

Georgia State University

ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University

Applied Linguistics and English as a Second
Language Dissertations

Department of Applied Linguistics and English
as a Second Language

7-15-2008

Negotiation of Identities by International Teaching Assistants through the Use of Humor in University Classrooms

Iryna Kozlova

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/alesl_diss

Recommended Citation

Kozlova, Iryna, "Negotiation of Identities by International Teaching Assistants through the Use of Humor in University Classrooms." Dissertation, Georgia State University, 2008.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.57709/1059186>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Applied Linguistics and English as a Second Language at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Applied Linguistics and English as a Second Language Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gsu.edu.

NEGOTIATION OF IDENTITIES BY INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS THROUGH THE USE OF HUMOR IN UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS

by

IRYNA KOZLOVA

Under the Direction of Dr. Gayle Nelson and Dr. Stephanie Lindemann

ABSTRACT

Research on international teaching assistants (ITAs) often highlights that ITAs have at least two identities, an identity of a teacher and a student (e.g., Jenkins, 2000). Since American classrooms foster a variety of behaviors that are negotiated by instructors and students, ITAs may identify themselves with students during behavior negotiation when building rapport, especially by exchanging jokes (Unger-Gallagher, 1991). Making their student identity relevant may distort the teacher-student relationship, which ITAs might need to renegotiate. Little research has been done to show whether ITA student identity actually emerges and if does, then how. This study addresses the questions of what attributes of ITAs' identities emerge during humorous exchanges with their students, how these attributes shape the teacher-student relationship, and what role humor plays in the identity negotiation process between the ITAs and their students in the university classroom. Four ITAs, all non-native English speakers, participated in this microethnographic study.

This study informs research on social identity in that, most of the time, participants made the attributes of their teacher identity relevant, with teacher authority emerging as the most important attribute. While enacting their teacher identity through humorous exchanges, ITAs built rapport and created affiliation with their students. Although humor led to establishing good relationships, it did not lead to the emergence of ITA student identity. This study also contributes to research on humor in that it makes a distinction between the concepts of the target and the butt which allows for deeper understanding of how humor is used to negotiate identity. It also introduces the *target switch*, or a particular type of counter teasing, in which the initial target redirects humorous aggression to the teaser, thus making her/him the target and a potential butt of the tease. An optimistic finding for ITA research and research on the use of humor by non-native speakers is that even without extensive experience with American culture in general, ITAs can use humor rooted in the local context to negotiate different classroom behaviors and their identities with their students.

INDEX WORDS: Identity, international teaching assistants (ITAs), humor, teasing, authority, conversational joking, behavior negotiation

NEGOTIATION OF IDENTITIES BY INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS
THROUGH THE USE OF HUMOR IN UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS

by

IRYNA KOZLOVA

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in the College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University

2008

Copyright by
Iryna Kozlova
2008

NEGOTIATION OF IDENTITIES BY INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS
THROUGH THE USE OF HUMOR IN UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS

by

IRYNA KOZLOVA

Committee Chairs: Gayle Nelson
 Stephanie Lindemann

Committee: Diane Belcher
 Lucy Pickering
 Margaret DuFon

Electronic Version Approved

Office of Graduate Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University
August 2008

DEDICATION

To my family for their inspiration and support

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people guided me through my journey to this stage and to all of them I am deeply indebted. I would like to express special gratitude to my advisers, Dr. Gayle Nelson and Dr. Stephanie Lindemann, who led me through my dissertation. For the past two years, these two women were always with me and for me with their wise advice, immense support, and encouragement. Without their incredibly helpful feedback on my numerous drafts, this day would never come. I would also like to thank Dr. Nelson and Dr. Lindemann for their patience with editing my drafts. I am incredibly thankful to Dr. Lindemann for the last-minute-before-the-deadline feedback, which took her lots of time and energy.

I also highly appreciate help and advice of my committee members Dr. Diane Belcher, Dr. Lucy Pickering, and Dr. Margaret DuFon. Dr. Belcher has been working with me through the years I spent at GSU and has taught me that good writing opens the doors to the community of practice. Dr. Pickering's enthusiasm and interest in my project encouraged numerous quick small talks that supported my spirit. I do not know what magic she puts in her words, but after she made a joke that my dissertation would be five pages long if the participants do not perform humorous exchanges, humor in the classrooms mushroomed. Dr. DuFon takes a special place in my life. She introduced me to research and saw me developing as a researcher while guiding through my M.A. thesis and dissertation. Her kindness, open heartedness, and wisdom helped me survive in the most difficult moments of my academic career and her positive attitude to life always makes me believe that I am able to do anything I want.

My participants Wen, Rana, Ming, and Alexandros deserve special appreciation. These four men volunteered to participate in this project in spite of the fact that they were tremendously busy teaching and working on their dissertations. The more I worked with these international

teaching assistants, the more I admired them as teachers who cared about their students and who did their best to share their knowledge and expertise with them.

My special thanks are to Sharon Cavusgil, John Stowe, and Guiling Hu who assisted me in a very important process of searching for participants. I would also like to thank two people, Tim Merritt and Zena MaNais, who were of tremendous assistance at the busiest time of data collection. Tim's enthusiasm, willingness to help and to share all his knowledge about the videotaping, computers, and video editing, to mention just few things, made my rough days with technology more tolerable. I am grateful to Zena without whom my stimulated recall sessions would be practically impossible. Through the four months of data collection she was helping me with the conference room reservations, which allowed me to conduct stimulated recalls with the least possible delays.

I would like to thank my friend Julia Turlington with whom I worked during the pilot study for her emotional support throughout my big project. I am grateful to my colleagues and friends Lauren Lukkarila, Luciana Diniz, Weimin Zhang, Magdi Kandil, Joseph Lee, Jason Litzenberg, Guiling Hu, Yanbin Lu, Cheongmin Yook, Kate Moran, Eliana Hirano, Caroline Payant, Pam Pearson, and Amanda Baker and also all the IEP instructors who always found nice words at the time I needed encouragement. My friends Elizabeth Kozlovski and Lukas Faber supported me emotionally by making me have fun. They reminded me that there is life outside academia and that I deserve to have it. My friends Natasha Anthony and Thora DeLey were always for me on the phone and supported with their talks. I also would like to thank my children Masha and Kirill for their kind attitude and pleasant moments that they shared with me during this time.

Finally, I am very thankful to all the faculty members and the staff from the Department of the Applied Linguistics and ESL who during my five and a half years at this school co-constructed with me my identity of a teacher, a researcher, and, of course, a student. They also shaped my personality and I am happy that they were, are, and will always be in my life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiv
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
International Teaching Assistants: Historical Perspective.....	1
The Role of ITAs in the American Classroom.....	3
Humor in Educational Settings.....	7
Motivation for This Research.....	9
The Present Study.....	11
<i>Organization of the Study</i>	12
II LITERATURE REVIEW	14
Theoretical Background.....	14
Identity Defined.....	14
<i>Identity and Institutional Talk</i>	16
<i>Identity Through Turn-taking Organization</i>	17
Negotiation of Identities Through the Use of Humor.....	20
<i>Conversational Joking Defined</i>	20
<i>Identity Negotiation and Display Through Conversational Joking</i>	22
<i>Identity Display Through Narrative Jokes</i>	23
<i>Identity Display Through Joking About Absent Other</i>	24

<i>Identity Display Through Self-denigrating Humor</i>	25
<i>Identity Negotiation Through Teasing</i>	26
<i>Identity Negotiation Through Laughter</i>	28
<i>Politeness and Identity</i>	29
Humor in Institutional Settings	31
<i>Affiliation While Exerting Authority</i>	32
<i>Building Rapport While Maintaining Authority</i>	33
<i>Affiliation While Recovering Status</i>	34
<i>Creating a Team While Collaborating</i>	35
<i>Affiliating While Re-asserting Authority</i>	35
Summary	37
III METHOD	38
Introduction	38
Microethnography	39
<i>Reciprocity and Complementarity</i>	39
<i>Contextualization Cues</i>	40
Study Design	41
<i>Methodological, Data, and Participant Triangulation</i>	42
<i>Participant Triangulation</i>	42
<i>Methodological Triangulation</i>	43
<i>Data Triangulation</i>	45
Participants and Their Recruitment	45
<i>Recruitment of the Participants</i>	46

<i>Participants</i>	49
<i>Ming</i>	50
<i>Wen</i>	51
<i>Rana</i>	52
<i>Alexandros</i>	53
Data Collection Procedures.....	54
<i>Video Equipment</i>	54
<i>Videotaping</i>	55
<i>Stimulated Recall Sessions</i>	56
<i>Questions for the Stimulated Recall</i>	58
<i>Field Notes</i>	60
Data Analysis and Coding.....	61
<i>Data Segmenting</i>	61
<i>Laughter and Smiles</i>	62
<i>Markers of Irony</i>	63
<i>Markers of Teases</i>	64
<i>Identifying Boundaries of Humorous Exchanges</i>	65
<i>Data Transcription</i>	66
<i>Orthography</i>	67
<i>Laughter</i>	68
<i>Layout</i>	69
<i>Data Coding</i>	70

IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	73
Introduction	73
<i>Social Identity and Humor</i>	73
General Description of the Data.....	75
<i>Categorizing Humorous Exchanges</i>	76
Teacher-initiated Humorous Exchanges.....	79
<i>Affiliating While Exerting Authority</i>	79
<i>Affiliating While Exerting Authority as Evaluators of Students</i>	79
<i>Evaluation of students' responses</i>	80
<i>Evaluation of students' questions</i>	94
<i>Evaluation of students' behavior</i>	101
<i>Affiliating While Exerting Authority to Manage Class Issues</i>	107
<i>Target switch</i>	122
<i>Affiliating While Maintaining Teacher Authority</i>	135
<i>Rapport Building Through Narrative Jokes and Cartoons</i>	136
<i>Creating Affiliation Through Joking About Absent Other and Joking</i> <i>Without Targets</i>	145
<i>Rapport Building Through Humorous Self-repair</i>	151
<i>Affiliating While Recovering Teacher Authority</i>	153
Student-initiated Humorous Exchanges.....	159
<i>Affiliating While Having Authority Enhanced</i>	160
<i>Affiliating While Re-asserting Authority</i>	162
<i>Affiliating While Dealing With Students' Challenging Responses</i>	163

<i>Affiliating While Responding to the Students' Challenging Questions...</i>	168
<i>Affiliating While Passing Authority to Students.....</i>	175
Extended Sequences.....	178
<i>Affiliating While Sharing Authority with Students.....</i>	178
<i>Sharing Authority During Negotiation of Class Issues</i>	178
<i>Sharing Authority While Constructing Meaning Collaboratively</i>	194
<i>Affiliating While Competing for Authority.....</i>	199
Non-native Identity: Foreigner and a Non-native Speaker.....	212
The Role of Humor in the Classroom: The ITAs' Perspective.....	215
<i>Ming.....</i>	215
<i>Alexandros.....</i>	216
<i>Wen.....</i>	218
<i>Rana.....</i>	219
V CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.....	221
Summary of findings.....	222
<i>Research Question #1: What Attributes of ITAs' Identities Emerge During Humorous Exchanges With Their Students?.....</i>	222
<i>Research Question #2. How Do the Attributes of ITAs' Identity Shape Their Relationships With Their Students?.....</i>	224
<i>Research Question #3. What is the Role of Humor in the Identity Negotiation Process Between the ITAs and Their Students?</i>	225
<i>ITA Identity: Teacher or Student?</i>	228
<i>Behavior Negotiation in the Classroom.....</i>	230

Contributions and Applications.....	234
<i>Contribution to the Study of Identity</i>	234
<i>Contribution to the Research on ITAs</i>	235
<i>Contributions to the Study of Humor</i>	237
<i>Contribution to the Research on Humor in Educational Settings</i>	239
<i>Pedagogical Applications of the Study</i>	240
Limitations.....	243
Directions for Further Research.....	244
REFERENCES.....	246
APPENDICES	
1 INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS..	255
2 INFORMED CONSENT FOR VIDEOTAPING STUDENTS SITTING IN THE CLASSES.....	258
3 INFORMED CONSENT FOR THE INTERVIEW WITH THE STUDENTS SITTING IN THE CLASSES.....	261
4 INSTRUMENT FOR THE STIMULATED RECALL PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN STIMULATED RECALL.....	264
5 INSTRUMENT FOR THE STIMULATED RECALL PROCEDURE FOR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS.....	266
6 TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS.....	268

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	<i>Teacher authority and affiliation in relation to the humor initiation, functions of the humorous utterance, responses to humor, humorous genres, and the target of the humor</i>	<i>77</i>
----------	---	-----------

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

International Teaching Assistants: Historical Perspective

The end of the 1970s and 1980s witnessed a burst of studies on International Teaching Assistants (ITAs) (see Bailey, 1984b; Madden & Myers, 1994). ITAs are graduate students, “non-U.S. citizens or recent U.S. residents” (Smith, Byrd, Nelson, Barret, & Constantinides, 1992, p. 11), who pursue their doctoral or Master’s degree and are employed as teaching assistants (TAs) to teach university introductory undergraduate courses or to assist professors in grading students’ homework, quizzes and tests, leading discussion sessions, supervising laboratory sessions, and proctoring tests (Plakans, 1997). The main reason for the U.S. universities to employ international graduate students, whose first language was other than English, was the shortage of qualified American graduate students who spoke English as their first language, especially in the disciplines such as business administration, engineering, sciences, and technological fields (Smith, Byrd, Nelson, Barret, & Constantinides, 1992). While ITAs were considered to be competent in their disciplines, students and their parents complained to the university authorities that the ITAs’ imperfect command of English led to the “ITA problem” that includes problems in communication and in the relationships between the ITAs and their students (Bailey, 1984b, 1984c).

The existing communication problem between the ITAs and their students was identified and elucidated differently by the parties involved, specifically, the university professors and administrators, the students and their parents, and the ITAs themselves (Bailey, 1984c). The university authorities recognize that both ITAs and the universities benefit from foreign graduate student employment as TAs (Cole et al., not dated, as cited in Bailey, 1984b). ITAs benefit from gaining experience needed for their future careers and the universities benefit from ITAs’ active

involvement in the educational process. As added by Pialorsi (1984), American students also benefit from ITAs because they often offer a different perspective on the material taught and approach teaching the subject in a way “that U.S. academicians may not have considered” (p. 16). At the same time, universities realize that some ITAs have issues with fossilized pronunciation and may sometimes use teaching methods and classroom practices that American students are not used to. Finally, university administrations admit that part of the problem is American students’ assumption that they will have communication problems with a TA because the TA is of foreign origin.

Many students’ and parents’ perspective on the “ITA problem” is that the English proficiency of the ITAs is so low that undergraduate students do not understand material delivered in class (Bailey, 1984b, 1984c). ITAs, on the other hand, may believe that American students find ITAs’ language proficiency as “an easy excuse” for the students’ laziness, poor comprehension of the subject matter, and “poor performance in class and on tests” (Bailey, 1984c, p. 7). Although the ITA problem is perceived differently by the students and parents and ITAs themselves, in reality, the problem is not just in the ITAs’ English proficiency or in their students’ ethnocentrism, but, according to Bailey (1984c), in reality, the problem “probably lies in between these two extremes” (p. 7). Although the students’ attitudes towards ITAs also add to the “ITA problem”, the ITAs still need to clearly understand their roles as teaching assistants and to have English proficiency that allows them to perform their teaching job successfully (Bailey, 1984c). However, as Bailey emphasizes, English proficiency and teaching success are “debatable issues” and the roles of ITAs can also vary, so what it means to be a successful ITA is difficult to describe. At the same time, both understanding their roles in certain situations and using language in accordance with the situation seem to be some of the essentials for effective

communication between ITAs and their students. Without knowing the culture of American classrooms, however, ITAs may not have clear understanding of their roles within the educational system in the United States (Bailey, 1984c). Therefore, according to Bailey (1984c), linguistic and cultural differences can make the interaction between the ITAs and their students “complicated and sometimes problematic” (p. 3).

The Role of ITAs in the American Classroom

The distinguishing features of the American college classroom include an array of behaviors and “the relative freedom that exists for a professor and students to jointly negotiate the behavior patterns that will subsequently typify the conduct of the class” (Shaw & Bailey, 1990, p. 318). For example, one of the prominent behaviors that is allowed in American classrooms, but may not be permitted in other cultures, is that students can ask questions in the middle of the instructor’s lecture. However, it is up to the instructor and the students to negotiate whether this kind of behavior is acceptable in this particular classroom and if yes, then when during the lecture it is allowed. Shaw and Bailey claim that most of the time, the negotiation of behavior patterns occurs covertly, when instructors somehow let students know what is appropriate. Students, for instance, may ask questions in the middle of the lecture, but the instructor may just ignore their questions, thus setting a class norm of not allowing for the interruption of the lecture. As Shaw and Bailey maintain, the patterns of classroom behavior vary because they are based on what instructors and students negotiate as allowable for this particular classroom. According to these scholars, while the instructors and students sustain their power relationship in the classroom in general (e.g., students are not allowed to order pizza when in class), their power differential is reduced at times when behavior negotiation occurs. Although behavior negotiation involves an alteration of power relationships, it seems that behavior

negotiation also involves negotiation of the teacher and student identities, or who they are at certain moments of classroom interaction.

Since negotiation of behaviors involves negotiation of power relationships, Shaw and Bailey (1990) foresee two challenges for ITAs during the behavior negotiation process. The first challenge is that the ITAs may lack the experience of behavior negotiation simply because in their cultures “behavior is much more restricted” (p. 318). The second one is ITAs’ student identity, which they share with their students. Because of the shared status, the status difference between the two groups is reduced, which may lead to a greater degree of freedom for negotiation of the behavior patterns between the ITAs and their students.

While American classrooms foster numerous behavior patterns, e.g., instructor giving a lecture, instructor evaluating students, another prominent behavior pattern in the American classroom is its interactivity (Pialorsi, 1984). Students often speak out in class without raising their hands or being called on by the teacher, which results in “interactive dialogue between students and professors” (Pialorsi, 1984, p. 19). Giving students more freedom for interaction may lead to authority problems; therefore, as Pialorsi argues, balancing teacher authority with permissiveness is one of the skills that teachers, both foreign and American, need to develop. Unger-Gallagher (1991) is also concerned with the challenge for ITAs to balance authority with permissiveness and suggests that ITAs may opt for more interactive classroom “without changing power strategies” (p. 277). In an interactive classroom the role of the instructor is to orchestrate students’ participation in discussion rather than to be in charge of the discussion. Thus, students in an interactive classroom obtain more rights to make contributions to the discussion and to negotiate issues not clear to them. Such participation involves altering the teacher-student relationship. According to Unger-Gallagher, the TAs may try to involve students

in the discussion, but if their roles are not negotiated, students' participation may be constrained. Thus, if a TA invites students for a class discussion, but remains in charge of it, students may not participate as much as they would if the TA allowed them more rights for participation and participated in the discussion on equal footing with the students. However, when offering students more rights and opportunities to talk, the TAs must negotiate their new roles and relationships because students may not be accustomed to this type of behavior and may be confused with the new relationships (Unger-Gallagher, 1991). Unger-Gallagher argues that if a TA takes on the new role of being a participant in a class discussion in order to encourage mutual interaction between the TA and the students, the TA may "attempt to identify with students by exchanging jokes, chatting with students before class and revealing personal aspects of his or her life" (p. 279). If the TA maintains this type of behavior during class discussions and, in addition, places students in charge of the discussion, students may test these relationships "to see how far they can assert their role in the relationship" (p. 279) and may challenge the TA "to determine the boundaries of what is appropriate" (p. 279) in their relationships.

Although Pialorsi (1984) and Shaw and Bailey (1990) focus on ITAs and Unger-Gallagher (1991) concentrates on TAs in general, they seem to agree in their proposition that for (I)TAs, it is important to know how to negotiate different types of behaviors that are appropriate in their classrooms with their students, and, consequently, how to negotiate instructor-student roles relevant to different activities in their classrooms. While these researchers agree that the role negotiation involves altering the teacher-student power relationship, their common concern is that (I)TAs' student identity may unfavorably affect the (I)TAs' authority, especially, as Unger-Gallagher (1991) suggests, when ITAs participate in rapport-building activities with their

students, e.g., exchanging jokes, and through these activities may identify themselves with their students.

An individual's social identity consists of different attributes which maybe classified into attributes of universalistic and particularistic character (Erickson & Schultz, 1982). The universalistic attributes, according to Erickson and Schultz, can be acquired by anyone who has motivation, talent, opportunities, and insistence and are related to the individual's institutional identity such as a teacher or a student. The particularistic attributes cannot be acquired by anyone because they are determined by birth (e.g., sex, skin color, race) and the individual's culture (e.g., accent, dialect, interactional style, religious affiliation). Erickson and Schultz believe that in institutional talk, an individual's particularistic attributes of the social identity are not expected to emerge because they are not relevant to the institutional encounter. For example, if both the instructor and a student/students support the Braves, the Atlanta baseball team, or know the same person, these attributes are not relevant to the classroom talk and should not emerge during classroom interaction. However, Erickson and Schultz demonstrate that particularistic attributes of one's social identity emerge as relevant during institutional encounters as well.

As Unger-Gallagher (1991) suggests, when participating in rapport-building activities in the classroom, an ITA may "identify with students", for example, through the use of humor, which could be in conflict with the teacher status. This means that, unlike Erickson and Schultz (1982) predict, ITAs may share universalistic attributes of their student identity with their students. If ITAs make their student identities relevant in certain encounters in the classroom, it might lead to the development of comembership, or sharing social status with their students, which may distort their power relationships. In this case, TAs might need to restore their teacher status. For ITAs this task may be challenging because for understanding and producing humor,

both advanced linguistic and cultural knowledge may be necessary. Even though ITAs are more likely to have a native-like fluency, they may have difficulty in applying their knowledge of the social functions of humor in American culture to the local context of a particular classroom encounter.

Humor in Educational Settings

Research on the use of humor in education shows that humor is an important part of American college classrooms (Gorham & Christopel, 1990; Nelms, 2001; Neuliep, 1991; Tapper, 1999; Wanzer & Frymier, 1999; White, 2001). Although the studies on the use of humor in the classroom show how humor functions in the classroom, they do not seem to differentiate the purpose of the humorous utterance and the social functions of humor. The purpose of the humorous utterance may be to assist in the teaching/learning process or classroom management e.g., to make a point or to reprimand a student for missing a class, whereas the social functions of humor could be to establish rapport with students while making a point or to minimize the effect of reprimands.

The studies show that instructors use humorous utterances with multiple purposes: to stimulate students' learning (Gorham & Christopel, 1990; Nelms, 2001; Neuliep, 1991; Wanzer & Frymier, 1999), to make a point (Nelms, 2001; Neuliep, 1991), and to facilitate retention of the class content (Wanzer & Frymier, 1999). The social functions of humor, on the other hand, are to reduce tension and to make the classroom atmosphere delightful (Gorham & Christopel, 1990; Nelms, 2001; Neuliep, 1991), to relieve embarrassment (Gorham & Christopel, 1990), to mitigate professor negative comments (Nelms, 2001), and to decrease social distance between students and their instructors as professionals (Tapper, 1999). Humor, however, may affect the

teacher-student relationship unfavorably when it is used to shame, ridicule, and urge to perform or behave better (Gorham & Christopel, 1990; Nelms, 2001).

Although numerous studies on the use of humor in the classroom involve university professors, there is lack of studies on the use of humor by ITAs. While a few studies contribute to the knowledge base on this topic (Bailey, 1984a; Davies, Tyler, & Koran, 1989), none of them investigates how through the use of humor ITAs build relationships with their students.

Bailey (1984a) demonstrates that the use of humor is a contributing factor to the ITAs' teaching effectiveness when it is used "on-task" in the process of explaining class material. It also seems to contribute to ITA success because of its social function of creating affiliation. However, as Bailey further argues, the use of humor does not guarantee teacher success. An ITA from her study who was evaluated as not successful also used humor, but his humor was rarely on-task and added little to purposeful teaching. Unlike other TAs who succeeded in the use of humor and its relationship to their teaching activities, that ITA "had not learned to balance his sense of humor with his primary responsibility—teaching math—or his unwritten responsibility—supporting his students" (p. 124).

Since the social functions of humor range from building rapport and solidarity to expressing insult and aggression (Attardo, 2000; Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997; Drew, 1987; Eisenberg, 1986; Gibbs, 2000; Glenn, 1995; Hay, 2000, 2001; Holmes & Marra, 2002a; Kotthoff, 1996; Straehle, 1993), the use of humor is rather risky for ITAs. If ITAs use humor to shame or ridicule their students, it may lead to alienation. Both the development of comembership and creating alienation can be damaging to teacher status.

Motivation for This Research

I have been an ITA for more than five years, so I approach this research project on ITAs as an insider of the researched group. Smith (2005) advocates for research conducted by the insiders of the researched communities because this type of research changes the position of “seeing ourselves as passive victims of all research to seeing ourselves as activists engaging in a counterhegemonic struggle over research” (p. 87). With the hope to bring new insights into the field, I take on this endeavor not only to show the problems that ITAs have or might have, but also to inspire those who are concerned with these problems to believe that ITAs can cope with the challenges they face in their classrooms in terms of culture, language, and their authority.

Although both TAs and ITAs are graduate students who also teach or assist in teaching university courses, the word “international” separates ITAs from other TAs who are native speakers of American English. “International” suggests the other one, or “the foreign Other” (Holliday, Hyde, & Kullman, 2004). To be “the foreign Other”, one does not necessarily have to come from a foreign country, but to belong “to any group of people *perceived* as different” (p. 23, emphasis in the original). The concept of otherization is based on prejudice, or “judgment made on the basis of interest rather than emergent evidence” (p. 4, figure 4). According to Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman, interest could include political, religious, or ethnic, and “would colour, bias, or infect the way in which the foreign Other is seen” (p. 23). The concept of otherness is somewhat malicious because it tends “to reduce people to be less than what they are” (p. 21). In relation to ITAs, the concept of otherization can be malicious in a way that ITAs may be perceived differently or may be thought of as not capable of dealing with certain issues because of being foreign while experiencing similar problems as domestic TAs, for example, in terms of the negotiation of authority in the classroom.

My experience of being an ITA shows that, most of the time, students do not openly demonstrate their orientation to the teacher being “the foreign Other”; however, “the otherness” sometimes emerges. I remember when I taught my first undergraduate class, I responded to a student’s sarcasm with humor. The student turned to his classmate and smiled: “See, she understands sarcasm”. This comment struck me because the student, for some reason, did not expect me to understand and to use humor. I was wondering if he thought all instructors or just I would fail to understand sarcasm.

When I teach and just deliver the material without making any jokes or saying something funny, I feel like a robot programmed for academic purposes who needs to speak clearly with a minimum foreign accent and explain the material so that students can understand. For me, making humorous comments, understanding students’ humor, and being able to respond to their humor connect me somehow with them and make me feel closer to my students. Humor also helps me build rapport with the students. While humor can relax students, especially when we discuss a difficult concept, it may lead to classroom “disorder” when everyone wants to make a humorous comment and to amuse each other. Although such moments, if they happen, bond the students and the instructor as a group, these moments are challenging because in order to bring students back to a working mood, I need to renegotiate with them our roles as instructor and the students.

I feel that using humor in the classroom is like riding a roller coaster. While taking a ride is exiting, it is dangerous at the same time. The exciting part of using humor with the students is bonding and developing a friendly relationship, which helps during teaching. The “dangerous” side of the humorous classroom roller coaster is that the participants may cross the boundaries of social status by teasing me back and I may need to deal with their teasing. Therefore, when using

humor, I try to stay alert to be able to deal with unforeseen outcomes of humorous interaction. I enter this research project with curiosity about how other ITAs use humor, how they deal with challenging and “dangerous” situations if they happen, and how they negotiate who they are with their students during humorous exchanges.

The Present Study

Although literature on (I)TAs often highlights that (I)TAs have at least two identities, an identity of a teacher and identity of a student (e.g., Jenkins, 2000; Pialorsi, 1984; Shaw & Bailey, 1990) and cautions that the (I)TAs’ student identity may emerge in the classroom, especially when (I)TAs use humor (Unger-Gallagher, 1991), to the best of my knowledge, no studies so far show whether it actually happens and if it does, then how. This study seeks answers to the questions of what ITA identities emerge during humorous exchanges with their students and how ITAs negotiate their identities in humorous interactions with their students.

In this study I look at humor as a pragmatic act and use it as a tool for studying how identity is negotiated and displayed. I treat humor as a pragmatic act because like any pragmatic act, it is used to achieve a certain goal, and because to use it appropriately, one needs to be aware of sociocultural norms of when and how it can be used. I use humor as a tool to study identity because humor allows for building social relationships and allows for entering humorous negotiation of the participants’ roles during interaction.

Four ITAs, all non-native speakers of English, participated in the study. To study how identity is negotiated and constructed, I conducted a detailed analysis of the ITAs’ humorous exchanges with their students. While analyzing verbal humor, I took into account how the participants’ body moves added to the ITAs’ identity construction and also looked at how the

ITAs and their students took into account their verbal and non-verbal cues during identity negotiation. My research is guided by the following research questions:

1. What attributes of ITAs' identities emerge during humorous exchanges with their students?
2. How do these attributes shape the teacher-student relationship in the classroom?
3. What is the role of humor in the identity negotiation process between the ITAs and their students?

Organization of the Study

In chapter two, I provide theoretical background for the study of identity and review studies on how identity is negotiated and displayed through the use of conversational humor and how identity is negotiated and displayed through laughter. I also review research on how politeness theory approaches the study of humor and look at research on the social function of humor in institutional settings.

I describe my methodology and the reasons for choosing microethnography for the data collection and analysis in chapter three. In this chapter I also introduce the participants of the study and how they were recruited. In addition, I describe how data were collected, coded, and analyzed.

In chapter four I present the results of the study with a detailed discussion. Each category that emerged during the data analysis will be discussed separately to show how the purposes of humor and the targets of humor, humor initiation and termination, as well as the participation structure of the humorous exchanges are linked to the ITAs' identities.

In the final chapter, I draw conclusions and discuss the implications of the findings. I also discuss the relation of the findings to the existing research and suggest directions for future inquiry.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Background

For this study of how ITAs' identity is negotiated in the university classroom, I use a theoretical framework developed by Erickson and Schultz (1982). In this chapter, first, I describe the theoretical framework for the study of identity. Then, drawing on the research on humor and identity, I show how scholars have approached the study of humor and identity by investigating how identity is constructed through (1) different humorous speech genres, (2) laughter practices, and (3) application of politeness strategies that involve humor. Finally, I discuss the studies on how identity is constructed through humorous exchanges in institutional settings.

Identity Defined

Scholars who study identity underscore that our presentation of who we are does not solely depend on us, but on our interaction with other people in the world, across time and space (Erickson & Schultz, 1982; Norton, 1997; Norton Peirce, 1995; West, 1992). Norton (1997) defines identity as “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future” (p.409). West (1992) connects identity with individuals’

desire for recognition; quest for visibility ...; the sense of being acknowledged; a deep desire for association... . It's the longing to belong, a deep, visceral need that most linguistically conscious animals who transact with an environment (that's us) participate in. And then there is a profound desire for protection, for security, for safety, for surety. (p. 20)

Erickson and Schultz's (1982) view of identity goes in line with Norton (1997) and West (1992) in that people perform their identities at different moments of their interaction with others and through their interaction they show their belonging to certain groups, or their desire to associate with or be like others. Affiliation, or “the way in which humor functions to build or

reinforce intimacy between interlocutors” (Bell, 2002, p. 112), occurs when people share common background, interests, experiences, knowledge, or components of their identities which they make visible, or relevant, when talking to others. According to Erickson and Schultz (1992) the components, or attributes, of one’s identity compose a set in which the attributes are placed along different dimensions.

