sequence. In this sequence, the tutor noticed a problem while reading the tutee’s paper and provided her advice, as seen in Excerpt 4b.

Excerpt 4b. Problem noticing-advice giving (with native speaker tutee)

24 ((Tutor is looking at the paper))
 25 → Tut: umm and then here (0.4) just because you will be using
 26 actual quotes unless this is like exactly the word
 27 that he used [you can just use single quotes [to
 28 Tte: [mm hmm↑ [okay
 29 Tut: indicate that you are using a set phrase but not a
 30 direct [quote
 31 Tte: [okay yeah because its its not a direct quote.
 32 [I hope that's fine
 33 Tut: [mm hmm
 34 Tut: yeah so you would use single quotes to indicate that
 35 this is a set phrase that you (use) like (0.2)
 36 ((Tutor makes air quotation sign with hands))
 37 Tut: [like that (0.4) but not a direct quote
 38 Tte: [mm hmm (0.5) yeah
 39 Tte: gotcha okay
 40 ((Tutor continues reading the paper))

In lines 25 to 26, the tutor notices the tutee’s problem of using double quotes for a single quote and offers advice (line 27). In line 31, the tutee accepts the advice by repeating the part of the advice given. However, the tutee also adds a hedge that may weaken this acceptance (“I hope that’s fine,” line 32). This may be why the tutor re-issues the advice (lines 34-37). The tutee

finally upgrades the advice acknowledgement by producing a more definitive response (“gotcha okay,” line 39) and the advice sequence closes.

Pre-Closing and Closing

As soon as the agenda of the session is completed, the interactants mutually “negotiate the relevancy of the closing” to terminate the tutoring session (Nguyen, 2012). The tutors and tutees in the data tended to initiate closure with pre-closing sequences before the *terminal exchange* (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), as seen in Excerpt 10a. The pre-closing sequences often opened up the actual closing. The pre-closing sequences in some cases strongly projected closure of conversation and the conversation came to an end without the terminal exchange (Excerpt 7a and 8a). However, some pre-closing sequences led to a move out of closing because a participant introduces a new topic (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973) or a new sequence (Excerpt 5a and 7b). The closing was often delivered with the nonverbal action (with a projection of leave-taking). Once a leave-taking occurred, there was no further extending talk.

The types of pre-closing utilized in the writing tutoring sessions by both tutors and tutees include assessment, advice giving/requesting, announced closing, appreciation, jokes, invitation for questions, and arrangement sequences.

Excerpt 5a is an example of assessment inquiry followed by advice giving, both done by the tutor.

Excerpt 5a. Tutor-initiated assessment inquiry & advice giving (with a native speaker tutee)

1 → Tut: so how do you feel about now?
 2 Tte: awesome. [I feel a lot better about it. Yeah.
 3 Tut: [okay
 4 cool [cool
 5 Tte: [I was pretty nervous but this makes me feel like
 6 I can (0.6) put it all together and make it sound a
 7 little bit (0.4) more structured or yeah
 8 → Tut: so a couple of kind of strategy you can use is when
 9 you have it all drafted out=(0.5) if you go through and
 10 write in the margins what each paragraph is about=
 11 then you can just like one sentence like (0.4) uh (0.5)
 12 Tte: =umm hmm =okay
 13 Tut: parents controlling their children just such and such=
 14 Tte: =yeah
 15 Tut: if you read those sentences just by themselves= if
 16 Tte: =mmm hmm
 17 Tut: that makes its own kind of logical flow its own
 18 paragraph that makes sense then your flow is good.

In Excerpt 5a, the tutor shifts the direction of the tutoring towards the closure of the conversation with the change of token *so*, and the assessment pre-closing sequence; asking the tutee about her feeling of the tutoring session (line 1). The tutee responds with positive assessment (line 2). The tutor provides a sequence-closing third to end the sequence (line 3). However, the tutee continues her assessment and elaborates how the tutoring was helpful (lines 5-7). In line 8, in response to the tutee’s expression of trouble (“I was pretty nervous,” line 5), the tutor initiates advice giving.

This leads to drastic movement out of the closing. Then, the tutor’s advice-giving sequence continues until line 18.

