

**Challenges in the Institution of Peer Tutoring:
Dilemmas in Student-Tutor Interaction**

by

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Abstract

This thesis project is an analysis of nine, 1-hour peer tutoring conversations between tutors and students at a university implemented tutoring organization. The primary framework for this study is grounded practical theory. Billig et al.'s (1988) notion of dilemmas is a secondary conceptual framework for this study. The analysis describes different situational and interactional practices that reveal ambiguous identities as a reflection of Billig et al.'s (1988) expert-equality dilemma. Analysis also shows framing practices that reflect the teaching-learning dilemma, where the intellectual ideology pertaining to collaboration between tutors and students competes with the lived (or experienced) ideology of hierarchy/authority in the educational institution, sometimes known as the "traditional" mode of education. These practices shed new light on the dilemmas as posing interesting challenges for participants. Furthermore, this study illuminates a definition of the peer tutoring situation where there is *both* collaboration and traditional education.

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I. Introduction

“There are these two young fish swimming along and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who nods at them and says ‘Morning, boys. How's the water?’ And the two young fish swim on for a bit, and then eventually one of them looks over at the other and goes ‘What the hell is water?’”

David Foster Wallace (2009)

Consider daily routines. The piercing noise streaming from the bedside table communicates that it is time to wake up. Movements are begrudgingly made from the warmth of the bed, across the cold wooden floors of the bedroom, towards the coffee pot in the kitchen. The stillness experienced is fleeting, for a busy day waits ahead. With the effects of fresh coffee streaming through the body, clothes are put on, teeth are brushed, and the roaring of the car's engine fills the early morning. The car takes its typical route, headed for work, where hours are spent interacting with colleagues (and perhaps friends). Rarely, however, are these daily routines consciously considered as they actually occur. One simply goes through the motions. Until something occurs that challenges the normality of daily life which individuals so fervently cling to. Just as the fish remains unaware of the water that surrounds her every move, humans often fail to recognize the most obvious realities that construct their daily lives.

The starting quote from Wallace's commencement address from Kenyon College, suggests that humans are trapped in the sameness of everyday life which ultimately prohibits them from becoming aware of the world around them. Wallace's speech suggests that humans spend too much time trying to discover Truth, rather than recognizing the importance of simple awareness. Little t “truth” or even “truths,” for Wallace, are real, crucial, and hidden in plain

sight in ways that require individuals to remind themselves again and again, “This is water, this is water.”

The study at hand largely follows this philosophy. As Tracy (2011) and so many social constructionists before her point out (e.g., Berger & Luckman, 1967; Mead, 1934; Pearce & Cronan, 1980), humans not only have the ability to make choices, they are capable of reflecting on the implications of those choices. Talking, like daily routines, often eludes simple awareness, but it has the unique capability of not only communicating, but also communicating *about* talk. Analogous to Wallace’s (2009) water surrounding fish, communication sustains, and even transforms human existence in ways that are largely taken for granted. But communication requires an extension to that metaphor. The ubiquitous nature of communication – talk-in-interaction – in this study – also constructs, often swallowing us so that we do not consider what it accomplishes in our daily interactions.

Communication research seeks to regain simple awareness (Wallace, 2009). For instance, researchers have examined talk in specific contexts to make broader claims about human communication (e.g., Ehrlich & Blum-Kulka, 2010; O’Halloran, 2005; Prego-Vazquez, 2007). Specifically, discourse analysts seek to make the implicit notion of everyday talk explicit (Tracy, 2011). They do what humans often fail to do. They bring attention to the functions of talk in ways that cultivate awareness. Although Wallace used the term *simple* awareness, discourse analysts make practitioners more aware of the *complex* nature of talk that is often overlooked.

Consider peer tutoring as a communicative situation largely overlooked, perhaps due to its assumed conventionality. Its oxymoronic name, peer tutoring, poses an interesting dynamic where the assumed equality of a peer relationship is challenged by the traditional asymmetrical relational baggage of teaching and learning that comes with tutoring. This thesis considers these

challenges. I will focus on the discursive practices tutors and students enact that reveal and deal with these challenges or tensions that arise in interaction.

This thesis begins with a discussion of the theoretical background that frames my study. I first discuss discourse as a social construction before introducing and providing an extensive explanation of grounded practical theory as the theoretical model for reconstructing and examining tutor-student interaction. I also review discourse and discourse analysis as particularly relevant to this theoretical approach, including research that uses discourse as a construction of identity. In the final section, I explain dilemmatic challenges in communication, specifically in regard to the expertise-equality dilemma, the teaching-learning dilemma, and their potential manifestation in peer tutoring. After articulating a specific research question regarding dilemmas in peer tutoring, the materials and methods section explains the specific approach to discourse analysis taken and provides background information regarding data collection.

II. Theoretical Framework

“The world is not categorized by God or nature in ways that we are all forced to accept. It is constituted in one way or another as people talk it, write it, and argue it.”

Jonathan Potter (2005)

Potter’s (2005) conceptualization of the “world” provides a useful starting point for a discussion of the theoretical framework for this thesis. For Potter (2005) the world is not one of absolutes. Reality, in this sense, is produced, maintained, and transformed through the social practices in which we actively participate (Potter, 2005). This point of view is social constructionist where talk and texts are part of the social practices that produce versions of the world. When we talk, we take a stand on what the world is really like to us (Gee, 2011). Talking communicates a perspective about what is real, what is acceptable, what is normal, how things ought to be for some and how things ought to be for others. Furthermore, everyday talk mirrors, builds, sustains, and even transforms who people are and how they view the world.

Similar to Potter (2005), Craig and Tracy (1995) argue that our identities, world views, and ideals regarding the best way to communicate are exposed in the conversational practices we employ. Moreover, our tendency towards normativity is produced and reproduced in our social interactions (see also Gee, 2011). The conversations we have, words we write, and arguments we make are products of human action, grounding the realities we socially construct.

This philosophical framework provides insight into tutor-student interactions, allowing a viewpoint in which discursive moves may construct but also constrict the tutor-student dynamic. When tutors and students interact, they make choices – though not always consciously – about how to talk. This talk shapes the interaction. Interaction, then, is a goal-oriented activity, or as Kellerman (1992) once described, is “primarily automatic” but “inherently strategic.” Discursive strategies about talk also reveal how the tutor and the student each think the interaction should play out. Over the course of an interaction, expectations may be challenged, which leads to problems for the tutor, the student, or their relationship. Although Potter (2005) and Edwards (2005) provide a useful starting point for viewing discourse and social construction, they leave out a framework for reconstructing communication problems that arise in interactions, particularly in a way that invites discussion of how such a problem ought to be managed. Craig and Tracy (1995), however, propose a framework that combines Potter’s philosophical underpinnings with the rational reconstruction of communication problems to inform communicators about the best way to communicate in certain situations.

Grounded Practical Theory (GPT)

GPT views communication as practice for the sake of improving our understanding of the theory-practice relationship (Craig, 1999; Craig & Tracy, 1995). Rather than explaining or speculating in regard to an existing reality, like challenges in education, practical theory reconstructs and articulates communication problems in a particular situation (Craig & Tracy, 1995). Thus, the grounded aspect of GPT refers to communicative problems that are situated in specific interactions and revealed through talk. Craig (1999; 2005) argues that practical metadiscourse is inherently part of communication practice. Here again is the reflexive nature of communication, where communicative acts are with the ability to talk about these communicative

acts (Craig, 1999; 2005). Communication can be seen as multi-layered with the ability to talk and the ability to talk about that talk. This ability is also a process of social construction where talk and talking about talk in a particular way, shapes how a situation and others are regarded. With this ability in mind, GPT works as a framework that unites the technical and productive (i.e., *techne*) facets of communication with the moral (i.e., *praxis*) facets that guide communication practices (Craig, 1989; Craig & Tracy, 1995). The technical and productive facets of communication refer to the strategic nature of talk in conversation. Those strategic choices are also influenced by moral facets of communication, or commonly accepted parameters for how one ought to talk in certain situations.

GPT proposes a metatheoretical model for developing, questioning, or advancing theories – however formal or informal – about normative practices. Where scientific theory is concerned with what *is*, normative theory is concerned with what *ought* to be (Craig & Tracy, 1995; Tracy & Craig, 2010). A focus on what ought to be emphasizes the practical and moral implications of what individuals consider *ideal* situations in social interactions (Castor, 2005; Craig & Tracy, 1995; Gee, 2011; Tracy, 1995). Inquiry into conversational practices necessitates a reconstruction of communication problems and the normative ideals that guide communicative acts. Reconstruction captures conversational practices as experienced by the practitioners, as opposed to imposing concepts, hypotheses, or theories *onto* the communication in question. GPT provides multiple modes of exploration at the problem, technical, and philosophical levels to reveal communication problems practitioners experience and the specific strategies used to manage those problems (e.g., D’Enbeau & Kunkel, 2013).

To better understand the construction and reconstruction of conversational practices in specific situations, I identify and discuss four key features of GPT. It is necessary to have a clear

understanding of each feature in order to theorize or make claims regarding peer tutoring interactions. I discuss these features individually, but they are intricately related and interdependent. I begin by explaining communication *practices* in a broad sense before discussing the interactional *problems* that make the larger practices interesting and worthy of scholarly attention. To better understand the communicative actions that individuals take, I then focus on the nature of *normativity* as managed and revealed in talk. Finally, I emphasize the *reconstruction* of communication practices as a tool for scholars to gain insight into the interactional problems practitioners face, and the normative ideals that ultimately construct, guide, and constrain human action.

practices.

Communication as *practice* refers to the set of activities in which individuals within a particular culture commonly take part (Craig, 2006). Like talk, “practice” is metadiscursive in that practice is the actual activity (e.g., a batter at the plate – the practice of batting), but practice may also refer to efforts to master that activity (e.g., going to batting practice at the batting cages). “Practice” is also a term for application. Business practices, religious practices, and scholarly practices are only a few examples. In regard to communication, however, practice refers to doing anything that involves the exchange of messages in a given situation (Craig, 2006). Examples of communication practices are questioning (e.g., Tracy & Robles, 2010), negotiating (e.g., Agne, 2007), interviewing (e.g., Mirivel, 2008), and meeting (e.g., Tracy & Dimock, 2004).

Practice also involves thinking and talking about those activities in particular ways (Craig, 2006). The practice of questioning, for example, changes depending on the setting, participants in the interaction, and the specific purpose for questioning. Conversational practices

serve functions that have both practical and moral implications for communicators (Craig & Tracy, 1995). Practically, decisions about talk are guided by how people are expected to talk (Craig & Tracy, 1995). Morally, people make decisions about their conversational practices that best serve their needs in certain situations. Bergmann (1998) argues that everyday interactions construct discourse as morally implicative and ultimately recognizable to communicators. That is, communicators make strategic choices regarding talk so that its meaning is recognized and evaluated as good/bad, selfish/humane, or right/wrong by participants in the interaction (Bergmann, 1998). Morality, then, is not explicitly one's conscience of faith. Rather, morality is an activity produced and maintained through discourse (Bergmann, 1998).

Both moral and practical implications of communication carry with them meanings and risks that are revealed within communication practices. Researchers examine communication practices during doctor's visits (e.g., Duggan & Thompson, 2011; Mirivel, 2008; Robinson, 2003; Stivers, 2012), FBI negotiations (e.g., Agne, 2007; Rogan & Hammer, 2002; Rogan & Hammer, 2006), departmental colloquia (e.g., Tracy, 1997), and classroom negotiations (e.g., Oral, 2013). For example, Mirivel (2008) argues that cosmetic surgeons use strategic interactional moves to make surgery relevant for patients. Through a combination of interactional practices that include verbal and physical assessments, cosmetic surgeons successfully persuade patients that elective cosmetic surgery is medically necessary. Doctors medicalize the body (an interactional practice) by describing what they see and physically enacting the form of undesired body parts. Therefore, cosmetic surgeons manage being a doctor with being a salesperson during doctor-patient interactions.

Tracy (2005) argues that people's communicative choices are more goal-oriented than explicitly recognized by practitioners during interactions. In the case of crisis negotiations,

individuals may strategically reframe a communication practice when they experience interactional conflicts (Agne, 2007). Analysis for scholars then focuses on describing these conversational practices that reflect or manage interactional troubles. Agne and Tracy (2001) suggest that naming interactional troubles shape the consequences of interaction. For example, naming a communicative situation as teasing has different consequences than naming the situation as an argument or fight. Intended and unintended consequences of communication are revealed as communicators make discursive decisions within larger conversational practices.

Grounded practical theory includes three theoretical levels of practice that incorporate both technical and moral aspects of communication (Craig & Muller, 2007; Cronan, 2001; Driskill, Meyer, & Mirivel, 2012). At the *problem level*, practitioners experience interrelated tensions, challenges, or dilemmas that arise as each individual seeks to advance their own concerns. The *technical level* describes the strategies and techniques used by the practitioners to manage the tensions, challenges, or dilemmas. At the *philosophical level*, practitioners rationalize their communicative actions based on the normative ideals they accept.

Because GTP offers three levels of analysis, scholars can examine communication practices and foreground interactional problems that practitioners experience. D'Enbeau and Kunkel (2013), for instance, take on two levels of practice to examine the discursive creation and implementation of empowerment at a violence prevention organization. At the problem level, they examine the paradoxes that organizational members experience. Then, they identify technical level communication strategies used to manage those paradoxes.

problems.

Practice, then, invites attention to problems exposed within the broader communication practice. Tracy (2001, 2011) asserts that problematic situations in communication are the most interesting and should be examined to cultivate a greater understanding of human action.

Situations are considered problematic when participants make discursive moves that stray from expectations for that interaction. Participants no longer take these situations for granted because a communicative act(s) has broken consistency, normality, or as Craig and Tracy (1995) say, “smoothness” of interaction. Communication is often difficult because people frequently pursue multiple goals that compete with one another. Interactional problems, possibly due to these multiple and competing goals, must be understood from the perspective of practitioners involved.

The perspectives these practitioners hold may shape communicative situations in ways that either implicitly or explicitly define that situation (Goffman, 1974). Furthermore, this definition of a situation, or frame (see also Batson, 1972), refers to how practitioners perceive a particular situation when they may have multiple and competing goals (see chapter five for an expanded discussion of frames and framing). Framing problems, then, can occur when participants articulate or implicate the problems themselves, or they may be institutionally or culturally imposed. Examining interactional problems revealed in talk advances GPT as a practical and productive framework. Research suggests, for example, that practitioners experience interactional problems in classroom interactions (e.g., Griep-Kerssen & Witt, 2011; Muller, 2003; Prawat, 1992), in situations where identities are challenged (e.g., Musumeci, 1996; Oral, 2013; Tracy 1997), and in situations where participants want to achieve both personal and institutional goals (e.g., Mirivel, 2008; Timbur, 1987; Waring, 2005).

Communication problems during classroom interactions may arise when students address teachers in ways that deviate from societal expectations. Muller (2003) found that when students challenge a teachers’ knowledge in order to clarify their personal understanding, teachers perceive the challenge as inappropriate. The student role and the teacher role make it so teachers and students should not argue together (Muller, 2003). However, understanding interactional

tensions increases the opportunity for beneficial conversational moves (Tracy & Ashcraft, 2001).

As problems develop in the pursuit of multiple and competing goals during interactions, tutors may encounter interactional problems in an attempt to manage loyalty to those they tutor and loyalty to the institution through which they are employed (Timbur, 1987). Communicators, as choice-making actors, rationalize strategies for dealing with problems, but do not always consider the unintended consequences of communication. Timber (1987) asserts that calling tutors “peer tutors” is contradictory and problematic. The selection process for tutors puts the terms “peer” and “tutor” at odds. However, the title essentially communicates that they should play both roles (Timber, 1987). As previously mentioned, when communicators name an interaction, especially an interaction problem, they shape how that interaction will unfold (Agne & Tracy, 2001). Peer tutors, then, may encounter interactional problems based on a “misguided sense of student solidarity” (Timber, 1987, p. 24).

When problems arise, practitioners are faced with social prescriptions for how they ought to act in a specific situation, but practitioners must also act strategically to advance their personal concerns for the interaction (Tracy, 2005). Thus, the strategic actions communicators take and the situated ideals guiding those actions certainly influence and shape problem resolution. At the same time, how we talk about the communicative situation and engage with others in it necessarily shape how interactional trouble(s) are conceptualized and managed. Through analysis, scholars illuminate the communicative moves individuals make that produce, reproduce, and maintain both common and uncommon challenges in interactions. In the same regard, the reconstruction of communication practices reveals the norms or socially accepted parameters guiding those communicative moves.

normativity.

