

The Study of Third Turns in EFL Writing Tutorial

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Jung, Hanbyul. 2008. The Study of Third Turns in EFL Writing Tutorial. *SNU Working Papers in English Linguistics and Language* 7, 136-154. This study investigates the contingencies of the third turns produced by nonnative tutors in the college English writing tutoring data, within the framework of Conversation Analysis (CA). Based on a previous study (Lee 2007), which investigated the contingencies in the third turns of native teachers in ESL classroom discourse, the current study focuses on the contingent production of third turns of NNS tutors in the EFL writing center tutorial sessions and categorizes the different functions of the tutors' third turns following the second turn responses of the tutees in the interactional sequences between nonnative tutors and nonnative tutees in the EFL writing tutorial data. (Seoul National University)

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1. Introduction

As a main locus of language teaching and learning, language classrooms have drawn a lot of attention from research in second language acquisition (cf., Ellis 1994) and discourse analysis (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975). A large number of studies on the organizations of institutional discourse have focused on the issues of teacher talk and recognizing the growing importance of teacher feedback and evaluation in the familiar three-turn, IRF (Initiation-Response-Feedback) sequence, in classroom talk. The basic IRF exchange structure - an initiation by a teacher, which elicits a response from a student, followed by an evaluative comment or feedback from the teacher - was first approached by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and then identified again or further developed by researchers such as Edwards and Mercer (1994). This IRF structure is a frequently occurring sequence in classroom talk which is

one of the most researched areas of institutional discourse. The third turn position of this familiar three-turn sequence in institutional discourse is considered to play an important role in giving feedback on second turn answers produced by the students, and the structural features and criticisms of the third turn organizations in classroom discourse are well documented in previous literature on CA (cf., Cadzen 2001, Macbeth 2003, Nassaji and Wells 2000, Wells 1993). Some have noted that the three-turn sequences can be an effective functional means of "monitoring" and "guiding students' learning" (Mercer 1992), thus achieving the final goal of education. Others considered them to be a major source of the teacher's power and control that might limit students' construction of knowledge by imposing the teacher's own (cf., Allwright and Bailey 1991 and others). Many educational researchers have also noted that the three-turn sequences assume more diverse roles than the polarity distinction of positive and negative role projects (cf., Nassaji and Wells 1990, Young 1992).

Based on Lee's (2007) paper on the contingencies of the teacher's third turn in classroom discourse, this study expands the domain of research into another area of institutional discourse and goes on to examine the appearance of contingencies in the third turns of the tutors in the tutorial discourse. Considering the third turns of the tutors to reflect the basic aspects of the tutor talk in general, this paper adopts the notion of third-turns within the domain of writing tutorials, which has only recently surfaced in the research areas of the institutional discourse.

The tutoring sessions in the data set are all one-to-one interactions where the sequence of questioning, answering and giving feedback has a big role in the interactional discourse. As the tutorial is short and the issues to be discussed within that short period is basically set beforehand, the questions in the initiating positions are mostly manual. In other words, the basic forms of questions are small in its range of choices. On the other hand, in the case of third turns which constitute the feedback or evaluative production of the tutor in reaction to the students' second turn, there is more space for diverse productions of the tutors. By studying the third turns, i.e., the feedback or evaluation that the tutors give the students, we can not only analyze the talk of the tutor but also study the general interaction between the tutor and the tutee. The study of the third turn is a small gateway leading to the holistic study of the interaction of tutor discourse.

In addition, the writing tutorial data used in this study have its advantages in that it also enables us to study the rare interaction in English between a nonnative tutor and a nonnative tutee. The significance of using the writing center tutoring data is that such data allows us to study the newly established relationship between a tutor, who has less authority than a teacher figure and is yet in the position of a teacher, and the tutee and secondly, it enables us to study an institutional discourse between two nonnative speakers. By analyzing the discourse between the nonnative tutor and a nonnative student, one can not only have the chance to examine a truly authentic NNS discourse, but will also be able to provide various pedagogical implications and suggestions to make a better learning environment within the same context (EFL) using the same resources. Used well, it may even result in a similar or even higher acquirement of language competence compared to that of students learning in ESL contexts.