Excerpt 5b shows an interesting case in which a tutee requests assessment from the tutor, and the tutor manages the delicate extent of his evaluation on the quality of the tutee’s paper.

Excerpt 5b. Tutee-initiated assessment & advice inquiry (with a non-native speaker tutee)

19 → Tte: (1.0) so since you read my article how was it?
 20 Tut: hmm?
 21 Tte: since you read it how was it do you like uh uh
 22 (1.0)
 23 is it worth s-submit it (0.7) [is it good
 24 Tut: [yeah i think I
 25 → Tte: do you have suggestion (any)
 26 Tut: oh umm when when I get like something that’s
 27 like (0.5) <not (0.5) engli-> like not writing or
 28 english related cause its kinda like social work and
 29 it deals with like marketing. (0.5) I pay more
 30 attention to like the grammar (0.5) like (0.4)
 31 mechanics of it
 32 Tte: mm hm
 33 Tut: but I didn’t see any like when I read it I didn’t
 34 umm (0.5) get an I didn’t need like explanation of
 35 anything. so umm (0.5) I think everything was pretty
 36 much like (0.5) I was looking at (0.5) things that
 37 kind of like (0.3) if it didn’t make sense I would
 38 like to tell you (0.6) but umm (0.9) I think it
 39 didn’t really need explaining
 40 Tte: oh [oka:y okay
 41 Tut: [yeah
 42 Tte: okay. but like (0.5) umm (0.4) the content is okay
 43 like
 44 Tut: yeah
 45 Tte: (1.0) hopefully
 46 ((Tutee picks up paper))

In Excerpt 5b, the tutee asks for the tutor’s assessment of his paper, which projects the closing of the tutoring session (line 19). The tutor’s repair indicates a delayed response to the tutee’s request (line 20). The tutee then provides self-repair by simplifying his question (line 21). The tutor delays his response through the two pauses after the tutee’s request has been made clear, which necessitates the tutee to reproduce his request a third time (“is it worth s-submit it,” line 23). In line 24, the tutor overlaps with the tutee’s fourth reproduction of the request (“is it good”) and initiates what seems to be an assessment. However, perhaps due to the delayed nature of the tutor’s response, the tutee scales back his request for assessment, and only requests for “suggestion” (line 25). The tutor seems to abandon the in-progress request for assessment and responds to the revised request with a delayed assessment, in which the assessment comes very late in the turn (lines 26-39). Further, the tutor’s assessment is rather non-evaluative (“I think it didn’t really need explaining,” lines 38-39) and does not match the tutee’s earlier request for an evaluative assessment (“how was it,” “is it worth submitting it” and “is it good”). This lack of an

evaluative assessment from the tutor may have triggered the tutee's continued pursuit of the tutor's assessment on the paper's content (lines 42-43). The tutor answers with a curtailed response ("yeah," line 44), showing both a weak assessment and lack of interest in expanding the conversation. The tutee seems to recognize both and produces an optimistic projection ("hopefully," line 45). In line 46, the tutee's non-verbal action projects the progression to closing. This excerpt shows how a tutor managed the delicate nature of writing tutoring sessions: while tutors are highly involved in the tutee's writing, their involvement is limited to the technical aspects of writing and does not go into the content quality of writing.

Excerpt 6a and 6b exemplify the announced closings as a type of pre-closing in the data.

Excerpt 6a. Announced closing (with a non-native speaker tutee)

14 → Tte: o:kay.(0.4) and do:ne yeah?
 15 Tut: and yeah that's pretty much it.
 16 (0.7)
 17 Tut: yeah

In Excerpt 6a, the *announced pre-closing sequence* (Wong & Waring, 2010) is initiated by the tutee (line 14), which explicitly projects closing. The tutor goes along with the tutee by confirming the closing of the tutoring (lines 15-17).

Excerpt 6b. Announced closing (with a non-native speaker tutee)

61 → Tut: then I will walk you out
 62 Tte: thank you, :
 63 Tut: ↑yes of course↓
 64 ((Tutor stands up))
 65 ((Tutee stands up and starts to pack))

In Excerpt 6b, the tutor announced the closing (line 61). In line 62, the announced closing is accepted by the tutee and the non-verbal actions indicate that the conversation proceeds to a closure (lines 64-65).