The concept of normativity in GPT involves the standards of accepted behaviors that

implicitly shape the way people talk to one another. Normative ideals or overarching principles guide practitioners in their decision to solve a problem in one way or another (Craig, 2005; Leichter & Castor, 2009; Thacher, 2006; Tracy, 2005). GPT seeks to generate new and practical normative ideals based on those situated and revealed in the talk of practitioners (Craig & Tracy, 1995). In addition, GPT questions already taken-for-granted norms in interactions. Encapsulated in the term “ideal” are societal prescriptions for how one ought to act. Normative ideals pertain to interactional expectations based on commonly accepted rules, roles, and norms. They do not involve a concern for oneself, but rather the best possible outcome for everyone. If communicators are actors, then normative ideals work like a script, outlining communicative acts in a way that reduces uncertainty and increases predictability. Ideals, however, are not answers, rather, they are invitations for more questions. Participants implicitly or explicitly articulate ideals in ways that characterizes their preferred solutions to communicative problems (Craig & Tracy, 1995; Tracy, 2005; Tracy & Craig, 2010). Scholars, then, examine the meaning of conversational moves that go beyond what is visibly displayed. In doing so, scholars are inviting a discussion about the best way to communicate in a given situation, rather than simply providing answers or perceptions. Deetz (2008) uses the Greek term, *phronesis*, to explain discussion as a cultivation and evolution of the wisest way to communicate. Individuals have a certain way of attending to the world that is accomplished through language and knowledge-producing practices. Wisdom, then, refers to a practical way of dealing with interactional problems that is managed and revealed through the best forms of talk for that time (Deetz, 2008).

According to Alvesson and Kärreman (2000), normative ideals construct the subjectivity through which practitioners frame their communicative acts. Moreover, normativity simultaneously constructs and constrains our communicative decisions (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). An ebb and flow of making decisions about talk to serve individual needs that is shaped

by societal prescriptions for talk in particular situations. Situated ideals tell individuals how to act as they manage multiple and contradictory goals during a particular interaction (Scott, Martin, Stone, & Brashers, 2011). For instance, situated ideals shape how we ask questions (e.g., Musumeci, 1996) just as they guide how we criticize the answers given (e.g., Waring, 2005). When participants make communicative choices they also reflect on the implications of those choices (Tracy & Craig, 2010). Participants may orient themselves to situated ideals in order to solve interactional problems, yet, individuals do not always share the same ideals about how a conversation ought to go or conclude.

The pervasiveness of normative ideals are apparent when situated in institutional settings such as interactions among organizational members (e.g., Alvesson & Karreman, 2000; Banks, 1994; Canary, 2010; Tracy & Ashcraft, 2001; Tracy & Dimock, 2004), students and teachers (e.g., Dickman, 2009; Griep-Kerssen & Witt, 2011), and peer collaborators (e.g., Chan, 2000; Timbur, 1987; Waring, 2005). Tutor-student interactions could certainly be included where relevant normative ideals involve giving and receiving advice, negotiating authority and subordination, and attempting to balance power with solidarity. Normative ideals guide interactions in different ways depending on the situation. For instance, situated ideals shape discursive moves for the professor-student interaction in ways that potentially differ from the situated ideals guiding peer interactions.

reconstruction.

Problems (and how they are managed) and situated ideals are revealed as scholars reconstruct communication events. When problems arise in communicative practices, individuals make choices (however consciously) about talk that are guided by situated ideals. Reconstructing communication practices makes explicit the practical and desirable ideals that implicitly guide interactions (Tracy, 2005). Researchers aim to reconstruct communication practices at each of

the previously discussed levels (i.e., problem, technical, and philosophical) by analyzing the actual discourse of practitioners (Tracy, 1995; 2005; 2011). GPT's reconstruction of communication problems, dilemmas, or challenges benefits the larger purpose of making normative claims for how specific practices ought to be done (Craig & Tracy, 1995; Driskill et al., 2012; Mirivel, 2008; Sanders, 2007).

Lyon and Mirivel (2011) used the concept of reconstruction to better understand communication between salespeople from a pharmaceutical company and physicians. Their examination of internal training materials is a reconstruction of assumed problems, the communicative skills and techniques that the pharmaceutical company taught, and the company's communication philosophy underlying those skills and techniques. Findings suggest that the internal training materials communicate a business frame that impedes on physician's choices and hinders patient's health (Lyon & Mirivel, 2011). For instance, reconstruction revealed unethical principles regarding the company's philosophies that guide communication. These philosophies urged communicators to control others, pursue profit, and practice objectification.

Reconstruction of practice combines the practical and productive arts in order to generate new questions regarding situated communication practices. Practical arts (i.e., praxis) emphasize a fuller conception of practice where practitioners are reflectively informed and morally liable for their communicative actions (Barge & Craig, 2007; Barge & Fairhurst, 2008; Craig & Muller, 2007). It requires practitioners to interpret situations and deliberate about the purposes of conversational moves (Craig & Tracy, 1995). Productive arts (i.e., techne) refer to the skilled and technical knowledge available to practitioners. Practitioners are not always aware of the knowledge they possess or its value. Through experience, however, practitioners become

more skilled in communication practice. Therefore, reconstruction offers practical applications that enable individuals to better respond to future communication problems (Tracy & Mirivel, 2009). With good reconstruction of communication problems that practitioners face, practitioners will be better able to develop communication strategies that deal with the multiple and competing goals they often have (Tracy & Mirivel, 2009).

In sum, grounded practical theory is a useful framework for illuminating communication practices and generating discussion about those practices. The end goal of GPT is to enhance the ever-evolving concept of *phronesis*, or the wisest way to communicate. With this end goal in mind researchers attempt to elucidate communication problems, the conversational acts that expose those problems, the strategies employed to manage them, and the situated ideals that guide communicative choice and the implications of those choices. As Tracy and Mirivel (2009) suggest, GPT informs discourse analysis research that pursues applied ends in various situations (see also Tracy & Ashcraft, 2001). In the next section, I focus on discourse analysis as a valuable method for scholars interested in the practical implications of situated talk, particularly in a GPT framework.

Discourse Analysis

As previously mentioned, discourse is the *grounding* to which GPT refers. Discourse is a term that scholars define in a variety of ways. Gee (2011), for instance, makes an important distinction between two types of discourse – capital D discourse and little d discourse. Illustrated in the work of Michael Foucault, Gee (2011) describes capital D discourse as a given form of life or the broad cultural ideologies that are produced, reproduced, and transformed through linguistic and non-linguistic means. Examples include the discourse of health care, education, or civil rights in our country. Conversely, little-d discourse refers to language-in-use or the stretches

of language (i.e., conversations or stories) occurring in everyday life. This study takes a little-d approach to discourse that focuses on what Tracy (2005) calls, “the particulars of talk and text” (p. 302). These “particulars” (e.g., hesitations, inflection, interruptions) become important pieces of evidence that anchors scholarly claims about interactional problems or strategic conversational moves practitioners employ (Tracy, 1995; 2005).

The argument that discourse embodies the functional aspect of language is not new (e.g., Cameron, 2001; Craig, 1989; Tannen, 1994; Pearce, 2005; Tracy & Mirivel, 2008; Wooffitt, 2006). Tracy (2011) argues that discourse analysis (DA) makes explicit the interactional moves in naturally-occurring talk – strategic or otherwise – conscious or otherwise. Furthermore, DA focuses on cohering discursive actions to form the whole discourse. Discourse and discursive actions are not just about what people say, but also how they say it. Communicators use words and phrases in various ways depending on the social context. These subtleties, ambiguities, and multiple meanings behind words and phrases become apparent through discursive actions (see also Craig & Sanusi, 2000; Sanders, 2005). Moreover, components of a discourse are often produced by communicators to contribute to the discourse’s coherence. Discourse analysis, then, takes into account the various qualities of discourse as communicators interact strategically with one another.

The area of Language and Social Interaction in communication studies represents many different approaches to studying little-d discourse. Conversation analysis, action-implicative discourse analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, ethnography of communication, and discursive psychology are among the most well-known (Sanders, 2005). This study’s approach to DA focuses on tutor-student interaction as a strategic activity in which practitioners talk in ways to

accomplish some ends and avoid others. GPT's practical theory approach refers to this strand of discourse analysis as having a rhetorical thrust.

A rhetorical approach (see for example Tracy 2005; 2007b; 2011) considers moral and practical action that an individual takes towards others. As previously discussed, those moral and practical implications of talk are ultimately recognized by those in the interaction. Recall that when people interact, they make communicative choices that are meaningful and significant. DA illuminates these uses and meanings of talk as they are strategically used in particular situations (Cameron, 2001; Tracy 1995; Tracy, 2011). Therefore, when talk is analyzed, interactional problems and the practices used to manage those problems are revealed. In sum, DA exposes the practitioner's sense of self, as rooted in communicative experiences, and revealed in their conversational practices. DA, therefore, makes the link between discourse and identity a particularly relevant and heavily examined research area.

Discourse and Identity

Talking does more than relay information, in a rhetorical approach, it does identity-work. According to Tracy (2011), interaction shapes who we are, how we regard others, how we perceive others to regard us, and how we want to be regarded. Identity-work is accomplished through talk as individuals manage interactional goals that are often incompatible (Tracy, 2011). Problematic situations provide insight into how individuals use talk as a mode of self-presentation. For Waring (2005), the inclination to give or receive advice is tied to the identity each individual brings to the interaction. Graduate students, for example, may make identity claims about their level of competence which in turn shapes their resistance to advice from undergraduates.

Tracy (2011) distinguishes among four types of identities an individual may possess. One type are master identities, those identities to which people are culturally tied, such as our race, gender, religion, age, etc. Personal identities refer to an individual's personality, attitudes, and defining characteristics (e.g., fair, honest, hothead). Relational identities are enacted between conversational partners in a particular situation. These identities are typically referred to as a pairing (e.g., doctor-patient, parent-child, friends, romantic partners, teacher-student) and point to relational qualities such as the power differential and intimacy level between partners. Finally, interactional identity, of particular interest to this study, refers to the specific roles individuals take on in a specific communication situation. These roles are enacted with regard to other individuals in interaction. For instance, when tutors and students interact, their talk does identity-work that shapes them *as* tutors and students. Their talk also shapes their relational identity—as tutor/student, peers, perhaps even potential romantic partners or friends. Individuals, through discourse, create identities to also manage multiple and competing goals. Moreover, personal, dyadic, and institutional goals condition how interactional identities are presented. The relationship between identity and discourse is one of co-construction (Banks, 1994; Timbur, 1987).

According to Cohen (2012), discourse serves identity functions in regard to impression management and identity conflict and resolution. Through discourse, individuals present versions of the self in order to deal with interactional problems. For example, asking questions simultaneously presents and reflects identities of the speaker and the recipient (Tracy, 1997). A person's identity, in a pedagogical sense, is potentially tied up with being knowledgeable about a certain topic (Tracy, 1997). But at the same time discourse performs identity-work that manages one identity while shaping situational identities necessary for problem resolution (Cohen, 2012;

Tracy, 2011). In Tracy's (1997) study of academic colloquia, professors want to appear knowledgeable and intellectually superior, but interactions with faculty and graduate students pose challenges for desired identities. Questioning in this situation communicates how the speaker regards the professor's scholarly work, while simultaneously influencing the recipient's intellectual identity.

Identity and identity-work are inherently part of communication practices. In brief, identity is *self in situation* and the self is created, sustained, and confronted through the conversation practices of all participants in an interaction (Tracy, 1997; 2011). In regard to peer tutoring, tutors are part of an institution that has rewarded them for academic achievement with good grades and recognition. However, this traditional model of teaching and learning juxtaposes tutors as incapable of passing down knowledge (Timbur, 1987). Tutors have intellectual authority during tutoring sessions, but outside of tutoring they are co-learners with these students. Tutors are part of a system that poses contradictions. Through a process of selection, tutors are distinguished as having some sort of intellectual authority. Yet, outside of tutoring sessions those students are their peers. The educational system has rewarded tutors for their hard work with good grades, but tutors are not in a position to offer students those same rewards.

Tutors have multiple and potentially competing goals that include loyalty to the institution that employs them and loyalty to their peers. If indeed these goals do compete, both tutors and students may experience challenges that can be managed and revealed through conversational practices during tutoring sessions. Timbur (1987) calls these communication challenges an "intellectual tug-of-war." However, this metaphor may be too limiting. A tug-of-war suggests two competing forces. The potential problems in peer tutoring may involve more than two competing goals or perhaps more than one pair of competing forces.

Instead, draw on the notion of dilemmas, which move away from two opposing forces and towards a more realistic description of multiple and competing goals. Also, tug-of-war presumes a winner. Dilemmas, on the other hand, are managed. Peer tutoring, therefore, is a unique dynamic in which dilemmas construct and constrict communication.

Dilemmas in Communication

Tannen (1994) says, “Communication is a double bind in the sense that anything we say to honor our similarity violates our difference, and anything we say to honor our difference violates our sameness” (p. 29). The double bind Tannen (1994) refers to is the result of our continual self-correction between social prescriptions for equality and inequality that arise in communication practices. Just as similarity threatens the notion of hierarchy, difference threatens the notion of community.

In a foundational treatise to GPT, Billig, Condor, Edwards, Gane, Middleton, and Radley (1988) assert that contrary themes in conversation construct social life. Contradictions, conflicts, and inconsistencies in talk produce dilemmas, which in turn provide the possibility for argument and debate (Billig et al., 1988). For example, Billig et al. (1988) assert we rarely acknowledge that in order to be free, we must have order, and that in a country with laws promising equality, some must fail for others to succeed. Thus, themes that arise in conversation must be considered relative to their counter-themes. Analyzing how dilemmas are revealed and managed through talk illuminates the consequential nature of communication. Billig et al. (1988) discuss two specific dilemmas particularly salient to my proposed study: one that arises between experts and novices and another between teaching and learning.

expertise and equality dilemma.

The expertise-equality dilemma is a struggle for equal footing in an interaction that exposes expert and novice identities. Both the expert and the novice are respected as having an equal say in an interaction, but the expertise is marked by inequality through its association with authority (Billig et al., 1988). Dilemmas are revealed as each person in an interaction is respected as having valuable thoughts, yet contradictions of self-interest foreground one identity over the other (Billig et al., 1988; Vickers, 2009). The expert-novice relationship is not strictly dichotomous. Instead, the dynamic nature of expert-novice negotiations is constituted as interactions unfold (Jacoby & Gonzalez, 1991).

According to Vickers (2009), expert-novice differentiation is produced and reproduced in the process of face-to-face interaction. The novice typically depends on the expert in order to learn, but this dependency is largely taken for granted by both the novice and expert. Participants accept each role as naturally occurring, thus, reproducing an expert-novice relationship that is marked by inequality (Billig et al., 1988; Vickers, 2009). Jacoby and Gonzalez (1991) also assert that the expert-novice relationship is achieved through a dynamic process of co-construction and re-construction. As participants interact, they engage in a back-and-forth process in which they ratify or reject ideas that construct “achieved identities” (i.e., the expert identity and the novice identity). Along with Vicker’s claim, instead of viewing the expert-novice relationship in regard to rank, this notion of achieved identity emphasizes how talk (re)produces the expert and the novice.

Agne and Tracy (2001) showed how discursive moves enacted and/or reinforced situated identities in the negotiations between FBI agents and a religious leader, David Koresh, outside Waco, TX in 1993. Their findings suggest that FBI negotiators talked to Koresh in ways that

constructed themselves as novices and Koresh as an expert on Biblical patters. Negotiators legitimized Koresh's authority by responding in a way that conveys acceptance of their novice roles. As individuals interact, they emphasize one role over the other. Expert-novice identities are negotiated, but intrinsically marked by both inequality and human equalization (Billig et al., 1988). That is, participants in an interaction want to be respected as having valued opinions, but the notion of expertise hinges on the other person's lack of knowledge or experience. The expertise-equality dilemma is further explored as it manifests itself in both the teacher-learner and tutor-student relationships.

teaching and learning dilemma.

According to Billig et al. (1988), an educational dilemma exists where teachers must *impose* knowledge on learners while appearing to *elicit* them. Teachers are expected to bring out knowledge that students already possess. Students, however, do not always have the knowledge expected of them. For example, when teachers paraphrase student contributions to class discussion, they attempt to bring them closer to desired answers (Billig et al., 1988). Teachers also modify their talk when learners display instances of non-understanding (Atwood, Turnbull, & Carpendale, 2010; Musumeci, 1996). However, teachers and learners rarely use talk to resolve incomplete or incorrect messages at the same time (Musumeci, 1996). These examples of conversational practices in classroom communication reveal how teachers and learners manage these dilemmas.

Contributing to this dilemma is pedagogical research suggests that students and teachers alike must communicate with each other to gain knowledge, clarify misunderstandings, and process messages (Atwood et al., 2010; Staton-Spicer & White, 1981; Witt & Kerssen-Griep, 2011). This collaborative approach to education is in direct opposition to the traditional model of

teaching and learning where teachers pass on information and later evaluate how much was received (Rocca, 2010; Timbur, 1987). Teacher-learner interactions, therefore, place educational ideologies regarding hierarchy and collaboration in opposition to one another (Billig et al., 1988; Cohen, 2010).

Research identifies successful interactions between students and teachers as outcomes of teacher immediacy (e.g., Trad, Baker, Blackman, Glynn, Wright, & Miller, 2012), instructor attention to interpersonal communication (e.g., Griep-Kerssen, Hess, & Trees, 2003), and perceived instructor competence (e.g., Kerssen-Griep, 2001). Student motivation to learn derives in part from perceived instructor credibility based on an expressed sense of solidarity (Griep-Kerssen & Witt, 2011). When students are provided with instructional feedback that incorporates inclusive language, vocal variety, and nonverbal immediacy, instructors are perceived as more credible (Rocca, 2010). Griep-Kerssen & Witt's (2011) findings emphasize this dilemma that derives from opposing educational ideologies. That is, teachers must maintain their role as an authoritative figure while also constructing a sense of solidarity or collaboration within the classroom. Goodboy and Bolkan (2011), however, argue that the perceived power and authority of teachers within a hierarchal system leads to student motivation to learn.