One of the dimensions, universalism-particularism (Erickson & Schultz, 1992), includes universalistic attributes that can be shared by any individual and particularistic attributes that can be shared by a more limited group of people. Universalistic attributes of an individual’s social identity are those that can be accomplished by any person, assuming that the person has inspiration, determination, talent and opportunity for certain achievements. These attributes are linked to the person’s institutional identity. For example, some of the universalistic attributes of a teacher’s identity include teacher expertise, knowledge of the subject, and teacher authority to manage the classroom, to evaluate students’ work and behavior, and to give grades. The universalistic attributes of a student’s identity are different, incorporating students’ performance in class, their grades, diligence, discipline, desire to learn, subordination to a teacher, and demonstration of respect to the teacher. Particularistic attributes, according to Erickson and Schultz, are those that are determined directly by birth, e.g., ethnicity, skin color, sex, social class, and those that shape identity indirectly, or cultural attributes, e.g., the ways of speaking, religious affiliation, and social contacts. While the teacher and students are not expected to share the same universalistic attributes of their identities in the classroom, they may share some of the same particularistic attributes of their identities.

However, Erickson and Schultz (1982) claim that particularistic attributes of social identity should not be relevant to an institutional encounter. This implies that, ideally, primarily

universalistic attributes of social identity should emerge in institutional settings. For example, a college instructor can be also a native speaker of Russian, a female, and a good friend, but these attributes are not likely to become relevant in an institutional encounter. In practice, however, as Erickson and Schultz show, particularistic attributes of social identity tend to transpire within an encounter and influence the outcome of the interaction. Thus, according to Erickson and Schultz, the universalistic and particularistic attributes that emerge within an institutional encounter compose performed social identity, which can change from moment to moment during interaction.

As Erickson and Schultz (1982) argue, during interaction, people may reveal new information, which may lead to their identity change. For instance, at some point the participants may reveal their interests that their conversationalists did not know about, and this new information may lead to the development of comembership. Comembership is belonging to the same social group, or social category, based on the particularistic features shared by conversationalists, such as race, ethnicity, social status, sex, common interests, or friends (Erickson & Schultz, 1982). In the classroom, for example, comembership may develop when ITAs reveal their identity of students and it may impact classroom interaction and change the participation structure of the classroom discourse. Students may challenge ITAs with their questions and comments and feel more freedom to talk in class without the instructors' permission, which will change the turn-taking organization of classroom discourse.

Identity and Institutional Talk

Scholars studying institutional talk agree that institutional identities do not dictate rights and obligations on conversationalists, e.g., the instructor has the right to talk because of her or his role as instructor and students are obliged to wait till the instructor allows them to talk; rather,

conversationalists orient toward their roles within a certain encounter and toward what roles they play within this encounter at a certain moment of interaction (Bergmann, 1992; Drew, 1992; Heritage, 2005; Schegloff, 1992; Zimmerman, 1992). Even in an institutional setting, conversationalists do not perform their professional identities all the time. There are moments when they are involved in ordinary conversation talking about mundane things like weather (see Drew & Sorjonen, 1997), thus orienting themselves toward their roles as friends or acquaintances. Similarly, institutional interaction can occur at home or at any other setting “insofar as participants’ institutional or professional identities are somehow made relevant to the work activities in which they are engaged” (Drew & Heritage, 1992, pp. 3-4). In other words, institutional and ordinary talk are products of conversationalists’ co-construction of reality and the social order at a certain moment of time. Although both ordinary and institutional talk integrate the elements of the same turn-taking system, e.g., one person talks at a time and the next speaker can be assigned by the present speaker or may self-select, they remain distinctive in terms of how turn taking occurs, overall structural organization, sequence organization, turn design, and lexical choice (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Heritage, 2005).

Identity Through Turn-taking Organization

Turn-taking organization is critical in the analysis of institutional discourse because conversationalists manifest who they are by means of turn-taking organization. While in casual talk conversationalists have equal opportunities to participate in the talk, institutional interaction can “alter the parties’ opportunities for action” (Heritage, 2004, p. 225) and any deviation from the institutional norms can be openly restricted. The studies on institutional talk demonstrate that the main difference between ordinary and institutional talk lies in predictability of the next turn allocation. In ordinary conversation, the actions of the conversationalists are not predictable,

while in institutional talk, turn-taking practices are systematically different from ordinary conversations because they represent “groupings of distinctive turn-taking practices, used by both speakers and hearers, that are organized as a group and are geared to a common outcome” (Heritage, 2005, p. 115). These turn-taking practices demonstrate how conversationalists orient to their institutional identities as well as how they orient to their tasks and constraints (Heritage & Greatbatch, 1991).

The basic set of rules that emerges from ordinary conversations (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974) regulates turn construction and allows speakers to take the next turn and to coordinate the turn assignment in a way that the gap between the current and the next speaker and turn overlap are minimal. At a possible turn end, the current speaker can select the next speaker or can continue to talk unless another speaker self-selects. This set of rules can be applied recursively until turn transfer occurs. The rules of turn-taking organization of ordinary talk manifest that conversationalists have equal rights to contribute to the talk.

The turn-taking system of classroom discourse, however, restricts the participants’ rights for self-selection of the next speaker, which does not allow for much permutability, or open-endedness (McHoul, 1978). Unlike the rules governing the turn-taking organization of casual conversation, the rules regulating classroom talk coordinate the turn taking in a way that allows a “greater instance of a gap while maintaining conversation’s minimization of overlap” (p. 187). The smaller opportunities for permutability of talk and the greater instances of a gap characterize classroom talk as formal, or “medial between local-allocation (conversation) and pre-allocation” (p. 187).

McHoul’s (1978) rule-modification of turn-taking organization accounts for turn management of classroom talk. In classroom talk, the right to assign the next speaker belongs to

the teacher and students are not to self-select at the transition-relevance place. If the teacher does not select a student to speak next, then the teacher continues to talk. A student's turn is also constructed in a way that the next speaker must be the teacher, who is to speak at the transition-relevance place. If the student does not choose the teacher as the next speaker, either the teacher self-selects or the student who is the current speaker continues to talk.

McHoul (1978) argues that if teacher-student interaction is governed by these rules, then formal classroom talk provides “grounds for locating one party to those interactions (the teacher) as ‘head’ or ‘director’” (p. 188). Consequently, “*only teachers can direct speakership in any creative way*” (p. 188, emphasis in the original). The turn-taking organization of classroom interaction exemplifies this rule in that the teacher is the initiator of a “talk-unit” and “any deviation from the pattern “‘Teacher-Student-Teacher...’ is seen to be in need of repair; and even some permutations within this pattern may be repaired if they are not teacher-organized” (p. 210).

While the rules of turn taking organization of casual conversation emphasize conversationalists' freedom for participation in conversation, the rules of turn-taking organization of classroom talk highlight that the teacher and students do not have equal opportunities to navigate classroom talk. The teacher has authority to steer classroom interaction and students are obliged to conform to the teacher's moves. Thus, the allocation of teacher and student turns in classroom talk exhibits the teacher and student identities and if their roles are changed (e.g., the instructor as the leader of the discussion vs. the instructor as an equal participant in class discussion), the participation structure of their talk will show this change through the turn initiation. For example, if the instructor leads the discussion, students may not

self-select as the next speakers. If the instructor is an equal participant in the discussion, students are more likely to self-select.

I have described the theoretical background of this study and how the participation structure and turn-taking organization of talk are indicative to the participants identities in terms of their rights and obligation for participation in the talk. The rest of the chapter is devoted to the relationship between humor and identity and why humor is a good tool for researching identity.

Negotiation of Identities Through the Use of Humor

Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997) argue that humor provides a fertile ground for identity construction and display. Through the use of humor, especially conversational joking, which is spontaneous, as opposed to narrative jokes, which are created in advance, conversationalists develop their relational identities, which leads to “a sense of membership in a group” (p. 276). Similarly, Norrick (1993) maintains that “joking allows participants to recognize their respective affiliations and to align themselves in terms of them and in spite of them” (p. 5). Before I focus on the relationship between humor and identity, I will define conversational joking and other terms that will be used throughout the study.

Conversational Joking Defined

Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997) treat conversational joking as an umbrella term for spontaneous humorous speech genres, which they distinguish according to the targets of humor. Attardo (2001) defines the target as “groups or individuals with (humorous) stereotypes attached to each” (p. 23), but this definition of the target is more relevant to narrative, or canned jokes. Although this definition of the target can be applied to conversational humor, the target may not have any particular stereotypes attached to it. According to Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997),

conversational joking includes teasing, which requires that someone present is the target; joking about absent other; and self-denigrating humor.

Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997) argue that the most important functions of conversational joking can be relational identity display and development because through this type of humor participants “not only display identity but create new ones based on their past, present, and future relationship” (p. 282). According to Boxer and Cortés-Conde, through conversational joking participants can perform their relational identities as friends, acquaintances, and in-group members. While by means of joking people can establish an in-group relationship, joking with those who we do not know very well is less risky because with strangers we tend to use joking that does not involve teasing. Teasing is more likely to occur with intimates rather than with strangers because it involves releasing of aggression, which can hurt, or bite (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997). Joking with intimates and friends, on the other hand, is a high-risk activity because the identity display occurs based on our past history of relationships. We may have past history that seems to allow for more freedom, but during the present encounter the conversationalists’ relationship may not be reconfirmed and teasing that bites, according to Boxer and Cortés-Conde, may weaken our relationship.

Although Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997) distinguish between conversational joking and narrative jokes, I treat narrative jokes as another genre of conversational joking because in conversation, narrative jokes are often told in relation to the context of conversation (Zajdman, 1991). What makes narrative jokes different from the other three conversational genres in that unlike teasing, joking about absent other, and self-denigrating humor, all of which are spontaneous humorous utterances, narrative jokes are short stories prepared in advance with a punchline. The punchline serves as a device to resolve an ambiguity created by two possible

scripts involved in the humorous text (Raskin, 1985). Although narrative jokes represent a different humorous genre, through narrative jokes participants also display their identities because they demonstrate their understanding and shared attitude toward the humor, for example, by laughing together at the joke. In the next section I will focus on how conversationalists construct their identities through different genres of conversational joking.

Identity Negotiation and Display Through Conversational Joking

Although conversationalists display and negotiate their relationships with each other through all genres of conversational humor, some genres, e.g., teasing, involve more negotiation of the conversationalists' relationships than the other genres (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997). Thus, while narrative jokes, joking about absent others, and self-denigrating humor allow conversationalists to display who they are in relation to each other, teasing involves not only identity display, but also identity negotiation, which may change the conversationalists' relationships by the end of the exchange (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997). Humorous genres that are less aggressive toward the participants of conversation involve less identity negotiation, while joking that is more aggressive toward conversationalists requires more conversational work to define that relationship.

Norrick (1993) argues that humor is aggressive in three ways: it is aggressive toward the target, toward the audience because they undergo a test, and toward all the participants. It is aggressive to the target because humorists make fun of the target. It is aggressive to the audience because the audience needs to interpret and understand the humor in order to enjoy it and risks looking foolish if it fails. It is aggressive to all the participants because humorists may hold the floor for a long time which restricts other conversationalists' participation. According to Norrick, "aggression in conversational joking is a matter of degree" (p. 135). Norrick characterizes joke

telling as less aggressive because it leads to rapport building. It could be added that it is also less aggressive to the participants in cases where it targets a group or groups of people with whom they are not personally acquainted.

Joking about absent others, similar to narrative jokes, is also less aggressive because it targets people who are not part of the group, so the aggression is directed at outsiders. While self-denigrating humor targets a person who is present, it is less aggressive because it leads to rapport (Norrick, 1993). Teasing is, probably, the most aggressive humorous genre compared to the other genres of conversational joking because it targets participant(s) who are present and the target needs to decide very quickly whether the teaser is serious or not and how to deal with the tease (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997; Norrick, 2003). I will focus on each of these genres separately and discuss them in terms of how identity is negotiated and displayed through these genres.

Identity Display Through Narrative Jokes

Jokes carry a social function of rapport building (Norrick, 1993) and “help us get to know each other” (p. 106). Although in jokes we often take advantage of a group of people or sensitive topics such as politics, sex, or ethnic identity, the primary goal of jokes is not to test or intimidate hearers, “but rather to give them an opportunity to affirm shared knowledge and beliefs” (p. 107). Norrick claims that since jokes are directed at a third party, they allow for creating group affiliation and solidarity. Despite the fact that Norrick argues that the primary goal of jokes is creating group affiliation rather than testing hearers’ understanding of the joke, to understand jokes, hearers need to interpret the text as a joke.

The need “to solve the punch line as fast as possible” (Sacks, 1995, p. 481) appears to make jokes a special test of hearers’ ability to decipher them, otherwise, the recipients’ perceived

cleverness could be compromised. Therefore, “the social circumstances lead a recipient to attempt to be finding what the punchline means” (p. 481) and to demonstrate her or his understanding of the jokes by “laughing, and laughing as soon as possible” (p. 481). Jokes, however, not only test the hearer’s intelligence, but also the speaker’s ability to entertain the audience. Thus, by appreciating a joke with laughter, hearers simultaneously demonstrate their understanding of the joke and appreciate the humorist’s wit.

While jokes test the speaker’s ability to entertain the audience and the hearer’s ability to interpret the humorous test, it appears to create a *laughing with* environment (Glenn, 1995) where participants laughing together exhibit affiliation. The humorists, however, tend not to laugh first after they deliver a joke (Glenn, 1989) because of the “bias against self-praise” (p. 137). According to Glenn (1989), the first laugh by someone other than the humorist, especially in multi-party conversations, eliminates the bias. The recipient-initiated first laugh indicates that the audience gives a humorist credit for entertaining them and acknowledges the humorist’s success with laughter. By not laughing first, a humorist also claims her or his ownership of the joke. If original authorship of the joke does not belong to the humorist, then the humorist may “claim credit for successful delivery of the joke” (p. 137). As Glenn concludes, “the barometer of a successful joke is its ability to draw laughter” (p. 137).

Identity Display Through Joking About Absent Other

When joking about an absent other, conversationalists build a common bond that unites them against outsiders and characterizes the absent other as different from the participants (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997). For example, three women from Boxer and Cortés-Conde’s study mock a man that one of the women is dating, who is not present. They collaboratively

construct their identities and create comembership based on their shared knowledge about “how men think and act” (p. 283).

Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997) show that the three women construct their identity within a play frame. The play frame suggests that messages, or signals, communicated within this frame are not faithful and what these messages mean should not be taken seriously (Bateson, 1972). By accepting the game and playing it, conversationalists exhibit who they are and negotiate their attitude toward the humorous messages while playing. To enter the play frame, conversationalists need to interpret the utterance opening the play frame as not serious. Bell (2002) summarizes different ways of how humorists cue the opening of the play frame. The opening of the play frame can be marked with (1) laughter or a smile voice; (2) unusual prosody such as very loud or very quiet voice, very high or very low pitch, and exaggerated intonation contours; (3) vocabulary which is associated with another genre; and (4) an interlocutor’s humorous response or a response in a form of laughter.

Identity Display Through Self-denigrating Humor

Self-denigrating humor may lead to identity display (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997). Self-denigrating humor enhances the speaker’s positive face and leads to rapport and affiliation. Norrick (1993) argues that through personal anecdotes, humorists present a positive rather than negative image of themselves because “they present a self with an ability to laugh at problems and overcome them” (p. 47), thus creating rapport with the hearers and enhancing the speaker’s positive face. Glenn (1995), similarly, claims that by targeting humor at themselves, speakers create a situation in which their listeners’ laughing at them is relevant to promote affiliation and to “accomplish a micro-transformation of social structure” (p. 54). According to Glenn (1995),

laughing at self is associated with “playing the fool” in order to get laughed at and offer the situation in which group affiliation is relevant.

Identity Negotiation Through Teasing

Teasing is defined as humor that targets someone present (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997) and is associated with such speech forms as criticism, joking, assertion (Eisenberg, 1986), shaming (Shieffelin, 1986) and mock dispute (Miller, 1986) and serves to achieve several goals. One goal of teasing is to construct friendship and solidarity (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997; Eder, 1993; Hay, 2000; Kotthoff, 2003; Straehle, 1993); others are to maintain power (Hay, 2000), exert social control (Eisenberg, 1986; Norrick, 2003; Shieffelin, 1986), and “to clarify and maintain boundaries” (Hay, 2000, p. 719). Eisenberg (1986) defines teasing

as any conversational sequence that opened with a mock challenge, insult, or threat. A key feature of the teasing sequence was that the teaser did not intend the recipient to continue to believe the utterance was true, although he or she might intend the recipient to believe it initially. This is an important distinction, because teasers do often hope to “trick” their listeners into believing them so as to enjoy the results when the latter realize that they have been duped. (pp. 183-184)

The ambiguity of the teasing utterances affects the outcomes of teasing in that it brings a hearer at a crossroad to decide whether the speaker is serious or not. If the hearer interprets the message as humorous, s/he shows it by either responding with a tease on a tease, defending her/himself (Eisenberg, 1986), by providing a non-serious exaggerated response, e.g., exaggerated denial or surprise (Eder, 1993), or even by insulting the playful offender (Straehle, 1993). If a hearer fails to interpret teasing correctly, s/he becomes the “butt” of the tease (Eisenberg, 1986). According to Eisenberg, both correct interpretation of the tease and initial failure to do so are successful outcomes of teasing. In the former case, participants enjoy playing together; in the latter instance, the recipient “joins in the fun” as soon as the tease is interpreted

as such, unless the recipient demonstrates the tease was taken seriously (Drew, 1987; Glenn, 1995).

Drew (1987) argues that conversationalists respond seriously to a tease not because they do not understand the tease, but because the utterance prior to the tease demonstrates that the teased person “is overdoing something” (p. 242), e.g., complains elaborately, praises somebody with exaggeration, or tells something unrealistic. The teases, in their turn, “attribute some kind of DEVIANT activity or category to the person who is teased” (p. 244, emphasis in the original). Thus, according to Drew, teases transform someone’s identity into a deviant one. In Drew’s data, for example, teases transformed the identities of women who were talking into women who gossip and talk endlessly, the identities of men being attentive to women into men who are sexually manipulative, or the identity of someone who is home on time to a person who skips work. Since teases are close to reality, they “provide the recipients with the motivation to set the record straight in their serious, po-faced responses to teases” (p. 247) and transform their transformed unusual identities into their normal identities.

Although teasing transforms conversational normal identities into unusual identities as Drew (1987) argues, it leads to bonding and enhancing the rapport of the participants (Norrick, 2003). In spite of the fact that teasing is aggressive because it targets someone present and involves mock challenge and criticism (Eisenberg, 1986), at the same time it conceals the aggression and “makes it tolerable” (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997, p. 285). In other words it combines “friendliness and antagonism” (Randcliffe-Brown, 1952) and may lead “from bonding to biting” (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997). When teasing bonds, more aggressive forms of joking emphasize that the relationships between conversationalists “need not stand on formalities” (Norrick, 2003, p. 1348), thus enhancing the rapport of the interlocutors. When participating in

such an activity, conversationalists know that the bite implies something different from what it would imply in a serious situation because it is realized within a created play frame.

Similar to conversational humor, which provides the ground for identity negotiation and display, laughter also plays an important role in identity construction. The studies on laughter show how by sharing laughter interlocutors avoid alienation and tend to create an environment in which laughing together is relevant.

Identity Negotiation Through Laughter

Studies on laughter show that laughter is one of the ways to display and negotiate relationships between conversationalists (e.g., Glenn, 1989; Glenn, 1995, 2003; Jefferson, 1979, 1984; Jefferson, Sacks, & Schegloff, 1987). Recipients demonstrate their alignment with a humorist by providing laughter voluntarily or by invitation (Jefferson, 1979). Voluntary laughter is located after the humorous utterance. With voluntary laughter the recipients of humor show their interpretation of the utterance as humorous and appreciation of the humorist who amused them, thus affiliating with the entertainer.

Sometimes humorists invite affiliation by inviting the recipients' to laugh with them by initiating laughter upon the completion of the humorous utterance or by inserting laughter in the speech (Jefferson, 1979). According to Jefferson, the recipient might wait for a laughter invitation if the speaker's utterance is ambiguous and the speaker needs to signal that laughter is appropriate at the moment. In other words, in ambiguous situations, affiliation should be invited.

While laughter may communicate alignment of the conversationalists with each other, it also can signal disaffiliation. Disaffiliation occurs when the speaker's humor, which is often a tease, is targeted at one of the participants and creates a *laughing at* situation (Glenn, 1995). The *laughing at* situation is marked by the conversational turns and the placement of laughter: it is

initiated by somebody other than the butt and is not shared by the butt of the tease.

Conversationalists who become the butt of the tease tend to seek affiliation by transforming a *laughing at* into a *laughing with* environment by initiating shared laughter. Multi-party shared laughter can be indicative to either *laughing with* if the butt joins the laughter or *laughing at* where the butt chooses not to be affiliated with the group. Because the butt of the tease has a choice of affiliating with or distancing from the group by performing some action, Glenn argues that *laughing at* and *laughing with* environments are not static but dynamic. They develop in conversation through negotiation of the participants, thus demonstrating participants' realignment. One way of transforming a *laughing at* to *laughing with* environment, as Glenn (1989; 1995) shows, is for the butt to go along with the tease and make fun of themselves, which may lead to the participants' realignment when they laugh together.

While studies on laughter reveal how laughter is socially organized in terms of demonstrating conversationalists' in- or out-group relationship, politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) proposes that humor, as a politeness strategy, mitigates face-threatening acts and seems to work as a rapport building technique.

Politeness and Identity

Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest that humor is used as both positive and negative politeness strategy. Positive politeness strategies are used to enhance someone's positive face wants of being appreciated by others. Negative politeness strategies are employed to mitigate a possible threat to the hearer's independence and autonomy. Joking, according to the theory, is a positive politeness strategy because it is based on the conversationalists' shared background knowledge and presupposes that the hearer's and the speaker's shared background allows for enjoying humor together. Joking also puts the hearer "at ease" if the hearer does something that

might embarrass her or him. Thus, joking initiated by the speaker makes speakers and hearers allies not only on the basis of shared knowledge but also on the basis of the speaker's desire to please the hearer and the hearer's wants to be appreciated.

Humor as a positive politeness strategy is also used to talk about personal achievements or success (Kotthoff, 1996). Humor in this case, according to Kotthoff, camouflages self-praise and saves the speaker's positive face. At the same time, by entertaining the hearer, the speaker attends to the hearer's face wants to be included into the group and enjoy humor together.

Humor can also be used as a negative politeness strategy to minimize the speaker's imposition on the hearer, for example, when making requests (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The face-threat to the hearer's negative space is softened with humor because it shifts serious interaction to non-serious mode. It also balances the speaker's imposition with positive politeness since in order to enjoy humor together, the speaker and the hearer need to share background knowledge.

Brown and Levinson (1987) also suggest that using humor allows the speaker to state the meaning indirectly and by doing so to soften the intended meaning, e.g., criticism. Criticism is damaging to the hearer's positive face in that the hearer's positive image is compromised. It is also threatening to the hearer's negative face because it implies evaluation, or invasion of the hearer's independence. In Brown and Levinson's view, humorous criticism not only minimizes the imposition, but it also minimizes the damage to the hearer's positive face. By encouraging the participants' comembership on the basis of shared background knowledge, humor leads to affiliation.

While Holmes' (2007) findings go in line with politeness theory in that humor is used to soften face-threatening behaviors of criticism and directives, Kotthoff (1997) argues that

conversational humor, which is at the expense of other people, can “temporarily or permanently threaten relationships” (p. 309). While politeness theory treats humor as positive and negative politeness strategies aimed at attending to the hearers’ or speakers’ face wants which lead to the participants’ alignment, humor may not always function as politeness strategy and in this case, the relationships are put at risk (Kotthoff, 1997).

These studies on how identity is constructed and displayed through humorous speech genres, on laughter in conversation, and on humor as a politeness strategy demonstrate that humor has a great potential for bonding, affiliation, and creating comembership between the participants. Even teasing someone present and using self-denigrating humor can create an environment in which participants have opportunities to reconfirm their in-group relationships and promote affiliation. While these studies were based on data from casual conversation, in the next section I review research on humor in the workplace which shows that at the workplace, humor also assists in creating positive relationships.

Humor in Institutional Settings

The studies on humor in the workplace demonstrate that most of the humor is initiated by those with higher status and functions as a device for affiliation while using authority in different ways. While higher-status participants use their authority to perform face-threatening activities (e.g., negatively evaluate their colleagues or reprimand them), these activities are accompanied by their and their colleagues’ affiliative moves. Although affiliation is one of the ways to develop intimacy, the studies that I examined do not report that humor minimized status differences of the participants at their workplaces. Even in the situations when the lower status participants challenged their higher-status colleagues through the use of humor, their institutional roles were renegotiated and re-asserted.

Good relationships appear to be valued and important at the work place. Perhaps that is why mitigating authority with humor that assists in building relationship is so important at the workplace. Moreover, humor seems to be more the right of those with authority, as has been highlighted in studies on humor in a machine shop (Boland & Hoffman, 1983) and in different work groups, e.g., business firms, engineering and medical laboratories (Duncan & Feisal, 1989), where only well established professionals were allowed “to pull a joke” on anybody else, and apprentices were permitted to perform only certain kinds of jokes. Moreover, Duncan and Feisal found that for novice workers to become the butt of a joke meant social inclusion in their professional group and, consequently, a new social circle. The fact that “the joke must ‘fit’ the existing hierarchy” (Boland & Hoffman, 1983, p. 194) reflects status relationships in the workplace and thus social identities of the participants.

As also pointed out by Holmes (2000), studies on the use of humor in institutional settings demonstrate that humor carries various functions and, most of the time, it is used to exert authority while simultaneously attenuating it. However, through the use of humor, participants also appear to maintain, balance, challenge, and re-assert their authority while building rapport and creating affiliation with each other.

Affiliation While Exerting Authority

Several studies show that humor creates an environment for affiliation when higher-status conversationalists exert their authority. Nelms’ (2001) study on the use of sarcasm in academia demonstrates that while university professors exerted their authority, e.g., to tell a student to remain at the front of the class after she gave a presentation, or to reprimand a student who had missed the previous class and asked the professor to go through the transparencies slower, or to evaluate a student’s incorrect answer humorously, both the professors and students sought

affiliation. Tapper (1999) reports that humor in the undergraduate practical science laboratories was also used by a supervisor to reprimand a student “in a face-saving way” (p. 457).

Holmes (2000; 2006) and Tapper (1999) also found that humor is used to save the addressee’s face in both equal and unequal power encounters when participants give directives, express criticism, or provide negative evaluations of the addressees. Tapper (1999) shows that in the college science lab, students apply humor as a face-saving strategy when criticizing another student. Holmes (2000, 2006) also says that giving directives or instructions to status equals is a threat to their independence because there is no formal institutional right involved. Therefore, speakers garnish their directives with humor to reduce the possibility of being overtly directive and to emphasize “goodwill and cooperative intent” (Holmes, 2000, p. 171).

Building Rapport While Maintaining Authority

Humor is also used for rapport building and affiliation when higher-status conversationalists perform their routine activities, e.g., professors teach students; managers conduct the staff meeting. In the university classroom, professors used humor to make a point while entertaining students and building rapport with them (Nelms, 2001).

Similarly, Holmes (2005) shows how power relations at work are built inconspicuously through routine workplace interactions, including humorous anecdotes and story-telling. Holmes differentiates between workplace narratives and anecdotes, although the two are similar in that they are based on personal experience and are not necessarily expected to be included in business talk. They differ in that workplace anecdotes are digressions from the business talk, whereas workplace narratives carry a pedagogical function because they have a point and are related to the content of business interaction. Holmes argues that while it may seem that the workplace narratives told by those with authority, managers, mainly serve social purposes to amuse co-

workers and build rapport between the managers and subordinates, they also reveal professional qualities of the narrators who in the process of story telling construct their authority. The authority is constructed through the evaluation of the events in the story and focusing on the moral of the story and not just on its content.

Some types of workplace humor are used to affirm solidarity and in-group relationships by targeting outsiders (Holmes, 2000) or just making humorous comments not related to the business at hand (Holmes & Marra, 2006). Humor targeted at outsiders to the group highlights the participants' alignment with each other and brief humorous off-topic comments alleviate boredom, and increase participants' energy before they return to serious discussion. This was also true for an undergraduate science lab (Tapper, 1999), where the instructor's joking about absent others who are not scientists served to create solidarity between the instructor and students and develop comembership in a community of scientists. Similarly, telling jokes about managers who combine their authority with arrogance (Duncan & Feisal, 1989) creates in-group inclusion of the lower status employees who team against those with authority.

Affiliation While Recovering Status

At the workplace, humor is also used as a face-saving strategy (Holmes, 2000; Holmes & Marra, 2006) either to the speaker or the addressee. Speakers may employ humor to minimize the embarrassment of having made a mistake by amusing the hearer and "deflecting her potential irritation" (p. 170). When humorously recognizing their mistakes or disclosing unprofessional behavior, speakers twist "the source of the embarrassment into a subject of humor" (p. 170), thus preserving their positive face and reinforcing collegiality.

Creating a Team While Collaborating

Collaborative humor brings participants together as a team (Holmes & Marra, 2006). Collaborative humor occurs when participants “supportively develop the topic at length” (p. 126). This type of humor is supportive in a sense that the contribution of each of the participants develops and elaborates on the utterance of the previous speaker and serves a function of “constructing group cohesion” and creating rapport among the participants.

Affiliating While Re-asserting Authority

Research conducted by Holmes and Marra (e.g., Holmes, 2006; Holmes & Marra, 2002a, 2002b) shows that sometimes participants establish rapport and create a team while participating in contestive humorous exchanges. According to Holmes and Marra (2002a), “contestive humor ... challenges, disagrees with or undermines the propositions or arguments put forward in earlier contributions” (p. 1687). Contestive humor is often used by a higher-status conversationalist who re-asserts her or his authority undermined by a lower-status person. In one example shown in Holmes and Marra (2006), a team member indicated that the team leader missed an error in a report, thus making the team leader the target of his remark. The team leader did not seem to accept the criticism but re-asserted his authority by responding with a “humorous retort” saying that he does not read reports and telling that this was the team members’ job to check for the errors. While Holmes and Marra characterize this type of humorous response as contestive, they do not point out that such exchanges may involve redirection of humor from the initial target to the original humorist.

Teasing which involves jocular abuse (Holmes, 2006; Holmes & Marra, 2002a, 2002b) also can lead to contestive humorous exchanges directed at re-assertion of authority. In business organizations, jocular abuse was mainly applied towards those with more authority and of higher

status, e.g., the meeting chair or manager, who competed for their authority in response. When participants respond to a challenge with a challenge, the humorous sequence becomes interactive and “pragmatically contestive, with each contribution undermining or challenging the proposition or implied claim of the previous speaker” (Holmes & Marra, 2002a, p. 1688).

While Holmes and Marra (2002a) argue that contestive humor involves a challenge of the previous claim, in some of their examples participants do not seem to respond to a jocular abuse with a challenge. For example, in one of the exchanges (see Holmes and Marra, 2002a, example 3) Eric, one of the team members, makes Callum, another team member, the target of his jocular insult by pointing out that Callum did not up-date a document. Although the scholars argue that “Callum responds by challenging Eric’s claim with his own ironic, mock-modest claim” (p. 1688), which is, as seen in the transcript, “I find it really hard being perfect at everything” (p. 1688, line 4), Callum seems to respond with a self-denigrating rather than challenging comment. In spite of the fact that Holmes and Marra define contestive humor as the humor that involves a challenge of the previous speaker’s claim, they do not seem to restrict the challenging utterances to the utterances being re-targeted at the initial teaser.

Although contestive humorous utterances challenge participants, at the same time they are “good-natured”, “good-humored” and amusing (Holmes & Marra, 2002a). As Holmes (2000) argues, jocular insults and abuse are “signals of solidarity and markers of in-group membership” (p. 174) through which participants confirm that they know each other well enough to allow this type of behavior without offending anyone. In other words, when challenging authority with humorous insults, participants “‘do collegiality’ between those who work together closely” (Holmes, 2000, p. 174).

These studies on the use of humor in institutional settings show that the use of humor is linked to status/authority management among conversationalists. While performing their institutional identities, participants seem to orient to creating and keeping good relationships with each other through different activities, even if the activities are rather face threatening. Thus no matter whether higher-status participants exert, maintain, balance, or re-assert their authority, conversationalists tend to establish rapport, in-group union, and affiliation with each other.