2. Third turn position in teacher talk

In his study of third turns in the three-turn sequences in the classroom data, Lee (2007) posed the question of how the local contingencies that surround the teacher's third turn in such sequences can be taken into account analytically. He noticed that much of the prior literatures recognized the complexity of the third turn position (Hall 1998, Nassaji and Wells 2000, Young 1992) but that most of such studies were based on the functional regularities of the third turn abstracted into formal categories. Finding that these pre-established functional categories do no justice to the multiple layers of interpretive work displayed in the third turn, Lee (*ibid.*) sought to find the contingent interpretive acts the third turn brings out and analyze what is accomplished in the process.

His study is based on 46 hours of ESL classroom interactions data, and several collections from these talk exchange data are analyzed to demonstrate how the third turn carries out the contingent task of responding to and acting on the prior turns, mostly the second turn produced by the students, while moving interaction forward. Accordingly, the third turn turns out to be an extraordinary space in the sense that it allows identification of the practical and procedural details of teaching that teachers routinely and contingently display in

the course of interaction.

The question that Lee poses is whether it is possible to analytically preserve the interactional contingencies that may have been bypassed in the formal categories (cf., Nassaji and Wells 2000) and moreover, whether there is anything that can be learned from recovering those "lost" contingencies. Lee (*ibid.*) states that contingency should not be harnessed if one intends to recover the actions and activities as the participants themselves experience them. Rather, it should be incorporated in the analysis because it shows the members' reflexive undertaking of what goes on in full view for each other to see. In this perspective, the third turn represents the situated accomplishment of pedagogical actions out of contingent circumstances that the teacher encounters. Predetermined categories do not allow access to these contingent contexts nor to the situated accomplishments does the teacher exhibit to the students in the evolving sequence of talk-in-interaction.

This does not, however, imply that the teacher's third turn represents unplanned and random work. Rather, they show a more intelligible organization of language use. This view enables us to trace back the participants' interpretive undertaking of their own discourse and thus to bring out their orientation, because the participants "furnish each other with instructions for discovering the sense and interactive implications of their talk" (Lee 1991: 217). The local exigencies that surround the third turn, therefore, help us see that classroom interactions become orderly, reliable and thus stable, not in the regularities of conceptual categories, but through the competent work of understanding by the teachers and their students who make sense of and act on each and every turn in the course of their interaction. With such a perspective on the notion of third-turns in institutional talk, it gives us an idea as to how another type of pedagogical discourse could be, or should be carried out.

With this perspective, Lee (2007) classified the contingency of the third turn in these sequences into five groups: parsing, steering the sequences, intimating answers, discovering language, and classroom management. This study provides a new perspective in studying teacher talk in the aspects that the third turn produced by the teacher or tutor is a place holder that opens up analytic possibility for describing the communicative acts that teachers display. This is also important in that the relevance and influence take shape across the contingencies generated by the students' second turn, which itself is contingent upon the prior

turn by the teacher. Following the lead of this study, the present study focuses on the analysis of the NNS tutorial discourse with hopes that it will provide a wider scope for study of diverse aspects of teacher/tutor talk in the area of teacher/tutor's third turns in institutional interaction, which will ultimately provide effective pedagogical methods that can be used to tutor students more effectively.

3. Data & methodology

The data used in this paper is from EFL writing tutorial sessions. The EFL writing center from which the data is taken is an affiliation program to the College English Program at Seoul National University. The main aim of the writing center is to guide college students in writing properly formed English paragraphs. The tutors, who are graduate students at the university, are obliged to help the students construct the basic structure of English paragraphs and essays. They are, however, not required to edit or rewrite the essays for the students.

The data used in this paper consists of five tutoring sessions. Each of the sessions consists of about 30 minutes of conversation between the tutor and the student in which they discuss the writing sample that the student has written. All tutors are non-native speakers of English but have had short experiences living in English speaking countries. The students in these sessions are college undergraduates who are taking College English as a mandatory freshmen English course. All students are non-native speakers of English, with TEPS¹⁾ scores ranging from 551 to 750. The students are given the choice to sit through this session in either Korean or English, and accordingly, the students in these data transcripts are the ones who chose to be tutored in English. Each of the data set was separately audio-recorded by the tutors and was given consent to use it for analysis, which was then transcribed according to the conventions developed in Conversation Analysis (cf., Jefferson 1984, ten Have 1999).

This study is based on the methodological framework of Conversation Analysis (CA), which is an approach to analyze the organization of everyday talk of language as is actually used in social interaction (Heritage 1984, Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson

1) Test of English Proficiency developed by Seoul National University

1974, Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby and Olsher 2002). The concept of turn-taking, sequence organization, repair organization and preference organizations are the major concepts within the framework of CA, and the analysis of this study follows the conventions of this framework.