Conceptualizations of authority are often linked closely to the notion of power. However, Brubaker (2005) argues that authority is an interrelational act that should be viewed separately from concepts like power, manipulation, coercion, or influence. Unlike power, authority necessitates voluntary submission that takes into account those who command it just as much as those who obey it (Amit & Fried, 2005; Brubaker, 2012). Authority, as it relates to education, derives not only from rules or expertise, but from the authority of community (Brubaker, 2012; McNay, 2003). Instead of a power-over relationship, some educators opt for a power-with or

power-for relationship, acknowledging their ability to guide and influence while maintaining a professional environment (McNay, 2003). Instead of a hierarchal approach to power, authority of community focuses on shared experiences and their contribution to our understanding of authority through co-participation (Benne, 1970). Recall that learning, as a collaborative endeavor for teachers and students, contradicts traditional educational approaches (Corbett, 2013). Teachers, therefore, must manage a dilemma between individual inclinations to approach teaching in one way while acknowledging academic values within a hierarchal system (Billig et al., 1988).

A great deal of research emphasizes pedagogical power and authority in larger settings like the classroom (e.g., Brubaker, 2009; Moreno-Lopez, 2005; Myers, 2007; Pace & Hemmings, 2006). However, little research focuses on dilemmatic communication stemming from concepts of power and authority during tutoring sessions. Peer tutoring offers a unique dynamic where tutors and students may be close in age, social standing, and share similar experiences. Yet, the tutor is assumed to have an intellectual advantage that places the tutor in a position of authority.

peer tutoring.

Tutors and students, similar to the teachers-student interaction, may face a dilemma between individual freedom and traditional constraints about how tutors ought to teach and how students ought to learn (Atwood et al., 2010; Billig et al., 1988). According to Bruffee (1984), faculty and administrators at a number of institutions were aware that many students entering college did not do well in their studies. In spite of academic ability, it was difficult for students to adapt to the traditional conventions of college classrooms. A major symptom of this difficulty was a refusal for extra help from faculty because students saw it as an extension of classroom work and expectations (Bruffee, 1984). Bruffee (1984) and others reason that peer tutoring is an

alternative to the traditional classroom (see also Chan, 2001; Duran & Monereo, 2005). As a type of collaborative learning, peer tutoring does not change what students learn. Instead, peer tutoring transforms the social context in which students learn (Bruffee, 1984; Duran & Monereo, 2005; Roscoe & Chi, 2008). Peer tutoring, then, positions learning as an interactional activity where both the tutor and the student participate in learning (Bruffee, 1984). In this sense, collaboration is the ideal tutoring relationship.

Most notably, Gillam (1991) suggests that a disjunction occurs between collaborative learning and practice. That is, leveling the traditional academic hierarchy in tutor-student interactions is extremely difficult (see also Blau, Hall, & Strauss, 1998). The tutor-student dynamic inhibits true collaboration, which only exists when individuals are from the same community (Clark, 1988). Billig et al. (1988) asserts that the norms of democracy are primarily egalitarian, yet, authority figures still exist and expect respect. Research that focuses on tutoring in writing centers has dedicated some effort in using politeness theory to explain between the egalitarian and authoritative nature of the student-tutor relationship (e.g., Bell, Arnold, & Haddock, 2009; Bell & Youmans, 2006; Jones, Garralda, Li, & Lock, 2006). Bell et al. (2009) suggests that tutors rely on politeness strategies to shift between their role as a collaborative peer and their role as an authoritative figure. Politeness has the goal of building rapport between tutors and students, but is also used to lessen the threat of criticism. For example, tutors may praise students in the same breath that they criticize them in order to maintain a sense of collaboration or egalitarianism (Bell & Youmans, 2006). As tutors and students communicate, they establish patterns of politeness where both the student and the tutor engage in authority negotiations (Bell et al., 2009). Politeness strategies impact the success or failure of these negotiations and ultimately, the tutoring session.

Another discourse research area relevant to challenges tutors and students face is that of advice-giving and receiving (e.g. Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997; Heritage & Sefi, 1998; Pudlinski, 2002; Waring, 2005). Heritage and Sefi (1998) suggest that the central challenge of advice-giving and receiving is the assumption that the receiver lacks knowledge or competences. This assumption leads to tensions where the receiver wants to be respected and viewed as competent in spite of needing advice (Heritage & Sefi, 1998). The need to make oneself feel useful during interactions makes advice receiving difficult and often resisted. The tutor-student relationship presupposes that tutors are advice-givers and students are advice-seekers. Tutors have a responsibility to provide students with sound advice, but students also have a responsibility to seek out that advice. Challenges arise in advice-giving and receiving when communicators struggle to be helpful versus meddlesome, collaborative versus authoritative, and gratuitous and respectful versus standing one's own ground (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997; Waring, 2005). According to Waring (2005), competing areas of expertise or "knowledge asymmetries" in the tutor-student relationship lead to problematic communicative situations. During interactions communicators attempt to balance needs for assistance, friendship, and autonomy (Pudlinski, 2002). When communicators fail to balance those needs, interactional problems arise. For students, advice-receiving suggests that they accept their role in the interaction as less knowledgeable. However, students may resist advice to counter the negative attribution of knowledge implicated in the tutor's advice-giving (Waring, 2005). Just as politeness is strategically employed in tutoring sessions, advice-giving and receiving is certainly used in student-tutor interactions as a means of negotiating authority.

Peer tutoring programs such as the one involved in this study (from here on, called Study Partners) advocates equitable principles. As the partnership suggests, tutors and students are

respected as having equal footing in the relationship. However, the concept of authority is not totally dismissed. Norms may criticize authority, but they also validate it (Billig et al., 1988). That is, norms that exist within Study Partners promote collaboration between tutors and students. However, norms also guide the teacher-learner relationship where the teacher, in this case, the tutor is in charge. Collaboration, therefore, masquerades as democracy when in actuality, tutors and students abide by the same authoritarian norms guiding traditional classrooms (Lunsford, 1991).

Peer tutoring by definition involves an asymmetrical relationship that is necessarily about inequality between partners. Unlike other expert-novice dyads (e.g., student-teacher), tutors and students have conflicting areas of expertise. Tutors can offer advice on particular courses, yet tutors have no power in regard to grading (Waring, 2005). Tutors adopt what Roscoe and Chi (2008) refer to as a *knowledge-telling bias* in which tutors primarily give students information with little reciprocation. This bias contradicts knowledge-building approaches expected from collaborating partners. Moreover, the tutor-tutee interaction becomes a negotiation of intellectual capability (Waring, 2005).

The act of students asking for help emphasizes the inequality of the tutor-student relationship (Blau, Hall, & Strauss, 1998). From a student's perspective, the end goal is to increase academic achievement (Moschkovich, 2004; Roscoe & Chi, 2008; Timbur, 1987). At the same time, tutors want to produce "A" students (Timbur, 1987). Tutors expectations regarding academic success stems from loyalty to the educational institution, the same institution that rewards them for personal academic achievement (Blau, Hall, & Strauss, 1998; Timbur, 1987). Over time, both tutors and students internalized the values and standards set forth by the traditional model of teaching and learning (Gillam, 1991; Lunsford, 1991; Timbur, 1987). The

tutor-student interaction is fundamentally dilemmatic as tutors and students enter a situation that appears to promote equality, but requires inequality to function.

Through a process of selection, tutors are given intellectual authority to pass on knowledge despite the fact that traditional hierarchies in education tell them that they are not qualified to do so (Timbur, 1987). While Bruffee's (1984) ideal tutoring relationship emphasizes conversation among a "community of knowledgeable peers" (p. 92), one individual is certainly more knowledgeable than the other. Ultimately, the interaction in fluid peer collaboration that Bruffee (1984) advocated for illustrates a far more complex relationship than first glance might afford.

Summary and Research Question

When dilemmas arise in interactions, practitioners become more aware of the communicative situation in which they are a part. Because of these dilemmas, scholars and perhaps communicators can become attuned to the importance of communication in daily life. Recall that peer tutoring, like other communicative situations, may pose challenges for practitioners that shape and constrict notions of reality and identity. These challenges invite a reconstruction and analysis of discursive moves and the potential dilemmas revealed. However, reconstruction of communicative events does more than illuminate potential problems and how practitioners manage them. That is, reconstruction furthers communication research as a practical endeavor with applied ends for practitioners to better communicate in particular situations.

My aim for this thesis project is to explore naturally-occurring tutoring sessions, seeking to describe interactional challenges tutors and students face in order to show how the dilemmas of tutoring get played out. Articulating the dilemmatic nature of peer tutoring takes my thesis project in a direction that seeks to understand how dilemmas are exposed and managed in peer

tutoring through the reconstruction of partners' discourse practices in actual tutoring sessions. To this end, the research question guiding my analysis is, "How are expertise-equality and teaching-learning dilemmas exposed and managed through talk in peer tutoring interactions?"

III. Method and Materials

The method of discourse analysis I use for this thesis project is Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis (AIDA) (Tracy, 1995; 2005; 2011; Tracy & Craig, 2010). AIDA is particularly suited to GPT due to its rhetorical, goal-oriented approach to discourse. It also shares GPT's attention to practice, problems, normativity, and reconstruction. The tutor-student session is easily taken as a nicely packaged communicative event that consists of communication practices with practical implications. AIDA attends to the details of talk that arise in tutoring sessions with the goal of reconstructing and understanding these communication practices. Furthermore, tutoring sessions seem to naturally embody the expertise-equality and teaching-learning dilemmas discussed above. AIDA's focus on describing these dilemmas, discursive strategies, and situated ideals makes it an appropriate method of discourse analysis for this study. In addition, reconstructing these dilemmas, strategies, and ideals provides tutors and students with the practical information necessary for more thoughtful reflection about how to act in tutoring sessions.

Problems examined using AIDA include discursive practices during public meetings of a school board (e.g., Tracy, 2007a), self-assessment during psychic cleanout-meetings (e.g., Agne, 2010), physical examinations by cosmetic surgeons (e.g., Mirivel, 2008), and inconsistencies in the context of political rhetoric (e.g., Neuman & Tabak, 2003). Additionally, AIDA is ethnographically informed. This information means that scholars examine interactional problems with ethnographic knowledge about the context surrounding the interaction (Tracy & Craig, 2010).

Ethnographic Background

In this particular framework, based on Tracy and Craig (2010), ethnographic background includes experiences, observations, and institutional documents. For this thesis, my personal experience as a tutor in a university setting provides me with ethnographic knowledge regarding the situational and institutional contexts in which tutoring sessions operate. Over two semesters, I tutored six student-athletes. This experience provided me with instances of interactional problems in talk between me and the student-athletes I tutored. I was assigned these student-athletes based on the courses they needed to take within the communication discipline. A set schedule every week for tutoring sessions that was monitored through an online program. Each tutoring session was scheduled by the student-athlete's adviser. These tutoring sessions lasted for one hour and occurred in a private room on campus that was equipped with tables, chairs, and whiteboards.

Study Partners is an official undergraduate tutoring program at a public university. Tutors are selected based on their GPA (i.e., minimum of 3.0) and recommendations from faculty members. Further, tutors typically made an "A" in the class they are tutoring. The courses available for tutoring change every semester due to the courses offered by the university. However, examples of courses tutored include math, chemistry, physics, biology, economics, and accounting. Every Study Partner's tutor is employed by the university and is expected to aid in their students' understanding of difficult material. Students consist of undergraduates that seek out tutoring sessions. These sessions last for one hour and are free to undergraduate students currently enrolled in selected core classes. However, students are charged a fee if they do not attend their scheduled tutoring session.

Study Partners is located in the university library, in an area known as the Learning Commons. In addition to Study Partners, the Miller Writing Center, Office of Information Technology Help Desk, and library reference services all utilize this space. The Learning Commons is open to all university students, regardless of their affiliation with the aforementioned organizations. However, a fluctuating number of tables are reserved for Study Partner's use only. The Learning Commons area features a flexible space that accommodates both individual study and group collaborations. Features include ten group study areas, 415 seats, and whiteboards. Tutoring sessions typically occur at tables that accommodate two or more individuals comfortably. These tables are not segregated from the rest of the tables on the second floor. The tables are set up in an open space in a large corner of the library. Tutors or students may request rooms for their tutoring session. These rooms are also located in the Learning Commons, but is only accessible when a key is requested from the front desk. Each room has glass walls and sliding doors that are meant to alleviate environmental noise. These rooms are equipped with tables, chairs, and whiteboards. Every table is near a power outlet that makes it easy for tutors and students to use laptops during the session.

Students can schedule tutoring appointments online through the program's website, they can call Study Partners, or they can stop by the main desk in the library. Students may schedule repeat sessions with the same tutor, but this depends on tutor availability. Tutors and students that meet with each other more than once pose an interesting dynamic that may be important to consider. These individuals may get to know each other beyond the tutor-student relationship and form stronger ties that shape how dilemmas are revealed and managed in the interaction.

With permission from participantsⁱ, data collection consisted of audio recording and transcribing interactions that occurred during nine, one-hour tutoring sessions. These tutoring

sessions were recorded in the private rooms located in the Learning Commons. Prior to each tutoring session, I met the tutors and students scheduled for that hour at Study Partner's main desk in the library. Each individual was given an overview of the study and asked to sign a consent form for their participation. I then explained how to use the audio recorders to the participants. I directed the participants to place the recorder in the middle of the table and press record as soon as the session begins. They were then instructed to press stop when the tutoring session concluded. Tutors and students met me by the front desk to return the recorders. Other than recording their voices, no additional information about the participants or their relationships with each other was collected (e.g., amount of times students met with a specific tutor, or whether they knew each other prior to the tutoring session)

Transcribing Tutoring Sessions

This thesis project analyzes the nine transcriptions of peer tutoring interactions at Study Partners. Ochs's (1979) seminal article is particularly useful for this study due to the consequences of transcription that are emphasized. Ochs (1979) addresses important considerations scholars should keep in mind when transcribing. A major consequence is overlooking or taking transcription procedures for granted (Ochs, 1979). Scholars must consider transcript layout and use of symbols for verbal and nonverbal actions from audio recordings (Ochs, 1979). Ochs (1979) also points out the impact of transcription on the generalizability of research. That is, transcription influences and constrains the generalizations that emerge from research (Ochs, 1979).

In regard to tutor-student interactions, transcripts are analyzed with the goal of describing the meaning of the interactional practices that occur given the situation. Transcribed discourse, therefore, provides a more detailed view of tutoring sessions. Moreover, analysis of the transcripts gives me the opportunity to make claims regarding the attribution of conversational

practices to interactional outcomes. Transcription for this study follows a modified version of the most commonly used transcription system (see appendix A). Agne and Tracy (2009) assert that conventions develop as to the best way to represent discursive moves in written form. The transcription system developed by Gail Jefferson is most commonly used, but that amount of detail is not advantageous to my goal with this thesis project. This thesis project uses the same modified version that Agne and Tracy (2009) used in their study. This modified version takes a less is more approach to the transcription system often used by conversation analysts (CA) (see for example, Bromberg, 2012; Walsh, 2003). Similar to CA, this transcription system takes into account the particulars of talk that include pauses, pitch, and intonation. However, my focus is on the broader meaning of these particulars of talk. My goal is to reconstruct the communication practices that occur during these interactions in order to reveal how expertise-equality and teaching-learning dilemmas are managed in the tutor-student interaction.

The following discourse analysis exposes challenges in the institutionalization of peer tutoring and how tutors and students managed them. By carefully listening to the recordings and examining the transcripts, I come to describe how participants reveal and manage the dilemmas through the interactional practices they employ. In the analysis, I pinpoint interactional practices and describe how they reflect challenges for participants. I also describe how specific practices manage these challenges.

IV. Analysis I: Exchanging Identities in the Expertise-Equality Dilemma

Analysis is divided into two chapters, each exploring one of the two respective dilemmas that frame the entire study. This chapter examines the peer tutoring data with a focus on how the expertise-equality dilemma is reflected and managed in peer tutoring interaction. This focus points analysis to practices that create identities in terms of knowledge, capability, expertise, and experience in the tutoring session's subject matter. Discourse between students and tutors form different combinations of expert and novice identities. It may reaffirm the identity of the student as a student and the tutor as a tutor but also reshape those identities such that the student sounds like a tutor and the tutor sounds like a student.

The main argument for this chapter, then, is that participants may exchange student and tutor identities as a manifestation of the expertise-equality dilemma. In supporting this argument, my aim is to show the multifaceted nature of exchange and that tutors and students face challenges when their identities change or are made unclear. In line with AIDA and grounded practical theory, I focus on communication practices that show identity exchanging through two broad types – situational practices and interactional practices. These practices show the dilemma in interaction, where identities overlap or are swapped, abandoned, resisted, or traded (and traded back). Tracy (2005) describes “practice” as a multi-dimensional term such that it involves both application of the activity (including rehearsal) and the activity itself. For instance, baseball players may practice batting at the batting cages, but the actual practice of batting also takes place during a game (Craig, 2006). Communication practice may refer to a

speech event that occurs in a specific situation (e.g., calling the police, classroom discussion, peer tutoring), and it may also refer to practices that cut across situations (e.g., questioning, story-telling, negotiating, meeting, naming), making them visible in a wide variety of social contexts (Tracy, 2005). The first part of this chapter describes the expertise-equality dilemma in situational practices as tutors and students display and exchange institutional identities. The most visible situational practices that make up the broader practice of “peer tutoring” are those in which partners work through errors and correction in course work (error management) and those that involve giving and receiving academic advice (advice-giving/receiving). The second part focuses on two interactional practices – appropriating and altercasting – that shape expert and novice identities in ways that expose the expertise-equality dilemma.