Summary

In this chapter I explained the theoretical framework that I use for the study of identity and reviewed research on how identity is constructed through humorous interaction on different levels. Through conversational humorous speech genres such as joking about absent other, self-denigrating humor, teasing, and joke telling, conversationalists negotiate who they are in relation to each other and the world around them. Through laughter they negotiate their relationship as group members by joining the group voluntarily or by invitation. By joining or denying laughter they also demonstrate their choices to join or to distance themselves from the group, thus reconfiguring their identities. Conversationalists also negotiate who they are by engaging in face work when using humor as a politeness strategy to mitigate the face threat of their interlocutors.

The studies on humor in institutional settings informs us on the social functions of humor in situations where conversationalists are of unequal status. These studies provide a background for the present study in that they highlight that while conversationalists used humor for rapport building and affiliation, they still retained their institutional identities and did not seem to jeopardize their status relationships.

CHAPTER III: METHOD

Introduction

In this chapter, I will address the methodological considerations for the methods chosen for this study, study design, rationale for choosing participants, recruitment, data collection method, and the data analysis procedures in relation to the purpose of the study. The study concentrates on how through the use of humor in their professional settings – university classrooms – ITAs co-construct their identities with their students.

I apply qualitative research methodology to examine *how*, moment-by-moment, ITAs negotiate their identities in the humorous exchanges with the students they teach and interact with in the classroom. I am interested in humor as a social action: *what* it means for conversationalists, *what* type of interaction takes place among participants during humorous sequences, and how through the use of humor they construct their identities. Since I attempt to understand the meaning of humorous activities in the classroom, qualitative inquiry is appropriate: it is used to “study things in naturalistic settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3).

The interpretive paradigm, or “basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba, 1990, p. 17), that I chose for this study is constructivist. Taking a constructivist approach to this study is important because together with the participants, I build the knowledge of the phenomena I investigate. According to social constructivists, the meaning-making activities “shape action (or inaction)” (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 167) and, based on our experiences gained from these activities, we construct our knowledge, test it against our new experiences and against understanding practices of others (Schwandt, 2000).

A constructivist perspective is rooted in the ethnographic approaches (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). While ethnography fosters an array of methods and approaches, this study fits best with microethnography. I will discuss this methodology in the next section.

Microethnography

Microethnography is a method of studying naturally occurring interaction which rests on the “model of a practical speaker-hearer” (Erickson, 1985, p. 294). According to Erickson, face-to-face interaction engages speakers and hearers in an active process of making sense of each other’s performance, moment-by-moment as it occurs in real time. Listeners attend to what speakers are doing at the moment of speaking, while speakers focus on how listeners react to what they say. In other words, microethnography is the study of the interactional competence of “a practical speaker-hearer” or how the speaker-hearer verbal and non-verbal behaviors complement each other during interaction and how speaker-hearer verbal and non-verbal actions affect the outcome of the encounter.

Reciprocity and Complementarity

The key feature of the microethnographic theoretical perspective is that conversationalists take into account each other’s actions during interaction. Erickson and Schultz (1982) maintain that the organization of face-to-face social interaction is two-dimensional. The social action is reciprocal in terms of changing and sequencing in real time when conversationalists react retrospectively to something that was done in the past and prospectively by foreseeing something that will happen in future. The social action is complementary in that participants are taking account of each other’s verbal and non-verbal actions simultaneously and synchronically thus “completing (complementing) the actions of the other” (p. 215).

Contextualization Cues

Erickson's notion of reciprocity and complementarity builds on Gumperz's (1986; 1992) proposition that conversationalists interpret and make meaning of on-going interaction by means of contextualization cues defined as implicit signals, which could be verbal, non-verbal, or prosodic. A partial list of contextualization cues compiled by Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, and Shuart-Faris (2005) includes paralinguistic/prosodic and verbal cues, kinesics, and proxemics. Paralinguistic/prosody cues are pausing, changes in volume, tone, rhythm, pace, and intonation patterns as well as stylizing patterns of intonation and stress, which are an application of intonation and stress patterns not typical for the situation in which they are actually used. An example of stylizing patterns of intonation and stress could be a serious tone of voice while performing a humorous utterance. Verbal cues include change of register and syntactical shifts. Kinesics involve facial expression, eye movement and eye gaze, eye contact and lack of it, shifts in eye contact, facial direction, posture, and parakinesic shifts which involve body movement and changes in body movement styles. Proxemics incorporate postural configurations and distancing.

In Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, and Shuart-Faris's (2005) interpretation, contextualization cues communicate the action that has just occurred and provide the ground for the reaction to this action; therefore, contextualization cues should be noticeable and provide a "material basis" for making sense of what has happened because "in order to react, a person or a group must have something to react to" (p. 9).

A microethnographic framework is suitable for the purposes of this study. Since the meaning of the exchange is constructed based on the immediate interpretation of signals locally by both parties participating in the exchange, the initiation and the reaction to humor should be

emphasized by contextualization cues signaled by the conversationalists. If the participants interpret each other's intentions accordingly, the outcome will match the intentions, e.g., to entertain the audience, even if this entertainment occurs at somebody's expense. Any breach of reciprocity and complementarity could be somehow noticed and negotiated or for some reasons ignored. All of these outcomes carry meaning and help construct the participants' identities, or more specifically, attributes of their identities, at this point of interaction. In other words, conversationalists disclose who they are at this point of time. Overall, microethnography delves into "how, behaviorally, the what of social action gets done" (Erickson, 1982) in real time. It tends to illuminate listener-speaker coordination of social action as well as to identify the relationships between speakers' social identity and their speech (Erickson, 1982, 1992, 1996).

Study Design

When conducting qualitative studies, researchers believe that the reality perceived by people inside and outside the study "will be social, cultural, situational, and contextual – and they want the interactivity of functioning and context as well described as possible" (Stake, 2005, p. 452). Qualitative researchers combine several types of data and several types of methodological approaches to the data collection and analysis (Denzin, 1970; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 2005). The technique of combining several types of data and several methodological approaches is called triangulation, which helps researchers to avoid personal researcher's biases that can stem from using only one methodology (Denzin, 1970) and "to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of observation and interpretation" (Stake, 2005, p. 454). I followed Denzin's (1970) guidelines and combined three types of triangulation: data triangulation, participant triangulation, and methodological triangulation. I describe these types of triangulation in the next section.

Methodological, Data, and Participant Triangulation

The design of this study incorporates methodological, data and participant triangulation. According to Denzin (1970), participant triangulation refers to the data collection from different participants. Methodological triangulation is a combination of several methods/techniques of data collection, or how, by means of what procedures, the data were collected. Data triangulation integrates the data collected from different sources.

Participant Triangulation

Since both instructors and their students were involved in the identity construction, both instructors' and students' interpretations of events were necessary in addition to my own. I also needed the participants' confirmation whether the situations were humorous because laughter is not always a signifier of humor (Coates, 2007); likewise, humor is not always signified by laughter (Drew, 1987; Jefferson, 1979). Also, what seems funny to some conversationalists, may not appear to be funny for others participating in exchange, and what seems funny to me, may not turn out to be funny for the participants. Therefore, I could not rely on my own judgments as to whether the situations I had chosen were humorous or not. Neither could I rely only on the ITAs' or only on their students' judgments.

Background knowledge was another reason for involving both ITAs and their students. Since I planned to videotape four or five classes of each of the participants, I would not have enough background knowledge of what would be happening in class. ITAs and their students, on the other hand, would be able to provide me with the background knowledge that I would miss. Also, I anticipated that humor could be related to the subject matter of their classes with which I was not familiar.

Finally, similar to ITAs, I am a non-native speaker of American English, while most of the students spoke English as their first language. The ITAs, their students, and I had different cultural backgrounds and could treat the same situation differently. Because of our cultural differences, I needed native speakers' perspectives on the humorous situations. Nevertheless, I decided not to ignore the opinions of the non-native speaking students who would participate in humorous exchanges either because humor is not always rooted in general culture; it could be rooted in the local culture of the classroom as well. Because of these reasons, both ITAs and their students were involved in the interpretation of humorous situations during stimulated recall sessions.

Methodological Triangulation

I used three methods of data collection: videotaping, my own observations, and stimulated recall sessions, which were also videotaped. While videotaping provided me with the video data that I could store and revisit at a later time, using only this method of data collection is not sufficient because humorous situations that occur during the videotaped classes have to be interpreted.

To get an emic perspective on the humorous exchanges, I supplemented the video data with the data from the stimulated recall sessions with the ITAs and their students. Stimulated recall facilitates better access to the participants' memory because the video-taped information of the participant's performance is available and this prompt accelerates recollection of the situation (Gass & Mackey, 2000). One of the purposes of this methodology is "to uncover cognitive processes that are not evident through simple observation" (p. 20). A similar methodology, playback viewing sessions, was used in the study of identity by Erickson and Schultz (1982). Although Erickson and Schulz and Gass and Mackey use different terminology, it seems that the

procedure of the data collection is similar. Participants view video recordings which stimulate their memory to reflect on the events in which they participated.

Similar methodology was employed by Erickson and Schultz (1982) for the study of identity to investigate whether counselors and students perceived the same points of the counseling interviews as salient and by Nelms (2001) to get an emic perspective on the functions of sarcasm in the university classroom. Since this study focuses on the relationship of humor and identity, the employment of stimulated recall methodology assisted in bringing evidence of “the social meaning of variation in the communicative performance” (Erickson & Schultz, 1982, p. 52).

Although I knew that I would not be able to participate in students’ activities because I would be operating one of the two video cameras, I still decided to include my own observation as an additional source of data. My observation contributed to the video data, specifically, the general atmosphere of the classroom. Just being there and listening to what students talked about and observing how they cooperatively tried to finish their homework assignments before the class, allowed me to get a better idea of student-teacher relationships in the class. I also noticed some details of the students’ and the instructors’ behavior or heard some comments that may be missed while watching the tape. This information complemented video information that I analyzed later. Although I could not take thorough field notes because I was operating a video camera, I was able to write brief comments and questions that emerged during my observation. Thus, the data were collected by means of videotaping, stimulated recall sessions, and my own observation and allowed me to get emic and etic perspectives on the studied phenomena.

Data Triangulation

The data sources correspond to the methods of data collection. The data from class videotaping include video clips of humorous interaction supplemented with the detailed transcription of these clips. The data from stimulated recall sessions are video clips with the students' and the instructors' comments on and interpretations of the humorous exchanges and their transcripts. My field notes are the data from my observations. The combination of the data from different sources allows for "the widest possible theoretical use of any set of observation" (Denzin, 1970, p. 306).

Participants and Their Recruitment

Four international teaching assistants participated in the study. Two of them were from China, one from India, and one from Cyprus. The ITAs from China majored in Political Science and in Computer Science, the ITA from India studied Political Science, and the ITA from Cyprus studied Business.

I wanted to select participants from the most represented graduate student population based on their country of origin and the field of study both nationwide and also in Georgia State University (GSU) where the study was conducted. According to the *Open Doors 2006: Report on International Educational Exchange* (Chin & Rajika, 2007), during the 2005/2006 academic year, India, China, Korea, Japan, Canada, Taiwan, Mexico, and Turkey were the eight leading places of origin of the graduate international students in the United States of America. These countries were also the leading countries of origin of the international students enrolled in GSU based on the GSU Fall 2005 report for the Open Doors 2006. However, in GSU, not India, but China took the leading place and was followed by India, Korea, Canada, Taiwan, Turkey, Japan, and the United Kingdom.

The fields of study during these academic years that were ranked number one through six in terms of the number of foreign graduate students majoring in these fields were business and management, engineering, other¹, mathematics and computer sciences, social sciences, and physical and life sciences correspondingly. In GSU, the fields of study with the most international graduate students' enrollment were business disciplines followed by computer sciences, social sciences, biology, physical and life sciences, and education. Since the majority of the population of foreign graduate students was enrolled in these disciplines both nationwide and in GSU, I wanted to recruit participants from these fields. The participation in the study, however, was voluntary, and, realistically, it would have been difficult to find participants from the most representative groups based on the country of origin and the field of study, particularly since GSU does not have an engineering major. So, I looked for participants who would fit at least one of the criteria.

Recruitment of the Participants

I planned to recruit six ITAs and developed a strategic recruitment plan. I contacted instructors of the ITA training courses in the Department of Applied Linguistics and ESL and asked them to contact their former students (current ITAs) to inquire whether they were interested in participating in this project. Also, the chair of the department, Dr. Nelson, contacted the department chairs in the college of Arts and Sciences and asked them to forward the information about the project to their graduate teaching assistants. I also contacted the ITAs I knew personally and asked them whether they would be interested in participating. I told potential participants that I was studying how international teaching assistants use language in

¹ These fields include liberal/general studies, communication and journalism, law, multi/interdisciplinary studies, family and consumer sciences/human sciences, library and archival sciences, communication technologies, and residency programs.

the classroom. I did not specify that I was interested in humor because if I did, it might affect the data: they might either use humor intentionally or might not use it at all.

The most effective recruitment method was personal contacts: contacting ITAs whom I did not know via e-mail appeared to be less successful. Although the instructors of the ITA training courses and the department chairs were extremely helpful in providing me with the names and e-mail addresses of the ITAs, I encountered several problems. First, some ITAs did not have teaching assignments during the semester of the data collection. Second, some ITAs who were teaching at that time refused to participate in the project explaining that they were very busy. Third, some ITAs did not respond.

The first ITA who agreed to participate in the study was Rana², a doctoral student from India in the Political Science Department. His country of origin and his major, which was part of the field of Social Sciences, fit both choice criteria (India is the top country for sending students to the U.S.A. and the social sciences are one of the top six majors). I had known Rana for about two semesters as we worked together in the Writing Studio. When I told Rana that I was looking for more participants, Rana said that he knew another ITA who might be willing to participate as well. In a couple of days, I received an e-mail from this ITA. It was a Chinese doctoral student, Wen, from the same department as Rana. Although Rana did not know the criteria for the participants' choice, it appeared that Wen also fit both criteria. When I met with Wen, I told him about the project and he agreed to participate.

The third participant, Ming, knew about my study from his roommate, who was my peer and colleague. When I met with Ming in his office, I told him about the project and he agreed to participate. Ming also fit both criteria because he studied Computer Science and was Chinese.

² The names of the participants are pseudonyms.

I also stopped by the ITAs' offices at the Business Department. Since their offices were in the same building and on the same floor as ours, I often saw the ITAs from the Department of Business in the building. I talked to three ITAs and e-mailed one of them; however, only Alexandros, a doctoral student from Cyprus was enthusiastic about the project and agreed to participate. He met only one criterion, his major field of study, which occupies the leading place for a foreign graduate students' enrollment. The other three ITAs, all females, were reluctant to participate for different reasons. Thus, I had four instead of six participants when the study began.

Before I started videotaping, I met again with all four participants individually, described the project in detail, explained how much time the project required, and we signed the consent forms (Appendix 1) that included both the consent for videotaping their classes and their participation in the stimulated recall sessions, which I called interviews using lay terminology. I asked the ITAs to provide me with their syllabi so that we could determine the dates of video recordings and to choose the dates for the stimulated recall sessions.

I also came to the classes the ITAs taught to talk to the students. I explained that the focus of my study was how teachers and students use language in classroom. While ITAs knew that I was studying the language used by ITAs, I did not provide this information to the students. Since ITAs were from a rather sensitive population and all of them were non-native speakers of American English, students might think that I was focusing on their language problems or something that they did differently than American teachers would do.

During my first meeting with the students, I said that I might invite some of them who participated in classroom interaction for an interview and would contact them via e-mail. I also told them that during the interview, I would show them some segments from the videotapes and

would ask them to explain what was happening on the videotape and what those situations meant to them. All but three students from two different classes gave their permission to be videotaped during the class. They signed the consent forms and wrote their e-mail addresses on the consent forms so that I could contact them. While the consent forms for the ITAs included both activities, class videotaping and the stimulated recall sessions, students had two separate consent forms: one for the class videotaping (Appendix 2) and another one for the stimulated recall (Appendix 3). Since only some of the students participated in stimulated recalls, they signed the consent forms immediately before the session began. If a student participated in more than one stimulated recall session, this student signed a separate consent form before each of the sessions.

On the first day of videotaping, I checked again whether all students were present during my first visit and knew about the project. In each class there were a couple of students who were absent on that day, so I briefly explained one more time what I was going to do. All of these students agreed to participate and only after we signed the consent forms did I turn on the video cameras. In the following section, I will introduce each of the participants and classes that they taught at Georgia State University in the Fall Semester 2006, when the study took place.

Participants

The four ITAs, Ming, Wen, Rana, and Alexandros are all male doctoral students who were employed as ITAs for at least one semester prior the beginning of the study. While all of them had completed their course work, three of them were working on their dissertations and one, Rana, was working on his dissertation proposal. All of them taught undergraduate courses and altogether had 121 students sitting in their classes thus being involved in the study indirectly. The majority of the students was native speakers of American English; however, there were

native speakers of other languages as well. The students' age ranged from 18 to approximately 60 years old. In the next four sections, I introduce each of the main participants.

Ming

Ming, who was 34 years old, first came to the United States in 1998 to pursue his Master's and then Doctoral degree in Computer Science after he earned his Bachelor's in Medicine in China. When I began the study, Ming was writing his dissertation and was working on three publications. He got a job before he defended his dissertation.

Ming, who was a native speaker of Mandarin Chinese, began to learn English when he was in the fourth grade. All his English teachers were Chinese. Ming said that the main focus of English classes in China was grammar and writing with almost no practice in listening and speaking. Although by the time of the study Ming had spent almost eight years in the U.S.A., for him, understanding students' questions was the most challenging part of teaching. He said that when it happened that he did not understand students, he tried to paraphrase students' questions just to check his comprehension.

Ming learned this strategy when he was taking the class for international teaching assistants from the Department of Applied Linguistics and ESL. The main goal of that class, according to Ming, was to prepare ITAs to teach in American culture, to simulate classroom environment, and to cover some problems that ITAs could encounter. The class on Principles of Computer Programming that Ming taught in the Fall 2006 was the third class that Ming taught in this university; however, it was the first time that he taught that particular class. Ming taught a morning class which met twice a week and had 10 students enrolled. Ming, like the other ITAs, was friendly with his students.

Wen

Wen, a native speaker of Mandarin Chinese, came to the United States in 2000 when he started working on his Master's degree. At the time of the study he was a doctoral candidate at the Department of the Political Science. Wen was the youngest of my participants; he was 27 years old when I began the study. He began to learn English in middle school and majored in English in college in China. According to Wen, English education in China was not very good because students studied for paper and pencil tests, so their listening and speaking skills were rather poor. However, when in college, he tried to bridge this gap by communicating with some of his English teachers, native speakers of American English. Although Wen's English was good by the time he came to the United States, it was not as good as he had expected. Wen's listening and speaking skills improved when he began to study in the American university.

Wen's teaching experience began in the spring of 2006 when he taught a class on Global Issues. He also taught the same class during the summer. In the fall, when the data was collected, he taught this class for the third time. Before Wen started teaching, he took a class on educational psychology designed for teaching assistants by the Department of Education. Among other things, students in that class were taught how to design a syllabus, how to design a test (which was very helpful at the beginning of his teaching), how to interact with students, and how to keep students on task.

I felt Wen was rather confident in the classroom with 28 students, both when talking to them and when presenting the content during his lectures. Since he had taught the class before, many of his materials were prepared already. However, he had to update class content frequently to cover current world issues. Wen's class met once a week at night and was two and a half hours long. Most of his students came to class after work and seemed tired by 7 p.m. when the class

began; however, both the teacher and the students maintained a friendly working atmosphere during the class time.

Rana

Rana came to the United States in 2003 from India to pursue his Doctoral degree in Political Science. At the time of my research, he was working on his dissertation proposal. Rana was the oldest participant at the age of 45 at the beginning of the study.

Rana was born and lived in the southern part of India where English was widely spoken. Speaking Telugu as his first language in his family, he received all formal education in English because English was the medium of instruction in schools in that part of India. When in his 20's, he moved to the northern part of India where he used Hindi at work because it was an official language there; he had not spoken English for 17 years before he came to the United States. While he had known English for 39-40 years, he considered English as his third language.

For Rana, it was rather disturbing to start speaking English again. He felt that his “mental processes changed” because “when you live in the area that uses one particular language, you start thinking in that language.” He mentioned several times that one of his problems was that the metaphors of all three languages he spoke were mixed up. He believed that using metaphors, proverbs, and sayings was very important because they “cover meaning more directly”, and if he used them in class it would help students understand difficult concepts better. However, he felt very comfortable speaking English.

In Fall 2006, Rana was teaching a class on Global Issues offered for undergraduate students. It was the second time Rana taught this class and it was his second semester of teaching in general. Before he began teaching, he took a class on Educational Psychology for teaching assistants from the Department of Education. He felt confident in the classroom and he seemed

rather inspiring for students. Rana taught the biggest class of 58 students and although his students were involved in class discussions, he was very concerned if he saw a student sleeping in his class. To pique students' curiosity in the subject, he would bring different fliers announcing various events or lectures that took place on campus that his students could attend to be more familiar with the issues discussed in class.

Alexandros

Alexandros, 29 years old, came to the United States in 1998 to work on his Bachelor's degree in Business after he graduated from secondary school in Cyprus. He finished coursework in three years and after that, he worked for a consulting company for a year. In 2002, he began to pursue his doctoral degree, bypassing a Master's degree. At the time of the study he was finishing his dissertation and already had a job.

Alexandros was fluent in English when he came to the United States. In Cyprus he attended a secondary school where all subjects except Greek and religious studies were taught in English. Alexandros did not feel that he had any language barrier; moreover, he thought that it would be more difficult for him to teach in Greek than in English because he received most of his formal education in English. He shared with me that he applied for a job in Greece but was scared because he knew all terminology in English. That is why he accepted a job in one of the English speaking countries.

The class on Life Contingencies he taught in the Fall of 2006 was the third class he taught in this university; however, he was teaching that particular class for the first time. The class was for students who were preparing to become actuaries. During my first observation of his class, I felt that when he entered the classroom, it filled with energy. Interestingly, when I asked him what he liked about his teaching, the first thing he mentioned was the flow of energy.

In his opinion, this energy comes from his personal experience with the subject. He took the same class from two different professors and he had enough materials to draw from. When in class, I felt the teacher's concern and his desire to help students to pass the professional exam they were preparing for in that class.

Although all the participants were chosen from the population of international teaching assistants, their English language experiences were different. While all of them were striving to be successful teachers, it seems that their perspectives on what it means to be a good teacher varied. Wen's image of a good teacher was associated with being serious and knowledgeable. For Ming teaching was related to accomplishment of certain goals and these accomplishments were the sources of enjoyment of the class for teacher and students. Rana tried to evoke students' interest in the subject, which seemed to be important for him. Alexandros believed that students' attention in class was linked to their understanding of the material and, consequently, to passing the professional exams.

Data Collection Procedures

The data for the study were collected during the Fall semester 2006. The data come from three sources: the videotaped classes that the ITAs taught, videotaped stimulated recall sessions with the ITAs and students, and my field notes taken during and after videotaping and stimulated recall sessions.

Video Equipment

I used two video cameras: one directed at the instructor and another one at the students. This practice allowed me to observe their actions at the same point of time. To videotape students, I used a hard drive video camera, the JVC GZ-MG77 Everio Hard Drive Camcorder, which was advantageous in that it allowed for capturing lengthier (about seven hours) videos

compared to one hour of regular videotape. Using a hard drive video camera was also extremely convenient because it automatically recorded video in MPEG-2 format, which occupies less space on the computer hard drive and also is supported by most software for qualitative data analysis. The camera directed at the instructor was a Panasonic mini DV camcorder. I used this camera to videotape instructors because I could sit close to the camera at the back of the classroom and change the cassettes during video recording.

Videotaping

I began video recording at the end of September and spread the videotaping over the semester to be able to observe whether the participants' use of humor at the beginning of the semester would differ from their use of humor at the end of the semester due to any change in their social distance and thus relationship. The fact that the teachers and students are likely get to know each other better might influence their verbal behavior. I finished video recording by the end of November before the final exams. Three ITAs, Ming, Rana, and Alexandros, taught early afternoon classes of one hour and 15 minutes and one ITA, Wen, taught a two and a half hour evening class.

Each ITA was videotaped four times over the semester; this totaled 25 hours of class video on each of the two video cameras used for class videotaping. Since Wen's class was longer, the data from Wen's class come from 10 hours of class time and the data from Ming's, Rana's, and Alexandros' classes come from 5 hours of class time for each of the instructors. Because the key feature of the microethnographic theoretical perspective is how participants take into account each other's verbal and non-verbal action (Erickson, 1982), both instructors and the students enrolled in the classes were video recorded. Since three students from two classes did

not want to be on the video camera, I asked them to sit in the row on the left which could not be caught by the video camera that was directed at the students.

The camera focused on the class was stationary and mounted on a tripod. It was placed in such a way that I had wide-angle shots of the class. The camera directed at the instructor was also put on a tripod, but I was able to operate the camera from my seat when the instructors moved around the classroom.

I did the video recording by myself. Although I was not able to take thorough field notes while being involved in the recording process, I had a greater control over the video camera. If someone else had assisted during videotaping (e.g., a videographer or an assistant), I would have been able to take field notes and observe the entire event better; however, having another person in the classroom would have been more intrusive. Thus, although asking the participants do video recording was another option (DuFon, 2002), for the purposes of this study it would seemed impossible because it would have distracted them from their lectures.

Erickson (1982) recommends videotaping the entire event including a few minutes before and after the event. I turned on video cameras a couple of minutes before the beginning of the class and turned them off a couple of minutes after the class was over. In the two and a half hour class I ran the videotaping during the class break as well.

Stimulated Recall Sessions

I conducted 43 stimulated recall sessions totaling approximately 26 hours of video. This included 16 stimulated recall sessions with the ITAs, four sessions with each of them. Eighteen students were interviewed from one to three times which totaled 27 sessions.

The simulated recalls were conducted after each videotaped class and were also video recorded. I conducted the stimulated recall procedure with each instructor and with the students

who participated in the humorous and non-humorous exchanges with the instructor. The students participating in the humorous exchanges provided an insider view of the humorous interactions between them and their teachers. The students participating in other exchanges brought an insider view of the classroom interaction in general and an outsider view of the humorous interactions in particular.

I intended to interview both the ITA and the student participating in the humorous exchange because I wanted to have both of their perspectives on the same exchange. However, it was not always possible to get the student participating in the humorous exchange because some of the students could not come because of their schedules. In that case I relied on the interpretation of the ITAs and the students who did not participate in the humorous interaction. Similarly, if the ITA's humorous comments were not directed at somebody present, a student or several students participating in the stimulated recall from videotaped classes served as informants.

I had planned to conduct stimulated recalls with the participants within one week after each videotaped class. However, due to the participants' and my schedules it was not always possible. Because of this, the time between the video recording of the class sessions and the stimulated recall varied. I conducted twenty-three stimulated recall sessions within one week, 10 sessions within two weeks, and six sessions within more than two-week period. Four sessions with students combined video segments from two videotaped classes because these four students could not come after each of the videotaped classes, but their interpretation of certain segments were important. Two of the four sessions combined segments from within one and two weeks of videotaping and two included segments from within two and more than two weeks of

videotaping. The sessions that took place in more than two weeks were delayed twice because of the participants' and my schedules, and the rest of the time because of unforeseen circumstances.

At first, I was worrying whether participants who came in more than two weeks after the class would be able to recollect the events accurately after such a long period of time. However, the delayed time for the stimulated recalls did not appear to be an issue. Interestingly, sometimes the participants who viewed the video recordings within a couple of days could not recollect recent events, while those who viewed the clips after 19 or 30 days promptly responded to the situations. It appeared that certain humorous interactions that meant something to the students were retained in their memory for longer whereas those exchanges that were not salient to them were forgotten at once.

Questions for the Stimulated Recall

The main purposes of the stimulated recall in this study were to confirm that the selected situations were humorous and to elicit the participants' perceptions of the humorous interactions and their explanations of their actions during humorous interactions. Having participants to identify humorous exchanges prevented me from excluding from the analysis instances that I might not have identified as humorous or that I could misinterpret (see Holmes, 2000). The explanation of the conversationalists' actions assisted me in understanding and explaining which attributes of the participant's identities emerged as relevant in certain encounters.

Erickson and Schultz (1982) precaution that while asking questions, researchers should "avoid putting the researchers' words and concepts into informants' mouths and heads" (p. 59). At the same time, they also should avoid general questions because they can "be unintelligible and unanswerable" (p. 59) for the participants. Therefore, they just played a videotape to their participants and asked them to stop the tape at any moment that they wanted to provide their

comments. Fiksdal (1988), however, in her study on verbal and non-verbal strategies of rapport in cross-cultural interviews, chose to stop the video at the moments she identified as uncomfortable and invited her participants' comments by asking more direct questions as "What did you think at this point?" (p. 6).

Erickson and Schultz's (1982) as well as Fiksdal's (1988) data included only counselor-student interaction, so they played the entire videotape to the participants. I did not play the entire videotape, but I chose segments that seemed humorous to me and/or to the participants. The reason for this was that my data incorporated university lectures with long stretches of teacher's talk on the subject matter. Showing the entire tape did not appear to be reasonable because participants may comment on the content of the class, which was not the purpose of the study, and also it would take much time. On the other hand, to include just humorous parts would provide participants with a guess of the purpose of the study, which might affect the quality of the data. If they guessed that I was studying the use of humor, they could either use more humor than they normally do or refrain from using it at all. Therefore, I included numerous segments of the video where teacher-student interaction took place, both humorous and non-humorous, and only those portions of lectures where humorous comments were made. The portions of lectures with the teacher's humorous comments began approximately 15-30 seconds before and ended a few seconds after the humorous comment in order to mask the comments a bit. This reduced the length of the video and eliminated the information not relevant to the purpose of the study while keeping many portions of student-teacher interaction.

I told the participants that they could stop the video at any moment that seemed important or salient to them. I also stopped the video at the points of interest. I asked description questions such as "Can you tell me what is going on here?", clarification questions of what- and why-

types, and also questions directed at the elicitation of the participants' thoughts that they had during the interaction. The description questions helped me to obtain the participants' insider explanation of how they interpreted a particular interaction. The clarification questions such as "What did he/she say?" or "What did you say?" were asked to address referential, or the literal meaning of talk (Erickson & Schultz, 1982) that needed further interpretation by the participants. Finally, the questions "How did you feel at this moment?" and "How do you perceive this interaction?" evoked the participants' reflection on the effects of humorous interaction on the participants (the instruments for the stimulated recalls are included in Appendices 4 and 5).

Interestingly, most of the time, when viewing humorous interactions, participants reacted to them with smiles or even laughter, but they rarely began to talk about them. Therefore, I had to stop the video and ask them why they were laughing or what was funny. In spite of the fact that most of the time the participants did not initiate the comments on humorous interaction, their laughter or smiles suggested that they found these exchanges to be humorous and provided an opening for me to ask about the exchanges directly.

Field Notes

Although I did not participate in the students' activities, just sitting at the back of the class among the students made me feel that I was one of them, not only because I was sitting there, but also because I was listening to the lectures in order to understand what was going on in the classes and to be able to relate humor to the events. Because I operated one of the video cameras, I could not always take field notes during the class. However, if something that would not be obvious on videotape happened, I quickly wrote it down so as not to forget and to alert me to pay attention to that episode when I watched video or to ask the participants questions about it during stimulated recall sessions.

Data Analysis and Coding

When analyzing and coding the data, I took into account theoretical considerations from research on humor and laughter. I applied a four-stage process partially adopted from Erickson (1995). These stages include (1) data segmenting, (2) identifying boundaries of humorous exchanges, (3) data transcription, and (4) data coding. For the data segmenting, transcription, and coding I used Transana (Woods & Fassnacht, 2006), a computer program for qualitative analysis of video data.