4. Analysis & discussions

The third turns²⁾ of the NNS tutors can be divided into two large categories. The two categories are divided according to whether the second turn, i.e., the response to the initial question, is successful or not. The analysis of the data shows that these responsive feedbacks of the tutors differ in their contingencies depending on the success or failure of the tutees' second turn. The data shows that there are less successful productions of second turns and more unsuccessful productions of the second turns by the tutees. This section is the classification and analysis of the tutor's diverse reaction to these second turns of the students.

4.1 Contingencies in the third turns to relevant productions of second turns

In the sequences of the tutorial discourse, the initial questions of the tutors have underlying intentions of carrying out a certain sequence. When the student produces a successful, intended response to the tutor's initial question, it is easier for the interaction to flow in the way intended

2) The data of the tutorial discourse show that the third turn of the tutor in a specific IRE sequence is not always in the "third position" as such. Here, by using the term "position" instead of "turn", I mean that in the NNS discourse, the "evaluative, responsive" turn of the tutor is not always directly situated after the tutee's second turn (which also could be or could not be the second position in the sequence). The reasons for this are that in many cases, there are several other turns within the sequence which is needed for the negotiation of meaning and sometimes, further explanations of the question or the response given by either the tutor or the tutee. Therefore, defining the third turn to contain the characteristics of the last part of the IRE (or IRF) sequence, if it is found to be the evaluative or connected turn of the initiating sequence, this study will acknowledge it to be the "third turn" of the current discussion. In other words the term "third-turn" is used as an operational definition and not as a direct reference to the physical third turn in the sequences. The third turn that will be discussed in the current analysis will be the teacher's first response within the sequential development initiated by the tutor's first question.

by the tutor. While these successful sequences are rare in the EFL tutorial discourse data, there were some instances in which the students were able to produce a successful response to the tutor's initial question that consequently leads a certain pattern of contingency in the tutor's third turn. The analysis of such sequence shows two distinctive characteristics. While the first characteristic is often manifested in instances in which the tutor accepts the relevant response of the student and closes it off with her third turn or add a simple compliment, the second characteristic is observed in cases in which the tutor uses the relevant responses of the student to expand the sequence with multiple questions which contributes in moving the sequence forward.

4.1.1 Closing third

The first distinctive characteristic of the tutor's third turn is the closing third; where the tutor uses her third turn to simply accept and compliment the successful response of the student and closes off the sequence with a closure-relevant production. The following excerpt is one of the few examples of an interaction where the successful response of the second turn results in a successful sequence.

(1) Embarrassing Moment (T: tutor, S: student)

- 1 => T: okay um- do you know um how paragraph (.) is composed?
- 2 S: (0.2) uh first um ((coughing sounds)) there is topic sentence
- 3 T: uh huh
- 4 S: and (0.2) uh several detail sentence
- 5 T: right
- 6 S: and ((um)), last (.) conclusion sentence
- 7 T: yeah you are the only one who responded to my this question
- 8 S: ((laughing))
- 9 T: ((laughing)) okay so:: (0.2) can you (.) specify me indicate me
- 10 S: yeah
- 11 T: which one (.) is your topic sentence

In this excerpt, the first single arrow in line 1 indicates the tutor's turn where she initiates the sequence by asking, "do you know um how paragraph (.) is composed?" to which the student responds quite well. In lines 3 and 5, the tutor acknowledges the response of the student as the student deliberates on what she knows about the composition of a paragraph (line 3, "uh huh," line 5, "right"). In line 7, after the student finishes her response, the tutor uses her third turn to produce a

closure-relevant third, accepting the student's second turn and adding a compliment in line 7, "yeah you are the only one who (raised) responded to my this question." The correct response of the student enables the current sequence to be wrapped up successfully, and the tutor is able to go on and initiate the next sequence in line 11, "which one (.) is your topic sentence?"

4.1.2 Pedagogical expansions with multiple questions

The second type of third turns in response to relevant second turns of the students are those in which the tutors accept the response and then use their third turns to display a string of multiple questions which expands the sequence further to move forward towards a certain pedagogical point. In the aspect of furthering the sequence towards a certain point, the characteristics of the third turns in this category slightly resembles one of Lee's (2007) categorization, steering the sequence. Although the NNS tutorial data do not identically match the characteristics that Lee (ibid) proposed with his classroom data, the analysis of the data in this section shows that the way in which the multiple questions of the nonnative tutors carry the sequence towards a certain direction has the aspect of steering the interaction towards a certain pedagogical point. This type of third turns also marks a certain characteristic of the NNS tutorial data. The following excerpt shows such an example.