Situational Practices

Challenges that stand out in peer tutoring are those practical ones in which partners work on errors and corrections in the student’s work. Others involve giving and receiving advice on how to work through assignments, study for exams, and digest course material. Error management and giving/receiving academic advice are both practices that, because of academic difficulties, may bring students to peer tutoring.

error management.

One specific responsibility of a tutor is to manage the student’s mistakes and errors. By their job description, tutors should be more knowledgeable than the student they are tutoring. Nakamura (2008) shows that as tutors manage mistakes and errors, they may provide clarification, signal the student that a problem exists, or perhaps prevent confusion. I argue that tutors and students implicitly negotiate knowledge (and thus, their identity) about the material and manage errors and corrections together in their interaction.

Consider, for instance, the following excerpt in which the tutor is having difficulty helping the student to complete her chemistry homework. As both participants navigate through each other's uncertainty about the chemistry problem, the tutor's identity as a tutor becomes unclear. She begins the interaction sounding like a tutor, but her display of uncertainty after the student's report calls her expertise into question.

Excerpt 1 (tutoring session #4, chemistry homework)ⁱⁱ

- 79 T1-f: ↓Okay so why did you do this here.
80 S1-f: Uh::m. Well I remembered that he did- I don't remember him
81 working a problem like this or even showing us a problem like
82 this but I remembered something that our TA in lab did >but it
83 wasn't< it wasn't like this exactly but she like (.) she did one
84 over something hheehe so like I kinda just went out on a limb.
85 T1-f: Right. See the thing is (.) see uh::m we didn't really do this in
86 my class? I think this is approached from (3 sec). Wellll let's
87 see if there's an example problem in here 'cause frequently
88 that's a good way to learn about example problems they do.
89 S1-f: Mhm okay ↑yeah sounds good

Part of a tutor's job is to encourage students to question and critique their own work. In this excerpt, the tutor's question in line 79 ("↓Okay so why did you do this here") does just that. However, it also launches an exchange of identities as the question may not be one that challenges (i.e., a question expected of a tutor) but one that requests information or help (i.e., a question expected of a student). A common function of "okay" is what Hatch (1992) refers to as a phase boundary, or a shift in talk in interaction. This shift provides closure to a previous phase in the interaction while projecting the next (Hatch, 1992). The shift is also revealed in the downward inflection on "okay" in line 79 ("↓Okay"), which has a settling quality as if the tutor is ready and prepared for how she plans on managing the next problem the two face.

However, lines 85-88 show instead that the tutor does not know how to help the student, which creates a more egalitarian moment in the interaction, backgrounding her tutor identity.

The student's response in lines 80-84 is typical of her identity as student as she accounts for her strategy and struggles in working the problem, which places the tutor's initial expert identity back in the forefront. Her "uh:m" (line 80) shows her thinking about how to account for her work on the problem or perhaps thinking about the problem itself. Vocal fillers, as Clark and Tree (2002) explain in their study of "uh" and "um" in spontaneous speaking, can be signals for dealing with particular problems in speaking or symptoms of problems in speaking. Although the student elaborates after using "uh::m" in lines 80-84, her student identity allows for a lack of knowledge when it comes to the material discussed. She explains that she used other similar problems from her lab experience as a guide to help her along, albeit with some uncertainty, as she indicates she "went out on a limb" (lines 83-84).

The tutor's "uh::m" works differently. "See uh::m we didn't really do this in my class?" (line 86) reveals her own knowledge state. Elongating "uh::m" creates a longer pause before showing herself as student in line 85 ("we didn't really do this in my class"), or as someone who can't know everything. Also, research has long noted that upward intonation in a questioning tone can contribute to sounding ineffectual (e.g., Hosman & Siltanen, 2006), and the upward intonation of, "we didn't really do this in my class?" seems to do just that. She begins with "right," acknowledging the student's efforts, which is typical of any tutor. But the rest of her response makes her no longer sound like a tutor. "Uh::m," along with "See the thing is (.) see" shows her momentarily relinquishing her tutorial knowledge and doing so with some reluctance. Saying "see" twice, saying "the thing is," and pausing sounds as if the tutor is reluctantly breaking news to the student.

The news and the reluctance to give, shows her relinquishing her tutor identity again, suggesting another egalitarian moment – this time more expressly undesired. The tutor cannot perform her duties and the student is left – out on her limb – to her own devices. The tutor acts as the student in disclosing her own confusion (see line 85) when the student cannot fulfill the tutor’s request for help in line 79 (“why did you do this here”). Her identity as peer in line 85 begins in an egalitarian way, but transitions into a self-preserving response to her lack of knowledge on the topic. Her admission of uncertainty (“See the thing is (.) see uh::m we didn’t really do this in my class?”) advances a notion that knowledge gaps between tutors and students can be minimal. That is, the tutor’s uncertainty challenges the expert-novice dynamic where the tutor’s job description necessitates she know the material.

However, the tutor does step up and attempt to work on the problem together with the student in lines 86-87. She thinks aloud by talking about the problem from some approach (“I think this is approached from”). She may be remembering from her own experience in the class or knowledge about the material. But she abandons reference to that approach (whatever it was) for a strategy, which is to use an example. Talking this way, allowing for a 3-second pause, elongating “welll,” and suggesting they work on it together with “let’s” all show egalitarianism. But she is also leading the way and providing a tutorial reason for her suggestions – that “frequently that’s a good way to learn about example problems they do” (line 87). Challenging the student’s strategy for working the problem could be seen as a way for the tutor to manage her own misunderstanding.

In the following excerpt the tutor uses a teaching strategy that involves creating an egalitarian relationship. Further, the student talks in a way that directs how the tutor should be tutoring him. In the excerpt, the tutor and student are working on a math problem that is giving

the student trouble. The tutor tries to guide the student to the correct answer, but the student remains unsure of how to solve the problem.

Excerpt 2 (tutoring session #1, mathematics homework)

- 74 S2-m: Could you do like since it's subtracting (.) subtracting for that
75 u:::h ↓oh but they're not like these.
- 76 T2-f: Yeah. I know. Yeah. I knew where you were headed. Those
77 spaces are different (.) okay so maybe that wasn't exactly what
78 we wanted to do.
- 79 S2-m: Could you do it- flip it around?
- 80 T2-f: Put the ((mumbles)) ◦somewhere el:::se◦.
- 81 S2-m: Would you have like issues (.) I guess? And then so this could
82 [be
- 83 T2-f: [So then we [↑have
- 84 S2-m: [Eight tw:o °A and B°
- 85 T2-f: Is ↑tha::t (.) is that good math?
- 86 S2-m: You tell me.
- 87 T2-f: You can do that if you're dividing. You can't do that if you're
88 subtracting. I mean yeah that's (.) 'cause that's [what
- 89 S2-m: [◦I haven't
90 done all this for a while

Swapping “you” and “me” (see lines 74, 76, 79, 81, 86, 87) for “we” (see lines 78, 83) help accomplish identity exchange. Identity challenges become visible when considering the student's suggestion (line 79) after the tutor points out that she too is uncertain about the problem. The use of “we” (lines 78, 83) shows her as a tutor working to create a “we are in this together” experience for the student. “We” could be seen as a comforting strategy that lets the student know he is not alone in the math homework he faces. The student, however, does not use inclusive language. He uses “you” when he asks the tutor questions or responds to her correction (see lines 74, 79, 81, 86). His use of “you” could be seen as confirming her tutor identity, especially when he gives another suggestion for solving the problem using “you” (line 81) while

the tutor overlaps with “so then *we* ↑have” (line 83, italics added). The challenge here is exposed as the tutor uses their egalitarian relationship to perform her tutor identity, yet the student rejects her notion of “we” in his continued use of “you.”

In line 74 the student makes suggestions for how to do the problem. The tutor first manages the student’s uncertain suggestion in an egalitarian way. She responds with “yeah. I know. Yeah. I knew where you were headed” (line 76). The tutor does not directly tell the student that he is incorrect. Instead, her response indicates an understanding for the student’s (incorrect) suggestion. Stressing the word “know” shows somewhat of an egalitarian approach as someone who can relate to the student’s uncertainty. However, saying “I knew where you were headed” indicates foresight, transforming the tutor from fellow student who can commiserate with another student about how math homework can be tricky to that of an expert who, in this case, knows the material so well that she can surmise where the student’s suggestion was headed.

The tutor’s overlapped speech suggests that she is in the position to speak over the student, yet “we” may be a strategy that conflicts with the function of interruption. In line 84, the student speaks over the tutor with an answer to the problem. Here, the student interrupts, which may suggest a power struggle between participants in terms of who gets heard. In line 85, the tutor indicates that the student has worked the math problem incorrectly. It seems to be a strategy to get the student to look over his method, rather than explicitly saying “this is wrong.” Saying “Is ↑tha:t (.) is that good math?” (line 85) indicates that the tutor is eliciting information from the student. His direct response, “you” tell “me,” (line 86) challenges the traditional tutor-student dynamic where the tutor acts as a guide through the learning process. Cazden (2001) points out that teachers often ask questions for which they already know the answer in order to prompt self-reflection from students. The student’s direct response in line 86 negates his responsibility to

analyze his own work by shifting focus back to the tutor. Saying “you” and “me” with emphasis on “you” and “me” clearly defines each individual’s identity. He not only confirms the tutor identity for the tutor, he also establishes himself as someone who should be told what to do.

The student’s utterance in line 86 prompts the tutor to respond directly in lines 87 and 88. She tells the student “You can’t do that if you’re subtracting” (line 87-88). In this utterance, the tutor swaps the indirect and non-authoritative approach for one characteristic of her tutor identity. Additionally, the student’s direct approaches are contrasted in lines 89-90 not just by admitting his lack of understanding but in the softer speech in saying so (“○I haven’t done all this for a while○”). Providing excuses for a lack of knowledge or understanding are accepted from students in general. In this case, the student’s admittance in lines 89-90 indicates that he is performing the student identity. In short, interchanging pronouns function not only to define one’s own identity but also to define the identity of the other. The student’s directness recreated the tutor’s tutor identity and his own student identity. When the tutor swapped indirect for direct approaches to error management she emphasized her tutor identity and the student’s identity as student.

advice-giving and receiving.

In addition to error management, identity exchange is also visible through the practice of advice-giving and receiving. Students sound like tutors and tutors like students in advice-giving and receiving moments. While advice is a natural part of tutoring sessions, it also contributes to the expertise-equality relationships between participants as it can create power struggles (Hutchby, 1995) and face-threatening moments (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). Looking again at Excerpt 1, when the tutor says, “Wellll let’s see if there’s an example problem in here ‘cause frequently that’s a good way to learn” (lines 86-88), she reproduces the expertise-novice differentiation that first appeared in line 79 when she challenged the student, but she also

neutralizes that power difference and works to maintain face for both the student and herself. The tutor has already expressed her lack of knowledge in lines 81-84 and done so with reluctance, which could be seen as facework for herself to not be seen as an inept tutor. Saying “let’s see if there is an example problem” (line 86) implies that this search for an example problem is a co-learning experience rather than one characterized by those who know and those who don’t. But following that advice with “‘cause frequently that’s a good way to learn,” (line 87-88) reveals what it means to act like a good tutor. Instead of telling the student to work example problems, the tutor says, “let’s see if there is an example problem” (lines 86-87). In doing so, the tutor gives expert advice despite the fact that she has proven herself to be not so much an expert.

Interestingly, the advice the tutor gives (i.e., learning from previous examples) is common knowledge in the life of a college student. The advice itself is likely not very newsworthy. It is the suggesting and the reasoning, not necessarily the suggestion itself or the reason itself that displays the tutor’s identity and reestablishes the expertise difference in the interaction. Moreover, the student ratifies the tutor identity by responding with, “mhm okay ↑yeah sounds good,” (line 89). Not only does the student agree with the tutor, but higher pitch in saying, “↑yeah” also indicates enthusiasm for the suggestion, as if the tutor’s advice was unique and groundbreaking. Whether or not the student actually saw this idea as was one she had not thought of before, in this excerpt the tutor’s advice shows her more talking as a tutor than actually being one and the student legitimizing her as a tutor by identifying her advice as a good and insightful idea.

Giving and receiving advice also creates identity problems between tutors and students when they share their experiences with each other. The following excerpt illustrates how shared

experiences can be an interactional strategy for showing authority by foregrounding qualities of one identity over another.

Excerpt 3 (tutoring session #7, anatomy homework)

- 22 T3-f: Okay I would rather look at old notes but not like really look at
23 them but maybe scan or skim sections and see what you don't
24 really remember as well or what not (.) um or go through the
25 book and you know how they sometimes have like summaries.
- 26 S3-f: His old notes just are not very helpful.
- 27 T3-f: Yeah.
- 28 S3-f: [But like
- 29 T3-f: [Just flip through and look for bold terms or look at the
30 summary 'cause they have a summary at the end of [every
31 chapter
- 32 S3-f: [Summary
33 of every chapter (.) that's a [good idea.
- 34 T3-f: [I wouldn't worry about the actual-
35 I wouldn't worry knowing definitions verbatim or whatever (.)
36 I would just look if a word seems kinda similar or not.
- 37 S3-f: Mhm.
- 38 T3-f: Yeah that's what I would do

Rather than the participants trading identities with each other, there are instances where the tutor foregrounds qualities of her student experience that help her perform her job as tutor. Yet, she also talks in ways that foreground her role as tutor. The student participates in this identity ambiguity by confirming both tutor and student aspects of the tutor's talk. The tutor gives the student advice for studying by saying what she would do if she were the student (see line 22, "Okay I would rather..."). Related to the use of "we" in helping the student correct errors in his work, this advice-giving strategy reveals her tutor identity as one who is tutoring by acting like a student. The phrases "I would" (lines 22, 37, 39), "I wouldn't worry" (lines 35, 36), and "Yeah that's what I would do" (line 39) indicate that her advice stems from an experience

with similar material. So here, the tutor uses her experience to place herself in the shoes of the student – as if she was a student, though she is not.

The tutor is in a position where she can maintain her tutor identity, while using student experiences to teach. The student is in a position where she can reject or ratify either identity. In this excerpt, the student does both. In lines 22-26, the tutor advises the student to scan over old notes before the test. The student resists this advice saying, “his old notes just are not very helpful” (line 27), which as Heritage and Sefi (1992) suggest in their study of advice-receiving between health professionals and first-time mothers, can be seen as an assertion of competence. They found that first-time mothers may resist advice regarding child care (e.g., feeding, sleeping) because that advice, by extension, possibly implicated failure on the mothers’ part. In this excerpt, the student’s rejection of the tutor’s advice is authoritative and indicates that she has first-hand experience in the class to back her up. In this case, competence is based on experience rather than intellectual authority. The tutor saying “yeah” in line 28 shows she agrees with the student and that her experiences – likely had in a more recent past than the tutor’s – are equally valued.

Although the tutor appears to find the student’s experiences valid, she interrupts the student with additional advice in line 30. This interruption seemingly contradicts the value she initially showed in line 28 (“yeah”), making “yeah” seem superficial. According to Menz and Al-Roubaie (2008), interruptions in conversation are often linked to power moves in social status. In this instance, the tutor’s interruption suggests that she is in a position where interrupting the student is acceptable. She is also interrupting the student with additional advice (see line 30), indicating that her advice is more important. The student concedes, accepting this advice in line 33-34, echoing the idea itself (i.e., looking at the summary of every chapter). Calling it “a good

idea,” and saying “mhm” (line 38) reestablishes a power dynamic in which the tutor’s tutor identity is confirmed. Further, the tutor again interrupts the student in line 35 with an elaboration of the advice. The tutor bases her advice on what “I would do,” yet her method of delivery (i.e., interruptions) foregrounds her tutor identity. Here, saying “mhm,” similar to the tutor’s “yeah” in line 28, suggests a superficial agreement with the tutor’s advice, perhaps indicating that the tutor is telling her something she already knows, which pushes toward a more equal relationship in this academic experience. Her response (“mhm”) may also treat the tutor as someone who, regardless of intentions she may have, is evaluating her competence in some way.

In sum, dealing with practical problems in the peer tutoring session is two-fold. First, dealing with practical problems involves participants foregrounding certain qualities associated with the student or tutor identity. Secondly, participants may integrate experiences associated with another identity in their talk to better perform their given identity. The situational practices involved in error management and advice-giving and receiving reveal the expertise-equality dilemma as participants foreground one identity over the other in order to navigate communicative troubles when dealing with uncertainty or negotiating who has the most or best experience. From here, analysis turns from situation-specific to interactional practices and how participants’ talk reveals a complexity to tutor-student identities where the tutor and the student both have experience as students, but the tutor’s tutor identity makes equality in this academic experience challenging. Identity exchange occurs as the tutor and the student negotiate academic experience that stemmed from their student identities and the tutor’s tutor identity.

Interactional Practices

According to Tracy and Robles (2011), interactional practices implicate important personal and/or professional identities that are not always fixed. In the tutoring situation,

participants' discourse may expose instances where one desired identity is pitted against another, or instances where identities are combined. Tutor and student identities are interactionally compatible when conversational practices are congruent with expectations for the respective institutional identity, as if the participants were following a script (Goodboy & Bolkan, 2011). Identities become difficult to manage when participants talk in ways that challenge identity expectations. Exchanging identities in an interaction makes it possible – perhaps inevitable – that identity challenges will arise.

Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) notion of adequation and distinction are particularly applicable to the idea that exchanging identities through interactional practices reveal the expert-equality dilemma of peer tutoring. They define adequation as a representation of similarity that relies on the suppression of differences during interactions. Adequation's counterpart, distinction, relies on the suppression of similarities to construct difference (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). It should be noted, though, that these concepts are not always mutually exclusive. Even as identity exchange occurs, participants rely on both their similarities and differences to construct appropriate ways of behaving. As we saw earlier, for example, a tutor may rely on her own student experiences to perform the tutor identity. Participants talk in ways that illuminate similarities as well as differences, making tutor and student identities more complex in peer tutoring sessions. This relational view of identity illustrates the ways in which identities are discursively legitimized and how expectations about identity performance can be disrupted during tutoring sessions. Participants sometimes foreground their similarities or differences to establish and re-establish identity. In this section, I examine two interactional practices that show adequation and distinction of tutor and student identity. One involves taking on another's way of

talking (appropriating practices), and the other involves talking in a way that casts the other as having a certain identity (altercasting practices).

appropriating practices.

According to Moschkovich (2004), tutors and students appropriate ways of seeing, talking, and acting from each other for the purpose of demonstrating expertise within the tutoring itself. Students demonstrate their expertise to show tutors that they are intelligent even though they are getting extra help. Tutors demonstrate expertise to show students they are qualified for their position. Further, appropriation is viewed as a joint activity, where tutors and students construct these ways of seeing, talking, and acting through the tutoring interaction. Attention, meanings, and goals, then, are not pieces of knowledge explicitly stated by and attributed to tutors (Moschkovich, 2004). Instead, they are interactionally created by both participants.

The following excerpt shows appropriation in a session where the tutor has a difficult time helping the student. Challenges arise when goals for the tutoring session may become unclear when the tutor lacks the knowledge to effectively perform her job. Appropriation is visible as the participants interactionally maneuver challenges associated with uncertainty of content, and their relation to that uncertainty.

Excerpt 4 (tutoring session #6, economics homework)

- 440 T4-f: Yeah like this one way to like to think about it and yeah it's
441 confusing. Ummm okay so you [look at
442 S4-f: [I may just have to read for this one
443 will be (.) 'cause I kinda like explain it but I just don't feel like
444 a one hundred percent confident about it.
445 T4-f: Yeah. Yeah. It's confusing [but
446 S4-f: [All [right.
447 T4-f: [Very much a hassle like too
448 much ((laughs)).

449 S4-f: ((Laughs)) Yeah. Okay. Ummm that one was done. Okay
450 imagine a small town with only two residents.

451 T4-f: ((Laughs)) I can't imagine. I don't know. Let's see what time it
452 is.

453 S4-f: Okay.

454 T4-f: It's eleven o'clock.

455 S4-f: Okay umm the problem says to imagine a small [town
456 T4-f: [So::: I have to
457 come back to that one.

458 S4-f: Okay yeah.

459 T4-f: Because um yeah (.) yeah I was trying to figure that out. I'm
460 not sure. I'm sorry.

461 S4-f: No it was fine. Umm what will quantity of water will- Uh::m
462 T4-f: Okay so:: uh::m I think we had trouble with this one too but (.)
463 yeah 'cause like my class didn't do this so li::ke I- I'm not sure
464 how to like figure that out.

465 S4-f: ↑Oh yeah. That's the Nash equilibrium.

466 T4-f: >Yeah yeah<.

467 S4-f: Who did you have when you taught?

468 T4-f: I had (.) uh- I had Bill.

469 S4-f: Okay I [mentioned
470 T4-f: [Yeah, okay. Yeah, I would just- yeah (.) I'm not sure
471 ((laughs)).

472 S4-f: ↑Right.

473 T4-f: I think it's probably like not that hard. It's just >I don't know<.

474 S4-f: I can figure that one out.

475 T4-f: Yeah.

476 S4-f: Umm how much time do we have left.

477 T4-f: Oh.

478 S4-f: We have like one minute. Ok::ay well thank you so much.

479 T4-f: ↑Yeah no problem.

In this excerpt, the tutor appropriates the conversational style of a student, which makes the tutor-student interaction look less like a tutor (expert) is present. We can see this identity confusion in the student's transition as someone who needs help (which the tutor cannot provide) to someone who can "figure that one out" (line 474) on her own. The student also follows up the tutor's failure to help with gratitude (see line 478, "Ok::ay well thank you so much). These examples (tutors talking like students and students talking like tutors) expose an unclear aspect of practical communicative problems where this fuzziness of tutor-student identities is an anomaly that poses challenges for participants.

In line 440 the tutor admits that the content under review is confusing, which is an appropriation of student interactional practices. The student does not directly state that the problem is confusing. Instead she says, "I just don't feel like one hundred percent confident about it" (line 444), to which the tutor responds again with "Yeah. Yeah. It's confusing" in line 445. Her emphasis on a second "yeah" strengthens her assertion that the content is confusing and therefore justifies the student's description of it as such. In addition to using the term "confusing," the tutor depicts uncertainty regarding content seven more times with the phrases, "I'm not sure" (lines 460, 463, and 471), "I don't know" (lines 451 and 473), "we had trouble with this one too" (line 462), and "I have to come back to that one" (line 457). The tutor appropriates student interactional practices to account for her ineptitude the way students would account for their own ineptitude, or for not doing work, or not putting in the effort to do the work.

A tutor expressing uncertainty so much is uncharacteristic of a tutor identity, but her reasons for doing so may be strategic. For example, phrases like "it's confusing" and "we had trouble with this one too" are in a way apologetic strategies because, after all, she is the tutor and

should be the one to provide help. Interestingly, the student only references her own uncertainty in lines 443 and 444. The tutor's overlapping utterance in line 447 reveals not only how she regards the content, but how she regards the tutoring session (which will be discussed in the next chapter). She says that the content is "very much a hassle like too much" (line 447). By this declaration, she indirectly depicts the tutoring session as difficult, and the student agrees with the tutor's description (see line 449).

The student's agreement with the tutor's repeated descriptions of this tutoring session indicates a shared perspective in which both individuals emphasize similar viewpoints. In addition to agreeing with the tutor in line 449, the student also makes the transition from describing the material as confusing to discussing the next economics problem. Through this transition ("Yeah. Okay. Ummm that one was done. Okay imagine a small town with only two residents"), the student does appropriate the tutor's perspective, which is accomplished by progressing to the next problem about two people living in a small town. This example is similar to Moschkovich's (2004) argument that appropriation involves taking what someone else interactionally produces for one's own use in ensuing productive activity. The tutor appropriated ways of seeing by describing the content as confusing. This way of seeing was a joint activity, as evidenced in the student's agreement. Saying "Yeah. Okay. Ummm that one was done. Okay imagine a small town with only two residents" (line 449-450) takes that shared perspective by suggesting to move on to the next item of business, keeping this tutoring session on track. Progressing becomes a shared activity as the student takes on this responsibility. The tutor responds to this shift in conversation by laughing and saying, "I can't imagine. I don't know. Let's see what time it is" (line 451). The tutor's laughter, as Potter and Hepburn (2012) suggest, could be taken as a marker of trouble, which in this case, comes from her not knowing the material. In addition, saying "I can't imagine?" (line 451) sounds like a glib comment about the

word-problem, making light of the study of economics in general by providing light commentary on the absurdity of the idea that a town can only have two residents.

Although a tutoring session is designed to be one hour and the allotted time dictates when the session will conclude, the tutor takes on tutor duties by keeping time in line 451. However, the tutor contradicts her tutor identity in line 456 when she interrupts the student. Interrupting the student would typically indicate that the tutor is in a position where interrupting the student is acceptable. Interestingly, though, the tutor interrupts the student saying, “so::: I have to come back to that one” (line 456-457). Bolden’s (2006) study on the use of “so” in conversation suggests that it can function to prompt moving on from one action to the next relevant one. In lines 456-457, it appears that the tutor prompts the student to produce the next relevant action with an elongated “so:::” when she says, “so::: I have to come back to that one.” Here, the tutor responds as a student who is opening a window for the student to provide guidance. This declaration reveals that her question about the time (see line 451) is a strategy to shift attention from something she should control (the task of understanding an economics problem) to something she has no control over (when the tutoring session will end). Perhaps the question of time is a way for the tutor to save face during what may be an embarrassing moment due to her lack of knowledge. Furthermore, the tutor’s question about time shows her as the kind of student who is more concerned about being done with work regardless of the quality of work being done.

In line 473, the tutor references the problem they cannot figure out and says that “it’s probably not that hard,” her emphasis on “that” indicates she could potentially figure it out, despite her claim to the contrary (see lines 463-464, “I’m not sure how to like figure that out”). The student relieves the tutor of her tutor identity when she responds with “I can figure that one out” (line 474). Not only is the student letting the tutor off the hook for the rest of the tutoring session, she also establishes herself as someone capable of doing the problem on her own.

Additionally, the student initiating the closure of the meeting in line 478 (“We have alike one minute” followed by “oka::y”) and expressing gratitude shows her recognizing that the tutor cannot help her but still recognizing her as someone who is tasked to help her and, therefore, requires an expression of appreciation.

In brief, the tutor and the student spent the majority of the interaction navigating identity shifts through interactional practices, which contributed to identity exchanging. Moschkovich’s (2004) meaning of appropriation was used to describe in detail how the participants interactionally created a shared viewpoint of the session, common points of attention, and progression of material. The tutor’s identity as tutor naturally placed her in a position of authority, where repeatedly describing the content as confusing shaped how the content was regarded. At times, tutors may describe content as confusing in order to build rapport with students. However, this interaction revealed how institutional identities become challenged when a tutor (or supposed expert) continuously talks like a student (or novice) without fulfilling the tutor responsibilities in a way that one would expect from someone in her position. Describing the content as confusing was ultimately problematic because it left the student in a position where she needed to help herself (see line 474). Although the student agreed with the tutor (see line 444, “I just don’t feel like a one hundred percent confident about it), she transitioned to someone who could figure it out on her own (see line 474, “I can figure that one out”). This transformed view of the problem exposes the student as taking on the perspective of the kind of student who no longer needs a tutor (or this tutor).

altercasting practices.

Another interactional practice with identity challenges that reveal the expertise-equality dilemma for tutors and students is altercasting. Altercasting is an interactional practice that implicitly regards the other as having a certain identity and is expected to behave accordingly (Weinstein & Deutschberger, 1963). Goffman (1959) suggests that when an individual takes on a

certain identity, she or he usually finds that behavioral expectations for that identity are already established. Implicit in these identities are expectations about behavior. Tutors and students must act in accordance with these expectations in order to foster the interaction so that it remains consistent with institutional parameters for interactional practices (Weinstein & Deutschberger, 1963). Further, tutors and students may feel pressure to behave in a particular way to ensure that identities are properly performed. In a family context, for example, a mother may tell her child to “Be a good girl and put your toys away.” In doing so, she projects the “good girl” identity onto the daughter, which then encourages certain behaviors. Altercasting in interaction, however, is typically not this straightforward. In the teacher-student relationship, if interaction goes smoothly, the way the student talks implicitly regards, or casts, the other *as* a teacher. Similarly, the teacher interacts with a student in ways that altercasts him or her *as* a student. For that matter, a student’s talk may cast a tutor as just another student. Also, altercasting may pinpoint a specific kind of a more general identity. For instance, students may altercast a teacher as a specific kind of teacher (e.g., a helpful, understanding, challenging, unreasonable, or confusing teacher), or a teacher may altercast a student as a particular kind of student (e.g., responsible, disruptive, capable, or average).

The excerpt below is an example of altercasting in the tutoring context to better understand what it looks like when identities are congruent with institutional expectations for behavior. In this example, the tutor altercasts the student as the kind of student who needs slower explanations.

Excerpt 5 (tutoring session #2, calculus homework)

35	T5-f:	It’s kinda like what you wanted in algebra like Y equals M-X
36		plus B- it’s kinda like that. Okay and the C is saying in what
37		month (.) ↓Oh I can slow down for [you.
38	S5-m:	[>No no< you’re fine.

- 39 T5-f: >Okay< in C it's saying in what month of the year are gas
40 prices the highest and what you'll do is look at all these
41 coefficients (.) right here and you can see that the highest is
42 point um let's see the highest is right there that yearly one.
43 S5-m: Okay

After explaining the math problem in lines 35-36, the tutor takes a short pause before offering to slow down. Pausing before transitioning into the offer is one way the tutor enacts her tutor identity. However, in this excerpt, the tutor talks in a way that altercasts the student as being a certain kind of student – one that needs a tutor to go slow – one that just does not quite get it (after all, that is why he is here). This altercasting is accomplished in part by the tutor saying “↓Oh oh I can slow down for [you” (line 37). In line 35, the tutor explains the current math problem by saying, “it’s kinda like what you wanted in algebra.” By focusing attention on a past math class, he is constructed as a student who should use what he was taught in the past to help him now.

The student responds, “>No no<” before the tutor finished her offer. This quick response, followed by “you’re fine” in line 38, implies that the tutor’s pace is acceptable and she does not need to slow down. Saying “>No no< you’re fine” may be a respectful way to reject, not just her offer, but also her altercasting. In this exchange, both participants are taking on their respectively assigned institutional identities because they are behaving in accordance with the educational hierarchy, which defines expectations for tutor/student identities.

Beyond this example that illustrates altercasting, peer tutoring interaction shows instances where students altercast tutors as having limited knowledge, thus illustrating how altercasting can show challenges for participants as they negotiate their institutional identities. For example, in the next excerpt the tutor is working a problem that both parties had difficulty solving. As the tutor talks through the math problem, she gets to a point where she can no longer

figure it out. Rather than waiting for her to arrive at the correct answer, the student altercasts the tutor as less capable than her institutionalized tutor identity affords.

Excerpt 6 (tutoring session #5, mathematics homework)

- 14 T6-f: Mmhm. Yeah and then (.) yeah and you keep the two points
15 together if I believe (.) so:: it should be this one but it didn't
16 look like there was one like that. >I'm sorry< I am not really
17 sure about this subtraction- I don't know why. I mean I can
18 deal with numbers it's [just
19 S6-f: [You can't [understand.
20 T6-f: [Let me try it and let me see.
21 S6-f: Are we going to do that one?
22 T6-f: Possibly. >If I move that< and [made it
23 S6-f: [I think that was right. It's
24 going to be this way and oka::y yeah. So then you're gonna put
25 V minus 2-U so your 2 here is going to go up here and go
26 down. Does that make sense?

After the tutor states in lines 14-18 that she is “not really sure...,” the student interrupts with, “You can't understand” (line 19). In saying, “You can't understand,” the student may be suggesting that the tutor does not understand how hard the class is for her. Or, perhaps it is a way to communicate that the tutor does not understand because she is not in the class and she is not the professor. Regardless of intentionality, her utterance suggests that she views the tutor as someone who is less knowledgeable in some way. Not only is she talking to the tutor in a way that suggests the tutor “doesn't know,” she does so by interrupting. Her interruption creates an asymmetry regarding the right to talk, keeping in mind that, according to Cazden (2001), teachers usually have the right to interrupt students, but students typically do not have the right to interrupt teachers. Thus, what the participants are saying, rather than the interruption practices, accomplish the altercasting of identities. The student's

interruption and subsequent utterance (“you can’t [understand]”) altercasts the tutor as someone less capable at some level than established expectations for her tutor identity.

Rather than challenging this statement, the tutor persists, saying, “Let me try it and let me see” (line 20), which models a “if at first you don’t succeed, try try again” mentality.

Altercasting becomes more certain from line 21 (“are we going to do that one?”) to lines 23-26, which show the student fairly confident when working through the math problem. Saying “I think that was right. It’s going to be this way and oka::y yeah” (lines 23-24) makes “are we going to do that one?” (line 21) sound more like a suggestion rather than a question for the tutor to answer. Further, the tutor’s response in line 22 includes the word “possibly,” which qualifies the statement in such a way as to detract from the tutor’s certainty regarding the problem. By incorporating “possibly,” she reduces the impact of her uncertainty as tutor. Her utterance casts her as low in power, therefore affirming a student identity.

Another way the student altercasts the tutor as a student is by way of explaining a problem the way a tutor would to a student – thereby creating two capable, tutor-like identities. In line 23 the student begins with “I think that was right.” In this instance, the hedge “I think” is not a form of powerless speech as it was in line 22 (i.e., possibly). Instead, saying “I think that was right” is a way to sound encouraging before providing a more accurate answer. The student ends this segment of talk with “does that make sense” (line 26). Typically, tutors ask students “does that make sense” to better understand where the student is intellectually. Students may use this utterance to see if they are on the right track when providing the tutor with an answer or response. In this excerpt, however, the student uses this utterance as a tutor would. The interaction leading to the student saying, “does this make sense” (line 26) supports the claim that this utterance further establishes the expert-novice relationship between tutor and student.

Summary and Preliminary Discussion I

In this chapter I examined tutoring sessions to see the ways the expertise-equality dilemma emerges. The expertise side of the dilemma can be seen when the student and teacher identities complement one another. The tutor may indeed talk like a tutor while the student may talk like a student – and vice versa. I found, however, that identities do not so cleanly switch, such as when tutors use their student identity to perform their tutor identity. In addition, students may talk like a tutor in one instance, but soon after show gratitude by distinguishing the tutor as someone who necessitates appreciation.