Data Segmenting

I began the analysis with viewing the video of the whole event that was one particular class without stopping the videotape to identify the major points of interest. During this stage I segmented the data into units so that I could later categorize them. Geisler (2004) maintains that “if we fail to segment our data into units of analysis before trying to place it into categories, we end up moving through our stream of data without awareness of its structure” (p. 29). During the first viewing, I tried to decide what to take as the unit of the analysis (e.g., a humorous utterance, a humorous utterance and a response to it, etc.) thus identifying “the level at which the phenomena of interest occur” (p. 29).

The data suggested that it was reasonable to take a humorous exchange as a unit of the analysis. I define a humorous exchange as a sequence including a humorous turn as intended by speaker or perceived by hearer(s) and any turns before and after the humorous turn which together constitute a complete humorous situation. While viewing the tape, I marked down the approximate location of the humorous exchanges and the approximate location of the shifts from serious to humorous mode and back from humorous to serious mode of interaction. The data also showed that humorous exchanges should be analyzed at the level of turn-taking organization

because humorous exchanges varied in terms of humor initiation, termination, and the response to the humorous turns. Although these factors are extremely important for the data analysis, I postponed the analysis of the turn-taking organization until a later stage.

While selecting humorous utterances, I did not try to identify exact boundaries of the humorous situations. I just chose segments which started several turns before the humorous exchange began and several turns after it ended so that the participants during viewing these segments could link the situation to the moment of the lesson when it occurred and could more easily recollect when the situation took place and what it was about. The length of the humorous exchanges varied from two or three conversational turns to longer stretches of humorous talk, which included several humorous turns and responses to them. For identifying humor, I relied on a wide range of contextual and linguistic cues including laughter and smiles, markers of irony, and markers of teases.

Laughter and Smiles

The first criterion for humor identification was laughter. Norrick (1993) states that a humorous utterance and appreciative laughter after it “are linked as two parts of an adjacency pair” (p. 23). Coates points out “laughter is the chief culturally recognized way that we acknowledge humor in talk” (Coates, 2007, p. 44). Norrick’s and Coates’ view of a laughter response, similar to that of Holmes (2000) and Holmes and Marra (2002b), is based on what at least some participants perceive as amusing. However, I also included situations containing the speaker’s utterances with a post-utterance completion laugh and within-speech laughter (Jefferson, 1979) which were not followed by the audience’s laughter response because, according to Jefferson, speakers can employ these practices to invite their audience to laugh.

Holmes and Marra (2002a) say that facial expressions including smile are also important cues for humor identification, therefore, I also included units where the response to the utterance was a smile. However, I did not include all instances when the speaker was smiling because the participants could adopt the American cultural norm of smiling when talking to other people. In American culture, smiling periodically when talking in front of a group is a common way “to maintain good feelings with the audience” (Byrd, Constantinides, & Pennington, 1989, p. 58). When I felt that the speaker smiled because he was saying something funny but there was no smile or laughter response from the audience or when I felt the speaker was humorous but at least one of the participants provided a serious response to the humorous utterance, I relied on the other cues such as markers of irony and markers of teasing that signal humor in talk.

Markers of Irony

Kreuz and his colleagues (Kreuz, 1996; Kreuz & Glucksberg, 1989; Kreuz & Roberts, 1995) as well as Attardo, Eisterhold, Hay, and Poggi (2003) propose several heuristics to detect irony in speech. Counterfactuality, for example, is the degree of deviation of the humorous utterance from reality (Kreuz, 1996). According to Kreuz, the greater opposition between what is said and what is meant, the easier it is for the interlocutors to interpret such the utterance as ironic.

The hyperbole cue is an evaluation of the degree of exaggeration between the statement and reality (Kreuz, 1996). Kreuz cautions, however, that hyperbole does not necessarily mean that an exaggerated statement is ironic. Indeed, if an ironist says: “My wife wears pajamas all the time” and this statement is not true, it would be funny in certain contexts. If the discrepancy between literal and implied meaning is not big enough, this utterance will be interpreted as an

indirect complaint or a criticism and will hardly entertain the speaker's wife. This principle is also called nonveridicality (Kreuz & Glucksberg, 1989).

Kreuz (1996) also says that ironists use the tag question cue, e.g., "It's a good thing you remembered the umbrella, isn't it" (p. 27) and the direct cue. The direct cue is an explicit denial of literal interpretation of the utterance, e.g., "You are really something – *not!*" (p. 28, emphasis in the original).

Kinesic cues, summarized in Attardo, Eisterhold, Hay, and Poggi (2003), include eyebrow movements (e.g., raising, lowering), eye movements (e.g., wide opening, squinting, rolling), winking, nodding, smiling, and talking with a blank face. The prosodic cues include ironic tone of voice characterized by "heavy stress, slow speaking, and nasalization" (Kreuz & Roberts, 1995).

Deadpan delivering of irony without any overt markers may prevent the hearer from interpreting an utterance as ironic (Attardo, Eisterhold, Hay, & Poggi, 2003). In this case, the ironist can provide a "metacognitive alert" either verbally or with the help of prosodic or kinesic cues to reveal the ironic intent, e.g., "I am kidding."

Attardo, Eisterhold, Hay, and Poggi (2003) add to this classification the use of pitch as an indicator of irony: (1) strong within statement pitch contrast with a large pitch range in one part of the utterance compared to the other one, (2) compressed pitch pattern almost without any pitch movement, or (3) pronounced pitch accents evenly spread through the utterance.

Markers of Teases

Drew (1987) shows that even teases which are ignored or are followed by "po-faced", or serious, responses can be recognized by their lexical context such as (1) their exaggerated proposition, (2) formulaic character of the proposition, or (3) contrastiveness of the initial

proposition and the proposition of the tease. In addition, both in two- and multi-party conversation, teases can be recognized by their sequential environment: (1) utterances containing teases do not initiate new topic, rather, (2) they appear to be responses to a prior utterance which (3) was uttered by the target of the consequent tease. In Drew's words, "a speaker in conversation may be VULNERABLE to being teased to the extent that materials in a current turn of talk may be exploited by next speaker to construct a tease" (p. 235, emphasis in the original). To provoke a tease, the utterance prior to the tease should demonstrate that the teased person "is overdoing something" (p. 242), e.g., complaining elaborately, praising somebody with exaggeration, or telling something unrealistic. Therefore, the tease is performed to doubt the speaker's proposition and transform "a kind of innocent activity or category membership ... into deviant activity or category" (p. 244). Consequently, by providing serious responses, recipients of the tease attempt to claim that their propositions were truthful and not exaggerated.

Identifying Boundaries of Humorous Exchanges

To identify the beginning and the end of the humorous exchanges and, thus, the beginning and the end of a humorous mode of communication, I viewed video clips twice: first without sound to pay attention to the participants' nonverbal behavior such as posture, gaze, and other body moves, and then with sound to see whether participants' nonverbal behavior corresponded to the beginning and the end of the humorous exchanges. When determining the boundaries between the humorous and serious modes of interaction, kinesics such as the change of the position of the trunk and the lower limbs (e.g., body turns, movement from one point in space to another one) play an important role because, according to Condon (1964, as cited in Kendon, 1972), the change of the position of more slowly changing parts of the body such as the trunk and the lower limbs takes place "at the boundaries of the larger units in the flow of speech"

(p. 183). Although body moves at the boundaries of larger units are not unique to humorous interaction, they assist in identifying the boundaries of the segments of talk since by moving toward and distancing from each other, conversationalists display their commitment to conversational exchange (Gill, Kawamori, Katagiri, & Shimojima, 2000).

Gill, Kawamori, Katagiri, and Shimojima (2000) note that body moves do not seem to incorporate any intentions in themselves; rather, “they embody an intention of communication as such” (p. 96). According to these scholars, interaction occurs in engagement space, or body fields of engagement “based on a certain commitment in being bodily together” (p. 96). The body field of engagement is not a fixed space where interaction takes place; it is established by the participants when they demonstrate willingness to cooperate and show their intention by body moves such as a hand moved into the other’s space or the entire body moved into the other’s space. While body moves toward the other’s space signal cooperation and establishment of conversational contact, the body moves directed from the other’s space indicate distancing and withholding commitment. Gill, Kawamori, Katagiri, and Shimojima argue that in the course of interaction, when conversationalists experience disturbances in their relationships, they express these disturbances by rearranging the shared engagement space. Therefore, the body field of engagement is also socially constructed, maintained, and negotiated, and body moves expressing engagement may highlight the boundaries of a certain situation constructed by the participants.

Data Transcription

I transcribed all data myself, as recommended by Have (1999), because while transcribing, a researcher notices details that an ordinary listener may not attend to (Heath & Luff, 1993). The process of transcription is not just translating the audio and video data into text

accessible to the readers, it is “an important analytical tool, providing the researcher with an understanding of, and insight into, the participants’ conduct” (Heath & Luff, 1993, p. 309).

I had to consider several things before generating a transcription system used in this study. As Ochs (1979) points out, the transcriber should be selective as to what should be included in the transcript and should include the features of particular interest. Jefferson (1985) also argues that while making transcriptions, “the issue is not the transcription per se, but what it is we might want to transcribe, that is, attend to” (p. 25). Thus, transcripts “are selective, ‘theory-laden’ renderings of certain aspects of what the tape has preserved of the original interaction, produced with a particular purpose in mind, by this particular transcriptionist, with his or her special abilities and limitations” (Have, 1999, p. 77). Since I am interested in how identities are constructed in classroom interaction during humorous interaction, in addition to the transcription of speech, I included laughter and non-verbal actions of the participants such as their gaze movements, smile, and body moves. Several major issues that I had to take into consideration were orthography, representation of laughter, and the transcript layout.

Orthography

One of the issues raised in the literature on transcription is the issue of the use of standard orthography or the combination of standard orthography with a modified English spelling rather than phonetic symbols (Have, 1999; Heritage & Atkinson, 1984; Ochs, 1979; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). An argument against using standard orthography not taking into account phonological features is that sometimes phonological information is important (Ochs, 1979). Using standard orthography with a modified English spelling, as used by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), instead of using international phonetic alphabet (IPA) symbols, has also been criticized because this type of transcription “resembles a sort of funnypaper-English and could

have derogatory connotations” (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974, p. 734). However, as Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson explain, using standard orthography with some modification and some additional symbols is advantageous in that this type of transcription allows for getting the maximum possible sound into the transcript while making transcripts accessible for the readers not familiar with more technical symbols.

Have (1999) offers three solutions to the issue of using standard orthography: (1) to use standard orthography not emphasizing language variation and informal talk even if these are relevant to the local context, (2) to use standard orthography most of the time and include modifications to emphasize some “significant ‘deviations’” (p. 82), and (3) to use standard orthography with modifications consistently. I opted for the second solution of the problem. Although, as noted by Have, the main problem in applying modifications selectively is that it is hard to decide when to use modifications and that the selective use of modifications creates differences in the transcript that are difficult to relate to the variations in talk, I decided to use modifications only when these “significant deviations” influence the outcome of the talk as illuminated by the subsequent actions of the speakers and the hearers.

Laughter

I transcribed laughter by adapting Jefferson’s (1984) transcription conventions. In my transcription, I tried to translate the participants’ laughter close to what I heard on the tape using English orthographic conventions (e.g., *ha-hah*, *he-heh*).

Scholars studying humor often name the laughter in their transcripts, just putting it in parentheses, e.g., (laughs), [laughter] (see Eisterhold, Attardo, & Boxer, 2005; Gibbs, 2000; Hay, 2001; Holmes & Marra, 2002b; Norrick, 1993). According to Jefferson (1979), such an approach to reporting laughter is appropriate for certain purposes; however, it “can also obscure interesting

features of interaction” (p. 28). Jefferson views laughter “as a systematic activity that warrants and rewards more than a naming of its occurrence, but close attention to just how and where it occurs” (p. 34). As studies on laughter show (see Glenn, 1989, 1995, 2003; Jefferson, 1979, 1984, 1985; Jefferson, Sacks, & Schegloff, 1987), conversationalists do not place laughter at any random points of interaction; rather they use it systematically at the laughter relevant points. The placement of laughter may serve as an invitation for addressees to laugh as appreciation of somebody’s humor, as affiliation or disaffiliation with a group or one person, or as a way to ignore the humorist. Thus, where and when laughter occurs may indicate at what point of interaction participants realigned themselves and how their social identities changed during humorous talk.

Layout

The issue of accessibility of transcripts to the readers has been discussed in the literature (see Duranti, 1997; Heritage & Atkinson, 1984; Ochs, 1979; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). Duranti (1997) stresses that “*the process of transcribing implies a process of socialization of our readers to particular transcribing needs and conventions*” (p. 142, emphasis in the original). Since for this study both gestures (especially body moves) and gaze are important factors in identity construction, I needed to include these types of behavior in the transcripts. I adopted Goodwin’s (1981) conventions designed for integrating gaze movements (with some modifications) which assist in capturing the relationship between speech and the gaze of the participants. I also included body moves into the transcript selectively as they were relevant to the phenomena investigated.

Depending on the phenomena I discuss, I use both traditional (top to bottom) layout and stave notations (Coates, 2007), which means that all contributions of the participants are to be

read simultaneously. Stave notations were used for the study of humor by Coates (2007) and Davies (2003). This system helps the readers to see how utterances of the different participants relate to each other as occurring at the same time. Including gaze and body moves in such transcripts where it is relevant allows us to observe how speech, gaze and body moves of the conversationalists function together to construct and reconstruct their social identities.

Transcription conventions are included in Appendix 6.

Data Coding

To reach higher precision of data analysis, I generated coding schemes. The coding scheme helps readers to understand how the data were assigned to certain categories (Geisler, 2004). I coded humorous exchanges based on several criteria such as humor initiation, humor termination, targets, and functions of humor. When choosing these codes, I relied on the previous research on humor that found that not all the participants, especially in institutional settings, have equal rights and opportunities to initiate and terminate humor, to be laughed at, or to respond to humor with humor (Boland & Hoffman, 1983; Duncan & Feisal, 1989; Gibbs, 2000; Grainger, 2004; Holmes & Marra, 2002a, 2002b; Holmes, Marra, & Burns, 2001; Kozlova, 2005; Nelms, 2001).

Humor initiation codes include teacher-initiated humor and student-initiated humor. These categories are based on who initiated the shift from serious to humorous mode of communication. Humor termination codes are also of two types, teacher-terminated and student-terminated. Similar to humor initiation categories, they also involve the initiation of the shift, but from humorous back to serious mode of communication. I also coded humorous initiations according to the target of the humor which included student(s) present, ITA, other not present, self, and simply humor without a target.

Codes for humor were based on Boxer and Cortés -Conde's (1997) classification of humor as humorous speech genres including *teasing*, *joking about absent other*, *self-denigrating humor*. I also added categories *narrative jokes and cartoons*, *humor with no targets*, and *other* which were not included into the classification offered by Boxer and Cortés-Conde. Although Boxer and Cortés-Conde do not include *narrative jokes* in their classification, as I stated earlier (see pp. 21, 22), I treat joking as one of the genres of conversational humor. Since *cartoons*, *humor with no targets* and humor coded as *other* were found in my data, I included these categories as well. I combined narrative jokes with cartoons because cartoons are similar to narrative jokes in their structure (e.g., both are prepared in advanced, have a narrative element, and a punchline), but differ in a presentation mode, verbal vs. visual.

The coding for the response or non-response to humor included several categories: non-response, laughter/smile, serious response, and humorous response. The humorous responses are of two types, supportive and challenging. Supportive responses are responses elaborated on the initial humorous utterance, thus intensifying the initial effect of humor. Challenging responses involve humorous utterances that challenge the speaker in some way.

I also coded humorous utterances based on their purposes in the classroom. The purposes of teacher-initiated humorous utterances were coded as evaluation of students' responses, questions, or behavior; managing classroom; explaining of class material; and easing awkward situations. Some functions of students' humor included challenging instructor comments, holding the floor, and easing awkward situations. Extended sequences, which included sequence initiated by both teachers and students that grew into lengthier exchanges, were coded as negotiation of class issues, negotiation of political views, and explaining class material. After initial coding of

the exchanges based on their purposes, I crosschecked my coding with the participants' categorization of the exchanges during stimulated recall sessions.

I assigned several codes to each humorous exchange. One exchange, for example, could be teacher-initiated, teacher-terminated, student as a target, teasing, humorous response, challenging, negotiation of political views; or, student-initiated, teacher-terminated, teacher as a target, teasing, serious response, challenging, challenging instructor comments. To see how all these characteristics of humorous exchanges (codes) contribute to identity construction, or how they are sensitive to each other, I grouped all the exchanges based on the purpose of the humorous utterances. This grouping demonstrated that the purpose of a humorous utterance is an influential factor in identity negotiation and display. Thus, the exchanges that were assigned to the same group based on the purpose of humorous utterance usually shared several codes: purpose, humor-initiation, humor-termination, type of humor, and the target. The analysis showed that the humorous utterances assigned to the same group shared the same social function of humor. For example, humorous exchanges initiated and terminated by the teacher to evaluate students' responses were all teases targeted at a student(s) present. The social function of all the humorous exchanges included in this group was *affiliating while exerting authority*. All humorous exchanges fall into eight categories of how authority was used that will be discussed in detail in chapter four.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter examines in detail how the identities of ITAs emerge and are negotiated in humorous exchanges with their students in the university classroom. I organize this chapter in four parts. First, I briefly review the theoretical underpinnings of the study and the research questions. I also provide a general description of the data and explain how the data were categorized. Then, I describe and discuss the results of the study in depth. I conclude this chapter by summarizing the ITAs' beliefs about the role of humor in teaching and comparing them to their students' ideas about the role of humor in learning and to what the ITAs do with humor in their classrooms.

Social Identity and Humor

As has been discussed in Chapter I, ITAs have at least two institutional identities, one as a teacher and another one as a student. In addition to their institutional identities, they have other identities too, e.g., a parent, son, and soccer player. All ITAs also have an identity of a non-native speaker of American English. Although the ITAs have multiple identities, not all of the attributes of their identities become relevant during interaction (Erickson & Schultz, 1982). As Erickson and Schultz argue, during interaction, conversationalists co-construct their performed social identities, which change from moment to moment as interaction develops. Performed social identity is composed of both universalistic and particularistic attributes that emerge during interaction. Universalistic attributes can be attained by anyone who has a goal, motivation, aptitude, and opportunities for achievements and these attributes constitute an individual's institutional identity, e.g., identity of a teacher or identity of a student. Particularistic attributes,

on the other hand, are common to only some people. They go beyond institutional identity and include individuals' belonging to different social and ethnic groups, e.g., Greek, a father.

At different moments of interaction some attributes of one's identity emerge and some attributes fade away, which means that in different situations, different sets of attributes become relevant. Although Erickson and Schultz (1982) claim that predominantly universalistic attributes of one's identity are more likely to be relevant to a specific institutional encounter (e.g., when teaching, ITAs are likely to reveal universalistic attributes of their identity), in practice one's particularistic attributes emerge as well. Since American classrooms foster an array of behavior patterns (Shaw & Bailey, 1990) that require constant renegotiation of the teacher and student roles, the role alteration may lead to an authority problem for ITAs (Pialorsi, 1984; Shaw & Bailey, 1990; Unger-Gallagher, 1991). For example, to encourage students' participation in class discussion, ITAs may engage in rapport building activities by revealing personal information and exchanging jokes with their students (Unger-Gallagher, 1991) and through these activities they may reveal attributes of their student identity. When exchanging jokes, students may further explore their relationship with ITAs, even challenging their teacher status. If this happens, ITAs may prefer to renegotiate their relationship with the students by applying linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the social functions of humor in American culture.

This study investigates the questions of what attributes of ITAs' identities emerge during humorous exchanges with their students, how these attributes shape the teacher-student relationship in the classroom, and what role humor plays in the identity negotiation process between the ITAs and their students.

General Description of the Data

The analysis of humorous exchanges from four university classes taught by Wen, Ming, Rana, and Alexandros reveals that most of the time these ITAs make their teacher identity relevant. Although the attributes of other identities emerge as well (e.g., political identity or NNS identity), the attributes of other identities appear and are combined with the attributes of the teacher identity. I include a discussion of how ITAs' political identity emerges during humorous exchanges with their students in the section *Competing for Authority*, but I devote a separate section to how identity of a NNS becomes relevant in humorous exchanges. Since the identity of a NNS openly emerged only once, in the section Non-native Identity: Foreigner or a Non-native Speaker I also show how ITAs conceal their NNS identity.

The ITAs' teacher identity emerges when ITAs give lectures; explain class material; evaluate, or provide negative or positive feedback to their students; manage the classroom, negotiate classroom issues; negotiate political affiliations; and deal with the students' challenging questions. Through these activities, ITAs exert, maintain, recover, share, assert their authority and even pass authority to students. The ITA teacher authority emerges as a central attribute of their teacher status. The identity work is spiced with humor through which ITAs and their students build rapport and affiliate with each other while constructing their institutional roles of teachers and students.

Although humor assists the instructors and students in building rapport while being involved in identity construction, sometimes affiliation is achieved through rather aggressive and competitive humor because it is used to perform the face threatening activities of evaluating the students, managing the students' attention and behavior, or negotiating classroom issues. While teacher authority is often tested and challenged by the students and sometimes compromised by

the instructors themselves, the participants' engagement in humorous negotiation of who will take the lead in the graceful dance on the slippery classroom floor allows for overcoming possible tension between the teachers and students. Like in dancing, where successful performance depends on the lead of one partner and acquiescence of the other, in the classroom, the smooth interaction between the instructors and students seems to rest on the instructors' authoritative guidance balanced with affiliation with their students. While teacher authority supported by the participants' affiliation seems to prevent instructors and students from conflicts, teacher authority not backed up by the participants' affiliation may evoke students' resistance and even lead to confrontation between the teachers and students.

Categorizing Humorous Exchanges

A total of 115 exchanges that the participants characterized as humorous during stimulated recall sessions (see section Data Coding, Chapter III) fall into eight categories of how authority is used: exerting authority, maintaining authority, recovering authority, re-asserting authority, passing authority to students, having authority enhanced, sharing authority, and competing for authority. These categories are grouped as teacher-initiated humorous exchanges, student-initiated humorous exchanges, and a mixed group where both instructors and students collaborate in lengthier humorous exchanges. The eight categories share one component, using humor to create affiliation, but differ in the way in which the instructors practice teacher authority. The coexistence of the authority and affiliation is demonstrated in Table 1, which shows how the exchanges were categorized based on these two factors and in relation to the functions of the humorous utterance, humor initiation, responses to humor, humorous genre, and target of the humor.

Table 1

Teacher authority and affiliation in relation to the humor initiation, function of humorous utterance, purpose of humorous utterance, responses to humor, humorous genres, and the target of the humor

Humor Initiation	Functions: Affiliating While...	Purpose of Humorous Utterance	Responses to Humor	Humorous Genres	Target	Wen	Ming	Rana	Alex	Total
Teacher Initiated	Exerting authority	To evaluate students	L ³ /Ser	Teasing	S/Ss	5				29
		To manage classroom	L/Ch	Teasing	S					12
	Maintaining authority	To explain, to make a point, to entertain	L	Narrative jokes and cartoons	3rd party	3		2		5
			L	Joking with no targets	None	6		3	9	18
			L	Humorous self-repair	Self	1		1		2
	Recovering authority	To ease awkward situation, to entertain	L/Sup	Situational non-verbal (incidental)	T-self				2	2
			L	Self-denigrating humor	T-self	2			3	5

³ L – laughter, Sup – supportive response, Ch – challenging response, Ser – serious response, S – student, Ss – students, T – teacher

Table 1 (*continued*)

Teacher authority and affiliation in relation to the humor initiation, function of humorous utterance, purpose of humorous utterance, responses to humor, humorous genres, and the target of the humor

Humor Initiation	Functions: Affiliating While...	Purpose of Humorous Utterance	Responses to Humor	Humorous Genres	Target	Wen	Ming	Rana	Alex	Total
Student Initiated	Having authority enhanced	To ease awkward situation	L/Ser	Self-denigrating humor	S-self	2		1		3
	Re-asserting authority	To challenge the instructor	Ch	Teasing	T	6	2	3	4	14
	Passing authority to students	To hold the floor	L/Ser	Narrative jokes, joking with no targets	3rd party, no target			2		2
Extended sequences	Sharing authority	To negotiate class issues	Ch	Teasing	T/S	10	1	1		12
		To explain, to make a point)	Sup	Joking about absent other, self-denigrating humor	3rd party, Ss-selves	1	2			3
	Competing for authority	To negotiate political views	Ch	Teasing	T/S	6		1		7
Total						40 ⁴	8	24	43	115

⁴ The exchanges from Wen's class were come from 10 hours of class time rather than from five hours like for the other ITAs.

Teacher-initiated Humorous Exchanges

Seventy-three teacher-initiated humorous exchanges which fall into three categories constitute this group. The three categories are *affiliating while exerting authority*, *affiliating while maintaining authority*, and *affiliating while recovering authority*. These categories are listed and will be discussed in this order based on how teacher authority was practiced and towards what parties. Exerting authority occurs while instructors provide evaluation, or critical feedback, of students and while they manage the classroom. A greater degree of imposition on students is required for this type of activity. When giving lectures and explaining class material, instructors maintain teacher authority. Recovering teacher authority is needed when teacher status has been damaged somehow, e.g., by making an error. Since teacher status may be compromised when instructors make errors, they need to do some repair on their status and recover their authority. A detailed analysis of how teacher authority interplays with rapport building and affiliation is explained in the next several sections.

Affiliating While Exerting Authority

In twenty-nine exchanges instructors respond to students' utterances and non-verbal behavior in a manner that may be defined as evaluations of students' questions, responses, and behavior with a humorous intent. In twelve humorous sequences instructors checked whether students were paying attention or followed their instructions.

Affiliating While Exerting Authority as Evaluators of Students

Instructors evaluate students both positively and negatively. These humorous evaluations aim at the student(s) present in the classroom and like any speech act, as Brown and Levinson (1987) propose, are threatening to the students' face. While positive feedback of students' responses, like compliments, are threatening to the students' negative face because they invade

students autonomy, negative evaluations, in addition to being threatening to the students' negative face, are damaging to the students' positive face because they implicate criticism.

In spite of the fact that students often respond to the instructors' questions or ask the instructors questions, not all their responses and questions are evaluated humorously. The data show that only those responses and questions that are either wrong or strange, or responses that are very good and important for students to pay attention to get humorous evaluations. When students demonstrate inappropriate behavior, instructors also use humor to evaluate it. Although evaluating students is one of the instructors' responsibilities, it involves exercising their authority and if they overexert it, they may be perceived by students as over authoritative, or, in case of negative evaluations, even mean. Therefore, by means of humor, the instructors seem to minimize the possible negative effects of evaluations on the students.

Evaluation of students' responses. To evaluate the students' responses, the instructors use teasing. Examples of the purposes of teasing include making students provide a response if they did not do so, disagreeing with a student's opinion, or praising students for an excellent response. Humor in evaluations appears to create affiliation and soften the effect of imposition and criticism on the students and to prevent the instructors from being over authoritative. Creating affiliation while evaluating students seems to go along with Eisenberg's (1986) claim that while teasing creates a social bond and affiliation, at the same time, it functions as a device for social control when it is delivered in the form of a threat or bears an underlying criticism in it.

Since negative evaluations are face threatening to both students and instructors, by switching to humorous mode, instructors create a play frame to minimize the face threat. The play frame suggests that messages within this frame are not serious (Bateson, 1972). Although

instructors mitigate their negative evaluation by entering the play frame, they still exercise their authority while evaluating.

The first two examples show how Alexandros and Rana evaluate their students who do not provide responses to their questions. While Alexandros (ex. 1) uses his authority to evaluate his students who do not have questions, his humor mitigates his criticism and allows him to affiliate with his students. Since Alexandros asks the entire class whether students have questions (line 1), students have an opportunity to self-select as next speakers; however, the students do not initiate a response (line 2). Alexandros seems to treat their non-response as an indication of some kind of a problem and penalizes the students for not asking him questions by teasing them (lines 3, 4).

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-------------|---|
| (1) | 1 | Alexandros: | Question. |
| | 2 | | (5) |
| | 3 | Alexandros: | ☺we are doing good today. (1) we are either getting |
| | 4 | | everything or we are getting nothing |
| | 5 | | [☺] |
| | 6 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah] |
| | 7 | Alexandros: | (2) its one of those two (4) ok |
| | 8 | | let me see, just raise your hands, who feels |

Alexandros' affiliative smile at the beginning and at the end of his utterance (line 3) indicates that he is joking. His smile upon the completion of his humorous turn overlaps with the students' laughter showing their appreciation of what Alexandros said.

Similarly, Rana (ex. 2) uses humor to negatively evaluate students who do not provide the answer to his question, but at the same time, with humor, he mitigates his negative evaluation and creates affiliation with his students. Rana asks students what the Kyoto protocol is about, but the students do not respond to Rana's question (line 3). Rana treats the students' non-response as not knowing the answer to his question and humorously threatens the students that he will include this question on the next quiz.

- (2) 1 Rana: now, what is the Kyoto protocol all about? what is it
 2 saying?
 3 (5)
 4 Before we come to that, where is Kyoto?
 5 Should be on the next map quiz then☺
 6 Ss: [Japan]
 7 [Tokyo]
 8 Ss: [hah]
 9 Rana: Jap-hah-n, yes, so

Like Alexandros (ex. 1), Rana's smile at the end of the tease signals that his threat to include his question on the quiz is not serious and some students appear to align with him by laughing (line 8). Rana's further alignment with the students is demonstrated by the within-speech laughter in line 9.

Exchanges 1 and 2 share a common feature, a long pause after the instructor's question (ex.1, line 2; ex.2, line 3) followed directly by the tease (ex. 1), or by further question and the tease (ex. 2). Teases are usually initiated in response to an activity that the teaser perceives as unusual or strange (Drew, 1987). The strange activity in these examples that evoked the instructors' teases is the students' non-responses to the instructors' questions indicated by pauses. Thus, Alexandros (ex. 1) teases students for non-response by exaggerating the situation "we are doing good today, we are either getting everything or nothing" (lines 3,4); Rana (ex. 2) teases students for not answering his question by threatening them with the quiz, "should be on the next map quiz" (line 5).

Although, according to Drew (1987), teases are constructed to be recognizable, Alexandros indicates his humor by prefacing the tease with a smile (ex. 1, line 3) and Rana designates the tease by smiling after the tease (ex. 2, line 5). Students recognize the tease with their laughter (ex. 1, line 6) or with a short laugh (ex. 2, line 8) and serious responses (lines 6, 7), which occur simultaneously with laughter. Since teases create and strengthen a *laughing at*

environment (Glenn, 1989), students, who are the targets of the tease, initiate the first laugh and by doing so, they convert a *laughing at* into a *laughing with* situation (Glenn, 1995). Students laugh together as victims and show “their shared orientation toward the laughable” (Glenn, 1989, p. 142). Their laughter also indicates their appreciation of the instructor’s humor. Using teasing to perform a face-threatening act, evaluation, can allow participants to re-align and build rapport between the instructor and the students.

In example 2, however, students, while affiliating, also provide a serious response to the tease, a sign of disaffiliation (Glenn, 1995). According to Drew (1987), because teases transform the normal identity or the activity of the target of the tease into an unusual identity or activity, with serious responses students correct the tease and transform their unusual identity back to normal. Thus, Rana’s tease about a map quiz transforms students who do not know what the Kyoto protocol is into students who do not even know where Kyoto is. So, the students’ serious response transforms their unusual identity to the identity of students who know the correct answer. However, some students’ laughter shows how they affiliate.

While in examples 1 and 2 students were teased for not responding to the instructors’ questions, in example 3, Wen teases his student, Roger⁵, for providing a politically incorrect response. In his evaluation, he actually criticizes Roger’s point of view, but by entering a play frame softens his evaluation of Roger’s response. Roger believes that because the American companies located abroad pay their workers extremely low salaries, the prices on goods are very cheap in the U.S., which is beneficial for his family. The instructor teases Roger that in order to live a good life, Roger would allow American companies to treat people working for them unfairly.