(2) My hometown (A: tutor, S: student)

- 1 A: okay. (.) um (.) what were the (.) most hard thing when you
- 2 wrote (this)? (0.3) what was the most difficult thing you uh felt?
- 3 S: umm:: (0.4) the organization of (.) is very difficult. Haha
- 4 =>A: do you have any es-(.)especially where? Is- Was the topic
- 5 sentence hard for you (.) the conclusion or (.) is this sentence
- 6 have any organizations?
- 7 (0.2)
- 8 =>A: do you thought about (.) did you thought about um (.) think
- 9 about some organizations? (.) follow this, did you follow
- 10 this guideline? we gave you?
- 11 S: (0.2) um:: (.) I read that um: uh:: .hhh (0.3)
- 12 A: but (.) you:: didn't exactly wrote, write this?
- 13 S: I think the supporting details and explanations is this (.) is in

- 14 here the (reader)
 15 A: uh:: from [my hometown to the-
 16 S: [ye:ah (0.2) a::nd=
 17 A: =then the first line must be [the topic sentence
 18 S: [ye:s=
 19 A: =and the last paragraph must be the [concluding sentence-

This excerpt not only shows the pedagogical method of moving the sequence forward with multiple questions but also holds some distinctive characteristics of NNS tutorial discourse. Starting from the initiating question, the tutor rephrases herself. The (0.3) pause in between the two questions may also indicate that perhaps the second question was induced by the lack of the student's second turn, but the quietness towards the first question also may indicate that the tutor did not sound quite finished and the student was yet waiting for the tutor to finish her question. The actual string-lining of the multiple questions appear in the tutor's third turn. The student gives her response in line 3 which is not particularly acknowledged by the tutor in her next turn, yet it can be considered to be an appropriate response to the tutor's initiating question in line 1. After the student gives her response in her second turn, the tutor asks a string of questions which is indicated by the double arrow (lines 4-6) which takes the student five more sequential turns to give an answer for each of the questions. And even in those consecutive turns, the tutor answers the questions herself before giving the student a chance to answer. We can analyze this type of third turn in two different aspects. One is the perspective already partially mentioned above. Accepting the student's response in line 3, the tutor uses her third turn to expand the sequence further with the multiple questions, going from the issue of organization to the issue of topic sentences. As much as they come directly after one another and is still forming a string line of multiple questions, the questions in lines 8-9 show signs of turn increment in which the tutor steers the sequence towards a more accessible question for the student by slightly adjusting her questions, "did you think about some organizations? Did you follow this guideline? we gave you?" Especially, the last part, "we gave you" indicates a certain turn increment on the part of the tutor who is trying to produce a question that is more likely to induce a response from the student. In other words, the tutor uses the multiple of her questions in her third turn to narrow down the broader, initial question in line 2, "what was

the most difficult thing you uh felt?" to a smaller, answerable question for the student. And in this way, the multiple questions that the tutor produced in her third turn is being used to direct the interaction towards the issue of paragraph organization and topic sentence as the tutor has intended. Consequently, such expansions using multiple questions are being used as pedagogical expansions towards the certain matter of writing that the tutor intends to deliver to the student.

On the other hand, the second sequence of the tutor's third turn after the silence of the student line 7 shows a somewhat different pattern. This is the second aspect in which we can analyze this excerpt. The string line of multiple questions in lines 4-6 and lines 8-9 may be due to lack of certainty of the productions on the part of the tutor. There are only short, micro-pauses between many questions which support such an idea. Also, the cut-offs in the middle of the questions in line 6, "do you have any es- (.) °Is- Was the topic sentence hard for you (.) the conclusion or (.) is the sentence have any organizations?" show that the tutor is not hundred percent sure of her question sequences in this turn.

Such type of continued extended questioning occurs frequently in the NNS tutoring discourse. As it was mentioned above, the most likeable reason for this is that the tutor, being a nonnative speaker herself, is unsure of the language that she produces, and that insecurity doubled with the anxiety that the interaction must continue without long pauses, pushes the tutors to produce a string of questions in the third turn rather than have the relaxed patience that native speaker teachers may have in conducting their language classes. This excerpt also shows that such appearances of multiple questions are also used to reproduce the initial question, which did not receive a response from the student into a more answerable, accessible question.