Excerpts 7a and 7b show the tutees' appreciation as part of pre-closing.

Excerpt 7a. Assessment & appreciation (with a native speaker tutee)

19 → Tte: okay perfect awesome, ↑thank you so very much I
 20 → [really appreciate it↓
 21 Tut: [↑yeah↓
 22 no problem
 23 ((Tutor stands up))
 24 Tte: °just going to put this in my bag°
 25 ((Tutee puts stuff away and gets up))
 26 ((Both leave))

In Excerpt 7a, the tutee provides an assessment on the tutoring session, and shows appreciation, which projects closing (lines 19-20; Wong & Waring, 2010). The tutor responds to the thanking (lines 21-22) and projects leave-taking to close tutoring in a nonverbal way (line 23). In line 24,

the tutee orients to the projection of closing. Then, the leave-taking occurs and the conversation closes without terminal exchange (lines 25-26).

Excerpt 7b. Appreciation (with a non-native speaker tutee)

16 → Tte: thank you man. thank you so much [I appreciate your
17 time
18 Tut: [you're welcome
19 Tte: (1.0) so since you read my article how was it?
20 Tut: hmm?
21 Tte: since you read it how was it do you like uh uh

In Excerpt 7b, which comes before Excerpt 5b, the tutee's appreciation (lines 16-17), which signals the upcoming closing, is accepted by the tutor (line 18). However, in line 19, the tutee initiates a new sequence asking about the tutor's assessment of his paper. The tutor shows surprise as recognizing the drastic movement out of the closing (line 20). Then, the conversation seems to proceed with the new sequence, the assessment inquiry (line 21).

Excerpt 8a is a rare case in which the tutor initiates small talk in the form of a joke as part of pre-closing.

Excerpt 8a. Joke (with a non-native speaker tutee)

46 → Tut: yeah. this school's kind of scary
47 Tte: hh [heh heh
48 Tut: [yeah
49 Tut: well not really=
50 Tte: =this is good ahh
51 ((Both get up and leave))
52 Tut: okay

In Excerpt 8a, the tutor utilizes a joke to perhaps make the closing of the conversation smoother (line 46) and the laughter from the tutee follows (line 47). Then, both interactants project closure of the conversation in a non-verbal way (line 51) and orient to the closing without terminal exchange as leaving the table together.

As in many service encounters such as pharmacist and patient consultation (Nguyen, 2012), the tutors, as service providers, sometimes also initiate pre-closing by issuing an invitation to questions.

Excerpt 9a. Invitation for questions (with a non-native speaker tutee)

54 → Tut: so umm (0.4) yeah I think it looks awesome. Do you have
55 any other questions
56 Tte: (1.1) umm not now [so I should go hah hah and check if i
57 Tut: [no hah hah hah
58 → Tte: have something (0.2) I want to ask you again
59 Tut: okay awesome [hah hah
60 Tte: [hah hah hah
61 Tut: then I will walk you out
62 Tte: thank you,
63 Tut: ↑yes of course↓

In Excerpt 9a, in line 54, the tutor invites questions from the tutee, thus providing a last slot for the tutee to bring up any new requests, which projects closing. With a refusal to this invitation, the tutee co-constructs the closing, and mentions a possible next visit, which is an *arrangement pre-closing sequence* (lines 56-58; Wong & Waring, 2010). Then, both interactants move to the closing of the conversation (lines 61-63).

Finally, the tutoring session closes down with a terminal exchange, as shown in Excerpt 10a.

Excerpt 10a. Terminal exchange (with a non native speaker tutee)

64 ((Tutor stands up))
 65 ((Tutee stands up and starts to pack))
 66 Tte: I thought you were graduate
 67 Tut: no no i'm only a junior so I still have one more year
 68 after this.
 69 Tte: oh really?
 70 Tut: yeah, yeah (1.5) two more years to go. [I got this. it's
 71 Tte: [umm huh huh huh
 72 Tut: great. pull through it.hh.
 73 ((Tutee is packing her stuff into bag))
 74 Tte: thank you:
 75 → Tut: yeah of course I'll walk you out then
 76 ((Both tutor and tutee leave the cubicle))

In Excerpt 10a, which comes after Excerpt 9a, the non-verbal actions project the closing of the tutoring session (lines 64-65). However, the tutee initiated a new topic, the recipient-related event (graduation, line 66) to possibly move to the closing smoothly while packing her stuff. The small talk continues until line 72. Once the tutee finishes packing, she showed appreciation to the tutor (line 74). Then, the tutor initiated the terminal sequence (line 75) and the conversation came to a close (leave-taking, line 76).