⁵ I use pseudonyms instead of the students’ real names. When it was not possible to identify which student was talking, instead of names, I use Student 1, Student 2, etc.

- (3) 1 Roger: And that's just that's the reality=
 2 Wen: =ok ok, in other words you would rather let those
 3 people work ☺for fifty dollars per months=
 4 Ss: heh [heh heh heh ((talking together))
 5 Wen: [a-heh-[nd xxxxx]
 6 Roger: [is just a reality]
 7 Nick: [get out of here]
 8 Roger: [everybody is just in a certain way]
 9 Ss: [hah hah hah hah]
 10 Wen: [hah hah hah hah]
 11 Roger: xx in another country
 12 Wen: ☺ ok, Katherine

Wen's tease transforms Roger's identity of a goods consumer into the identity of a policy-maker and Roger corrects Wen's tease by saying "it's just a reality" (line 6) and "everybody is just a certain way" (line 8) thus trying to transform his unusual identity of a policy maker to his normal identity of a goods consumer. As John, a student from Wen's class, said during a stimulated recall session, Roger was making "a terrible point", which "is so ridiculous that it just requires laughter". One of the students, Nick, disagrees with Roger's comment and says, "get out of here" (line 7). Roger, by responding seriously, disaffiliates with the instructor and the students who laugh at him.

While Wen does not agree with Roger either, he does not state it directly, but opts for a humorous response. According to another student who participated in stimulated recall, Teresa, Wen responds with humor because "people cannot be that direct". She added that when using humor, Wen was able to provide his opinion "without vocalizing it". While shifting to humorous mode, Wen still provides evaluation of the students' response, but indirectly, which softens his negative feedback. Students laugh at Wen's comment and their laughter is characterized as *laughing at*, because someone other than the teaser initiates laughter. Wen's within-turn smile (line 3) and within-turn laughter (line 4) align Wen with the students who are laughing at Roger. Although Roger does not seem to affiliate with other students, most of the students and the

instructor affiliate by showing their disagreement with Roger's point of view (lines 9 and 10).

Thus, the students' affiliation with Wen demonstrate that his negative evaluation of Roger is supported by other students and underscores that he is not the only one to disagree with him.

While evaluation of students is part of the instructor's job, the instructors who evaluate students negatively may seem mean to students. Although evaluations occur within a play frame, it remains a face threatening activity for the instructor and the students. Instructors appear to minimize the face threat not only by performing the evaluation within a play frame, but also by bodily distancing themselves from their face threatening activity.

According to Gill, Kawamori, Katagori, and Shimojima (2000), body moves "embody an intention of communication as such" (p. 96) in that they demonstrate the participants' dedication to interaction. However, the field of engagement, or physical space in which participants demonstrate their commitment to talk by closer approaching each other, can be changed "depending on the participants being comfortable or uncomfortable with each other" (p. 97). If there is any change in their relationship, participants may reconfigure their field of engagement, thus "creating a new engagement situation by reshaping the field of engagement" (p. 97). The analysis of the classroom videotapes reveals that often the instructor's shift to humorous mode and his transition to another activity are marked with his entering the engagement space by moving forward toward the class (ex. 2a, line 4a) ⁶. However, as observed in example 2a, when there is disturbance in the participants' relationship, they re-arrange their body field of

⁶ The examples numbered with a letter, e.g., 2a, 3b, correspond to the examples 2, 3. Some examples numbered with a letter begin not from the first line, but from the line the closest to the phenomenon I describe. In the examples where body moves are added, I use stave notations. The participants' speech is located in the middle and the lines above and below the speech show the participants' body moves accompanying the speech. MF denotes movement forward, whereas MB stands for movement backward. S indicates a stop and T indicates a turn. X stands for gaze and Tch next to it stands for teacher; XTch means "gaze on teacher".

engagement. After entering the engagement field (line 4a), Rana moves backwards right after the tease, thus distancing himself from it (line 5a).

(2a)	4a	Rana:	MF_____ S/T_____
	4b		Before we come to that, where is Kyoto?
	4c	Ss:	XTch_____
	5a	Rana:	_____ MB
	5b		Should be on the next map quiz then☺
	5c	Ss:	_____

The end of Rana's humorous threat that he will include Kyoto in the next quiz coincides with his moving backwards. Since there is no transition to the next segment of talk (the transition to the next segment occurs later, in line 9, see ex. 2), it seems that Rana is not leaving the engagement space at this point, he is just distancing from what he has said.

Unlike exchanges 1-3 where Alexandros, Rana, and Wen tease students for doing something wrong (not answering their questions or providing a politically incorrect opinion), in the next two exchanges, the instructor teases students for doing something right; in other words, he teases students to praise them. In example 4, he compares a student's memorization of a formula with a memorization of a poem, which makes everybody laugh.

(4)	1	Alexandros:	what is v to the t ,
	2	Nancy:	xxxxx
	3	Alexandros:	this come for (.) inte[rest] (.) right=
	4	Nancy:	[interest] =this xx
	5		mortality just t p x and xxx times=
	6	Alexandros:	=very nice you learned the ☺poem=
	7	Nancy:	=[hah hah hah hah]
	8	Ss:	[~ ~ ~]
	9	Alexandros:	[good very good] so this is my this my

While humor mitigates criticism and minimizes the face threat of the instructors' negative evaluations of students' responses, humor also appears to minimize the effect of positive evaluation of students. While negative evaluation threatens students' positive face, positive

evaluation, like compliments, threatens students' negative face because, as Brown and Levinson (1987) point out, when complimenting, the speaker imposes her or his opinion on the hearer. Thus, there is a conflict involved in paying compliments: on the one hand, compliments enhance the hearer's positive image; on the other hand, they invade the hearer's autonomy. This conflict is reflected in the compliment responses in casual conversation in that they "often exhibit features of agreement and disagreement" (Pomerantz, 1978, p. 93). In casual conversation, the recipients of compliments often accept the compliments and simultaneously downgrade them. Since in the classroom students do not usually respond to the instructors' positive evaluations, Alexandros seems to downgrade his praise of a student himself by making a joke. Thus, Nancy, the recipient of Alexandros' compliment, does not downgrade Alexandros' compliment, but laughs at Alexandros' joke targeted at Nancy. Alexandros' smile (line 6) and Nancy's and other students' laughter (lines 7 and 8) seem to be signs of their affiliation and positive attitude towards Alexandros' humor.

Similarly, Alexandros again praises his students for knowing a complicated formula (ex. 5), "ok, thanks, good" (line 6), which even he, the instructor, cannot memorize (line 8). At the same time, his skeptical note "since you tell me that this is a correct formula" (lines 12, 13) downgrades his praise of the student and his own expertise and evokes students' affiliative laughter.

- | | | | |
|-----|----|-------------|---|
| (5) | 1 | Alexandros: | what is the formula for a angle k ? |
| | 2 | S: | one minus νk over i |
| | 3 | Ss: | one minus νk over i |
| | 4 | Alexandros: | one minus= |
| | 5 | Ss: | νk over i |
| | 6 | Alexandros: | ok, thanks, good |
| | 7 | S1: | hah hah hah |
| | 8 | Alexandros: | I never remember the formula, I would have to |
| | 9 | | write the whole thing [ok] |
| | 10 | S2: | [oh no] |

- 11 S1: hah hah hah hah
 12 Alexandros: so, since you tell me that this is a correct
 13 formula=
 14 Ss: =hah hah hah hah hah hah [hah hah hah]
 15 Alexandros: [Ooops!] right

Like in example 4, Alexandros' positive evaluation of students' response resembles a compliment, which threatens students' negative face. At the same time, his comment that he does not remember the complicated formula (lines 8 and 9) threatens his positive face. Thus, Alexandros' humor softens his imposition on students' negative face, mitigates his positive face threat, downgrades his praise of a student, and simultaneously entertains them.

As shown in examples 1-5, humor in the instructors' evaluation of students' responses allows for affiliation and rapport building while exerting authority by evaluating students. While the instructors perform their task of evaluating students, they use humor to attend to the students' positive and negative face wants and simultaneously present themselves as funny.

In the next two examples Alexandros also positively evaluates students' correct responses, but in addition, he elaborates on his evaluation to attract students' attention. While humor mitigates his imposition on the negative face of the student who is evaluated, humor satisfies the other students' positive face because Alexandros includes them in the activity. As Alexandros reported when viewing the video, for him, students' laughter indicates that they are paying attention. Alexandros, when doing a problem on the board (ex. 6), asks what happens to the company's money that is left after the company made all the payments. Alexandros' student Alex humorously responds that the company uses the money to throw a party.

- (6) 1 Alexandros: The insurance company only made a payment of
 2 two payments of 500. what happens to the rest?
 3 Alex: [>the insurance company houses a ☺party hah<]
 4 Ss: [((some talking))]
 5 Alexandros: exactly the actuary gets a raise
 6 Alex: hah [hah hah hah hah hah hah]

- 7 S2: [hah hah [hah hah hah]
 8 Ss: [hah hah hah]
 9 Alexandros: [That what happens] What happens if this guy
 10 S3: [o:h ye:s]
 11 Alexandros: [(.) dies at one oh five?]
 12 Ss: [((talking))]
 13 Alex: we all get fired hah [hah hah hah]
 14 Ss: [hah hah hah ha]
 15 Alexandros: [what happens if that guy

Although Alex initiates a laughter invitation (line 3), neither students nor Alexandros join the laughter. Students may not have heard what Alex said because Alex talked in a quiet voice (line 3) and his response overlapped with other students' talk (line 4). Alexandros, however, did hear Alex's response, but in spite of Alex's laughter invitation, he does not laugh either. Instead, he makes laughter sequentially relevant after his evaluation rather than after the student's response. Alexandros first evaluates Alex's answer as correct, "exactly" (line 5), and then, he performs a repair on Alex's correct and funny utterance by making it semantically stronger and funnier: the actuary who did a good job to save the money for the company gets a raise. After students confirmed with their laughter (lines 6, 7, 8) that they follow the lecture, Alexandros initiates another question and Alex responds again, but he aligns with Alexandros by continuing his theme: if actuaries do not save the insurance company's money, they get fired (line 13). Students appreciate Alex's and Alexandros collaborative effort to amuse with their supportive laughter.

When exerting his authority to positively evaluate Sam's response in example 7, Alexandros mitigated his authority with humor again. Like in the previous example, he attracted students' attention to important information and, in addition, engaged them in the lecture when he explained a formula. On the one hand, he exerted his authority to evaluate Sam and to engage students in the lecture; on the other hand, he downgraded his authority by acting somewhat as a clown to attract students' attention to the formula. Students' participation in the activity with

Alexandros strengthens in-group relationships when the instructor and his students bond when doing work together. As Alexandros explained, he intentionally wrote a formula with a mistake on the board to check whether students understand what he was doing.

- (7) 1 Alexandros: What's that actuary of present value of this z , right
 2 there, it gives you coverage from zero when
 3 Sam: it's xxxxxx
 4 Alexandros: exactly. that's what it is
 5 (3)
 6 [((shrugs his shoulders))
 6a [that's what it is
 7 Ss: [hah hah hah hah [hah hah hah hah]
 8 Sam: [yah hah hah]
 9 Alexandros: [☺ Right there]
 10 ok that's why

During a stimulated recall session Alexandros said that he noticed students were looking at the mistake he made intentionally and thought they detected the error, so he fixed it. When he asked a question, a student, Sam, provided the correct response, which Alexandros approves (line 4). However, other students did not say anything and did not laugh after the instructor's evaluation. In other words, they did not demonstrate their engagement. However, Alexandros seems to orient to the students' engagement by revisiting the situation and getting students involved in the activity with the help of gestures and body moves (ex. 7a).

- (7a) 1a Alexandros: MF along board _____ points
 1b What's that actuary of present value of this z right
 2a S__ MF along board _____ points _____
 2b there it gives you coverage from zero when,
 3a Alexandros: S/XS1__T to board
 3b S1: it's a x xxx
 3c Ss: XT _____
 4a Alexandros: writes T/X _____ S T to board/points T/X Hs/side
 4b exactly that's what it is (3) that's what it is
 4c Ss: _____

5a	Alexandros:	T writes _____ T/X _____ Xboard M/X _____
5b		[☺ Right there] ok that's why
5c	Ss:	[hah hah hah hah [hah hah hah hah]
5d	S:	[yah-hah hah
5e	Ss:	& & &

After Alexandros approves of Sam's response by saying, "exactly, that's what it is" (lines 4a,b), students do not demonstrate their engagement. Alexandros, during a three-second pause, turns to the board and points to something as if he wants to move on and to ask something else (lines 4a,b). This seems to be a transition place to the next segment of talk as Alexandros leaves the field of engagement (in line 4a he turns to the board). However, he does not initiate a new topic, but re-enters the engagement space to get the response he has failed to get so far: he turns to the class and theatrically throws his hands to his sides and repeats, "that's what it is" (line 4a,b). His body language communicates: "that's what it is, what else can I say?" After this, students finally initiate laughter (line 5c). Simultaneously with students' laughter he turns to the board and, again theatrically, adds a stroke to the formula, turns back to the students and says with a smile, "right there" (lines 5a,b). The instructor uses non-verbal communication as he attempts to make students' laugh. When students demonstrated their engagement in the class activity with laughter, Alexandros, simultaneously with a verbal transition "ok", turns to the board to continue his explanation.

Ming attempted a technique similar to Alexandros' to stimulate students' understanding of what he was teaching in class and wrote an incorrect expression on the board (ex. 8). What Ming did differently from Alexandros in a similar situation (ex. 7) is that he did not manage to get all students involved in the class activity. He accepts only David's response as the confirmation of the students' attention. As a result, affiliation occurs only between Ming and David while other students appear to be disengaged.

- (8) ((Ming wrote the incorrect formula on the board. While Ming is writing, David, Mark, and Jessica look at the board; Eric bends over his desk and looks in his notes.))
- 1 David: Is [is the one after three gonna be one again?
 2 Mark: [((straightens and looks at the board))
 3 Ming: Yes that's the problem I have to a-hah-sk you
 4 David: o:h
 5 Ming: >hah hah hah<
 6 David: [>hah hah<
 7 Ming: [☺ I just write to ask you.
 8 Mark: [((moves his gaze down to his notes))
 9 Eric: ((yawns and puts his face down on the desk))
 10 (20)
 11 Ming: David um tells (3) there is error in it
 ((David asks another question and Ming answers it; other students sit quietly))

David, a student from Ming's class, identifies the error and asks Ming whether the expression is correct (line 1). Ming responds to David's question with "yes that's the problem" and initiates a within-speech laughter invitation (line 3) with which, according to Jefferson (1979), he, as a speaker, provides "a recognition point, a locus for recipient laughter" (p. 82). However, nobody laughs. After David's response "o:h" (line 4), Ming initiates laughter again (line 5), but only David responds with laughter to Ming's laughter invitation (line 6).

Although Ming and also Jessica, a student in Ming's class, said when they viewed the video segment that it was funny that David identified the problem before Ming asked a question, none of the students including Jessica accepted Ming's laughter invitation. Moreover, while David initiates affiliative laughter and Ming continues to write the expression on the board, Mark moves his gaze from the board to his notes and Eric yawns and lies down on the desk. It appears that while Ming and David create affiliation, other students disaffiliate with them at the moment. Unlike Alexandros (ex. 7) who initiated funny gestures to attract students' attention to the error he had intentionally made, Ming does not initiate any verbal or non-verbal moves that would lead other students to share laughter with him and David and continues to write on the board.

After the 20 seconds that it took him to finish writing the expression (line 10), he says that David found the error. After that, David asks another question and Ming responds to it. Although the students look at the instructor, there is no indication that they follow his explanation. David seems to be engaged in the classroom interaction whereas facial expressions of other students express boredom. This example shows that while Ming and David, who found the error, create affiliation, other students demonstrate disengagement and disaffiliation.

Although students look at the instructor, they did not indicate their involvement and looked rather bored. As Eric said during the stimulated recall session when this exchange occurred, he feels bored in this class because Ming “[is] giving the lecture to only one guy” and other students “are just listening to this.” Apparently, Alexandros’ attempt to get students’ laughter has an important function not only to make students pay attention to an important point, but also to include all students in class activities. Ming’s not making this attempt and not using his authority to get students’ involvement makes students feel excluded, and, therefore, perhaps bored.

Exchanges 1-8 show that while evaluating students’ responses, instructors simultaneously exercise their authority and create affiliation with the students. They exercise their authority by performing evaluation; they create affiliation by entering the play frame and providing an opportunity for students to laugh together at the instructors’ humor. While praising students, instructors downgrade their praise by adding a humorous comment, e.g., by comparing learning a formula to learning a poem, or by demonstrating their doubt in the students’ correct response. While downgrading the praise of a student mitigates the imposition on the students’ negative face, a funny comment makes students appreciate the instructors’ humor and bond while “joining the fun”; examples 6 and 7 illustrate that the function of humor in these exchanges is more than

just softening the instructor's evaluation. While exercising their authority through the use of humor, instructors provide a fertile ground for laughing together. Laughing together creates group affiliation and in-group inclusion, which strengthens teacher-student relationships.

Evaluation of students' questions. Instructors sometimes use humor when answering students' questions. The instructor's humorous responses to the students' questions operate like teases in that they treat the students' questions as strange or problematic in some way. Asking questions in class is a face threatening activity for students because when asking questions, they reveal in front of class that they do not understand something. When students ask questions that the instructors treat as problematic, the instructors, instead of answering the questions, first humorously evaluate them and then provide a response. Similar to the evaluation of students' responses, humor in evaluations of students' questions not only softens the instructor's criticism, but also creates an environment for affiliation.

In example 9, affiliation occurs through Alexandros' invitation to laughter and Nancy's acceptance of his invitation after Alexandros evaluates Nancy's question as not related to the class. Although Nancy asks Alexandros a question, his response is not an answer to her question, but rather an evaluation of it. Nancy's question is related to the practical application of the formula, but not to the theoretical issues they study in Alexandros' class. Instead of saying it directly, Alexandros first humorously evaluates Nancy's question as being more practical and unrelated to what they are doing, "You are going to get your job now" (lines 4, 6), and after that he answers Nancy's question by providing a lengthy answer (beginning in line 8).

- (9) ((Alexandros tells students to ask questions and Nancy raises her hand))
- | | | |
|---|-------------|---|
| 1 | Nancy: | =but you say you also add a percentage |
| 2 | | [to it (will it be less than) a dollar] |
| 3 | Alexandros: | [forget this] |
| 4 | | we are not- forget [the percentages] ok you are |
| 5 | Nancy: | [hah] |

- 6 Alexandros: going straight to get your ☺ job no-hah-w hah hah
 7 Nancy: [hah hah]
 8 Alexandros: [to get we] are going to get price, you know,

Although Nancy refers to something that Alexandros said before, “but you say you also add a percentage to it” (lines 1, 2), Alexandros tells her “forget this” (line 3), thus implying that what Nancy asks is not relevant now. His direct response evokes Nancy’s laughter (line 5). Then, this time indirectly, he tells Nancy that her question is related to the practical application of the formula, “you are going to get your job now” (lines 4, 6). Alexandros’ humor and initiation of first laugh creates a *laughing at* environment, where the target of Alexandros’ humor is Nancy. Glenn (1995) maintains that the targets tend to realign and transform *laughing at* into *laughing with* by initiating an affiliative laugh. Although Alexandros’ smile and within-speech laughter followed by the post-utterance completion laughter invitation (line 6) characterizes the environment as *laughing at*, Nancy accepts his invitation to laugh together with Alexandros (line 7). Although Alexandros evaluates Nancy’s question as inappropriate, his laughter invitation and her accepting his invitation to laugh demonstrate their alignment with each other.

While, similar to Nancy, Samuel also seeks affiliation through affiliative laughter when students laugh at Rana’s humorous evaluation of his question (ex. 10), Tenesha aligns with Samuel, who is the butt of the tease, but not with the students who are laughing at him. Samuel did not understand the meaning of the concept “offshoring” and asks whether a company that is another country but on land can still be considered offshore.

- (10) ((Samuel raises his hand and Rana allows him to ask a question))
 1 Samuel: if a company moves to another country and both
 2 countries are (on land) is it still offshore?
 3 Rana: offshoring is really, [you know]
 4 Tenesha: [its just]
 5 Ss: [xxx]
 6 Rana: ☺yes, it is shores off it does not have to be the
 7 physical beach or coastline

- 8 Samuel: [((laughs⁷))]
 9 Tenesha: [it was a good question though]
 10 Ss: [hm-heh heh heh]
 11 h-heh heh [heh]
 12 Rana: [territorial]
 13 boundaries of the country
 14 Ss: hah hah hah
 15 Rana: ok, so

During a stimulated recall session, Rana said that Samuel's question was not "the most brilliant one". Samuel also admitted, "it was a stupid question." However, Rana does not say it directly, but his answer shows that the student's understanding of the concept "offshoring" is funny: "offshoring" does not mean that a company moved to somewhere in the water.

Samuel, the target of Rana's humorous response, shares laughter with other students (lines 8, 10) and affiliates with the rest of the class by laughing together. Tenesha, however, does not share laughter with others, but initiates a comment "it was a good question though" (line 9). Samuel when watching the video interpreted her comment as encouraging because, as he said, "she was trying to make me feel good". While Samuel affiliates with other students who laugh at him, Tenesha appears to disaffiliate with others by not joining laughter, but to affiliate with Samuel who is laughed at.

In the exchanges discussed so far the butt of the tease tends to affiliate with those who laugh at the butt to create in-group affiliation. This exchange, however, underscores that sometimes relationships among the group members are more complex. Rana seeks support from the students who appreciate his humor; Samuel creates affiliation with those who laugh at him; Tenesha, however, backs up Samuel and disaffiliates with the teacher and the class. Although Samuel explains that Tenesha's comment "it was a good question though" (line 9) was "to make [him] feel good", Tenesha might not understand this concept either and supports Samuel when

⁷ As seen on the videotape, Samuel laughs, but his laughter is not heard because the video camera was too far from him.

students laughed at him. This exchange reveals that in the classroom both the relationship between the instructor and the class as a whole and the relationships among students themselves are equally important. Therefore, Samuel, not to be excluded from the group, establishes his relationships with the entire class and the instructor by appreciating Rana's humor and joining the students in laughter. Tenesha creates personal bonds with Samuel by supporting him and disaffiliating from others. Tenesha's support of Samuel also seems to communicate that although for others Samuel's question may seem silly, the question was useful for understanding the concept of offshoring. Indeed, sometimes the questions that may seem silly are important for students to ask and sometimes the responses like Rana's help them to make sense of what they do not understand. Although Rana initiates a smile when answering Samuel's question, he does not share laughter with students. Rana's laughing would indicate that he laughs at the student's question, which would be face threatening for the students. Although Rana does not share laughter with the students, with his smile, he appears to invite students' laughter to appreciate his humor and to support his negative evaluation of Samuel's question.

A complex web of classroom relationships emerged in Rana's class again when Ron asked Rana how students could prove their attendance at a lecture (ex. 11). To get students interested in the subject, Rana gives extra credit to the students who attend a lecture of a political figure. It was impossible to take students' attendance at the public lecture, so Rana takes students' word for it (line 2).

- (11) 1 Ron: How do we prove (that we were there)
2 Rana: hah I'll take your word for it
3 Ron: o-hoh-k
4 Rick: hah hah hah hah
5 Ss ((few)): hah
6 Rana: [I'm taking your word for it can I trust you with]
7 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah]
8 Rana: that?

9	Ss:	hah hah hah hah hah hah
10	Rana:	or you can ask ex-president to sign for you that yes
11		you attended it
12	Tenesha:	It's a good suggestion

Rana, by initiating a laugh (line 2), laughs at Ron's question and at the same time opens a play frame within which he provides a response, "I'll take your word for it". Ron treats Rana's response as humorous and says "o-hoh-k", which is accompanied with within-speech laughter *hoh* (line 3). By initiating within-speech laughter, Ron prevents a *laughing at* environment: he aligns with Rana and invites other students' laughter before they started laughing at him voluntarily. Although just a few students appreciated Rana's response with laughter, Rana repeats his answer and adds a question "can I trust you with that?" (line 6), which evokes laughter from more students (lines 7, 9). Then, he adds another utterance "you can ask ex-president to sign for you that yes you attended it" (line 10, 11). This utterance creates an exaggerated hypothetical situation that makes Ron's question funny and what he asks not realistic to do. Rana appears to be amused by the student's question and elaborates on his first utterance "I'll take your word for it" to make the situation funnier. Although Rana seems to treat Ron's question as ridiculous (how can they prove that they attend the lecture?), he does not say it directly. He enters the play frame and jokingly communicates to the students that what Ron is asking is not realistic. Students' laughter communicates appreciation of Rana's humor and, thus, affiliation with him.

Although Ron appears to ask a question that any student who cares about her or his grades would ask, Rana's tease seems to transform Ron's identity of a normal student into a student who cares too much about providing a proof of the attendance of the lecture and, thus, about his grades rather than about the lecture. While Rana creates a hypothetical situation by humorously suggesting that the students can ask the ex-president's signature as a proof of their

attendance, Tenesha, treats Rana's comment as serious, "it's a good suggestion" (line 12). By providing a serious response, Tenesha transforms Ron's unusual identity of a student who cares about his grades but not in Political Science into his normal identity of a student who cares about his grades. Her serious comment also demonstrates that, similar to Ron, Tenesha cares about her grades and about providing evidence of the lecture attendance for getting extra credit. As in example 10, Tenesha disaffiliates with Rana to strengthen her bonds with classmates rather than with the instructor. Tenesha's disaffiliation with the instructor and treating his humorous suggestions as serious seems to show some tension between the students' and the instructor's interests.

When viewing this exchange, Rana said that he was surprised how students want to get extra credit. He gave students extra credit for attending lectures to get them interested in the subject. Students, however, thought they were not doing well in class, so they were interested in the extra credit as the means for improving their grades. According to Rana, "it's not that they are interested in ex-Peru president, but they are interested in extra credits, that's what makes it funny." This example shows the conflict between the instructor's and the students' interests: while for Rana students' interest in the subject was important, for students, getting good grades was essential. While Rana with his tease transforms students' normal identity of students who care about their grades into students who are not interested in Political Science, Tenesha with her comment "it's a good suggestion" corrects Rana's tease and transforms students' unusual identity to their normal identity of the students worrying about their grades.

The instructors' humorous evaluations of the students' questions which they treat as anomalous in some way reveal complex relationships between the instructors and students. While, in general, the participants of the exchanges included in this group demonstrate their

willingness to create affiliation between the instructor and students, some of the examples illustrate that affiliation with the students who become the butt of the tease is also important. Affiliation with a student who needs support seems to create camaraderie and strengthen friendly relationships among students. While during evaluations instructors seek support from their students as approval of their actions, students who are laughed at seek affiliation to minimize the effect of being laughed at. Since any of the students can be in the same situation, their support of each other seems to strengthen their bonds, to create an environment secure for asking any kind of question, and to minimize the face threat.

The participants' orientation to the instructors' evaluation of students as a face threatening activity is reflected in the tendency of the instructors to dissociate from their face threatening behavior by distancing themselves from students in the physical space. Before Alexandros' humorous evaluation of Nancy's question (ex. 9a), he creates physical distance by moving backwards at the transition to humorous mode on the word "ok" (line 3a). He creates even greater distance by turning to the board and performing his evaluation of Nancy's question while erasing formulas from the board, thus combining two activities together and not prioritizing either of them (line 4b).

- | | | | |
|------|----|-------------|--|
| (9a) | 1a | Alexandros: | S_____ MF_____ |
| | 1b | Nancy: | =but you say you also add a percentage |
| | 2a | Alexandros: | _____ |
| | 2b | | [forget this |
| | 2c | Nancy: | [to it (will be less than) a dollar |
| | 3a | Alexandros: | MF_____ MB |
| | 3b | | we we are now forget [the percentages ok |
| | 3c | Nancy: | [hah |
| | 4a | Alexandros: | Tboard/erases_____ XS_____ |
| | 4b | | you are going straight to get your ☺ job |

- 5a Alexandros: _____ Xboard _____
 5b no-ha-w hah hah [To get] going to get price, you
 5c Ss: [hah hah]
- 6a Alexandros: _____ XS
 6b know, price everything

The instructors' verbal and nonverbal behavior demonstrates that negotiation of their identities with students is a complex process. While evaluations are unavoidable in the classroom, the way they are performed may affect instructor-student relationships. Therefore, both the instructors and students are involved in extensive face work for creating affiliation while participating in the face threatening activities of performing evaluation and receiving feedback. The instructors' tendency to distance bodily from the face threatening activity of evaluating students' questions, their creation of a play frame, students entering the play and appreciation of the instructors' humor generates an environment in which the negative effect of evaluations is minimized although not totally eliminated.

In spite of the fact that instructors treat these questions as somewhat strange and tease students in response, they still orient to these questions as valid inquiries and provide answers to these questions. Therefore, instructors' humorous evaluations of the students' questions indicate that there is a problem whereas their consequent answers explain what students understood wrong.

Evaluation of students' behavior. The following exchanges demonstrate that in addition to evaluating students' responses and questions, instructors also humorously evaluate students' behavior. The instructors' humor evokes affiliative laughter and the instructors and the students align when laughing together at the situation. The exchanges included in this group occurred during lectures when students did something wrong, e.g., a student forgot to turn off her cell-

phone which rings during the lecture (ex. 12), or a student yawned loudly during the lecture (ex. 13), or a student came late after the break having missed important information (ex. 14).

- (12) 1 Wen: this is not a a small problem, this when the Arctic
2 ice is melting, right, has a lot of negative
3 consequences [one thing is (.)]
4 Phone: [*****]
5 Wen: nice music [hah hah one thing um] one thing is
6 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah hah]
- (13) 1 Rana: we've been talking about capital, currency financial
2 institutions u:m something that increasing
3 increasing [times] called foreign investment
4 S: [.A::H]
5 (3)
6 Rana: I know its not the most interesting of topics but
7 [☺ a
8 S: [heh heh heh
9 Rana: [but it is important for you guys to know it (.)]
10 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah]
11 Rana: Then you have
- (14) 1 Wen: I-I-I'll see, its still two weeks away
2 Its still two weeks away
3 [((student enters classroom and goes to her place))]
4 [(.) you missed very important inform☺ation]
5 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah]
6 S1: [o:.....h]
7 Wen: [hah hah hah but it does not matter] I am gonna talk
8 S1: [☺]
9 Wen: about it next time.

Although such misbehaviors may not be intentional, they are still interruptive. It appears that the instructors do not dismiss students' misdoings, but are not very strict either. So, when something happens, instructors pause for a moment, and then initiate a tease targeting the discipline violator. As Wen commented during stimulated recall, when the student's phone rang, he opted for a humorous remark because he did not want to be "that bad to students, because that does not happen very often"; if he were serious, it would be too embarrassing for a student. However, he did not want to ignore the interruption of his lecture either.

Affiliation occurs when the students enter the play frame created by the instructor and appreciate the instructors' humor with laughter. Affiliation between Wen and his students occurs when they simultaneously start laughing at Wen's humor (ex. 12, lines 5, 6). Similarly, Rana's students' laughter overlaps with his smile (ex. 13, lines 7, 8). In the situation when Wen's student comes late (ex. 14), the instructor and students do not laugh simultaneously, but some students appreciate Wen's humor first (line 5) and then Wen laughs (line 7) and his laughter overlaps with one of the students smiling (line 8). He also softens his evaluation by saying that although the student missed important information, "it does not matter" because they will talk about it later. As in exchanges when the instructors evaluated students' responses and questions, the instructors' humor provided opportunities for aligning while evaluating students.

Exchanges 12-14 where instructors evaluate students' behavior share a common feature, a pause before the instructors' evaluations of students' behavior. The instructor's pause operates as the attention getter to the violator (ex. 13a) and transforms the instructor's solitary evaluation of a student into a group activity. During this pause, students and the instructor turn to the discipline violator (lines 1a,d) and the instructor prepares for teasing the violator.