4.2 Contingencies in the third turns to unsuccessful productions of second turns

As it was mentioned in the previous section of this chapter, due to the lack of competence in communicating in a foreign language, and the lack of knowledge of the basic concepts of English writing, many times in the interaction, the students are unable to produce the adequate second

turn response. The following is an analysis of the contingency in the tutors' third turns when the student is unable to produce a response to the tutors' initial questions. In addition, it must be noted that sometimes the diverse nonnative-like characteristics of the third turns are not only the result of the student's inadequate second turn but are also affected by the fact that the tutors are also nonnative speakers of English.

Each of the following three subsections are: (a) redoing the first turn; (b) recapitulation of the second turn; and (c) the provision of the second turn response.

4.2.1 Redoing the first turn

In the sequence of questions and answers that makes up the interaction between the tutor and the student, the tutor waits for the student's response after the initial question before continuing with her intended sequence in the third turn. Often, when the student is unable to produce a successful second turn, or when the tutor feels that her initial question was not quite clear, she uses her third turn to redo the first turn. A few characteristics of this redoing of the first question resemble in some ways the categorizations of "parsing" and "intimating answers" that were proposed by Lee (2007). It is similar in that the tutor redoes the first question not only in repeating the question for the sake of the student who shows his or her incomprehension of the initial question but also for the sake of restating, changing the form of the initial question, or cutting the first big question into smaller, answerable questions in order to induce the intended answer from the student. In other words, the redoing of the first question is not simply a repetition of the initial question in reaction to the student's rather unsuccessful response in his/her second turn, but is also a pedagogical action of using different forms of the initial question in order to intimate the wanted responses from the students. The following excerpt is an example of redoing the first turn to induce a relevant response from the students.

(3) My Hometown (A: tutor, S: student)

- 1 A: how about here? did you, you HAD many friends here?
- 2 S: no- uh (0.3) this place (0.2) uh:: (.)
- 3 =>A: (or) maybe other places in other places did you have many

4 memories with your friends?
 5 S: (0.2) u:m (0.3) in other places, (.) I had some friends but- uh:
 6 (0.5) um:: 7(0.7) I had many friends in gangwha island most
 7 A: u::m so, I think that's (0.2) that's what you wanted to focus
 8 on here

In the excerpt above, the tutor and the student are in the middle of an interaction where they are trying to find the topic of the paragraph that the student has brought in. Finding out in the earlier interaction that the student had wanted to write about a particular place that reminded her of her friends, the tutor initiates this sequence trying to find this certain place that the student wants to place as the main topic of her paragraph. In line 1, the tutor initiates the sequence by asking, "did you, you HAD many friends here?" Line 2 shows that the student is not quite able to produce an appropriate answer. To this rather unsuccessful second turn, the tutor uses her third turn in lines 3-4 to redo her first question by referring to a different place that brings out the intended response.

4.2.2 Recapitulation of the second turn

The issue of being able to communicate effectively in a language that is not completely comfortable for either of the interlocutors is prominent in this NNS tutorial discourse. There are many sequences where there is a need for confirmation and negotiation on the meaning of the produced words, phrases or sentences. In this sense, the tutor uses her third turn to recap the second turn of the student when it is not so clear and develop the sequence after confirming the student's production of the second turn. The tutor does not simply repeat the second turn response of the student identically but recapitulates the response in a different way that might assist the student in producing the correct, intended response. The following excerpt is an example of the tutor's third turn recapitulating the student's second turn.

(4) Public Embarrassment (T= Tutor, S= Student)

1 T: ah, so, so this is a ei (0.2) this is narration so you wrote about
 2 your. um. episode and (.) but what I'm curious about is (0.2) a
 3 have you thought about topic sentences?