The equality side of the dilemma could then be thought of as an expert-expert set of identities or a novice-novice set. Looking back at excerpt one, for example, identities may become unclear as participants navigate each other's uncertainty. Tutors may background their tutor identity, creating an (sometimes undesired) egalitarian moment when disclosing their own confusion (novice-novice). Students may also respond in a way (e.g., "I can figure it out) that suggests they are not someone who really needs a tutor (expert-expert). The expertise-equality dilemma is played out in a way that foregrounds either "tutoring" or "peer" in peer tutoring.

Clearly, situational practices and interactional practices are not mutually exclusive. This chapter's organizational scheme illuminates two types of practices that, together, make up the larger communicative event of peer tutoring. Looking at "practice" from these two different angles allow us see peer tutoring play out in different ways. One way is from the standpoint of situated ideals. In line with grounded practical theory as concerned with cultivating "situated ideals," it makes sense that this analysis would look at aspects of the situation that make attaining an ideal peer tutoring session. Peer tutoring is also an interactional

activity, so it makes sense to do the same thing in terms of general interactional practices. Grounded practical theory works as a framework that unites these interactional practices with the situated ideals guiding those acts (Craig & Tracy, 1995). Situational practices like error management and giving/receiving advice, as well as interactional practices like appropriating and altercasting exposed and managed the expert-equality dilemma. Furthermore, these practices shuffled identities that shifted around expert-novice set of identities, novice-novice, and expert-expert identities. Participants often accepted their identities as predetermined, thus, reproducing the expert-novice relationship, emphasizing the notion of “tutoring” in “peer tutoring.” Talk between participants constituted the expert-novice relationship as one in which both identities are frequently traded and often not so cleanly switched. This exchanging of identities – the fuzziness about the extent to which the tutor is the tutor or a student and the extent to which the student is the student or looks like a tutor – could be viewed as collaboration in peer tutoring, emphasizing the notion of “peer.”

The next chapter explores peer tutoring from the dilemmatic angle of teaching and learning. This turn involves shifting focus from examining how participants’ shape their own and each other’s identities as peers or tutors to examining interaction for how they regard the situation and its purpose.

V. Analysis II: Framing Peer Tutoring in the Teaching-Learning Dilemma

The overall argument for this thesis has been that the peer tutoring can be described in terms of two pairs of contradictory ideologies that are thought to be intellectually true but experientially false (Billig et al., 1988). The previous chapter described discursive practices that revealed ambiguous identities as a reflection of Billig et al.'s (1988) expert-equality dilemma. This chapter shifts focus to practices that reflect the teaching-learning dilemma, where the intellectual ideology pertaining to collaboration between tutors and students competes with the lived (or experienced) ideology of hierarchy/authority in the educational institution, sometimes known as the "traditional" mode of education (Atwood et al., 2010; Billig et al., 1988; Goodboy & Bolkan, 2011). On one hand, educators and researchers alike argue collaboration is highly productive in peer tutoring (e.g., Bruffee, 1984; Chan, 2001; Duran & Monereo, 2005). This argument reflects the learning side of the dilemma. On the other hand, the lived experience of peer tutoring involves one person teaching another how to solve a problem, see a mistake, or understand a concept (see also, Blau et al., 1998; Gillam, 1991). How, then, is the peer tutoring session to be regarded?

Instead of describing how tutors and students exchange, trade, and synchronize (or fail to synchronize) identities, this chapter seeks to describe how they frame and reframe the peer tutoring session as a communicative event. The focus is on how discursive practices expose (and in some ways manage) teaching and learning dilemmatically. I begin with a brief discussion of the concept of frames/framing and its relevance to the teaching-learning dilemma.

Following this discussion, I describe two main framing practices in the peer tutoring data that illuminate the dilemma. The first of these practices is how participants implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) label and name the tutoring session. The second describes the ways students and tutors draw on their past experiences in classroom settings to understand the purpose of and specific goals in the peer tutoring session. Framing practices reflect, contradict, and even transform notions of collaboration and hierarchy in the experience of the teaching-learning dilemma. Naming and drawing on past experiences may create rapport or distance between participants that have implications for teaching and learning in peer tutoring.

Frames and Framing

A frame refers to how people perceive, shape, and communicate about a situation (Bateson, 1972; Goffman, 1974). According to Goffman (1959; 1974), it is the “definition of the situation.” When individuals have a frame, they either directly or indirectly identify what is going on in the situation, thereby interpreting it as or giving it – or the interaction in it – a name (e.g., flirting, arguing, teasing, fighting, joking) (Goffman, 1974). Frames further provide a guide for what subsequent action should be taken, by whom, and how individuals define themselves in relation to the problem (e.g., teachers, tutors, students, heroes, experts, victims, protectors) (Gordon, 2008; Sargent, 2012; Tannen, 2006).

The act of framing, then, refers to the actions communicators perform in a situation that support or challenge what is or should be going on. For example, Tracy’s (1997) study of 911 telephone calls suggests that citizens who call 911 implicitly mark their calls as a request for customer service, while call-takers implicitly marked them as a public service. Citizens’ frames called for immediate response, but call-takers’ frames required a certain amount of information from citizens before dispatching responders. Tracy argues these mismatched frames created

differing expectations that lead to interactional troubles where each speaker would challenge the other's implied framing of the situation.

The notion that an individual chooses the most appropriate frame to interpret a particular situation implies that other choices besides that frame (perhaps outside of it) are less appropriate. Analysis, too, involves attention to the frame and what is happening outside of it to cultivate a more complete understanding of communicative problems. Often, communicators choose what information is most important or appropriate for a situation based on relational expectations they have for the self and the other. This relational feature to framing includes a mixture of competition and cooperation where both parties may compete to achieve their own goals but also cooperate to achieve agreements (Putnam, 2010).

Goffman (1974) also argues that framing is a social construction. As such, it encapsulates individual and shared sense-making, further contributing to multiple frames for a situation. Tannen (1986) further suggests that frames should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. Framing that occurs in a situation is shaped by a frame that came before and shapes the frame that comes next. In other words, it is a reflexive process in which everything within the frame is both a reaction to and instigation for communication (Tannen, 1986). The particularly intricate nature of framing exists in the layering of different frame creations and negotiation of those creations, which are revealed in the discursive actions participants take. Differing frames of a particular situation, although they may foreground diverse aspects of that situation, are essentially corresponding portrayals of the same problem (Levin, Schneider, & Gaeth, 1998).

Communicative problems that arise when participants have multiple and competing goals lead them to construct different frames that, in turn, conflict with one another (see Gray, 2004; Putnam, 2007; Sillince & Mueller, 2007; Tannen, 2006). For example, in a study of local

stakeholders' conflict about how to manage a National Park, Gray (2004) showed how differing frames impeded collaboration efforts. Gray found that individuals often fail to reach an agreement when they resist frame change, believing their frame is the right one. In another example, Tannen (2006) examined how family members negotiated conflicts about the division of household responsibilities. Conflicts occurred between family members in the private sphere of the home when their expectations about the division of labor failed to align with those that come from the public sphere. Family harmony was restored when each individual accepted a new frame that reinforced shared family roles (Tannen, 2006).

These features of frames and framing have use for examining peer tutoring interactions. This analysis features framing practices in the interaction that shape sessions as a teaching (providing information) and learning (collaboration) situation. In associating teaching with the traditional academic hierarchical frame and learning with a more collaborative one, I describe framing practices that reveal the competition between the two. As tutors and students manage situational and interactional challenges, they may foreground one frame over another. Participants may also reframe traditional academic hierarchy challenges as collaborative ones and vice versa. Here, framing is discussed in regard to two specific practices – interactional naming and drawing on past experiences. In this analysis I reconstruct these practices to better understand the institutional challenges tutors and students encounter in regard to teaching and learning, and how they interactionally deal with challenges regarding the definition of the situation.

Interactional Naming

The teaching-learning dilemma can be seen through interactional naming in peer tutoring. As Tracy and Muller (2001) argue, labeling a situation, problem, or event necessarily shapes

how that situation, problem, or event is to be regarded. Over time, language used to identify a situation becomes the socially accepted associations for ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving among individuals (see also, Gee, 2011). Naming practices may show how participants regard the tutoring session and their place within the larger educational institution. Furthermore, as Putnam (2010) points out, labeling is often linked to a shift in responsibility or blame. When labels shift, patterns of blaming also shift (Putnam, 2010). Names that are socially constructed in interaction do more than communicate a restricted sense of the term. Using a name may also be evidence for accepting the restrictions as conventional, despite the possibility that the name may be contradictory to or an exaggeration or simplification of the referent situation.

When someone hears or thinks of a particular name an image certainly comes to mind, but that image is also accompanied by a particular meaning associated with that name and image (Andrews, 1996). Consider the implications of the name, “peer tutoring.” The term “peers” conveys social equality that is accomplished through both interactional and interpretive practices. Calling this tutoring program a peer tutoring program gives credence to the notion that there is an inherent equality between tutors and students that exists before a tutoring session even begins. Yet peer tutoring is part of a larger educational institution that in many ways is based on hierarchal order. By working for and signing up with Study Partners as a peer tutoring program, tutors and students become the embodiment of an institutional organization with contradictory values that then frame their understanding of the tutoring situation. This institutional frame also influences framing strategies during tutoring sessions. The name reflects the contradiction of hierarchy and collaboration in teaching and learning. These contradictions are revealed as tutors and students label problems and use names to understand the situation.

For instance, tutors and students may name a problem that comes up during a tutoring session in such a way that the name recasts the problem. They may use names to identify what is going on, explain the situation differently, and possibly shift responsibility. When tutors, students, or both parties have an inadequate understanding of the material, they describe it as “confusing.” This is a term that was used multiple times in most of the recorded tutoring sessions.

Excerpt 1 (tutoring session #7, anatomy homework)

338 S2-f: Yeah like I’ve just had a lot of trouble with this one.
339 Umm yeah (.) it’s just like really confusing.
340
341 T2-f: A lot of people have trouble with anatomy. I mean yeah (.)
342 it’s hard.
343
344 T2-f: ((Laughs)) Yeah it’s really confusing.

In this excerpt, the student’s description of the content as “just like really confusing” (line 339) may not necessarily reflect her own shortcoming, but a problem with how the content was presented (either in class, the text, or both). Tutors naturally operate under the assumption that students are there because they need help. This assumption stems from traditional approaches to education where a teacher’s primary responsibility is to pass down information to students. In this excerpt, the student labels the content as confusing (see lines 339, 342), rather than herself as confused. Drawing on an example from Agne and Tracy (2009), when someone describes reasons for needing clarification such as “I was getting lost,” he/she subtly justifies their own trouble and suggests that the teacher may not have been clear. That is, labeling the content as confusing implicates the material (or the teacher) as faulty. In contrast, a student could say “I didn’t listen closely,” thus, suggesting that the difficulty with understanding is a product of his/her own confusion (Agne & Tracy, 2009). Pointing to the self as confused does not, however, point blame to the self. Terms like “hard,” “hassle,” and “confusing” may

directly label the material tutors and students discuss, but they also implicitly name the situation. Choosing to describe reasons for needing clarification in a particular way exposes not only how participants regard the situation, but how they regard each other's role in relation to the situation.

In agreeing with the student's label (line 340-341, "I mean yeah (.) it's hard"), the tutor helps construct the learning frame that foregrounds the content as the problem, rather than the individual – whether that be the student or the tutor. In addition, co-constructing the material as difficult, could be seen as ironically creating a collaborative frame that nonetheless hinders the learning process (on top of precluding the other side of the dilemma). Thus, equally as interesting as students labeling content as confusing, are instances where tutors also use different labels for the course and course material. Consider the following excerpt in which the tutor talks about her experience as a student in the same course as a more extensive instance in which the tutor contributes to the framing of the tutoring session:

Excerpt 2 (tutoring session #2, calculus homework)

- 89 T3-f: I know it's kinda confusing I- these last few chapters ↑I wasn't
90 a huge fan of like I I really liked regression (.) wasn't too bad
91 and like once you figure out how to do you know the (.) u::m °I
92 don't know what I'm tryin'° the ↑intervals you know? Those
93 aren't too bad once you figure that out but these last few like
94 manipulating the ya know? It's tricky.
- 95 S3-m: S::o for this problem right ↓here. There's really nothin' to like
96 work out.
- 97 T3-f: Yeah most of these chapters you don't actually have to do that
98 much math. It's just kinda kinda pulling the information out.
- 99 S3-m: As long as you kinda pull 'em off the chart [or?
- 100 T3-f: [Mhm 'cause
101 they'll always give you these (.) they won't ask you to
102 calculate the stuff.
- 103 S3-m: ↑Right. Yeah.
- 104 T3-f: It's like you'll always have a computer to do that so it's just
105 kinda kno::wing what they all mean.

106 S3-m: Okay.
 107 T3-f: And if there's like really specific things that are confusing I
 108 would try to read the chapter 'cause like it is kinda confusing
 109 but at least you'll have ↑some idea of what's going on and then
 110 it's easier to try and dive into the homework after doing that.
 111 S3-m: Okay.
 112 T3-f: It's just hard 'cause every teacher kinda tests it in a different
 113 way so it's kinda (.) [ya know.
 114 S3-m: [>Yeah yeah<

Because the tutor is in a teaching position, it makes sense that she would label, describe, or otherwise evaluate the material as confusing (or not). However, what she is labeling it as and how that influences the interaction warrants a closer look. Corey (1996) argues that labels are not necessarily acts of self-definition, but instead impressions by those in charge. As the tutor uses the term “confusing” (see lines 89, 107, 108) to describe the content, she essentially authorizes the student to regard the content in much the same way the student did in the previous excerpt, which also contributes to a co-constructed frame. Saying that she “wasn’t a huge fan” (line 90), concurs with the student who said she was having a difficult time with the material before the start of the excerpt. Furthermore, the tutor’s statement in line 90 (“I wasn’t a huge fan”) could be a way of showing rapport to show sympathy through validation.

The co-construction of the frame helps the tutor guide the student toward a correct answer. When the tutor says “And if there’s like really specific things that are confusing I would try to read the chapter” (lines 107-108), she reemphasizes the confusing material but also provides direction for the student (“I would try to read the chapter”). Saying “okay” (lines 106 and 11), “right” (line 103), and “yeah” (lines 103 and 114) indicates that the student agrees with the tutor regarding her description of material. When the tutor says “I know it’s kinda confusing” (line 89) she shows that she can label material as “confusing” with much less ambiguity than the

student. As seen in the previous excerpt, the student's label could be seen as deflecting responsibility from herself. When the tutor tells the student the material is confusing, she essentially authorizes the student to label it the same way, thereby reducing the possible guilt (or indignation) that comes with deflecting responsibility. Adding "I know" (line 89), implies that she has been in the student's position and can understand why the material might be "kinda confusing" (line 89). The student accepts this authorization as she responds with "↑Right. Yeah," and her upward intonation ("↑Right") shows an enthusiasm to do so. The word "kinda" qualifies "confusing" in such a way that the tutor may be implying that "it's not really that hard."

This assertion in line 89, however, is a definition of the situation that implicitly guides both interactants. In this excerpt we can see tensions between the two frames. The tutor's labels promote a collaborative frame, but also direct the situation in such a way that the student may be inclined to accept a collaborative, yet authoritative-driven frame. That is, the tutor's name is an authorization to label the material as difficult. Co-construction of this authoritative-driven frame is evidenced in the student's willingness to collaborate or accept the tutor's labels (i.e., "yeah", "okay," "right").

Lines 112-113 offer further evidence of framing the situation as a co-constructed activity. When the tutor says "It's just hard 'cause every teacher kinda tests it in a different way so it's kinda (.) ya know," she again highlights framing as a co-constructed activity. Interestingly, she ends the statement with "ya know" (see also lines 92, 94). The social connotation and literal meaning of "ya know" often overlap (House, 2009). This utterance is sometimes used as a clarifier (e.g., "do you understand what I'm saying"), but it is also used to include the listener and make her/him feel part of the conversation (House, 2009). The implication here is that surely the student must know what the tutor means, indicating that the frame is co-constructed. The

student's quick response, ">Yeah yeah<" (line 114) shows an eagerness to agree with the tutor. What seems like an invitation to share similar experiences is actually further evidence of the teaching-learning dilemma. It looks like teaching because the tutor uses an authoritative-driven, co-constructed frame to guide the student's learning. Saying "ya know" (line 113) attributes supposed knowledge to the student in a way that is incontestable. It looks like learning because the tutor integrates her own experiences, which seem to invite the student to share similar experiences or to agree with those of the tutor. By indicating assumed knowledge (i.e., "ya know"), the tutor promotes a certain frame to which the student succumbs. Labeling the situation as confusing was certainly real, as were the consequences, which inscribed the student into a situation that was never anything other than confusing. Further, labeling the situation foregrounded a traditional teacher-student dynamic where institutional power outweighed any notion of partnership. Here, we can see how interactional naming frames the tutoring session in ways that expose the dilemma. Using the term "confusing" can shift responsibility from the student to the material or the course instructor, but more importantly it reshapes the peer tutoring session to create rapport. This rapport invites a more collaborative (learning) frame, but it can also create distance between interactants. Distance, therefore, may be a product of the tutor promoting a collaborative frame in such a way that the student is inclined to agree due to her social standing as learner.