(13a)	1a	Rana:	_____XS_____
	1b		[times] called foreign investment (3) I know its not
	1c	S:	[.A::H]
	1d	Ss:	XS/XT_____
	2a	Rana:	MF_____Xdown_____
	2b		the most interesting of topics but [☺ a
	2c	S:	[heh heh heh
	2d	Ss:	_____
	3a	Rana:	_____T/MFop/X_____
	3b		[but it is important for you guys to know it (.)]
	3c	Ss:	[hah hah hah hah hah hah hah]
	3d		_____XT_____

4a	Rana:	Xdown_____ T/X_____
4b		Then you have a lot of you guys wrote about
4c	Ss:	_____

Although these exchanges⁸ are separated from the serious talk by the instructor's body moves they do not grow into a longer exchange because it is disruptive to the instructor's lecture. The instructor's body moves seem to correspond to the verbal play frame. For example, during the pause, Rana moves his gaze to the student who yawned (line 1a), pauses for three seconds and then starts moving forward to the right just leaving the position from which he delivered his lecture (line 2a). At the end of the humorous utterance, he turns around (line 3a) and starts moving forward, but in the opposite direction to return to the location from where he just left. His movement to a new engagement space at the beginning of the humorous exchange seems to demonstrate his commitment to the exchange, while his leaving the engagement space seems to coincide with his distancing from the tease with which he downplays the evaluation. When he returns to the place from where his movement began, he turns to the class and continues his lecture. Shifting evaluations from serious to humorous mode separates them from serious talk and emphasizes the play frame: what is done within a play frame is less threatening.

When Alexandros noticed misbehavior before the class, the exchange grew into a longer sequence. Instead of doing their homework at home, students were finishing it before the class (ex. 15). Since the class had not started yet, the students participating in the humorous exchange with the instructors had more freedom to contribute to the exchange that they would do during the class. When Alexandros teases them (line 1), students being caught doing homework go along with Alexandros' tease (lines 3, 5). When entering the play frame while responding to his tease, they affiliate with Alexandros, thus strengthening in-group relationship by collaborating with him.

⁸ The body moves in examples 12, 13, and 14 are similar. I use example 13 to demonstrate the pattern.

- (15) 1 Alexandros: have you guys finished your homework?
 2 Ss: [HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH]
 3 Student1: [yes-s-s]
 4 Alexandros: [☺] ha?
 5 Student 2: we get to that
 6 Student 3: hah [hah-hah-hah]
 7 Student 4: [hah-hah-hah]
 8 Researcher: ((approached instructor))

Alexandros' discovery of the students' secret was met with the students' appreciation of Alexandros' tease (line 2). Since Alexandros lets students know that he is aware of their secret, the students enter the play frame by saying "yes" (line 3) and "we get to that" (line 4) thus affiliating with the instructor by maintaining the humorous exchange and appreciating each other's humor (lines 6, 7). While Alexandros creates a situation when students can equally contribute to the humorous exchange, he exerts his authority to communicate that he knows what students are doing and evaluates their behavior at the same time. This exchange demonstrates that exerting authority to evaluate students' behavior occurs not only during the class, but also before the class officially starts and does not support Unger-Gallagher's (1991) proposition that exchanging jokes with student may equalize the ITA with the students. Although students exchange jokes with Alexandros, he does not equalize or identify with them; on the contrary, he exerts his authority by pointing out that he noticed that students did not do their homework at home. Even though this exchange occurred before the class and students responded to Alexandros' humor with humor, the participants oriented to their institutional roles of teacher and students.

The data show that when instructors initiate their humorous evaluations of the students' behavior, they treat their evaluations as a group activity (e.g., a pause as an attention getter in ex. 12-14) and orient to producing a laughable. Producing a laughable and involving all students into the exchange seems to be important because students' appreciation of the instructors' humorous

evaluations demonstrates their agreement with the instructors' evaluations and secures the instructor from being perceived as mean to the discipline violators.

Exchange 16 shows that instructor makes laughter relevant after his evaluation of the students' behavior. It appears that Wen implicitly disapproves the students' behavior and seeks the other students' support for his disapproval.

- | | | | |
|------|----|-----------|---|
| (16) | 1 | Ss: | ((talking to each other/look at teacher |
| | 2 | Wen: | it looks like other people disappeared. |
| | 3 | | But i am gonna have a very important you know |
| | 4 | | ☺statement about the test = |
| | 5 | Matilda: | =all right= |
| | 6 | Clarissa: | =yes |
| | 7 | Wen: | so how unlucky those people ☺are= |
| | 8 | Clarissa: | =[yeah] |
| | 9 | Matilda: | =[oh]= |
| | 10 | Ss: | =[hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 11 | Wen: | I should have told them they wouldn't have left |
| | 12 | | I should not have y-ha-eah |
| | 13 | | (4) |
| | 14 | Wen: | but, anyways, some students asked me about the |
| | 15 | | test, which is which is two weeks away |

Wen says that he noticed that some students have left after the class break (ex. 16). Nobody laughs after his evaluation of the students' behavior and he adds that he has important information about the forthcoming test (lines 2-4). He initiates a smile (line 4), but students do not laugh and just provide supportive responses (lines 5, 6). In line 7, Wen initiates repair on his utterance by intensifying its meaning and, as previously (line 4), initiates a smile. This time students interpret his utterance as laughable and accept his invitation to laughter, thus appreciating what he has said (line 10)) and supporting his negative evaluation of the behavior of the students that have left. Although these instructors do not provide any serious feedback to students' misdoings, they evaluate students' behavior as not appropriate and penalize students

with teases. Again, as in previous exchanges, they use teasing, which sets up a ground for criticizing and control and at the same time provides opportunities for affiliation.

In this section I discussed how humor in the instructors' evaluations of students assists in softening criticism as well as their praise of students. Humor helps instructors to avoid being too authoritative and assists to create in-group relationships.

The humorous exchanges discussed so far include humorous utterances that rarely evoke students' responses other than laughter. Even if students respond to the instructor's humor, their responses, most of the time, go along with the instructor's joking and are supportive of it. When instructors use humor during their lectures to evaluate students' knowledge or behavior, students do not usually challenge their instructors' humorous contributions and the teacher authority and, thus, the teacher status remains unchallenged. In the following sections, I discuss humorous exchanges that involve more negotiation of the teacher status and are threatening to the teacher authority because students not only respond to the teacher's humor with humor, but they are trying to make the teachers the butt of their humor.

Affiliating While Exerting Authority to Manage Class Issues

In the 12 sequences included in this group, instructors use their authority to check whether students follow their explanation or instructions and students challenge their authority in response. To negotiate who they are, participants create a play frame while talking about serious things. Although this type of exchange occurs in both Alexandros' and Rana's classes, eleven of them come from Alexandros' classroom and have a similar structure. While the exchange from Rana's class is similar to the exchanges from Alexandros' class, ten out of eleven exchanges initiated by Alexandros are instigated by Alexandros' suspicion of students doing something that

may distract them from his lecture. First, I focus on the exchanges from Alexandros' class and then compare them to the exchange initiated by Rana.

The eleven exchanges from Alexandros' class open with the instructor calling on or just moving his gaze to a student while asking a question. Although to an outsider, the instructor's utterances containing a student's name may not seem funny, both students and the instructor treat them as laughables. These laughables resemble teases because they "open... with a mock challenge, insult, or threat" (Eisenberg, 1986, pp. 183, 184). Also, they are always sequentially 'seconds' to some previous activities and make these activities and people who are involved in them look strange (Drew, 1987). Since, according to Drew, teases transform the teasee's normal identity into unusual identity they are threatening to students when instructors tease them. As seen on the videotapes and as commented by the participants during stimulated recall sessions, the students are suspected of not listening or not understanding the instructor's explanation and are asked to provide the answer they may not know in front of their peers and the instructor.

Among the eleven exchanges, only one exchange was initiated not because of the instructors' suspicion of students' doing something wrong, but because it was evident that a student said something wrong. Alexandros calls on Nancy (ex. 17) because a minute before, she asked him a question "Are we still working on the concept or we just?" Her question demonstrates that Nancy does not know what Alexandros is doing on the board. After that, he asks her to provide the formula. When Alexandros calls on Nancy (line 1), Nancy initiates silent laughter (line 2).

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| (17) | 1 | Alexandros: now Nancy since you asked |
| | 2 | Nancy: ~ ~ |
| | 3 | Alexandros: [let's let's do the the formula] |

Exchanges 18-27⁹ differ from example 17 because before calling on a student, Alexandros takes “time out”. McHoul (1978) defines time out as “a piece of silence which occurs as a pause for thought between some pieces of ongoing talk” (p. 193). The video shows that during the time outs, Alexandros, who was writing on the board, stops writing, turns to class, and chooses a student to call on (ex. 18, line 2; ex. 20, line 1; ex. 21, line 4; ex. 22, line 1; ex. 23, line 4; ex. 24, line 3; ex. 25, line 1). The time out may follow a gap-reducing “u::m” (ex. 18, line 1) or it may be filled with “u::m” (ex. 23, line 4), or even with the question but addressed to the entire class before the student is chosen (ex. 19, line 1; ex. 21, lines 1-3; ex. 27, lines 1-3).

- (18) ((Melanie had just said something to Stephen, but at the moment Alexandros looked at the class Melanie was listening and Stephen was listening and nodding))
- 1 Alexandros: xxxxx one so we get v, all right, what is u:m
 2 (1) Melanie [(☺_____)]
 3 Alexandros: [let's let's do the the formula]
 4 Nancy: [☺_____]
- (19) ((Stephen is listening))
- 1 Alexandros: who is gonna give me the formula for these in terms
 2 of *vs qs* and *ps* [Stephen], give me the formula
 3 Ss: [(.) hah hah [hah hah heh heh heh]
 4 Melanie: [xx v hah hah].
- (20) ((Linda is taking notes))
- 1 Alexandros: (5) Linda what is the variance of z
 2 doctor Fox' class
 3 S1: heh
 4 Alexandros: ☺
- (21) ((Alex is listening))
- 1 Alexandros: so now, what i am trying to do is I'm defining the
 2 variable l as a functional of these two so l is equal
 3 to
 4 ((points to a student))
 5 why do I always ☺forget your name [☺]
 6 S1: [~ ~]
 7 S2: [hm hm hm]
 8 S1: who me? Alex

⁹ Examples 18-27 are arranged not in the chronological order of their appearance in the class, but based on the students' responses to the instructor's tease.

- 9 Alexandros: ☺ yeah [Alex ~ ~ ~]
10 Ss: [a-hah-hah-hah]
11 Alexandros: what would be this formula in term of z and y to
12 make this clear
- (22) ((Colin is taking notes; next to his notes there is a newspaper))
1 Alexandros: if I die the first year I get (3) Colin
2 Colin: yeah=
3 Ss: =[heh heh heh]
4 Alexandros: [☺]
- (23) 1 Alexandros: like with no doubt what this symbol means
2 Alexandros: (((turns his head to the board))
3 Melanie: (((says something to Stephen and Nancy))
4 Alexandros: ((looks at the class)) u::m Stephen
5 Stephen: ah?
6 Ss: [>>hah hah hah hah hah<<]
7 Alexandros: [(☺)]
- (24) ((Jack is not seen on the videotape))
1 Alexandros: m slash=
2 Student 1: =xx ax
3 Alexandros: ax (3) Jack
4 repeat this one more time in ☺English (.)
5 ☺ i was trying I was just trying to see
6 Student 2: heh
7 Alexandros: if you're paying attention ☺/~
8 Jack: oh, that's difference
- (25) ((Matthew is taking notes))
1 Alexandros: what is E of x (.) Matthew
2 Matthew: declaration 8.83
3 Alexandros: ☺in English
4 Student 1: hah [hah hah hah
5 Student 2: [hah hah hah hah hah hah
- (26) ((Jack is not seen on the videotape; lines 4-7 are the end of the previous exchange demonstrated in example 27))
4 Alexandros: ☺you missed the two classes? ☺ _____
5 S3: hah hah [hah hah
6 S4: [hah hah [hah
7 S5: [hah hah hah
8 Alexadros: ok. Jack, what is what is the product that provides
9 coverage for one year after rejects
10 Jack: eight twenty five at one
11 Alexandros: Twenty five? [☺where did you get twenty five]

- 12 Ss: [hah hah hah]
 13 Ss: hah hah hah hah
- (27) ((Student addressed is not seen on the videotape))
 1 Alexandros: ok what would be a symbol for this period, or
 2 product for this period. what is this. what is the
 3 coverage for one year.
 4 ☺you missed the two classes? ☺ _____
 5 S3: hah hah [hah hah
 6 S4: [hah hah [hah
 7 S5: [hah hah hah

The instructor's time outs seem necessary and sequentially relevant in exchanges 18-25 and 27 because of the instructor's and the students' previous activities. The video shows that prior to each of these exchanges, the instructor was busy writing on the board. He stood with his back to the class and was not able to see what students were doing. There is no observable pause in example 26 because this exchange occurred right after exchange 27 and Alexandros seemed to use the time when students were laughing (lines 5-7, ex. 26) as the time out.

During this silent time, Alexandros turns to the class and addresses the student who was suspected of not paying attention. During a stimulated recall session, Alexandros explained that Melanie and Stephen usually talk a lot in class and at the beginning of the semester, Alexandros told them that he was going to ask them questions since "this is the only way to get [them to] stop talking." In the video segment (ex. 18), Melanie and Stephen were listening to the instructor and Stephen, who was sitting next to Melanie, was nodding his head while listening to Alexandros. However, 21 seconds before the exchange, immediately after Alexandros turned to the board to write formulas, Melanie said something to Stephen and they laughed quietly. Although Alexandros was facing the board at that time and could not see Melanie talking to Stephen, on the tape, it is possible to hear a very quiet whisper, which Alexandros also might have heard. Before Alexandros called on Stephen in example 23, at the moment when he looked

at the board (line 2), Melanie quickly turned to Stephen and said something to him and Nancy (line 3) and the three of them laughed quietly. When Alexandros looked at the class, he called on Stephen (line 4). In example 19, Stephen was called on in spite of the fact that he was listening to the instructor.

Linda (ex. 20) did not seem to be distracted, but she was taking notes and was not looking at Alexandros at the moment he turned to the class. Colin (ex. 22) also was not looking at the board when Alexandros looked at him. Colin was taking notes, but next to his notes Colin had a newspaper, which, according to the students participating in stimulated recalls, he always had in class. During stimulated recall sessions, both Stephen and Melanie said that Colin was not paying attention at the moment. Alexandros when watching the segment also said that Colin was not listening to him, but when he saw that Colin was actually taking notes and looking at the board from time to time, he said that now when he saw he was actually paying attention he felt bad about calling on him.

Alex (ex. 21) was called on in spite of the fact that he was listening to the instructor and looking at him when Alexandros turned to class; however, Melanie and Stephen, sitting in a row behind Alex, were talking. In example 24, as Alexandros told me, he wanted to ask another student who was falling asleep at the back row, but he forgot his name, so he asked Jack instead. Matthew (ex. 25) was taking notes when Alexandros asked him.

The students' actions in examples 26 and 27 are not seen on the videotapes, but during a stimulated recall session Alexandros reported that the student from example 27 had missed several classes and he suspected that she did not understand what he was talking about. According to Alexandros, "she has no clue what we are doing ... she can solve the problem, but she does not know the language; there is no communication." Jack (ex. 26) was not listening to

the instructor in class, as he confirmed when watching the video. Thus, as video shows and as the participants inform, Alexandros uses the time out to detect who was not paying attention in order to call on them.

Students' responses to the instructor's turns vary and seem to depend on whether there is a need for identity negotiation. Several times students laughed in response to the instructor's calling on them and then provided their answers to the question, two times they confirmed that they heard the instructor calling on them and then answered the question, twice they answered the question without providing laughter or other confirmation that the question was heard, and once a student did not respond at all. While laughter responses appear to function as affiliative strategy, the students' responses pre-empting the laughter turn after the instructor's calling on them challenged the instructor and led to identity negotiation sequences.

Laughter appears to be relevant after Alexandros calls on a student and asks the student a question. According to Sacks (1989), "laughings are very locally responsive – if done on the completion of some utterance they affiliate to last utterance" (p. 348). As with all teases, the instructor's calling on a student created a *laughing at* environment. Laughter initiated by the students other than the target of the tease confirms the *laughing at* (ex. 18a). Students who can be laughed at can seek affiliation with the instructor and their classmates by initiating laughter (ex. 17a, 18a, 19a), which, according to Glenn (1995), transforms *laughing at* into *laughing with*. For example, in example 19a, a student orients to the *laughing at* environment and initiates affiliative laughter even before other students start laughing. As a result, the class and the student who was suspected laugh together at the student's misfortune to be punished with the instructor's question. The student's first laugh may occur simultaneously with the other students' laughter.

The instructor does not share laughter with the students, but he signals his affiliation with them with his smile.

- (17a) 1 Alexandros: now Nancy since you asked
 2 Nancy: ~ ~
 3 Alexandros: [let's let's do the the formula]
 4 Nancy: [☺ _____]
- (18a) 1 Alexandros: xxxxx one so we get v, all right, what is u:m
 2 (1) Melanie [(☺ _____)]
 3 Ss: [(.) hah hah [hah hah heh heh heh]
 4 Melanie: [xx v hah hah].
- (19a) 1 Alexandros: who is gonna give me the formula for these in terms
 2 of *vs qs* and *ps* [Stephen], give me the formula
 3 Stephen: [hah hah]
 4 Ss: hah

The exchanges in this group are rather face threatening for both the instructor and the students. For students they are threatening because the student called on will have to provide the answer in front of their peers and if the student is not paying attention she or he will need to communicate it somehow to the teacher. For the instructor they are face threatening because he might seem mean to students if he called on them when they are not able to provide the answer or he might seem overly suspicious if the student was paying attention.

Examples 24a, 17b, and 18b demonstrate that the instructor treats his calling on students as a face threatening activity because he tells the students that his intention was not to “pick on” them, but to check whether they were paying attention or knew the formula. For example, in exchange 24a Alexandros calls on Jack asking to explain the formula.

- (24a) 1 Alexandros: m slash=
 2 S1: =xx ax
 3 Alexandros: ax (3) Jack
 4 (5)
 5 repeat this one more time in ☺English (.)
 6 ☺ I was just trying to see=
 7 S2: =heh=

- 8 Nancy: ah hah hah
 9 Alexandros: I am not picking on you, just trying to do the
 10 formula. what is the integral

Nancy, after the instructor calls on her, laughs, covers her face with her right hand playfully, bends her head and then says, “oh god!” (line 5) thus demonstrating her anxiety (recollect, Alexandros called on her after she asked a question). In spite of the fact that Nancy’s actions were playful (later she provides the correct response), Alexandros said, “I am not picking on you, just trying to do the formula.” Apparently, Nancy’s actions led Alexandros to justify why he called on her.

Melanie (ex. 18a), unlike Nancy, did not demonstrate any exaggerated anxiety and was looking at the instructor.

- (18b) 1 Alexandros: xxxxx one so we get v , all right, what is $u:m$
 2 (1) Melanie [(☺ _____)]
 3 Ss: [(.) hah hah [hah hah heh heh heh]
 4 Melanie: [xx v hah hah]
 5 Alexandros: ☺Am I picking on you? [ah?]
 6 Ss: [hah hah]
 7 Melanie: no
 8 Alexandros: ok
 9 Ss: hah hah
 10 Alexandros: what is this. in English.

Alexandros, after calling on Melanie, initiates a smile (line 2) overlapping with the students’ laughter (line 3), which confirms the *laughing at* environment. Melanie after providing the answer “xx v ” affiliates with Alexandros and the students by sharing her laughter with them (line 4). Melanie appears to treat the environment as laughing at her. Melanie’s response seems to contain just the formula, but not the explanation of its meaning, as Alexandros expects. Apparently, Melanie treats her response as the response not expected by Alexandros and affiliates with the students by transforming *laughing at* to *laughing with*. Although students’ initiation of the first laugh that overlaps with Alexandros’ smile and Melanie’s affiliative laughter

with Alexandros and the students in line 4 characterize the environment as *laughing at*, this environment seems ambiguous. On the one hand, students may laugh at Melanie's misfortune to be called on. On the other hand, students may laugh at the instructor who was overly suspicious since Melanie was listening to Alexandros at the moment he looked at her. If students laugh at Melanie, it is face threatening to her; if students laugh at Alexandros, it is threatening to his authority. Apparently, both Melanie and Alexandros orient to the face threat. Melanie after she provides the formula, but not the explanation of the meaning of the formula transforms *laughing at* into *laughing with* by joining the students and the instructor in laughter. But her laughing after she provided the formula could be laughing at Alexandros as well because of his suspicion that she was not listening. Alexandros also seems to orient to the laughing at him situation and, with an affiliative smile (line 5), asks Melanie: "Am I picking on you?" (line 5). By doing so, like in example 24a, he creates an environment for students to laugh at him (line 6). He also demonstrates his awareness of how Melanie might treat his calling on her.

Examples 17b, 18b, and 24a show that both the instructor and students treat these exchanges as face threatening and seem to shift their exchanges to humorous mode. The instructor flags the shift by initiating a smile and students affiliate with the instructor by means of shared laughter. Nancy mitigated face threat through playful demonstration of her anxiety and Melanie through an affiliative laugh. Alexandros minimized the threat of being overly suspicious by explicitly claiming that he was not picking on the students and by inviting students' laughter at himself. While the participants re-negotiate their identities of an overly suspicious instructor and students who did not something wrong, they still maintain their roles of instructor and students. The instructor remains the class manager and, after his authority has been negotiated, returns to his business of checking whether students were following his explanation. Students,

after they have affiliated with the instructor and each other, provide responses to the instructor's question.

Although examples 17b, 18b, and 24a show that these exchanges are face threatening for students, they do not challenge the instructor in response. Exchanges 22a and 23a differ from the previous three sequences in that students who are called on challenge the instructor and respond to the instructor's tease with a confirmation turn that they hear the instructor's question. Their confirmation turn in a form of a mock challenge followed by the other students' laughter and the instructor's smile seems to work as what I call a *target switch*. I define the *target switch* as a mechanism of redirecting the target of the tease by the teasee to the teaser. The *target switch* is located in the next turn after the initial tease and pre-empts laughter after the initial tease, thus preventing the initial target of the tease from becoming the butt of the tease. As a result of the *target switch* performed by a teasee, the initial teaser becomes laughed at and, consequently, the butt of the tease.

- (22a) ((Colin is taking notes; next to his notes there is a newspaper))
- | | | |
|---|-------------|--|
| 1 | Alexandros: | if I die the first year I get (3) <u>Colin</u> |
| 2 | Colin: | <u>yeah</u> = |
| 3 | Ss: | =[heh heh heh] |
| 4 | Alexandros: | [☺] |
| 5 | Colin: | one hundred |
| 6 | Ss: | hah hah hah hah hah hah hah |
| 7 | Alexandros: | if I survive |
- (23a)
- | | | |
|----|-------------|--|
| 1 | Alexandros: | like with no doubt what this symbol means |
| 2 | Alexandros: | [((turns his head to the board)) |
| 3 | Melanie: | [((says something to Stephen and Nancy)) |
| 4 | Alexandros: | ((looks at the class)) [u::m] Stephen |
| 5 | Stephen: | [☺] |
| 6 | Stephen: | [<u>ha</u> . ☺] |
| 7 | | [((Melanie looks at Stephen; Nancy smiles))] |
| 8 | Ss: | [>>hah hah hah hah hah<<] |
| 9 | Alexandros: | [☺] |
| 10 | | what is the first symbol. |
| 11 | Stephen: | end= |

- 12 Alexandros: what's this
13 Stephen: endowment insurance, at 3.45 one year

When students provide a confirmation turn, the participation structure changes. Instead of affiliative laughter, which shifts *laughing at* to *laughing with* (e.g., ex. 17b and 18b), students who are called on disaffiliate with the instructor and perform a response that is perceived as funny by the students (line 2, ex. 22a; line 6, ex. 23a). This response transforms a laughing-at-a-student situation to a laughing-at-a-student's-humor environment and/or to a laughing-at-the-instructor environment.

In example 22a, when Alexandros turned to class, Colin was taking notes and did not look at Alexandros; moreover, he had a newspaper next to him on his desk. Alexandros seems to orient to Colin's not paying attention rather than Colin's taking notes: he calls on Colin and pronounces part of his name obviously louder, "Colin" (line 1). By calling on Colin, Alexandros nominates him as the target of the tease, or his next victim who is suspected of not paying attention. However, unlike in examples 18a and 19a, there is no laughter after Alexandros' calling on Colin in exchange 22a: Colin's confirmation turn "yeah" pre-empts the laughter turn and Colin does not become the butt of the tease because students do not laugh at him.

According to Jefferson (1979), laughter termination may occur when the next speaker applies a laughter termination technique, which is a topic pursuit. Although Colin's response pre-empts the laughter, Colin does not opt for pursuit of the topic, but applies a *target switch*. Colin's response "yeah" (line 2) not only prevents possible laughter at him in the next turn after Alexandros' calling on him, but also redirects the target of the tease to Alexandros. With his response "yeah", Colin seems to initiate a mock challenge of the instructor. Alexandros, when calling on Colin, pronounces his name louder and with a strict voice; Colin also pronounces "yeah" in a louder voice and with an intonation that is similar to that of a soldier's response in

the army. Colin's response "yeah" functions as a mock challenge of Alexandros who apparently, by calling on a student who was taking notes, is "overdoing" his suspicion of the student. Colin's "yeah" not only terminates a laughing-at-Colin environment, but also cancels Alexandros' suspicion of Colin and makes Alexandros overly suspicious. After Colin's turn was appreciated by some of the students (line 3) and Alexandros (line 4), Colin provides the correct answer to Alexandros' question which is also treated as funny by the students, maybe because of Colin's intonation which is similar to the intonation of his confirmation turn "yeah" or maybe because they laugh at Alexandros. Colin's correct answer confirms Alexandros' being overly suspicious: not only did Colin hear his question, but also had been following Alexandros' explanation and was able to provide the correct answer.

Laughter after the student's confirmation turn in line 3 seems ambiguous because students may laugh at Colin's funny response or they may laugh at the instructor. By initiating a smile overlapping with the students' laughter (ex. 22a, line 4), Alexandros seems to orient to both possibilities. If students are laughing at Colin's response, he affiliates with the class in appreciative laughter; if the students are laughing at the instructor, with his smile he transforms the *laughing at* into a *laughing with* environment.

Example 23a is similar to example 22a in that Stephen, like Colin, pre-empted the laughter turn by initiating a mock challenge of Alexandros with his confirmation turn "ha." (line 6). When Alexandros turned to the board (line 2), Melanie said something to Stephen and Nancy, and they laughed quietly. When Alexandros took a time out and looked at the class saying "u::m" (line 1), Stephen smiled when looking at Alexandros. Stephen's smile seems to demonstrate that Stephen foresaw Alexandros' suspicion of them because they were talking. Right when Alexandros called on Stephen, Stephen initiated a confirmation turn "ha.", which

pre-empted possible laughter at him and which, similar to the confirmation turn in example 22a, evoked some students' laughter. Although Alexandros pronounced Stephen's name without a special intonation (cf. ex. 22a), Stephen's falling intonation and lower voice when saying "ha." made it sound as not a student response in the classroom, but a response made in a casual conversation which communicates "What? What do you want?" Stephen's "ha.", like Collin's "yeah", was performed in a form of a mock challenge of the instructor and redirected the target from the student to Alexandros, who became the butt of the tease as an overly suspicious teacher because Stephen confirmed that he was paying attention. When Alexandros asked Stephen a question (lines 10 and 12), Stephen gave the correct response, which provides evidence that although Stephen was laughing with Melanie and Nancy, he followed Alexandros' explanation.

Similar to example 22a, laughter after Stephen's confirmation turn (line 8) appears to be ambiguous: it may be at the student's response or at the instructor. Exactly like in example 22a, Alexandros initiates a smile (line 9) overlapping with the students' laughter (lines 8 and 9), thus orienting to both possibilities. His smile could indicate his appreciation of Stephen's funny response or his affiliation with the students laughing at him; in the latter case, his smile transforms the *laughing at* into a *laughing with* environment.

Examples 22a and 23 are of particular interest because they illustrate a *target switch*, or a particular type of counter teasing that has not previously been discussed in the literature. Its social functions include a pre-emption of one *laughing at* environment and creating another *laughing at* which were not discussed in the literature before. Although counter teasing is not new to research of humor, its functions, and what is achieved by application of the *target switch*, or even a succession of *target switches*, deserves a special attention because it helps us to

understand how people build their relationships and how they negotiate their identities when participating in aggressive humorous exchanges.

Target switch. A *target switch* is a particular kind of a counter tease by means of which the target of the tease redirects the humor back to the teaser in the next turn after the initial tease. By placing the *target switch* in the next turn after the initial tease, the initial target of the tease accomplishes two goals. First, by initiating further talk, the *target switch* in this case, the teasee pre-empts the *laughing at* environment and avoids her or his becoming the butt of the tease because other participants of the exchange do not have a chance to laugh at the teasee. Second, the *target switch* creates another *laughing at* environment where the initial teaser, who becomes the target of the teasee's counter tease, has an opportunity to become the butt of the tease. The *target switch* is aggressive because of its quick appearance in the next turn, which eliminates the possibility for the initial teaser to receive appreciation for her or his humorous remark and which, in addition, creates a situation when *laughing at* the initial teaser, but not at the teasee, is relevant.

The phenomenon of the *target switch* suggests that first, in conversational humor the target does not necessarily become the butt and, second, that the target and the butt, which are often used interchangeably, are two different concepts. Attardo (2001), for example, defines the target as individuals, or a group of people "with (humorous) stereotypes attached to it" (p. 23) and argues that the target "selects who is the butt of the joke" (p. 23). While Attardo's definition of the target and the butt can be applied to narrative jokes, joking about absent other, joking at something in which the target is not present or is not a living thing and to self-denigrating humor in which the humorist intentionally makes her- or himself the target and the butt of humor, his

treating the target as a potential butt of the joke restricts the targets who are present to being passive recipients of the humorist's aggression.

While Glenn (1995), like Attardo (2001), seems to treat the target and the butt as the same concept, e.g., “in laughing at environment, *laughable appoints/nominates some co-present as a butt*” (Glenn, 1995, p. 44), he demonstrates how the butt of the tease can transform *laughing at* into *laughing with* environment while remaining the one who is laughed at. Drew (1987), by using a neutral term *recipient of the tease*, does not seem to separate the two concepts either. However, the examples provided in his work show that while the targets of the teases become the butts, they may resist teasing by rejecting the tease or by going along with it by agreeing with the tease or, in Glenn's (2003) words, by “extending the tease against oneself” (p. 125). Although the work of these researchers demonstrates that the target of the tease is not passive because the target attempts to change her or his alignment in relation to other conversationalists (Glenn, 1989, 1995, 2003) or negotiate her or his identity by correcting the tease with a serious response (Drew, 1987), this study shows that the separation of the concept of the target and the butt allows for deeper understanding the process of identity negotiation. My data show that a tease appoints the target, but the target does not necessarily become the butt of the tease. The separation of the two concepts is important because it demonstrates that the target of the tease can do more than providing a serious response, as was shown by Drew (1987), with which the target transforms the target's deviant identity into a normal one; the target of the tease can re-assert her or his status or authority by transforming the teasers' normal identity into a strange one which makes the *target switch* aggressive.

The aggressiveness of the *target switch* is measured by how close it is located to the initial tease. If the teasee fails to act quickly enough to initiate the *target switch* in the next turn

after the initial tease, the teaser's humor is appreciated and the teasee becomes the butt. The teasee can take revenge in the subsequent activities by initiating a *delayed target switch*, which is located in the turn next after the laughter. However, the fact that both humorists share the experience of being the butt minimizes the aggressiveness of the exchange. Since conversational humor is spontaneous and depends on the spontaneous actions of the participants, the outcomes of the *target switch* may vary. Different outcomes of the target switching activities will be discussed in the context in which they appear further in this chapter.