- 4 S: uh, (1.0) not (0.2) not pretty (0.3) topic sentence is about pretty
 5 (.) but I think (.) this (0.2) this paragraph's (0.3)
 6 T: uh huh
 7 S: topic sentence is (0.2)
 8 T: uh huh
 9 S: understanding (0.2) of my sex (.) misunderstanding
 10=> T: misunderstand, ok so this a- the story about misunderstanding
 11 of uh (.) the sex of you right?
 12 S: yeah
 13=> T: your sex but, ah, ah, I think uh we first define what a topic
 14 sentence is and why it is important. (0.2) ok, so have you
 15 heard about (.) what topic what ei topic sentence is?
 16 S: °topic sentence°
 17 T: in Korea we say *jujaemun*

The tutor initiates the sequence by asking the student whether she has "thought about topic sentences" (line 3). This rather obscure question surprisingly gets a response from the student where she tries to give the definition of the "topic sentence"(lines 4-5, 7 and 9). In line 10, the tutor partially repeats what the student has said and recapitulates the topic of the paragraph which the student was trying to say in her response. It seems that the tutor is wrapping up this sequence on the issue of topic sentence. In her following turn, however, the tutor continues the sequence by first giving her feedback on the student's response by saying, "but, ah, ah, I think uh we first define what a topic sentence is and why it is important" (lines 13-14) and then redoing her very first question in a slightly different form, "so have you heard about (.) what ei topic sentence is?" (lines 14-15). This again is repeated by the student instead of a response and in reaction to this, the tutor opts to give the Korean definition of the topic sentence in line 29, "in Korea we say *jujaemun*." In the case of this excerpt, the redoing of the initial question is resulted by the tutor's rather obscure question which still induces a response from the student. Yet the tutor is not satisfied with the response, as she was expecting a definition of the 'topic sentence,' and not the 'topic sentence' of the student's actual writing. This we can confirm by the fact that the tutor asks the same question again in a different form despite the fact that the student did try giving a response (lines 4-6, 7 and 9).

Being one of the most important factors in writing an English paragraph, the fact that the tutors are trained to make sure that the

students have a clear understanding of the concept of 'topic sentence,' this type of sequence is found in most tutoring sessions. Many times, the students are unable to give an appropriate second turn which induces the tutors to redo their initial questions and carry on the sequence until the concept of the 'topic sentence' is conveyed to the students.

4.2.3 Provision of the second turn response

Another categorization of contingencies in the third turns of the tutors in response to unsuccessful second turns of the students is the case where the tutor provides the second turn response that they had intended when asking the initial question, or at least steer the student towards the intended response by indirectly referring to the writings that the student had brought in. The following excerpt is an example of the tutor's third turn providing the intended answer in the place of an unsuccessful second turn of the student.

(5) Public Embarrassment (T: tutor, S: student)

- 1 T: ok (0.2) I think in in your paragraph topic would be an epi-
- 2 sode happening that you experienced uh in high school right?
- 3 S: yeah
- 4 T: so then, what (.) is ei controlling idea? What was your
- 5 impression? What was your opinion (.) or what was your
- 6 impression about that happening
- 7 S: u::hm (0.3) feeling
- 8 T: feeling (.) yeah embarrassing feeling right?
- 9 S: °yeah°
- 10 T: so that is controlling idea. So (.) ah with topic and its
- 11 controlling idea, we made topic sentence. So but we have to
- 12 avoid two things when we made topic sentences. ((writing
- 13 sounds)) Have you heard about this? well (.) topic sentence
- 14 should be, should not be this or this. topic sentence.. okay,
- 15 when you learn ah- (.) ah- which topic sentence which
- 16 sentence should be ei topic sentences (.) probably you were
- 17 taught that >you know< this and this should not be ei-

To the multiple of questions asked by the tutor in line 5-6, which starts out as the third turn of the previous sequence but also turns out to be the initial question of the following sequence, the student tries to respond but only succeeds in providing a single word, "feeling" (line

7). In response to this rather unsuccessful second turn of the student, the tutor provides the adequate response in line 8, "feeling (.) yeah embarrassing feeling right?" The acknowledgement token of the student in the following line supports the fact that the tutor has provided the correct response that the student had been intending in her second turn. After checking this with the student in line 9, the tutor goes on to use her next turn to give a prolonged description about the topic sentence and the controlling idea that makes up the topic sentence.

This excerpt leads to another characteristic of tutor's third turns in NNS tutorial discourse. Starting with the initiating questions, the tutor uses her third turns to steer the sequence towards the discourse on the issue of the controlling idea and the topic sentence. Similar sequences appear in the other five data transcripts as well. The data shows the tutor using their third turns to steer the sequence to a point where the tutor can naturally explain the concepts of the "controlling idea" and the "topic sentence". This can be seen as a result of tutor-training, in which tutors are given guidelines to make sure that the students acquire the knowledge of the basic structure of an English paragraph. This leads to a certain fixation on the part of the tutors that they must convey the structural concept of a paragraph and enable the students to get the gist of what a "topic sentence" is. Consequently, there are many interactions where the tutors start a sequence by asking a certain question, and the tutee answers accordingly. However, in the third turn, rather than giving an appropriate acknowledgment or evaluation, the tutor turns the sequence into a prolonged explanation about the "topic sentence".