Other labels may also redirect responsibility, which frames the tutoring session. The excerpt below shows tutors and students talking about a problem the student is having with the instructor of the course. This problem allows them to create a frame that shifts responsibility to the instructor as much as (or perhaps more than) the course material.

Excerpt 3 (tutoring session #3, statistics homework)

- 532 T4-f: Does that make sense? I hope that helps.
533 S4-m: ↑Yeah that does. Stats is just umm (.) it's just hard. My teacher
534 (.) he doesn't speak English though.
535 T4-f: That's hard. I know a lot of the teachers are kinda uhm hard to
536 understand. I think they're trying to build the program (.) like
537 get new teachers and stuff.
538 S4-m: Well (.) they need to do somethin'. It's bad.
539 T4-f: Yeah. I agree. I was lucky I had a good one and she was really
540 good but she doesn't teach it anymore.
541 S4-m: O::h (.) ugh the one I have is bad- he's foreign.
542 T4-f: ↑Oh ↓god (.) ye- yeah that's hard

The lengthy conversation leading up to this chosen excerpt was about a difficult statistics problem the student and the tutor were working. The student had trouble understanding the material throughout the tutoring session, prompting the tutor to say “Does that make sense? I hope that helps” (line 532). The student’s response, “he doesn’t speak English though,” (line 533-534) shifts focus from the difficult coursework and the extent to which it makes sense or the extent to which the tutor was helpful (see line 533, “stats is just umm (.) it’s just hard”) to his teacher. In doing so, the student reframes the problem with understanding as a result of his teacher. The tutor shows support for the student’s claim by saying “that’s hard. I know a lot of the teachers are kinda uhm hard to understand,” (lines 535-536). At this point, both participants contribute to the frame by commiserating over teachers that are “hard to understand” (lines 535-536).

The tutor then continues with “I think they’re trying to build the program (.) like get new teachers and stuff” (line 536-537). Here, the tutor offers inside information of sorts. In doing so, she creates distance between herself and the student, perhaps, indicating that she – as a member of the same institution – has the authority to be in the know, whereas the student does not. At the

same time, she also creates solidarity by letting him in on this inside information. In the same regard, “kinda uhm” in “kinda uhm hard” (line 535-536) does double duty. Saying simply “he’s hard to understand” would clearly show the tutor siding with the student in this matter. But “kinda um” shows some hesitancy in taking that side. Solidarity is achieved fairly clearly by agreeing that the instructor is hard to understand, but the hesitancy shows some level of loyalty to teachers – perhaps seen as fellow teachers by the tutor – and a reluctance to criticize them. Agreement may show solidarity, but the hesitancy creates distance.

When the student labels the statistics homework as “hard,” he is foregrounding the content as troublesome. Labeling the homework as “hard” (line 533) also provides a definition for the situation where tutoring may be about clarifying what the student considers to be difficult. He then introduces another label after stating “he ((the student’s teacher)) doesn’t speak English” (line 534). Saying he’s “foreign,” (line 541) shifts the problem away from the student, away from the content, and places responsibility for the trouble with the teacher and perhaps the institution for which he (the teacher) is employed. The tutor accepts the student’s new label stating, “↑Oh ↓god (.) ye- yeah that’s hard” (line 542). In doing so, she accepts the student’s frame which complies with their assumed partnership while resisting institutional hierarchy. Furthermore, labeling shifts responsibility in a way that builds rapport between the tutor and the student.

Using the terms “bad” (lines 538, 541) and “good” (539-549) to describe teachers frames the trouble as not with the students ability to learn or the tutors ability to tutor, but with the institution’s teachers. When the student says “the one I have is bad- he’s foreign” (line 541) he implies not just that the instructor is a poor instructor but that he is a poor instructor because he is foreign. Saying, “I was lucky I had a good one and she was really good,” (line 539-540)

functions in a similar way. The tutor uses “good” to describe her teacher, but only does so after agreeing with the student’s declaration about his teacher being bad. Indeed, it is likely that while the student describes his teacher as being “bad” and “foreign,” it would not be a stretch to surmise that the tutor’s teaching was not just “good” but also American.

This discussion/sharing/comparing of good and bad teachers in terms of their foreignness frames tutoring interaction in a way that shifts responsibility by creating distance between the participants and those held responsible for good/bad instruction (e.g., the course instructor). Furthermore, agreeing that the ability to speak English well can make or break the good or bad quality of instruction. The instructor not speaking English is an agreed-upon legitimate reason for not understanding the material. The distance is created by the fact that the student had a “bad” (read “foreign”) instructor and the student has a “good” (read American) instructor. In a sense, this frames the student’s need for seeing a tutor as due to the circumstances of having a bad teacher rather than a reflection on his academic abilities.

Drawing on Past Experiences

The previous chapter examined tutors and student sharing their experiences in the context of advice-giving and receiving, thereby having implications for the partners’ identities. This chapter examines partners’ drawing on past experiences to show how such a practice shapes how the tutoring session (the current one or tutoring sessions in general) should be taken/viewed/regarded. Similar to naming practices, drawing on past experiences can create a collaborative or traditional teaching frame by the building of rapport or distance. These experiences typically stem from a traditional classroom setting that may shape ways of behaving in the peer tutoring session. Students may rely on these experiences to justify their reasons for seeking a tutor, to explain learning challenges, and/or to parse responsibility in regard to those

learning challenges. Tutors may use past experiences to justify teaching methods, to find common ground with a student, and/or to enact hierarchy in the tutoring situation.

The following series of short excerpts provides examples of what past experiences tutors and students have mentioned during sessions. Here, the tutor talks about her experience in having the same teacher as the student:

Excerpt 4 (peer tutoring session #1, mathematics homework)

Yeah (.) I mean- yeah when I had him ((the student's teacher)) it was still pretty hard (.) but like I think you'll be fine. You just have to like make sure you really practice all this.

Here, the student talks about taking a calculus class for the second time:

Excerpt 5 (peer tutoring session #2, calculus homework)

Welllll (.) I mean this is the second time I'm taking this class. Um last time I had to drop be- because I didn't do that well on the first test and uh (.) I had a lot going on (.) so I kinda have an idea of what to look for but it's still pretty um (.) hard.

Tutors also draw from past experiences in other classes to help the teaching process in the current tutoring session. Here, the tutor reflects on her experience in an algebra class to help tutor a student with statistics homework:

Excerpt 6 (peer tutoring session #3, statistics homework)

((Laughter)) yeah statistics is hard by itself. It's way worse when it's a word problem. I mean when I took algebra I was pretty good at it ((laughter)) but I always hated when we did word problems. I um- I was still fine with it but yeah (.) not my favorite.

As we can see in these examples, apparent practical purposes for talking about past experiences vary – justifying a study strategy, finding common ground, perhaps deflecting responsibility. A closer look shows that drawing on past educational experiences functions to frame the peer tutoring session in a way that exposes it as a dilemmatic situation – teaching to receive (or provide) information or learning as a collaborative experience.

Both teaching and learning are revealed when past experience becomes part of the interaction. Learning in the form of collaboration can be found in both partners' sharing of past experiences, though non-reciprocal provision of advice, particularly when it comes from the tutor, more strongly conveys a teaching frame. For example, the following excerpt shows the tutor using her experience in the same class as the student to providing the student with tips for studying for the final based on her experience in the same class:

Excerpt 7 (peer tutoring session #6, economics homework)

- 11 S4-f: Ummm we're- we started new stuff like that's just gonna be on
12 the final so like maybe we can go over that but a lot of it like
13 really like (.) well the real reason I kinda like wanted to see like
14 tips for studying [for the final.
15 T4-f: [↑Yeah totally. I can totally do that. Actually
16 (.) I've got my notes with me from my class.

The student sounds like she wants to be smart with their time by studying material that the final exam will focus on. In order for the tutor to give “tips for studying for the final” (line 14) she uses her past academic experience to frame the situation. Saying “↑Yeah totally” (line 15) suggests a willingness to provide the student with the information she seeks. Furthermore, the tutor's willingness to provide these tips contributes to a co-constructed frame where past experience builds solidarity. However, saying “I kinda like” (line 13) shows some caution in conveying her “real reason” for initiating the tutoring session. This caution also creates distance,

as “kinda like” shows some acknowledgment that explicitly asking a teacher for “tips for studying for the final” (line 14) may be an inappropriate use of the tutoring session. By the student seeking out these tips and the tutor providing them, we can see solidarity as co-constructed. But we can also see distance as the student takes caution in her approach to speaking with the tutor. Consider the following example where a tutor talks about her experience in the same science course after the student asks her what she did to study for the exam:

Excerpt 8 (tutoring session #7, anatomy homework)

- 40 S5-f: So:: (.) like what did you do when you studied for this exam?
41 So maybe I'll (.) like know the best way to get started.
42 T5-f: Definitely work the online questions. When I took- I think this
43 is one thing I did for one of the tests that I did really really well
44 on. The one I made a 96 um (.) I did some of the questions
45 online and that helped a lot. I don't know if the content was
46 just better or what the deal was but I did really well on that test.

Similar to the previous excerpt, the tutor and the student here co-construct a collaborative frame where learning is about seeking advice from the tutor's past that will help learning in the current situation, and teaching is about providing that advice. However, in providing advice (see lines 42-47) the tutor conveys more of a teaching frame, which creates distance between the two participants. Saying “I made a 96” (line 44), suggests that the tutor is in a position to be a teacher because she did well when she took the exam. By asking the tutor what she did to study for the exam (see line 40), the student also reveals a teaching frame. That is, saying “what did you do when you studied for this exam?” (line 40) exposes a teaching frame where the student regards the tutor as someone with knowledge based on experience that she lacks. So here, both teaching and learning are revealed in the sharing of past experience. We can see the teaching side of the dilemma in the student's focus on what “did you do” (line 40), which creates distance between participants. The tutor participates in constructing this distance when she responds with, “When I

took” (line 42) and “one thing I did” (line 43). We can also see the learning side of the dilemma in the student’s invitation for the tutor to share her past experience to help the current situation. Providing the student with tales of her experience shows solidarity, but focusing on “here’s what I did” and “I made a 96” creates distance.

Tutoring interaction exposes the teaching-learning dilemma through the past experiences participants draw from to redefine the teaching-learning dynamic. More interesting than these examples were instances where tutors and participants framed past experiences in ways that conflicted, often due to tensions between hierarchy and collaboration. These tensions often intensified when individual goals for the situation competed with institutional goals for the situation during tutoring sessions.

Meeting each other’s social expectations for the situation was often problematic when participants used past experiences to gain support or approval. Furthermore, communicating a certain level of seriousness led to additional framing challenges for participants. In the excerpt below, for example, the tutor and the student are engaged in a discussion of psychology, despite the fact that they are there for a math related session. The student uses her experience from a psychology class to explain her inability to notice mathematical patterns.

Excerpt 9 (tutoring session #9, mathematics homework)

- 89 T1-f: Okay. All right (.) any other questions on this one?
- 90 S1-f: ↓No, I’m just like I don’t know if I would see that. Like my
91 mind just doesn’t work that way (.) I have to make sense (.)
92 this is like logic and rhythm.
- 93 T1-f: Right.
- 94 S1-f: You want to have that.
- 95 T1-f: Right. Umm yeah (.) a lot of this is noticing patterns.
- 96 S1-f: ↓Yeah [yeah
- 97 T1-f: [↓Oh ↑man but patterns are awesome.

98 S1-f: I was- okay. This is something really weird (.) I was in
99 psychology one day and we were learning about minds and
100 there's like three minds and like one of them is like advance to
101 like seventeen to like nine. And they're just like if you think
102 this way, you think this way, you think this way like you're in
103 the highest level if you think this way. I'm still in the second
104 level. I'm not- I'm not joking with you.

105 T1-f: Really?

106 S1-f: Yeah because (.) well they gave me the scenario and I was just
107 like (.) if someone's starving, would you go and steal food for
108 them or do you think no, it's like wrong. And I was like no
109 stealing (.) it's bad like you don't do that and I couldn't get it
110 out of my mind that it's just like wrong. And they're like you
111 can't make exceptions (.) > I don't know< It was weird so I
112 think it affects my like reasoning.

113 T1-f: I don't know. I feel like that would just be like different kinds
114 of people (.) like how high do you hold your morals.

115 S1-f: ↑Yeah that- that's what he said.

116 T1-f: Interesting.

117 S1-f: >I don't know< it was really weird and I kind of felt off and
118 it's like (.) what

119 T1-f: It makes you feel bad as a person but you shouldn't because
120 you're you.

121 S1-f: Umm I'm fine (.) I don't (.) care.

122 T1-f: That's interesting.

123 S1-f: That is what my psychologist told me.

124 T1-f: Psychology's some interesting stuff. Welllll maybe this will
125 help us practice looking at patterns then.

As the student elaborates on this experience in psychology class, she insists that she is “not joking” (line 103), indicating a certain level of seriousness. The tutor shows interest in her experience, but also uses the student's experiences, which creates distance between the two in the situation. Expressing approval incorporates collaboration through understanding, but it also establishes a footing for distance, which can be problematic for the tutoring session if this distance goes unnoticed. To say she is “not joking” (line 104) sounds like a call for a

confirmation, as if her account in lines 98-104 are fictional. In lines 106-112, the student talks about a scenario given in her psychology class that placed her mind at the second level. Based on her explanation of levels (see lines 98-104 and 106-112), we can ascertain that the student was not happy with this outcome. In line 112, she goes on to say that what she learned in her psychology class about minds was weird, even stating that it “affects my like reasoning.” Joking around tends to convey a level of friendliness, or perhaps collaboration, but not joking around may also end up conveying collaboration between participants (Norrick, 1994). The student frames the situation in a way that is serious, while also deflecting responsibility. In this case, not joking around, affects coherence and involvement by producing a frame that is inherently tied to outside discourses (i.e. her psychology class). By bringing in the discussion of psychology, the student impedes on her own involvement in the tutoring session. That is, she challenges the teacher-learner dynamic by positioning herself as someone whose mind “just doesn’t work that way” (line 91), as someone who cannot be taught. Therefore, the student creates distance between herself and the tutor by making learning something that may not be possible.

The tutor participates in constructing a collaborative frame by engaging in the student’s discussion. In fact, she calls it interesting three different times (see lines 116, 122, 124). However, in lines 124-125 the tutor says, “Wellll maybe this will help us practice looking at patterns then.” So here, one way to manage and expose the dilemma is through a transition from social to task. Saying “Wellll maybe this will help us practice looking at patterns then” (lines 124-125), brings the student closer to learning the material by transitioning into the task at hand. The tutor creates distance and transforms the student’s frame of reference as someone whose mind “just doesn’t work that way” (line 91) into one that may help the learning process, as well as the teaching process. Perhaps the tutor did find the discussion interesting. However, her transition in lines 124 and 125 emphasizes a teaching/hierarchal frame, which values knowledge

as something the tutor possesses that must be passed on to the student. She takes the student's experience and uses it as a teaching moment. The student's self-proclaimed inability to learn, though, makes accepting a teaching/hierarchical frame difficult. Collaboration was visible in this interaction, but ultimately expectations guiding traditional approaches to teaching manifested in the tutors application of the student's experience to learning the material.

Summary and Preliminary Discussion II

This chapter has shown how the teaching-learning dilemma is visible in framing practices, revealing competition between the traditional/hierarchy (teaching) frame and the collaborative/idealistic (learning) frame. It could be noted, too, that framing the situation is intricately connected to the expertise-equality dilemma discussed in the previous chapter because part of framing includes a guide for how individuals should behave, which necessarily involves participants' identities that create an egalitarian or expert-novice relationship. The teaching side of the dilemma can be seen when the purpose of the situation is to provide or receive information. For instance, tutors and students co-constructed a collaborative frame, but tutors (and sometimes students) used that frame to transition from a social to task orientation in a way that foregrounded teaching as the definition of the tutoring situation. This example shows that frames the situation as collaborative can also be used to create distance between participants. A dynamic between teaching and learning appears where we see a combination of both frames, rather than viewing the tutoring situation as explicitly a teaching or a collaborative event. The learning side of the dilemma can be seen when the purpose of the situation is for participants to work together to create a collaborative experience, or to build rapport. Analysis revealed that framing the tutoring session as collaborative did not always mean academic learning was taking place. That is, tutors and students would sometimes co-construct a frame for the situation that was more about commiserating, sympathizing, or shifting blame for confusing material to the student's

class or teacher. In effect, the teaching-learning dilemma is played out in a way that foregrounds either “hierarchy” or “collaboration” in peer tutoring while backgrounding (without excluding) their dilemmatic opposites.

In sum, interactional naming and past teaching and learning experiences influenced how participants framed the current situation in ways that managed the teaching-learning dilemma, but also revealed contradictions in how participants were to define the situation. When students and tutors framed a problem or challenge they co-constructed a frame for the situation that functioned to guide understanding. Talk between participants revealed different frames that shaped how they regarded personal goals, institutional goals, and the tutoring situation itself.

VI. Discussion

“It [discourse] is indissolubly fused with its authority—with political power, an institution, a person—and it stands or falls together with that authority. One cannot divide it up—agree with one part, accept but not completely another part, reject utterly a third part.”