To sum up, to move into closing of the tutoring interaction, the tutors deployed those pre-closing sequences: giving assessment, assessment inquiry, giving advice, announced closing, jokes and invitation for questions sequences. The tutees also utilized those pre-closing sequences: giving assessment, assessment inquiry, advice requesting, appreciation, announced closing, and arrangement sequences.

In all cases in the data, the nonverbal actions considerably contributed to the projection of closure.

Conclusion

This analysis has explored the overall sequential structure of a writing tutoring session, with a focus on what components it consist of and what interactional features are in each component. Based on its findings, this study suggests several teaching implications. First, teaching the overall sequences in a tutoring center will greatly raise students' awareness on how an opening moves into an agenda component, how actions are shifted, and how a closing is initiated in general. In particular, as for advice giving and receipt sequences, the findings here could possibly indicate that the native English speaking tutees managed their appearance of knowledgeability or

competence by utilizing a closed question, suggesting a solution to the advice provider, and asserting knowledge or competence when requesting and receiving advice rather than after advice-giving. While further research is needed to explore whether these patterns apply to a larger group of native and non-native speakers of English, ESL/EFL learners may need to be informed on how to manage their competent appearance as active advice requesters, just as the native speakers do. Understanding the authentic model of interactional practices will help learners communicate with native speakers of English in a more comprehensible manner, and empower them to use the second language strategically allowing them to portray themselves as they want. This will guide learners to be interactionally more competent in a second language context.

Second, this study provides a useful guideline for writing tutor training. It offers authentic tutoring data with native and nonnative speakers of English, enabling new tutor trainees to be familiar with the specific writing tutoring interactions. It will also be a good foundation where the tutoring curriculum can be developed for each tutoring center based on their settings or preferences (Reinking, 2013, p. 223).

The present study contains several limitations. One limitation is its small-scale. Since the data include only five tutoring sessions, it is challenging to generalize whether the data represents all interactional practices in a tutoring environment. The next limitation is the incomplete data in the openings. In most recordings, the opening component was recorded once the participants signed the consent form. Therefore, the recordings could not contain the very early beginning of the interactions, such as summon-answer, or greeting sequences in openings due to the subject's protection. Another limitation is the variation of participants. Considering the randomness of the walk-in tutees, it was also challenging to make a recording with only one group of speakers, either native English speakers or non-native speakers. Moreover, given that there were only three native speakers and two nonnative speakers, it was also difficult to make evident comparison between the two groups. One last limitation concerns authenticity. Some of the tutors and tutees in the recordings seemed to be aware of being recorded. This may have led the interactional practices to be not as natural as they would have been without being recorded.

For a future study, I hope to expand the current study with a larger number of participants for both groups. I would also set up the recording device in advance and have my participants sign the consent form before the recording so that I can catch the whole tutoring interactions. For future research, I hope to explore the overall sequential structure in other types of institutional talk in CA, such as classroom interactions to see any patterns in similarity and discrepancy with the current study.

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Appendix

Transcription notations (based on Jefferson, 2004):

.	falling intonation
?	rising intonation
/	slightly rising intonation
↑	rising pitch in the next phrase
↓	falling pitch in the next phrase
↑↓	pitch rises and falls within the next word
:	lengthened speech
=	latching speech
-	cut off word
<u>underlined</u>	<u>stressed syllable</u>
CAPITALIZED	higher volume
degree sign °	beginning and end of quieter speech
(())	nonverbal actions accompanying speech
xxxx	unintelligible talk
(guess)	the transcriber's best guess at an unclear utterance
[beginning of overlap of speech, or speech and nonverbal action
> <	sped up speech
< >	slowed down speech
.hh	in-breath. The more h's the longer the breath
hh.	out-breath(often heard as laughter). The more h's the longer the breath
!	animated or emphatic tone
(number)	duration of silence in tenths of seconds
→	specific parts of transcript discussed in analysis