One of the functions of the *target switch* initiated by students appears to be students' resistance to the teacher authority to have students participate in a face threatening activity of responding in front of the class. The instructor may respond by either downplaying his authority by affiliating with the students or by further negotiating his authority in subsequent activities, as occurs in examples 25a and 26a.

Examples 25a and 26a are similar to examples 22a and 23a in that the students suspected of not listening to the instructor pre-empt laughter (compare with ex. 17a and 18a) by providing answers to the instructor's questions (ex. 25a, line 2; ex. 26a, line 3).

(25a) ((Mathew is taking notes))

- 1 Alexandros: what is E of x (.) Matthew
- 2 Matthew: declaration 8.83
- 3 Alexandros: ☺in English
- 4 S1: hah [hah hah hah
- 5 S2: [hah hah hah hah hah hah
- 6 Matthew: um a future time xxxx
- 7 Alexandros: ok, expected future

(26a) ((Jack is not seen on the videotape; lines 4-7 are the end of the previous exchange demonstrated in example 27))

- 4 Alexandros: ☺you missed the two classes? ☺ _____
- 5 S3: hah hah [hah hah
- 6 S4: [hah hah [hah
- 7 S5: [hah hah hah
- 8 Alexandros: ok. Jack, what is what is the product that provides

- 9 coverage for one year after rejects
 10 Jack: eight twenty five at one
 11 Alexandros: Twenty five? [☺where did you get twenty five]
 12 Ss: [hah hah hah]
 13 Ss: hah hah hah hah
 14 Alexandros: ☺
 15 Jack: I am still on the back problem
 16 Alexandros: ☺ ok
 17 Ss: hah hah hah hah hah
 18 Alexandros: so what is this?

Similar to confirmation turns, which function as a *target switch* (ex. 22a and ex. 23a), the students' answers to the instructor's questions in examples 25a and 26a pre-empt the possible laughter turn and cancel the instructor's suspicion, thus presenting the instructor as being overly suspicious and threatening the instructor's authority because he may look mean. By providing responses, the students demonstrate that they were penalized for nothing. However, the instructor treats their utterances as problematic because Jack provides an incorrect response and Matthew does not provide the answer Alexandros expects. According to Alexandros, he wanted Matthew to explain the terminology, but Matthew did not know it and just gave the answer that was already on the board. On WebCT, Alexandros gave students humorous examples of how not to solve the problems and Matthew's answer was similar to those examples. Although the students provide responses different from what Alexandros expects, he does not say they are wrong. Rather, he challenges students back by asking Matthew to provide the answer "in English" (ex. 25, line 3) and asking Jack where he got twenty-five (ex. 26, line 11). Alexandros' questions, similar to teases, are initiated in response to some problematic activities and other students' laughter makes Matthew and Jack the butt of the tease, thus demonstrating that Alexandros was not overly suspicious.

Exchanges 25a and 26a demonstrate that if students cancel Alexandros' suspicion by providing an answer to his question and this answer is not correct, this answer may nevertheless

operate as a *target switch* in the sense that by providing the answer, students trick the instructor to believe they are paying attention. The instructor seems to interpret the students' answer as a tease because he opts for a *reverse target switch*. The *reverse target switch* is the tease initiated in response to the *target switch* and is located in the next turn after the *target switch*. The *reverse target switch* is stronger than the *target switch* in that it may lead to justifying the instructor's suspicion and makes the student the target for second time, and, finally, the butt (ex. 25a).

The *reverse target switch* can also lead to trapping the initial target into telling the truth that the target's response was not serious, as occurred in example 26a. While Matthew (ex. 25a) provides the expected response after he becomes the butt of the tease, Jack does not do so because he was not paying attention. Jack is trapped and has nothing to do but to tell the truth that he did not listen to the instructor. A *trap* is an outcome of a *target switch* sequence in which the initiator of the last *target switch* constructs it in a way that makes the other participant terminate the play frame with a serious response (e.g., Jack cannot continue the play because he seriously states that he is still working on the previous problem).

The next example differs from the previously discussed exchanges of this group because Linda neither provides an affiliative laugh after the instructor calls on her, nor challenges the instructor's tease. Linda does not provide the answer either because she does not know it.

- | | | | |
|-------|----|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| (20a) | 1 | Alexandros: | (5) Linda what is the variance of z |
| | 2 | | doctor Fox' class |
| | 3 | Student: | heh |
| | 4 | Alexandros: | ☺ |
| | 5 | | (3) |
| | 6 | Linda: | variance of z?=
variance of z? |
| | 7 | Alexandros: | ☺are you taking Dr. Fox's class? |
| | 8 | Linda: | hah [no hah hah] |
| | 9 | Alexandros: | [ok] |
| | 10 | Ss: | [hah hah] hah hah hah hah hah |
| | 11 | | [hah hah hah] |
| | 12 | Alexandros: | [ok what's the formula for] |

13 Colin: [I see you there]
 14 Melanie: A ha-hah [hah hah hah hah hah
 15 Stephen: [hah hah hah hah hah
 16 Alexandros: ☺ [Um
 17 Nancy: [hah hah hah hah heh

When Alexandros asks Linda what the variance of z is (line 1), Linda does not provide first laugh and, consequently, does not show her affiliation with the student and the instructor who orient to *laughing at* (lines 3, 4). Linda, after a three-second pause repeats Alexandros' question: "variance of z ?" Alexandros treats Linda's question as problematic by initiating a smile and asking a counter question "are you taking Dr. Fox's class?" Linda's first laugh demonstrates that she orients to the *laughing at* environment and attempts to transform it into *laughing with* before other students laugh at her. Linda's affiliative laugh also operates as a laughter invitation for others to laugh together with her. Linda's and the students' affiliation occurs when the students accept her invitation: Linda's response "no" and post-utterance laughter (line 8) overlaps with the students laughter (line 10).

The reasons for the participants' amusement were different. Dr. Fox's class was a prerequisite to Alexandros' class. Alexandros commented during a stimulated recall session that he did not expect that she was not taking it as the material they cover integrates the material from Dr. Fox's class. To Nancy, as she reported during stimulated recall session, it was amusing because the variance was what students did in Dr. Fox's class and something that she knew from that class came into use in this one. Stephen said that he laughed because he knew that Linda was taking Dr. Fox's class and he assumed that "she said 'no' so that she did not have to answer that question." In line 13, Colin teases Linda that he saw her in that class, which evokes more students' laughter. This example demonstrates once again that the exchanges in this group are threatening for students, especially if students do not know the answer to the instructor's

According to McHoul (1978), instructors may interpret students' "time outs" as their not hearing or not understanding the question and, therefore, they often repeat the question. In example 27a, however, the instructor does not repeat his question. Since the student does not ask Alexandros to repeat or clarify the question, then she claims no problems related to hearing or understanding. Consequently, the instructor orients to a different problem source – the students' missing two classes. Janet, unfortunately, is not seen on the tape, so it is impossible to see whether she realigns with the instructor and the students or not.

The exchange from Rana's class (ex. 28) is similar to those from Alexandros' in that Rana calls on a student and asks him a question. However, Rana does not merely assume a potential problem as Alexandros does, but first detects a definite problem and then initiates a similar exchange. Viktor, a student from Rana's class, did not bubble his name on the answer sheet.

- (28) 1 Rana: ((looks at the student's test; then looks at Viktor))
 2 Viktor, have you written your name this time?
 3 Viktor: Yes
 4 Ss: hah hah [hah hah]
 5 Rana: [hah hah]
 6 Viktor: (xx) I put in there [hah hah hah]
 7 Ss: [hah]
 8 (4)
 9 Rana: ((looks at Viktor and shakes his head))
 10 this does not work. you are not bubbling your name
 11 Viktor: o:h you bubbling you mean
 12 Rana: ☺yes
 13 Viktor: o:[h] I see. you never told me that
 14 Ss: [hah hah]
 15 Rana: [hah hah hah]
 16 Ss: [hah hah hah] hah hah [hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 17 Derek: [oh, come on man, come on]
 18 Rana [hah]
 19 You can start all over again
 20 Student: a-hah [hah hah hah]
 21 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 22 Rana: have you finished?

23 Student: have you taken SAT
 24 Viktor: no

When Rana checked Viktor's answer sheet and did not see his name again, he asked him whether he wrote his name that time (line 2). As Rana said when he viewed the video, this had already happened twice and college students are supposed to know how to do it in any case. Rana's question is face threatening to Viktor because Rana pointed out that it had already happened before, "Viktor, have you written your name this time?" (line 2). Viktor responds that he did (line 3). Students, however, find Viktor's answer amusing and initiate laughter and Rana joins the students in laughing at Viktor's response. Viktor initiates another utterance, "I put it in there" (line 16) and starts laughing together with other students.

Viktor's response that he wrote his name on the test is face threatening to Rana. While it saves Viktor's face by transforming Viktor's identity from the student who always forgets to put his name on the test to the identity of a student who does not, it transforms Rana's teacher identity to the identity of a teacher who just picks on Viktor. Rana regains his status by saying that Viktor was supposed to bubble his name, and not just to write his name on the answer sheet (line 10), thus showing that he does not just pick on Viktor without a reason. Now, Rana's utterance transforms Viktor from the student who was picked on unfairly to the student who does not know how to put his name on the answer sheet correctly.

In line 11, Viktor shows that there was a misunderstanding, but in line 13 he teases Rana by blaming him for not telling Viktor that he should have bubbled his name. Although Viktor blames the instructor, with his blame he seems to play a fool and to create a situation in which laughter at him is relevant because every college student knows how to put the name on the answer sheet. Derek's comment "come on man come on" seems to show that Derek treats Viktor's blame as ridiculous. Although Rana and the students appreciate Viktor's humor, Rana

pays Viktor back for his blaming him by initiating a *delayed target switch* by saying, “You can start all over again” (line 19) and now students laugh at Rana’s joke. A *delayed target switch* differs from the *target switch* in that it is separated from the initial tease by laughter. A *delayed target switch* seems to be less aggressive because both teasers’ humor is appreciated and they both share a misfortune to be laughed at.

The analysis of the exchanges initiated by Alexandros and Rana to manage classroom issues shows that these exchanges are designed to reveal some kind of a problem, which is also seen through the instructor’s body moves.

- (22b) 1a Alexandros: MF_____ M to board_____
- 1b Ok, so basically all this mess right here can be
- 1c Colin: XT/notes_____
- 2a Alexandros: _____ S/writes points_____ writes_____
- 2b simplified (4) into this (.) if I die the first year
- 2c Colin: takes notes _____
- 3a Alexandros: S___ XColin_____ T to board
- 3b I get (3) Colin ☺_____ ok
- 3c Colin: yeah= one hundred
- 3d Ss: =heh heh heh
- 3e Colin: Xnotes_____ XT_____
- 4a Colin: _____
- 4b Colin: hah hah hah hah hah hah hah
- 4c Alexandros: writes_____
- 5a Alexandros: T/X_____ T/X on board
- 5b If I survive, [what do I get]
- 5c Colin: [two hundred] two hundred
- 5d _____
- 6a Alexandros: _____ T to class_____
- 6b ok very good two hundred so we simplify this
- 6c Colin: Xnotes/taking notes_____

Since all these exchanges begin when the instructor is preparing to write or is already writing on the board, the instructor remains standing there throughout the exchange. That is why his

entering the engagement space is limited to turning his head or body to the class or just moving his gaze to the student he calls on (ex. 22b, line 3a). Colin provides the answer demonstrating that he is following the lecture. It appears that if there is no problem, the instructor leaves the engagement space immediately after he gets the student's answer (line 3b).

If the instructor identifies a problem, then he does not leave the engagement space until the problem is solved. Alexandros enters the engagement space (ex. 20b, line 2a) and stays in the same position until Linda says she is not taking Dr. Fox's class (lines 2a, 3a, 4e). Only then does he leave the engagement space and re-enter it at the beginning of the next exchange (5a).

(20b)	1a	Alexandros:	S writes on board T/MB_____ MF to board_____
	1b		(5) Linda what is the variance of z
	1c	Linda:	XT_____
	2a	Alexandros:	_____ T/S_____
	2b		doctor Fox' class ☺ (3)_____
	2c	S1:	heh
	2d	Linda:	variance of z=
	2e		_____
	3a	Alexandros:	_____
	3b		☺are you taking the class
	3c	Linda:	_____
	4a	Linda:	_____
	4b		hah [no hah [hah hah hah
	4c	Ss:	[hah hah
	4d	Alexandros:	[ok]
	4e		_____ MB/Xboard
	5a	Alexandros:	_____ MB SX_____
	5b		[ok what's [the formula for
	5c	Ss:	hah hah hah hah hah [hah hah hah hah
	5d	S2:	[(I see you there)
	5e		XLinda_____
	6a	Ss:	& & & & &
	6b	S3:	A-hah hah [hah hah hah hah hah
	6c	S4:	[hah hah hah hah hah
	6d	S2:	[hah hah hah hah heh

6e	Alexandros:	☺	[Um
6f			_____
6a	Alexandros:	_____	T/writes _____
6b		yeah	xxxxxx
6c	Ss:	&	&

Since the exchanges are designed to identify a problem, this, perhaps, explains why affiliation of the participants is so important. Without affiliation and shifting to the playful mode, participation in such face threatening activities would be more difficult.

The exchanges included in this group are face threatening to both the instructors and the students because students are suspected of doing something wrong or found to have done something wrong, while the instructor may be perceived as over suspicious, controlling, or even mean. Although these exchanges open with an instructor's serious question, students and the instructor immediately orient to playful interaction and humorously challenge each other until the parties prove whether the instructor's suspicion was fair or not. In other words, they shift to the humorous mode to negotiate serious issues.

The shift from serious to humorous mode shows the participants' orientation to the reduction of face threat. The shift occurs when the instructor calls on a student in spite of the fact that there is nothing obviously funny in his address. Since students called on are suspected of doing something that may distract them from paying attention and are expected to provide the answer to the instructor's questions in front of the class which they may not know, the participants shift to humorous mode because humor, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), mitigates face threat.

While the humorous exchanges from Alexandros' class are face threatening to the students and the instructors and lead to identity negotiation, students do not seem to feel bad about the instructors' making them provide responses in front of the class. Nancy reported during

the stimulated recall session that Alexandros “wants to make sure that [students] are paying attention” and he asks a lot of students a lot of questions “to involve [them] in participation”. According to Jack, Alexandros’ questions help students “not to fall asleep” and pay attention to what he is doing. Jack said that when Alexandros asked him, he was not following his explanation, so his questions made Jack pay attention to what he was doing. Although Melanie admitted that Alexandros’ questions scare her and other students, at the same time, she believes that these moments are the moments of “building camaraderie among students”. Students laugh together at their misfortune and at the same time, as Nancy and Melanie agreed, relieve their stress and as Nancy added, “helps to go back to concentration.”

The situations when students may be distracted from the instructors’ lecture are not unique to Alexandros’ classroom. Ming’s students did not always pay attention to his explanation either, but he did not try to attract their attention by calling on them like Alexandros did. Once Greg, who, according to Ming, was very gifted in math, was sleeping almost the entire class. Greg was sitting in the first row, right in front of the instructor. When watching the video, Ming saw how Greg was dropping his head on his chest and thought it was funny. He also added: “student sleeping for Americans is OK, Americans always eat and drink in class.” Ming also said that Greg looked “very tired and also really bored” because “[students] take too many classes from early in the morning” and “it’s hard to focus on the class from the morning to noon.” Ming also noticed that students were distracted from his explanation “by other stuff”, but he did not make an attempt to involve them into class discussion.

During the same class period, Will, a student from Ming’s class, played computer games for almost half of the class. When watching the video segment, Ming pointed out that Will was playing computer games, but he did not say anything about his attitude toward the student being

distracted. When viewing the same segment, Will, however, said that Ming spent so much time on explaining a computer program that he “got bored after awhile” and “began to lose [his] focus.” Although, according to Will, Ming spends much time on something to make sure that everybody understands the material, it appears that students do not benefit from it because they are not engaged in class discussions.

The examples included in this section illustrate that when students do not pay attention or do something wrong (e.g., Viktor not bubbling his name), the instructors may choose to tease them. Since teasing functions as a device for creating social bonds and exerting social control (Eisenberg, 1986), instructors while threatening students’ positive face create an environment for affiliation and building in-group relationships, while simultaneously involving students in learning.

Affiliating While Maintaining Teacher Authority

Twenty-three humorous exchanges by means of which instructors created rapport and affiliation with their students while maintaining their authority include narrative jokes and cartoons, joking at absent other or joking about something, and humorous self-repair. Although narrative jokes and joking at absent other or about something are similar in how the participants co-constructed their identities, it seems reasonable to separate them in two groups because exchanges containing joking at absent other and joking about something differ structurally from narrative jokes. Joking at absent other and joking about something are short humorous utterances inserted in the instructors’ longer turns. Unlike during joke-telling, when making short jokes about absent other or about something instructors do not seem to signal the transition from serious to humorous mode or to initiate affiliative laughter with the students at the end of these

exchanges. Humorous self-repair resembles jokes about absent other or jokes about something, but the transition from the serious to humorous talk is emphasized in these exchanges.

Rapport Building Through Narrative Jokes and Cartoons

The exchanges included in this group are funny stories told by Wen and cartoons showed by Rana in their Political Science classes. These exchanges show how instructors display their identity and reveal who they are at certain moments of interaction. The examples also show that while the instructors reveal attributes of their other identities by which they affiliate with their students, they enact their teacher identity by initiating and terminating the humorous exchanges and holding the floor.

Five times Wen and Rana told funny stories or showed cartoons related to the class topic. According to Wen, funny stories help students understand class content, get students interested in a class topic, and make them feel relaxed. Rana believes that showing cartoons related to the class topic at the end of the lecture makes students leave the classroom in a happy mood.

In addition to the functions mentioned by Wen and Rana, jokes appear to serve as a device for rapport building between the teacher and the students. Wen and Rana use jokes and cartoons to illustrate the concept of outsourcing discussed in their political science classes. Wen tells a joke that he read on the internet forum (ex. 29) and Rana shows students a cartoon that he found on the internet (ex. 30).

- | | | | |
|------|----|------|--|
| (29) | 1 | Wen: | also it's spread to many um areas right |
| | 2 | | the other day we were talking about NGO in the |
| | 3 | | other group discussion, I was I was surfing around |
| | 4 | | the website called sleek deals dot net its a website |
| | 5 | | where people discuss about sales and deals |
| | 6 | | available in all all kind of um um shops then there is |
| | 7 | | one day one guy posted the message saying now |
| | 8 | | there are free telephone calls to China, and this is |
| | 9 | | the number you dial and there is another person |
| | 10 | | who replied to say what a pity that there is not free |

- 11 phone calls to India because I have some Indian
 12 friends over there and the other guy replied instead
 13 if you wanna talk to India you just need to pick up
 14 your [phone and call]
 15 Ss: [((some ☺/~____))]
 16 Wen: [any kind of credit] card [company and they'll]
 17 Student 1: [hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 18 Student 2: [hah hah hah hah hah]
 19 Ss: [~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~]
 20 Wen: [put you through to India]=
 21 Ss: [~ ~ ~ ~]
 22 Ss: =hah hah [hah hah hah hah hah]
 23 Wen: [hah hah and that's [a mean joke] bu-aha-t
 24 Student 3: [o::::h]
 25 Wen: and it says a lot about nowadays credit companies
- (30) 1 Rana: ok, on this is happy end we can close ☺
 2 (6) ((students read the joke))
 The joke says:
 Dad: C'mon kid, climb up here and tell the nice man in
 Bangalore, India, what you'd like for Christmas.
 Kid: I don't believe it. They've outsourced Santa.
- 3 Student 1: hah
 4 Student 2: a: hah hah [hah hah
 5 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah ☺
 6 Rana: ok, test

Although narrative jokes and cartoons are delivered in different modes, the participation structure of these two exchanges demonstrate how teacher identity emerges through turn taking organization of these exchanges: when telling funny stories and showing cartoons, the instructors hold the floor, while students contribute to interaction with laughter.

However, when telling a joke, Wen reveals some aspects of his personal life not known to students and not strictly relevant to his teacher identity. By revealing these attributes, Wen appears to seek affiliation with his students. As one of his students, Teresa, commented during the stimulated recall session, the story that Wen told reveals some aspects of his personal life such as the websites he goes to and the chats he participates in. Sharing personal experiences is

one of the steps to rapport building (Unger-Gallagher, 1991). Also, Wen tells a joke which targets an ethnic groups, Indians. Teresa believes that Wen would not tell this joke if there were Indian students in the classroom because this joke could be offensive to them. Wen orients to the fact that the joke could be offensive by acknowledging that “that’s a mean joke” (ex. 29, line 23), but at the same time, he mentions that this is an example of how credit companies in the U.S. work, thus drawing on his and his students’ shared experiences in American culture. By telling this joke, Wen attempts to affiliate with the American students and create comembership in that he and the students share some cultural background knowledge that allows them to understand the joke.

Although Rana’s joke also targets Indians, the situation is a bit different because Rana is Indian himself and represents the target group. By showing this cartoon, he not only affiliates with American students on the basis of shared cultural background knowledge, but he laughs together with them at the target group to which he belongs.

How rapport is built between the instructor and students is also seen through affiliative laughter. Although laughter at the end of Wen’s joke and Rana’s comic demonstrates different patterns, it shows how instructors and students align while laughing together. Wen’s joke-telling in front of the class resembles a performance of stand-up comedians who rarely start laughing at their own jokes because it may be interpreted as “engaging in self-praise, akin to a public speaker applauding herself for making an effective oratorical point” (Glenn, 1989, p. 137). Wen does not initiate laughter at the end of his joke, but he joins it after the students initiate the first laugh (lines 17, 18, 22, 23). Rana smiles before students have read the joke (line 1). Perhaps this is because the joke is not Rana’s, but somebody else’s. According to Glenn, when laughables “derive their laughability from another source or assign credit for the laughter to someone other

than the current speaker” (p. 143), the current speaker initiates laughter to appreciate someone else’s wit. It also could be that Rana’s first laugh serves as an invitation and permission to laugh at the target group to which he belongs. Although Wen and Rana orient differently to the laughables, with shared laughter and initiated smile, they align with the students and demonstrate their willingness to enjoy humor together.

Although in these examples the instructors and students share their amusement by the jokes, at the same time the instructors and students orient to power relationships. Students laugh at the jokes, but they do not initiate any responses or comments to the jokes. The instructors are the ones who initiate the shift from serious to humorous mode, hold the floor during joke telling, and direct the talk back to the serious mode. In other words, they are in charge of initiation and termination of humorous exchanges, which they express not only verbally (e.g., by introducing a forthcoming joke) as shown on the videotape, but also by the way they position their bodies while performing the jokes.

The body moves on the onset of the jokes emphasize the instructors’ entering the engagement space, or “body fields of engagement” (Gill, Kawamori, Katagiri, & Shimojima, 2000, p. 96), and demonstrate their commitment to the verbal exchange. By leaving the engagement space, Wen and Rana withhold their obligation to continue this particular exchange, which coincides with their termination of humor and the shift to the serious talk as demonstrated in the following examples. The body moves toward and from co-participants are also known as proxemic shifts (Erickson & Schultz, 1982), or change in interpersonal distance, which operates to introduce “a new segment in the discourse structure” (p. 84).

As viewed on the videotape, Wen (ex. 29a) enters the engagement space (line 1a) on the words “um areas” (lines b): he moves forward and occupies a position from which he tells the joke. He stops on the word “right” and stays in that position throughout joke telling.

(29a)	1a	Wen:	MB_____MF_____S
	1b		also it's spread to many um areas right
	1c	Ss:	((sit listening/taking notes))_____

Students do not emphasize the beginning of the joke telling, but rather continue their routine business of listening to the lecture and taking notes (line 1c). Only when students recognize the text as a joke do they enter the engagement space by moving their gaze to the instructor, and they stay within the engagement space until Wen signals the end of the joke. He emphasizes the end of the joke by moving backwards, thus leaving the engagement space on the words “and that’s a mean joke” (ex. 29b, lines 23a,b). Students complement the instructor’s body moves by changing their body posture at the transition from humorous to serious talk on the word “bu-aha-t” (line 23b). The instructor’s and the students’ movements thus embody the end of humorous interaction.

(29b)	23a	Wen:	MBw_____MF_____
	23b		[hah hah and that’s [a mean joke] bu-aha-t
	23c	Ss:	& & &

When showing the cartoon, Rana’s body moves are similar to those of Wen’s during joke telling. Rana starts moving forward in the direction toward the bar near the door (ex. 30a, line 1a,b) when prefacing the cartoon “ok, on this happy end we can close” (line 1b). When he reaches the bar, he turns around to face the class, stops on the word “close” and remains standing leaning against the bar facing the class until the students laugh.

(30a)	1a	Rana:	MF_____T/S_____
	1b		ok, on this is happy end we can close ☺
	1c	Ss:	((X on slides))

When Rana prefaces the forthcoming comic, students who had already started packing their bags, stop packing and focus their gaze on the slide (ex. 30a, line 1c). Rana does not signal the end of the joke with his body moves simultaneously with the students' change of their posture. Students emphasize the end of the joke by changing their posture while laughing (lines 5-6a), but Rana remains standing at this point. After that, he turns at the word "ok" (ex. 30b, line 5-6c), which is a verbal transition marker (Modaff, 2003), to highlight the transition from humorous to serious mode, and immediately starts moving forward when initiating a new topic about the test.

(30b)	5-6a	Ss:	((some)) & & & & XT___
	5-6b		[hah hah hah hah hah ☺_____]
	5-6c	Rana:	ok. Test
	5-6d	Rana:	Stands_____ T_ MF

The instructors' leaving the engagement space at the transition word "ok" (line 5-6d) at the end of joke telling seems to impose constraints on students' participation in humorous exchange since a new segment in interaction is going to take place. Students' participation in interaction is possible when the engagement space remains open, which is demonstrated in examples 31 and 32.

In example 31¹⁰, Wen tells the same joke as in example 29 to a group of students during group work, which occurred during the class session previous to the one when he told the joke to the entire class. Similar to example 29, Wen enters the engagement space by moving to the group and going down on his knees (line 1) in front of the students' desks, which are arranged in a circle. At the end of the joke, he does not leave the engagement space and stays in the same position as he was during joke telling (lines 7-10) and one of the students, Clayton, initiates a comment (line 10d), which overlaps the students' laughter turn.

¹⁰ Since this example demonstrates the same joke that Wen told in example 29, I do not provide its full transcript here. I provide only the parts of the transcript, the beginning and the end of joke telling that I compare to example 29.

- (31) 1a Wen: MF _____ Kn _____
 1b i was i was I was browsing the website- called sleek
 2a Wen: _____
 2b deals

((in lines 2-6 Wen tells the joke))

- 7a Wen: Kn _____
 7b and another guy said why don't you just pick up the
 8a Wen: _____
 8b phone and call your credit card company in India
 9a Wen: _____
 9b Ss: & & & & & &
 9c hah hah hah hah hah hah [hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 9d Wen: [hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 10a Wen: _____
 10b Ss: & & &
 10c Wen: hah hah hah [hah hah hah]
 10d Clayton: [actually] ((not intelligible))

Example 32 shows a similar pattern at the end of a humorous story about Chinese Gold

Farmers¹¹ that Wen told in class. After telling this story as another example of outsourcing, Wen leaves the engagement space, but re-enters it by moving forward (58a, 59a) and saying, “just to make you laugh” (line 58b, 59b).

- (32) 58a Wen: MF _____ MB _____ MF _____
 58b it's another extreme example of outsourcing? Just to
 58c Ss: & & & & & XT _____
 59a Wen: _____
 59b make you laugh
 59c _____
 60 Teresa: I was just that shows you the kind of people here that

¹¹ Wen read this story in the New York Times and tells it to students as another example of outsourcing. There are Chinese companies who employ people in China to play videogames on-line to earn on-line currency. Then, they sell the currency on e-bay to richer players from the U.S. and South Korea who want to play video games, but do not have time to play them on the beginning levels and need the on-line currency to start playing from the higher levels. The U.S. and South Korean players buy on-line currency for dollars. This way, the Chinese players called Chinese gold farmers who farm on the internet for money, earn \$150 a month for playing video games.

- 61 nobody wants to walk away from it, everybody
 62 needs to buy tickets to the next level
 63 Wen: uh-huh. yeah. some people enjoy you know,
 64 starting from real beginning and play really hard
 65 Teresa: and I know when I was younger I mean I was from
 66 the internet generation, and there was no cheat
 67 codes and my little brother plays x-box and all he
 68 does is get a cheat code=
 69 Wen: =[yeah]
 70 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah] hah hah hah hah hah hah
 71 John: (xx? Did you play xx?)
- 72a Wen: MB _____
 72b Teresa: I also (played) princess from level one
- 73a Teresa: _____
 73b Ss: hah hah hah hah hah hah
- 74a Wen: MF _____ MB _____
 74b Let's quickly get into some other topics

After Wen's re-entering the engagement space, a student, Teresa, like Clayton in example 31, nominates herself to be the next speaker before Wen initiates a new topic (line 60). Teresa shares information about her personal experience of playing videogames. In line 65, Teresa again volunteers to speak to continue sharing her own experience with the class and the instructor. John, addressing Teresa, opts for self-selection too (line 69) and the students' talk "schism[s] into sub-conversation" (Glen, 1989, p. 134) thus resembling casual conversation. At the end of Teresa's turn, Wen moves backwards (lines 70a, 71a) and then he moves forward simultaneously initiating transition to a new topic by saying "Let's quickly get into some other topics" (lines 72a,b).

In the example 31, the instructor remains kneeling at the table and does not emphasize the end of the joke with body moves and he does not signal the end of his joke verbally by initiating a new topic. Although the instructor leaves the engagement space in example 32, he re-enters it and, like in example 31, he does not move to a different topic. Apparently, his behavior invites

students' participation and reshapes student-instructor relationships. Clayton (ex. 31) and Teresa (ex. 32) claim their rights to speakership, thus seeming to equalize their and the instructor's rights to navigate the talk. Wen's not shifting to a new topic appears to provide students with the opportunities to share their thoughts and experiences related to the topic of the instructor's joke. Students' sharing their experiences with the instructor shows that students, similar to Wen in example 29, also participate in rapport building.

Wen's verbal and non-verbal actions in examples 31 and 32 re-shape the participant structure of the classroom talk, altering the relationships between the teacher and students. Students receive more rights to participate in the talk. After a brief moment of sharing power with the students, Wen reasserts his rights to initiate transition to the next topic. Wen performs the transition verbally and with his body moves. First, he withdraws his commitment to the conversation initiated by the students by leaving the engagement space (line 70a) and then re-enters it with the words "Let's quickly get into some other topics", thus signaling a new unit in discourse and claiming his right to direct the classroom talk again.

The examples of joke telling reveal several important details of identity negotiation. Teacher identity is maintained through the instructor's holding the floor, switching from serious to humorous mode and back to serious talk. The instructor may reshape the power relationship and give students more rights to talk by verbal and non-verbal actions that invite students' contributions. While instructors perform their role of a teacher, through joke telling, the attributes of the instructors' other identities that allow them to affiliate with their students on the basis of shared cultural background knowledge and sharing personal experiences emerge as well. Thus, while maintaining their roles of instructors and students through turn taking organization supported by body moves, participants build rapport by revealing some details from their

personal lives and affiliate with each other by sharing some attributes of their identities that they have outside of the institutional setting.

Creating Affiliation Through Joking About Absent Other and Joking Without Targets

Twelve humorous exchanges included in this group are similar to joke telling in that instructors initiate humorous exchanges during their long turns when they deliver lectures. The utterances that embed humor, however, begin in a serious mode and they are followed by the instructors' serious talk without allowing the time for laughter; that is why students' laughter most of the time overlaps the instructors' serious talk. Similar to joke telling, the humorous exchanges from this group demonstrate how instructors build rapport and affiliate with their students while performing the role of a teacher.

The exchanges from this group, similar to jokes, are targeted on somebody not present or do not have targets at all. The distinguishing feature of these humorous sequences is that they lack the transition from serious to humorous mode of interaction.