Bakhtin (1981)

While past research on peer tutoring dedicates much effort to explain the egalitarian and authoritative nature of the student-tutor relationship with the purpose of identifying the ideal tutoring relationship (e.g., Bell et al., 2009; Bruffee, 1984; Duran & Monereo, 2005), it primarily focuses on challenges the tutor faces. This study stands out in two ways. First, it takes an interactional approach in considering both partners. Second, this study examines interactional practices and how they construct meaning in the peer tutoring session rather than the individuals in the interaction and their impact on tutoring outcomes. In this chapter, I begin with a discussion of discourse analysis as a valuable tool for attending to communication practices with practical implications for peer tutoring. I then discuss my findings in terms of rethinking collaboration as the ideal tutoring situation, and I illuminate the necessity of the traditional model of education in teaching and learning for the tutoring situation. Next, the expertise-equality and teaching-learning dilemmas are discussed as they relate to Tannen’s (2006) notion of a power/solidarity paradox. To sum up this thesis project, I offer final thoughts on what the ideal tutoring situation may be.

The Value of Discourse Analysis of Peer Tutoring

In this thesis, I explored the interaction, seeking to describe the interaction problems that show how the dilemmas of tutoring are played out. Studying the discourse of peer tutoring allows a glimpse into the ways everyday talk both reinforce and contradict institutional identities and understanding of the peer tutoring situation. As a discourse analysis, this study has been an inductive endeavor. In such an endeavor, participants revealed the challenges of peer tutoring in naturally occurring interactions. AIDA acted as a lens through which I examined and reconstructed these challenges. This approach involved analyzing not just what participants said, but how they said it and what the implications for the interaction were. Studying peer tutoring discourse allowed me to understand one participant's utterance with respect to the other participants' – to understand how these utterances functioned within a dilemmatic framework.

Articulating the dilemmatic nature of peer tutoring took my study in a direction that sought to understand how the expertise-equality and teaching-learning dilemmas are revealed in participants' talk by reconstructing their discursive practices. The framework for this study has been grounded practical theory (GPT), which allows us to explore inherent problems of interaction, reconstruct communicative practices, and perhaps view peer tutoring differently. Billig et al.'s (1988) notion of dilemmas was a secondary conceptual framework for this study. With an understanding of the dilemmatic nature of peer tutoring, the practices articulated in this study revealed the dilemmas as posing interesting challenges for participants. For instance, tutors sometimes have to accept the fact that they are still students, which may create equal relationships when a tutor-student relationship might be needed. Furthermore, a student may take on a tutor identity in ways that create a power struggle between the two interactants.

The dilemmas discussed in this study should not be considered a negative aspect of peer tutoring. These dilemmas and challenges lead us to acknowledge the important and complex nature of tutoring interaction. Accepting this dilemmatic nature of peer tutoring allowed me to

look carefully at the practical problems tutors and students face on an interactional level. In addition, reconstructing those problems invites a contemplation on the complexity of peer tutoring as a communicative event, the identity and discourse problems that can arise, and the ideal tutoring situation.

Rethinking Emphasis on Collaboration

As discussed throughout this study, research repeatedly claims collaboration is the ideal tutoring situation, so much so that “collaboration” could be considered a god term in peer tutoring. GPT invites us to ask questions about accepted communicative practices and institutional values, such as whether or not collaboration is always productive in peer tutoring. Analysis suggests that the complexity of the peer tutoring situation makes deeming collaboration the ideal not just difficult but unrealistic and unwarranted. Choosing to foreground collaboration over traditional tutoring discounts the possibility that a student may simply need be told how to do something rather than taking up time to discover it together. The reality of the 1-hour tutoring session creates limits the extent to which tutors and students can collaborate. Sometimes teaching – providing information or showing a student how to do something – is more effective and efficient.

Analysis revealed a recurring theme where participants talked in a way that was expected of them, but did not always have the knowledge or expertise to meet these institutional expectations. When expectations and ability failed to align, identity challenges became more pronounced. In the early stages of examining this theme and writing the analysis, I identified this misalignment as identity oscillation, where tutor and student each switch back and forth between sounding like a tutor and sounding like a student. Despite the opportunities for examining the

variety of combinations, especially as they oscillate, the metaphor still failed to acknowledge the more complex challenges of tutor-student identities and the dilemma of expertise and equality. For example, oscillation implies cycles, and therefore prediction, which inadequately represent the social construction of meaning in peer tutoring as a discursive event and what Sacks (1984) might call the messy order of interaction. I would also argue that this metaphor is collaboration-centric such that the purpose of oscillation would be to determine when and how identities fall in and out of synch, suggesting “in” synch as preferable to “out” of synch.

The starting quote from Bakhtin (1981) also helps us move away from the overly simple notion that participants merely swap and oscillate between identities. Bakhtin points out that discourses imbued with authority – as found in tutoring interaction – are constructed, perpetuated, and revealed through interaction. An individual’s voice is continually constructed through conversation with other voices. On the surface, peer tutoring may seem like a typical interaction in which participants voice their ideas, experiences, and goals. Certainly, tutors and students talk in ways that shape how they regard each other and how they want to be regarded. But discourse analysis illuminates something else about tutoring interaction. That is, each individual’s voice is his/her own, yet the meaning of his/her utterances are also constructed and constricted by the same institution that taught them to speak. For instance, interactional practices revealed ambiguities in participants’ identities as a reflection of the expertise-equality dilemma. Rather than merely switching identities, tutors often used their role as peer to perform their tutor identity. Students often accepted the tutor’s role as peer, thus confirming the tutor’s tutor identity. Here, we can see how authority and collaboration are entwined in the tutor’s communicative practices, as well as the student’s confirmation of those practices.

Sharing experiences is another highly visible theme in this study. Findings exposed how students and tutors used experiences in the classroom to find the best course of action for dealing

with the current tutoring situation. For example, students and tutors often collaborated through shared experiences with difficult coursework when confronting uncertainty. In doing so, collaboration became a way for participants to commiserate together, rather than a productive activity. At first glance, this finding indicates a collaboration in peer tutoring where experience is an important part of building rapport between participants. However, collaboration, similar to intellectual knowledge, is negotiated in regard to who has the most or the best. In this sense, experience is still used to assert a level of power, authority, and status.

The Necessity of Traditional Education

Peer tutoring is a communicative event that is inextricable from the traditional education institution in which it functions. It reflects a larger institutional organization with contradictory values regarding teaching and learning. Traditional education focuses on teaching as a providing of information – in the dilemmatic sense, providing while appearing to elicit. Past research does suggest that effective teaching practice involves building rapport with learners (e.g., McNay, 2003; Rocca, 2010; Wright & Miller, 2012), which this study illustrates. But it also shows how creating distance is also an important part of teaching and learning effectively. In one example from the analysis, the tutor and the student co-constructed a collaborative frame, but when that frame was not conducive to learning, the tutor created distance in order to transition from social talk to academic-related talk.

The lived experience of peer tutoring is one that is defined by hierarchy and distance between participants. Tutors and students may collaborate during the session, but institutional hierarchy looms over any notion of true partnership as tutors and students personify the institutional organization in which they function. For instance, even when tutors took a collaborative approach as someone who could relate or commiserate with the student, their job still required them to teach the student how to solve a problem, see a mistake, or comprehend a

concept. Students also participated in creating rapport with tutors, but they also created distance just by asking tutors for help or, as an example, labeling a problem as “confusing.”

As this study sought to describe interactional practices that expose the expertise-equality and teaching-learning dilemmas, those practices can also be viewed as tacit ways of managing them. Tutors and students managed the teaching-learning dilemma, for instance, by often framing the situation according to institutional expectations for how the situation ought to occur. Tutors and students would share experiences to build rapport or find common ground in ways that invited a more collaborative session, but in doing so, also created distance. For example, drawing on past experiences to frame the situation creates a collaborative moment, but it also reifies traditional education. That is, past experiences are less about the sharing of a moment and more about the tutor providing the student information to better understand the current situation or problem. Furthermore, students contribute to teaching and learning by either confirming or denying the tutor’s past experience as valid or useful for the current situation.

In peer tutoring some production takes place, that is, some kind of transition of educational ideals through communicative practice. Yet some sort of preservation always takes place, something that remains the same through the transition. Collaboration and traditional education in peer tutoring are inseparable. Without transformation through collaborative ideals, we are left with a rigid and traditional academic environment that negates the interactive quality of learning. In effect, the educational institution remains the same and hierarchal order positions teaching as a parsing of information. Without preservation of traditional ideals in education, though, we are left trying to stay above constant waves of constant change. Here, collaboration is in constant flux – to the point that collaboration is not always a productive activity or synonymous with learning.

Dilemmas and the Power/Solidarity Paradox

Although the expertise-equality and teaching-learning dilemmas were discussed separately, we must understand that they are not mutually exclusive. Analysis showed that both dilemmas play a part in the production of the peer tutoring situation. In addition, these dilemmas can be likened unto a paradox, particularly the paradox of power and solidarity Tannen (2006) discusses. Tannen argues that power and solidarity capture the way people balance involvement with independence during interactions. Power deals with social status, but it also encompasses the need to control, an extension of involvement. Yet, power is also about the need to resist control, an extension of independence (Tannen, 1986). Hierarchy in education may provide rules that control actions, but individuals have the autonomy to decide how to behave (Billig, 1996). On the other hand, solidarity or collaboration reflects the degree to which individuals use friendliness or rapport to guide an interaction. Yet the decision to *use* friendliness or rapport can be seen as a power move (Tannen, 1986). Thus, power and solidarity – like collaboration and hierarchy and expertise and equality – are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they are two interrelated dimensions of relationships where both exist simultaneously, but only one side of the dimension can be seen at a time (Tannen, 1986).

Furthermore, these two dimensions of relationships show the expertise-equality and teaching-learning dilemmas in action, where perceptions of power and solidarity shape how tutors and students frame the identity and the situation to meet their needs. As discussed, power and solidarity are intertwined with one another, keeping communication in a state of imbalance (Tannen, 1986). Students and tutors have mixed motives for achieving interconnected, yet opposite goals. Tutors often refer to their own experience as a student to answer questions from the students they tutor. They express solidarity, but use that solidarity to exert control over the student in regard to studying/learning habits. Students often frame their own experiences in a

way that justifies a lack of understanding, while seeking support. Past experiences can be seen as power moves when they are framed as describing the self as *more* experienced than the other, thus implicating the teaching/hierarchical frame. They can also be seen as a solidarity move when framed as a commiserative, sharing, “we’re all in this together” frame, thus implicating a teaching, collaborative frame.

Advice for Tutoring Organizations

As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, there is what Hopper (1981) refers to as the “taken-for-grantedness” of messages by speakers. In peer tutoring, when tutors and students interact they socially construct a conceptual reality (or realities) that naturally get overlooked or dismissed as every day occurrences. Hopper (1981) calls this natural tendency to overlook the social construction aspect of talk as a “natural attitude” every ordinary communicator takes on. This study illuminates what is often taken-for-granted in peer tutoring. Through my analysis, I have shown that what is often taken for granted in peer tutoring are the varied goals and expectations (individual and institutional) participants bring to the session such that there cannot be a *best* way to approach peer tutoring. Peer tutoring is situational and depends on tutor, student, and organizational expectations in that moment. Expectations are not always going to align, let alone being the same, in every tutoring situation. So instead of focusing on if they align and why or why not, it make sense to pay attention to what they create in the moment of misalignment.

A suggestion my analysis provides is to maintain an awareness and regularly question the normative value of collaboration. Peer tutoring organizations’ training might include expanded possibilities of interaction scenarios of various alignments and misalignments of identity or frame. Discussion of those scenarios involving the reasonableness and

productiveness of those scenarios could follow. Students, for instance, may need to be students even when they are tutors, and students may need to be told what to do. Expanded possibilities of interaction scenarios might also include instances where participants manage being supportive without being empathetic, and building rapport while maintaining distance. It may also be useful to consider training (of sorts) for students – perhaps in the form of a “what to expect” section in the process of registering for a tutor.

Limitations and Future Research

This study is not without limitations. Because I use the expertise-equality and teaching-learning dilemmas as a secondary framework, I only show how they play out. Future research could examine peer tutoring interaction for new dilemmas that may be revealed in interaction. Also, choosing a dilemmatic approach necessarily excludes other possible approaches to peer tutoring. Those related to my approach, however, include instructional communication theory. Specifically, relational goal theory (Mottet, Frymier, & Beebe, 2006) suggests that both teachers and students bring their own intelligence, personalities, experiences, and expectations to the classroom in ways that impact both parties (Milton, Pollio, & Eison, 1986). This theory provides support for the notion that teacher communication behaviors interact with student communication behaviors in ways that may influence learning outcomes. Milton et al., (1986) argue that relational goal theory is useful in examining how teachers and students differ on what they seek from the educational situation based on experience. My analysis highlights the importance of experience in tutor-student interaction, thus, this theory may be a useful analytic tool.

Another theory that may be useful for future research is relational power and institutional influence theory (McCrowskey & Richmond, 1983). This theory incorporates the work of

French and Raven (1959) and Kelman (1961) regarding instructional communication, and explains how relational power influences the teacher-student dynamic. This theory may be useful in analyzing peer tutoring interaction, as it attends to the verbal and nonverbal messages of interactants that reveal power structures in an instructional communication setting. Although I did explore power-dynamics in tutoring interaction, this theory may be a useful tool for deeper exploration into the role educational power structures play in tutor-student interaction.

A third way of viewing the challenges in peer tutoring that may be advantageous for future research is through Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) situational leadership model. This model suggests that acceptable leadership develops from certain behavior that is responsive to varied situations (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). They identified four styles of situational leadership (telling, selling, participating, and delegating) to define a group's maturity. These four styles are good indicators of ability and may help to identify the best approach to leadership in a particular situation (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). For instance, if a student expresses a lack of ability the best approach to that tutoring situation may be for the tutor to tell the student exactly what to do. In contrast, if the student indicates a fair understanding of the material, the best approach to the situation may be for both the tutor and the student to participate in discussing the material. In brief, this approach to viewing peer tutoring takes into account the importance of situational or contextual expectations. That is, expectations for tutoring sessions will change from tutor to tutor and from student to student.

All of these approaches to understanding instructional communication share similarities with the approach I took, but offer unique perspectives that I did not focus solely on. Further research could continue to consider peer tutoring as a highly contextual event where the nature of tutoring relationships may shape the tutoring interaction. Future research may also consider

how long the tutor-student pairs have known each other, if they knew each other prior to the tutoring event, or perhaps how many times they have previously met (if at all). These considerations may expose various expectations the participants have for their own role, each other's role, and expectations regarding the tutoring situation.

Final Thoughts

Assumptions and preconceptions about the student-tutor relationship and the peer tutoring situation are based on institutionalized expectations for how one ought to act in the tutoring session. Recent research that calls for more collaboration in tutoring could be thought of as, ironically, becoming a part of that education institution. GPT allows us step back to view tutor and student interaction as well as the situation in which it can be found in a different light. It allows us to question the ideal tutoring relationship and situation. In this case, it encourages us to see peer tutoring dilemmatically, and that both sides of the dilemma are valuable. Peer tutoring, as an organization, needs to consider that a successful tutoring session is not up to just the tutor. The student also has responsibilities that contribute to peer tutoring effectiveness. The tutor is tasked with effectively teaching the student, but the tutor's effectiveness depends on the student's ability to ask for help, communicate confusion, or possibly request additional explanation. Peer tutoring may consist of two "peers" but they each have institutional identities that, when played out, have consequences for the effectiveness of the situation. Future research on peer tutoring should elevate the importance of the student in the interaction, as I have done with this study.

This study illuminates a definition of the peer tutoring situation where *both* collaboration and traditional education occur. As previously discussed, researchers tend to take an "either/or" approach when identifying the ideal tutoring situation. This approach has

consequences for tutors and students where one approach (collaboration) is presented as better than another approach (traditional education). Perhaps the ideal tutoring situation, then, is one that invites a dynamic interplay between expert and equal, collaboration and hierarchy, tutor and peer, teacher and learner. Analysis illuminated a dynamic dance between these tensions where both the tutor and the student have the potential to develop a deeper understanding for their role and the situation. By understanding the inherent dilemmatic nature of peer tutoring and how communicative practices revealed these dilemmas, I have broadened the scope of what is considered the *ideal* peer tutoring situation. In doing so, I have extended the use of discourse analysis to expose practical problems in peer tutoring that often eludes the simple awareness first discussed in the introduction to this thesis. Peer tutoring is a communication situation that stands out from the educational institution, but – as Bakhtin (1981) noted – is “indissolubly fused with its authority.”

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Appendix A

Tutoring sessions will be transcribed using the following simplified version of the Jeffersonian transcription system (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984). Transcription symbols include:

?	Rising intonation (sounding like a question)
.	Falling intonation
-	An abrupt cutoff
::	Prolonging of sound
<u>never</u>	Stressed syllable or word
>word<	Noticeably quicker speech
o	softer speech
hh	Aspiration or laughter
[Simultaneous or overlapping speech
(.)	Micropause, 0.2 second or less
()	Nontranscribable segment of talk
(())	Transcribers comment or description
↑↓	Rise or fall in pitch

Endnotes

ⁱ IRB protocol approval # 13-330 EP 1310

ⁱⁱ This naming system consists of a “T” for tutor and “S” for student. The corresponding numerals refer to the specific excerpt number. Each participant’s gender is identified as “m” or “f” for ease of writing in the analysis. Gender was not considered in any analytic point.