In other words, the data analysis shows that the tutors have a tendency to lead the student toward a certain discourse that the tutor has already decided in her mind to relate to the student. This is a positive situation in that the tutor is ready to teach the student something that is important in writing in English, but often, rather than particularly listening to the second part of the student's response, the tutor uses his/her third turn to induce the sequence into a chance as to where the tutor can use to relate his/her own thought on the certain matter in discussion to the student. These "thoughts" are mostly related to the issue of paragraph structure, topic sentences and supporting details, which are the factors the tutors are prepared in advance in readiness to teach the students. From a positive perspective, this could be viewed as being 'prepared'

as a teacher prepares certain things for his/her class. But such phenomena in NNS tutoring data are distinctive in that perhaps it has a feeling of being forced in some aspects, and consequently leads the discourse in a certain direction rather unnaturally. Such phenomena disclose another aspect of nonnative tutor and nonnative tutee discourse.

5. Conclusion

This paper examined the sequential interaction between the nonnative tutor and nonnative tutee in a Writing Center tutorial discourse. Of the several aspects of this comparatively new form of NNS discourse, this study focused on the production of the third-turn of the tutors that follows a question and answer sequence. Compared to the rather manual productions of question forms, it was noted that the third-turn of the tutors reflected the diverse contingent forms of evaluation and feedback to the responses of the students in the second turn. Accordingly, this study examined the various forms of these third turns of the nonnative speaker tutorial discourse.

The findings of the current study offer some pedagogical implications. The study of the tutor talk, especially focused on the third turn which reflected the evaluative responses of the tutors and the way they directed the interaction, allowed to surface a few issues on the writing tutorial itself and also on the ways in which we can improve the pedagogical environment of NNS writing tutorials in an EFL context. One of the most prominent issues is the matter of whether the focus of the Writing Center is on encouraging enhancement of the task of writing a paragraph or an essay in English, or whether it is on providing the opportunity to communicate in English in spite of the fact that much of the important factors in English writing may not be conveyed as well as it would have been if done in the native language of the tutor and the tutee. The tutorial is primarily offered in Korean, but the English data used here are from the tutorial sessions of those students who chose to be tutored in English. Although the tutors are comparatively highly proficient in their competence of English as a nonnative speaker, nonetheless they are not quite at a level where they can freely convey educative purposes in their second language. On the other hand, in the aspects of guiding the students to write a relatively good paragraph in English, the tutors are

trained beforehand which they have shown to use relatively well in their tutoring sessions in Korean³⁾. The English tutorial data that were used for this study shows that the tutors are less competent in having to convey various conventions that are vital to paragraph writing in English. This leads one to wonder whether it is rather precarious and unnecessary that the tutorial sessions are conducted in English. In other words, it is important to figure out whether the main goal of these tutoring sessions are focused on the issue of "being able to write well," or on the issue of "improving English skills", and a more thorough examination of the tutorial data and a comparative study on the Korean and English data may provide a more accurate analysis on the third turns of the tutors in the evaluative perspective.

The current study contributes in an aspect that it opened a new area of study by examining the third-turn of the NNS tutor talk in a EFL environment. The study on the third turns shed a light on the various methods tutors apply in guiding the students in a certain direction using their third turns in a question and answer sequence. In this aspect, the study on the interaction between the nonnative tutor and tutee shows that there is need for a forward point within the discourse that indicates the pedagogical direction of the interaction. This consequently calls for the need of certain strategic manual or protocol for the tutors to follow in order to induce the appropriate, intended responses from the students even when tutoring in English. There is, however, a limitation to the current study in that only the English data of the Writing Center tutorials were examined. Considering the fact that more than 80 percent of the tutorials are proceeded in Korean, this factor cannot be overseen. Only a comparative study of the English and Korean data would do justice to the actual third turn productions of the tutor talk. Thus, further research into the other data of the Writing Center tutorial discourse will reinforce the grounds on which the current study stands.

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3) For a more accurate comparison, it is vital that the data of the tutorial session in Korean should also be transcribed and adapted. However, that would once again lead this paper into a different road, so this will be left for further studies in the future.

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