As Wen and Alexandros pointed out during stimulated recall sessions, the humorous utterances are used in these exchanges with multiple purposes. Wen uses humorous comments to explain class material. Alexandros also uses humor to better explain the content of the lecture; in addition, he uses humor to draw students' attention toward something important (a lot of homework, a difficult formula to learn).

One major characteristic of these humorous exchanges is that while students respond to them with laughter and sometimes with long and persistent laughter, or with laughter and a serious response, or even "go along" (Drew, 1987) with the instructor's humor, the instructor's transition to the serious talk almost always overlaps with the students' laughter thus constraining

some students appreciate the impropriety (lines 4-6). By ridiculing the values of his own culture, Wen also affiliates with his American students because the students and Wen have similar views. One of the students, John, commented on this video segment, “for Americans, it’s funny why they want more boys, why people do that”. Wen expresses a similar opinion during the stimulated recall session, “their bias against girls – that’s traditional thinking, but it’s ridiculous.”

Alexandros, similar to Wen, also performs teacher identity by humorously explaining class material. As he explained when viewing the video, he was “trying to get [students] in the thinking mode” by asking “stupid questions”.

- | | | | |
|------|---|-------------|---|
| (34) | 1 | Alexandros: | Think think of this can we have the benefit |
| | 2 | | paid at the beginning of the year of death? |
| | 3 | Ss: | hah hah [hah hah hah hah] [hah hah hah |
| | 4 | Melanie: | [no:::] |
| | 5 | Alexandros: | [no ok that’s not possible |

Alexandros asks students whether an insurance company can pay benefits before somebody dies. Students respond to his question with laughter, which Alexandros interpreted during a stimulated recall session as the students’ understanding of his point: it is impossible to pay benefits before somebody dies. One of the students also provides a “no” response. Alexandros accepts the student’s response (line 5), but he does not share laughter with his students and pursues serious talk, which overlaps with the students’ laughter (lines 3, 5).

Alexandros uses the same technique of asking “a stupid question” again to explain a formula (ex. 35). This example differs from the previous one in that Alexandros supports his question with gestures.

- | | | | |
|------|---|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| (35) | 1 | Alexandros: | if you take it back where is it gonna |
| | 2 | | go ((shrugs his shoulders)) |
| | 3 | Ss: | hah hah hah hah hah hah |
| | 4 | Alexandros: | right☺ |
| | 5 | Ss: | ah hah hah |
| | 6 | Nancy | In my pocket |

- 7 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah]
 8 Alexandros: [ok all right]

When asking where the money should go in that situation, Alexandros shrugs his shoulders, which could be understood in this situation to indicate something like “nowhere” or “who knows?” (line 2). Students initiate laughter and Alexandros accepts their laughter as a correct response, saying, “right” (line 4), which is accompanied with his smile. His smile seems to indicate that he appreciates students’ reaction to his question thus aligning with them. A student, Nancy, “goes along” with Alexandros’ humor saying “in my pocket” (line 6). Although Alexandros smiles, he does not share laughter with the students and continues his lecture. As soon as Alexandros hears Nancy’s response “in my pocket” (line 6), he moves to the next topic. His transition, as in the previous example, overlaps with the students’ laughter (lines 7, 8).

Alexandros said that he also used humorous comments embedded into longer turns to draw students’ attention to something important that students should not miss. According to Alexandros, in the next example he exaggerates by saying that the equation “looks nasty” to draw students’ attention to the formula they had to memorize.

- (36) 1 Alexandros: that equation you have to memorize. this is what it
 2 looks like (.) its nasty=
 3 Nancy: = ouch
 4 Melanie: he heh
 5 Stephen: eu::: [what’s that]
 6 Nancy: [ha-hah ha-hah]
 7 Alexandros: I will explain it next time

Students elaborate on Alexandros’ humor “it looks nasty” (line 1) by responding “ouch” (line 2) and “eu, what’s that” (line 4) thus supporting the instructor’s humor and collaborating with him. While providing supportive responses, some students not only demonstrate their attention, but also illustrate their agreement with Alexandros, thereby affiliating with him. Alexandros does not

share laughter with the students, nor does he smile. He continues his talk saying, “I will explain it next time” (line 7).

Exchanges 33-36 share several characteristics. All of them are initiated within longer instructors’ turns, but the instructors do not provide an introduction to the forthcoming joke. This is because jokes continue instructors’ serious utterances and do not stand alone; they are embedded into serious segments of talk. Only sometimes, instructors mark the humorous comment with a short pause at the beginning (ex. 36, line 1) or with a short pause and a louder voice (ex. 33, line 1). As examples 33-36 show, the instructors’ transition back to serious talk always overlaps with the students’ laughter. Most of the time, instructors do not invite laughter and do not share laughter with students during these exchanges because only students’ laughter is relevant at this time. In example 33, students’ laughter indicates their acceptance of the instructor’s impropriety (see Jefferson, Sacks, & Schegloff, 1987); in examples 34 and 35, laughter is taken by the instructor as demonstration of their understanding of the instructor’s point; and in example 36 the instructor interprets laughter as a demonstration of the students’ attention to the important information. The instructors’ not indicating transition to the humorous mode, not sharing laughter with the students, and transitioning to serious talk simultaneously with students’ laughter minimize the interruption of serious talk.

This minimization of the interruption of serious talk can also be observed through the instructor’s body moves. When the instructor pronounces the humorous utterance, he remains standing at the same place (ex. 33a, lines 1a, 2a, 3a) and starts moving slightly only when he transits to another segment of talk “so you know” (line 4a).

(33a)	1a	Wen:	S_____
	1b		especially they wanted to have boys (.) <so if boys
	1c	Ss:	Sit_____

2a	Wen:	_____
2b		do not come they will continue
2c	Ss:	_____
3a	Wen:	_____
3b		[get work> till boys would come]
3c	Khalila:	[~ ~ ~ heh heh [heh heh heh]
3d	Matilda:	[heh [heh heh]
3e	Sara:	[heh heh heh heh heh]
3f	Ss:	& & &
4a	Wen:	M_____T_____M_____
4b		so you know, they its very it was extremely hard for
4c	Ss:	Sit _____

The beginning and the end of the humorous utterances in the form of a question (ex. 34a, lines 1a, 3e) are marked by the instructors' body moves. However, the body moves in these exchanges are more likely to emphasize not a humorous exchange per se, but the transition from the narrative to a question format.

(34a)	1a	Alexandros:	MF_____
	1b		Think think of this can we have the benefit
	1c	Ss:	Sit_____
	2a	Alexandros:	_____
	2b		paid at the beginning of the year of death?
	2c		_____
	3a	Ss:	& & & &
	3b		hah hah [hah hah hah hah] [hah hah hah ((talking))
	3c	Melinda:	[no:::]
	3d	Alexandros:	[no ok that's not possible
	3e		S_____ MB_____

The turn taking organization, turn design, and laughter organization of these exchanges supported with the instructors' body moves show that although the instructors use humor for different purposes while giving a lecture or explaining the material, both instructors and students orient to on-going serious talk thus performing their identities of teachers and students. While

instructors initiate humor which amuses students, they use their authority to terminate amusement as their serious talk is still in progress.

Rapport Building Through Humorous Self-repair

This group includes two exchanges initiated by Alexandros and Wen. Utterances that were ambiguous in some way were disambiguated by the instructors' humorous self-repair in a form of self-targeted humor. Although instructors use self-targeted humor, the organization of these exchanges together with the supporting body moves show that instructors treat these two types of exchanges as not threatening to their teacher status. Self-targeted humor here does not seem to be used to downplay their authority; on the contrary, their humor appears to show that while teaching, the instructors use their sense of humor to entertain students.

Alexandros (ex. 37) draws students' attention to possible misunderstanding of his utterance. When Alexandros explained a formula where one of the symbols stands for mortality, he pointed to the symbol and told the students, "mortality right there is waiting for me" (line 1).

- | | | | |
|------|---|-------------|--|
| (37) | 1 | Alexandros: | no mortality mortality right there is waiting for me |
| | 2 | | (2) |
| | 3 | | ((" "gesture)) ☺I did not mean that ((" "gesture)) |
| | 4 | Alexandros: | [☺ _____] |
| | 4 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah hah hah] [hah hah hah] |
| | 5 | Alexandros: | [ok] |
| | 6 | | what is this saying? |

Alexandros' comment "mortality right here is waiting for me" has two scripts. One meaning in the Math language is that the symbol for mortality is right there on the board in that situation. Another script reads, "I will die at this point". Students do not indicate with their laughter that Alexandros' utterance is funny (line 2). Alexandros uses his teacher status and initiates a repair on the utterance "mortality right here is waiting for me" to make a humorous comment and to allow for some entertainment. He activates the switch to the second script by saying, "I did not

mean that” (line 3). Although he said something that is not funny in math language, his switching to another script demonstrates his sense of humor. Alexandros does not laugh with students at his own joke, but he smiles while students appreciate his humor.

Like Alexandros who initiates a repair on an utterance, Rana does not admit that he made a funny statement because the statement he made includes students’ ideas. When explaining class material, Rana asked students to provide two examples of products that people mostly need, which appeared to be coke and cars.

- | | | | |
|------|----|-------|---|
| (38) | 1 | Rana: | Give me some of the products, give me any product |
| | 2 | S1 | car |
| | 3 | S2: | coke |
| | 4 | Rana: | Coke ok ok so there are two |
| | 5 | S: | hah hah [hah hah hah] |
| | 6 | Rana: | [☺ for the purpose] for the purpose of this |
| | 7 | | class let's say all human |
| | 8 | | beings require only two things, one coke the other |
| | 9 | | cars |
| | 10 | Ss: | hah hah hah hah= |
| | 11 | Rana: | =let's say for example, and the US with its resources |

When Rana begins summarizing what students said, one of the students initiates laughter before Rana finishes his utterance, because the student prospectively orients to the end of Rana’s utterance: the two products that human beings need are coke and cars. Rana initiates an affiliative smile and then repairs his utterance saying that it is just for the purposes of his class. This exchange is entertaining because when Rana repeats what students have suggested, he produces an ambiguous statement: coke and cars are the most important products for human beings in general vs. coke and cars are the most important products for human beings as an example to explain class material. So, with his utterance containing students’ examples he seems to build rapport with his students by using their examples and thus working together.

Although instructors maintain their teacher identity by initiating and terminating humorous exchanges, through their humor, they also build rapport with their students. Wen displays his disagreement with the traditions of his culture and demonstrates similar views with American students by means of a sexual joke. Alexandros asks “stupid” questions to make explanation more accessible to his students. In other words, teaching and rapport building seem to occur simultaneously. Apparently, being too authoritative makes instructors more distant from and less accessible to students. Therefore, building rapport with students allows for maintaining teacher authority without overexerting it.

Affiliating While Recovering Teacher Authority

Ten humorous exchanges were initiated to recover compromised or possibly compromised teacher status with the affiliative activity of laughing together invited by the ITAs. These exchanges also occurred during instructors’ turns in which they delivered lectures.

This group includes two types of humorous exchanges in which instructors make themselves the targets of their own jokes. One type includes instructor-initiated comments that prevent students from asking the instructor questions they cannot answer or comments on something that the instructors did wrong (made a mistake, provided an unsuccessful example). To recover their authority, instructors joke about what they have done wrong. Although they make them look “not altogether competent” (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997), the instructors seem to mitigate their students’ possibly negative perception of their competence. When allowing students to laugh at their own misdoings, instructors “downplay their authority while exercising it” (Tannen, 1994, p. 177). They downplay their authority by revealing their errors or weaknesses, but they exercise their authority by actually telling about their errors to students.

Although they seem to look “not altogether competent”, they are still competent enough to notice the error and correct it.

The second group, which is not included in the discussion, consists of two humorous exchanges were initiated by Alexandros unintentionally. One of them occurs when Alexandros accidentally touches his bag with his computer and it falls down. Another one occurs when Alexandros writes a formula on the board and makes an error. These situations evoked students’ laughter and Alexandros used humorous comments in response to students’ laughter to reassert his status.

Similar to the example of joking about absent other and joking without a target discussed in the previous sections, instructors use humor in the middle of instructional talk. The instructor’s humorous comment referring to something they did wrong is followed by students’ laughter. The instructors may or may not share laughter with students and their transition to the serious talk may or may not overlap with students’ laughter. Unlike previous exchanges where instructors’ body moves at the end of the sequences support on-going serious talk, the body moves at the end of these exchanges separate humor from serious interaction.

Rana uses self-denigrating humor which works as rapport-building and identity display because through this type of humor, he presents himself as “human and not altogether competent” (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997, p. 284). According to Rana, he did not know the five main pollutants, so before students ask him what those pollutants are, Rana prevents their questions with self-denigrating humorous comment.

- | | | | |
|------|---|-------|--|
| (38) | 1 | Rana: | I wouldn't like to put a lot of science into it |
| | 2 | | because a) you would not like it, b) because I don't |
| | 3 | | know it ☺ |
| | 4 | Ss: | hah hah hah hah hah [hah hah hah ~ ~ |
| | 5 | Rana: | [so the the some assumptions |

6 [i-heh-heh-s that there are five gases
 7 Ss: [~ ~ ~ ~ ~

This exchange shows the complexity of the identity negotiation process. Rana does not just downplay his authority. First, he exercises it by making a decision of not including the scientific information because it is not interesting for his students (line 2) thus attending to the students' face wants first. While exercising his authority by telling students that he will not provide any scientific information on greenhouse gases, he downplays it by telling the students directly that he lacks knowledge on this subject. The lack of knowledge may be seen as threatening to Rana's status and he initiates an affiliative smile, which also could be interpreted as a laughter invitation, which the students accept (line 4). As in previous exchanges, Rana continues his talk, which overlaps with the students' laughter (lines 4-7). In line 6, he initiates within-speech laughter and aligns with his students by laughing together. Thus Rana goes through a complex process of negotiation in which exercising his authority occurs simultaneously with rapport building and affiliation.

Rana's display of his lack of knowledge also reveals his familiarity with American classroom culture. According to Tannen (1994), in many cultures professors would not admit their unawareness of something; in American culture, however, it is not unusual that professors can admit that they do not know the answer to the students' questions.

Unlike Rana, who prevents students' questions with self-denigrating humor, Wen uses humor in the aftermath of providing an unsuccessful example (ex. 39). Providing an unsuccessful example may threaten his teacher's status. Apparently, Wen opts for creating a *laughing at* environment before the students challenge his example. During his lecture, Wen talked about trade relations between countries and how the U.S. controls world trade. Wen mentioned a

military option as a possible method to control world trade by referring to the Iraq war, which, according to Wen, was not successful.

- (39) 1 Wen: in our case (.) is certainly not a successful example
 2 to look at
 3 [(1)]
 3a Matilda: [>hum<]
 3b [((Matilda and Clarissa exchange looks))]
 4 Wen: hah [hah hah so um (.)]
 5 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 6 Wen: so what people think

After Wen provided the example, he made a short pause (line 1) and expressed his personal opinion that the military option was not a good example (line 1). Two students looked at each other (line 3b) and one of them, Matilda, initiated a quiet laugh (line 3a). However, the other students did not join her in laughter but started laughing only after Wen initiated a laughter invitation (lines 5, 6). It might be that although Wen created a *laughing at* situation by initiating self-denigrating humor, his higher status did not allow students to start laughing at his comment before he offered a more explicit sign, his laughter invitation, to laugh at him. It appears that, similar to the previous example, downplaying and exercising authority occurs simultaneously: on the one hand, Wen deemphasizes his authority by initiating self-denigrating humor; on the other hand, he exercises his power by inviting them to laugh together.

The next example differs from example 39 in that students did not wait for the instructor's laughter invitation, but started laughing simultaneously with the instructor after his self-targeted comment. Wen was responding to a student's comment on environmental issues and was so involved in his talk that he shifted to another topic. As one of the students said in stimulated recall, while Wen was responding to the student's comment, "he realized that he slipped into his personal beliefs; it was more his opinion."

- (40) 1 Wen: but its not gonna happen because you always have
 2 other things that contribute
 3 (3)
 4 we are a little bit off topic but
 5 Matilda: hm hm
 6 Clarissa: hm hm hm
 7 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah]
 8 Wen: [hah ha hah ha ha hah] ☺ consequences you
 9 know

Similar to example 39, Matilda again initiated something like quiet laughter and Clarissa did so too (lines 5 and 6). After that, students together with Wen started laughing at Wen's comment. Matilda's and Clarissa's laughter after Wen's comment characterizes the environment as *laughing at* and Wen and other students laugh at Wen's comment.

The example from Alexandros' class (ex. 41) resembles the examples from Wen's and Rana's classes in that he acknowledges that he made a mistake, but it differs from those examples because Alexandros does not affiliate with his students. Alexandros talks about endowment insurance and says that no matter what happens, an insured person gets benefits. A bit later, Alexandros stops drawing a graph, goes to his table, looks into his notes, then, returns to the board (line 2b) and says, "so actually you don't get paid no matter what" (line 3). The statement evokes students' laughter because it is opposite of what he had said before.

- (41) 1 Alexandros: it gets paid no matter what (2) ok (2) u:m
 2a [(22)
 2b [((goes to his table, looks at his notes, returns to the
 2c board))]
 3 ok (1) so actually you don't get paid no matter what
 4 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah]
 5 Alexandros: [that's whole life insurance] ok I made a mistake

Making mistakes is threatening to the teacher's authority, so Alexandros, like Wen in examples 39 and 40, negotiates it. On the one hand, he presents himself as a human who is not perfect; on the other hand, initiating self-criticism makes him look good in front of students because he can

criticize not only the students, but also himself. Unlike Wen and Rana, who initiated shared laughter, Alexandros does not laugh together with his students. Rather, he first states something contrary to what he stated before, which students treat as funny. Jokes are supposed to be appreciated by the audience (Glenn, 1995). Thus, first, he entertains the audience, and only after his comment has been appreciated does he acknowledge that he made a mistake. He exercised his authority by evaluating his own work and he downplayed it by admitting he made a mistake.

The exchanges initiated by the instructors in response to something they did wrong are threatening to the teacher authority. The instructors' body moves appear to show that the instructors indicate that something went wrong by pausing, and after the pause they admit what happened. In example 38a, Wen begins to move backward during the pause and his utterance "we are a little bit off topic", thus leaving the engagement space and distancing himself from the activity that threatened his authority. He re-enters the engagement space to share laughter with the students.

(38a)	1a	Wen:	M/Xaway_____	MB/Xaway
	1b		always have other things that contribute (3)	
	1c	Ss:	XT/notes_____	
	2a	Wen:	_____	MF
	2b		We are a little bit off topic but	
	2c		_____	XT
	3a	Wen:	_____	MB/X_____Xaway
	3b		[hah hah hah hah hah hah] ☺and	
	3c	S1:	hm hm	
	3d	S2:	hm hm hm	
	3e	Ss:	[hah hah hah hah hah]	
	3f	Ss:	& & &	

By leaving the engagement space simultaneously with admitting that something when wrong, the instructors reconfigure the body field of engagement. According to Gill, Kawamori, Katagiri, and Shimojima (2000), reconfiguration occurs when there is disturbance in the participants'

relationships. The discrepancy between the speakers “is expressed by the bodies’ need to re-arrange their relationship to each other, so that a feeling of sharing an engagement space is re-established” (p. 97). When the authority of the instructors is threatened, the instructors appear to re-arrange the relationships with the students and to re-enter the engagement space to share laughter.

Making mistakes or saying something irrelevant is rather face threatening because it threatens the teacher’s status. Therefore, the instructors negotiate their authority by making a self-denigrating humorous comment and simultaneously giving students permission to laugh at them. It appears that using humor in such situations also helps the instructors to create an environment for offering affiliation at their own expense (Glenn, 1995). After instructors acknowledge that they did something wrong, they either initiate a laughter invitation or join in laughter after students initiate the first laugh. Although the situations when instructors make errors may become awkward, using humor to laugh at themselves can also relax participants and “ease the tension of awkward moments” (Sarkisian, 2006, p. 29).

The humorous exchanges included in this group demonstrate how ITAs, simultaneously with recovering their authority, build rapport with their students. Rapport building occurs when ITAs and their students affiliate when they laugh together at the instructor upon his invitation or voluntarily at his humorous comment.

Student-initiated Humorous Exchanges

Student-initiated exchanges included in this group are divided into three categories based on the degree of threat to the teacher authority. The first category, *affiliating while having authority enhanced*, incorporates three exchanges initiated by students who sought the instructor’s affiliation and support when they did something wrong. In the exchanges included in

the category *affiliating while re-asserting authority*, students challenge teacher status and instructors assert their authority in subsequent activities. The sequences form the last group *affiliating while passing authority to a student* are the most threatening to teacher authority because students attempt to hold the floor and the instructor passes authority to students so that they continue to talk.

Affiliating While Having Authority Enhanced

Not only instructors, but also students initiate self-denigrating humor when they do or say something wrong and need to recover their status or positive image. While recovering their status, students enhance the instructor's authority by seeking the instructor's support and affiliation.

With his self-denigrating humorous utterance, John recovers his identity of a good student and makes Wen's identity of an instructor relevant at the same time. John initiates self-denigrating humor when Wen gives quizzes back. As John commented when he viewed the video segment, he knew he had not done well on the quiz.

- (42) ((Wen moves around the classroom and gives back his students' quizzes. He moves toward John, calls his name and stretches his right arm out to give John his quiz))
- | | | |
|---|-------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Wen: | John |
| 2 | John: | ☺You can throw it into a trash can |
| 3 | Wen: | hah hah hah hah hah |

John is a good student, but he did not prepare for the quiz, so he expects a bad grade on it. John's positive face is threatened and his identity of a good student may be damaged as well. By saying to Wen, "you can throw it into a trash can", John lets Wen know that he is not happy with the expected quiz score, thus recovering his identity of a good student. During a stimulated recall session, John said, "I knew it [the quiz] was bad; I did not want to see it. It was the quiz I was not ready for". With this comment John demonstrates that he is aware of his bad performance and

does not even want to see the expected bad grade. At the same time, he makes Wen's authority relevant by letting Wen know that he is not satisfied with the grade. With his self-denigrating humor he seems to seek Wen's affiliation and support of his self-criticism. By laughing, Wen appreciates John's humor and affiliates with him.

The next example demonstrates how a student, Anne, creates affiliation with the other students and Rana while she is recovering her identity of a competent speaker. Anne was reporting the news and "lost her train of thought", as Tenesha explained during a stimulated recall session. In order not to stop talking and at the same time to find the place where she lost her thought, Anne says, "huh huh-huh" (line 10), as if she is singing.

- | | | | |
|------|----|-------|--|
| (43) | 1 | Anne: | And China is- has announced plans of investment |
| | 2 | | (of the sum) of 5 billion dollars in environmental |
| | 3 | | protection to into 2006 into 2010 the amount equal |
| | 4 | | to more than 1.5 percent of China's annual growth |
| | 5 | | in domestic products and it will be using to control |
| | 6 | | water pollution and improve air quality in China's |
| | 7 | | cities to increase solid waste disposal to |
| | 8 | | reduce soil erosion and (.) huh huh-huh |
| | 9 | | [China] |
| | 10 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah] |
| | 11 | Rana: | [☺] |

Anne is reading the news from a newspaper in a monotonous voice. When she loses her train of thought, she pauses (line 8) and then says "huh huh-huh" (line 10) which seems to indicate that she messed up and to operate as self-denigrating humor. Anne's losing her train of thought is face threatening when making the news report in front of the entire class and getting a grade for the report, so she acts similar to the instructors when they made an error or said something inappropriate. By initiating a self-denigrating comment, Anne creates an environment when laughing at her is relevant and students and Rana affiliate when appreciating her humor (lines 10,

11). At the same time, Anne recovers her identity of a competent speaker by demonstrating that although she messed up, she is able to admit her error and entertain the class.

Similar to exchanges in which the instructors create affiliation while recovering their authority, students also create affiliation while recovering their student identities. During these exchanges, instructors' authority is not threatened, but enhanced. By initiating self-criticism, they let the instructor who assesses their knowledge know that they are in agreement with his expected negative evaluation. At the same time, they appear to seek the instructor's confirmation of his agreement expressed by his laughter or smile. Apparently, no matter whether the teacher authority or a student identity (e.g., an identity of a good student, an identity of a competent speaker) is at risk, the instructors and students orient to affiliation while participating in face threatening activities.

Affiliating While Re-asserting Authority

The data show that students do not have many opportunities to initiate humor because most of the time instructors hold the floor. Students can initiate humor in the turns which are pre-allocated for students such as in their response to the instructor's questions, while asking questions, or, in other words, when instructors allow for students' contributions.

The exchanges included in this group are initiated by students during the lectures and are challenging to the instructors because even if the instructors are not the targets of students' humor, their authority is somehow threatened and they re-assert their teacher status. Situations that are challenging for instructors can arise when instructors ask unspecific or ambiguous questions, when students ask challenging questions, or just humorously respond to the instructors' comments. In all cases, instructors need to deal with the students' humor.

Affiliating While Dealing With Students' Challenging Responses

Ambiguous questions and the questions to which students do not know the answer evoke students' ambiguous responses, which are different from what the instructor expects. Students' ambiguous responses operate like teases because they make instructors' questions strange, and, therefore, they are threatening to the instructors' authority. First, they indicate that instructors' questions are not clear and, second, they create an environment in which the students are appreciated for their amusing responses. As a result, instructors re-assert their authority in the subsequent activities.

When dealing with the student's tease, Wen aligns with the student and then performs a *delayed target switch* (ex. 44). Wen asks a question which does not seem to be specific, "what does WTO has to do with environmentalists?" (lines 1-2). A vague question elicits a vague response from John, "they hate capitalism" (line 3).

- | | | | |
|------|---|-------|--|
| (44) | 1 | Wen: | But environmentalists, what does WTO has do with |
| | 2 | | environ-environ-environmentalists. |
| | 3 | John: | They hate capitalism so- |
| | 4 | Wen: | hah |
| | 5 | John: | hah hah hah |
| | 6 | Wen: | more detail. [Explanation.] (.) how? |
| | 7 | Ss: | [hah] |

With his response, John challenges the instructor because Wen needs to either accept John's response or reject it. Wen first appreciates John's humor by initiating a laugh (line 4). John also laughs and affiliates with the instructor (line 5). After John and Wen create affiliation, Wen re-asserts his authority by making John explain his answer in more detail (line 7). Wen's asking for more explanation operates as a *delayed target switch* because Wen challenges John back and makes him the target and the butt of the tease (line 6) after the parties appreciate John's humor

that challenged Wen. Students appear to orient to the *laughing at* environment of Wen's tease and initiate a short laugh (line 7).

Alexandros also has to deal with a student's challenging response (ex. 45); however, he does not appreciate the students' humor nor does he affiliate with her. Rather, he opts for a direct rejection, which itself may be treated as humorous (line 11). Alexandros asks students a question about the time of death of the insured person that would be more beneficial for the insurance company.

- (45) 1 Alexandros: now let me ask you this, what happens if you
 2 have somebody die right there. (2) which one would
 3 the insurance company prefer. this one or this one
 5 Nancy: second [one]
 6 Ss: [the second one]
 7 Student 2: first
 8 Student 3: no, no, no the first one=
 9 Alexandros: =who says the first one?
 10 Nancy: it depends on how long it happens=
 11 Alexandros: =[<<no, no, no>> this is let's suppose it's for one year]
 12 Ss: =[hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah
 13 hah hah hah hah]
 14 Alexandros: it definitely does not matter doesn't matter the
 15 period which one does the insurance company
 16 prefer?

Alexandros provides students with two options for the answer and asks them to choose one (lines 1-3). Students who are not sure of the correct response make guesses and then Nancy says that both options are fine; it is just a matter of fact how long it takes a person to die (line 10). While in the previous example Wen first appreciated the student's humor and then initiated a delayed target switch to re-assert his authority, Alexandros asserts his authority by rejecting the tease and pursuing serious talk (line 11).

Alexandros' rejection also seems to work as a target switch. Although his response "no, no, no" does not seem humorous, the manner in which Alexandros performs it makes it funny.

He pronounces “no, no, no” louder which makes his rejection both funnier and stronger. In addition, his rejection makes Nancy the target because he negatively evaluates Nancy’s response. Alexandros appears to treat Nancy’s response as funny and initiates his rejection right upon Nancy’s completion of her utterance; as a result, Alexandros and Nancy’s utterances latch (lines 10, 11). According to Jefferson (1979), initiation of talk after the laughable may lead to the termination of laughter. In this situation, however, students’ laughter overlapping with Alexandros’ rejection “no, no, no” is ambiguous since it is initiated simultaneously with Alexandros’ rejection: students may laugh at Nancy’s humorous comment and continue laughing at Alexandros response, thus affiliating with both.

Rana’s student also provides a challenging response (ex. 46), but Rana, unlike Wen, who first created affiliation and then performed a delayed target switch, or Alexandros, whose target switch overlapped with students’ laughter that was appreciative of Nancy’s and possibly his utterances, affiliates with the students after he accepts Ken’s challenging response.

- | | | | |
|------|----|-------|--|
| (46) | 1 | Rana: | How many science majors? |
| | 2 | | (2) |
| | 3 | Ken: | ((raises his hand)) |
| | 4 | Rana: | CFC is Montreal protocol. |
| | 5 | | (3) |
| | 6 | | Any light on that? |
| | 7 | Ken: | nope |
| | 8 | Rana: | ok |
| | 9 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah] |
| | 10 | Rana: | [hah hah] CFC is is its its in an emission |

Ken’s response “nope” (line 8), as Tenesha said during a stimulated recall session, is funny because Ken is a science major and does not know what the Montreal protocol is about. It is also funny because Ken’s response is an informal and rather direct acknowledgement of his ignorance, which is not mitigated or hedged (for example, by saying “sorry”). Since Ken does not know anything about the Montreal protocol, with his response “nope” he creates *laughing-at-*

Ken environment. However, students do not laugh after Ken's response, but they do laugh after Rana says "ok". Rana's "ok" does not switch the target, but it does create an environment where laughter after his "ok" is relevant. By accepting Ken's response which is not the answer to Rana's question, Rana creates a *laughing-at-Rana* situation. Rana's "ok" changes the environment in that now students' laughter is invited not by Ken's self-denigrating comment to laugh at him, but it is invited by Rana's comment. Thus, with his "ok" Rana creates an environment in which not Ken's but Rana's comment is treated as humorous because, according to Sacks (1989), laughter affiliates with the utterance after which it occurs. By accepting Ken's response, Rana downplays his authority and re-asserts it at the same time by inviting students to laugh together.

Ming, while affiliating with a student who provides a vague response (ex. 47), also initiates a target switch. Ming shows to his students a very long expression used in programming and asks students whether they can use the expression. However, he does not specify where to look for an error in that expression.

- | | | | |
|------|----|--------|--|
| (47) | 1 | Ming: | Can we use this expression= |
| | 2 | Kevin: | =yes= |
| | 3 | David: | =um go back up to the top heh heh heh yeah |
| | 4 | | this xxxxx yeah um |
| | 5 | Kevin: | right there |
| | 6 | David: | yeah |
| | 7 | Ming: | yeah [heh heh heh heh heh heh] |
| | 8 | David: | [heh heh heh heh] |
| | 9 | Ming: | yeah means yes or heh heh |
| | 10 | David: | sure yes why not heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh |
| | 11 | | heh heh heh heh |

Kevin says "yes" (line 2) and David asks Ming to scroll up to the beginning of the expression.

Kevin seems to find the error and says "right there" (line 5) and David confirms "yeah" (line 6).

Ming repeats David's response (line 7) and Ming and David initiate shared laughter (lines 7, 8).

Jefferson (1972) recognizes this practice of repeating the previous utterance as appreciation of the prior turn. Laughter, however, could be either at or with the speaker of the laughable, which becomes evident in the subsequent talk. The next turn shows that Ming treats David's response as problematic because he initiates clarification of David's response. After his clarification question Ming initiates a post-utterance laughter invitation. However, since Ming's utterance has not been completed "yeah means yes or", it is not clear in this particular situation whether Ming treats his utterance as a laughable or instead of completing the utterance with "no" or "something else" he finishes it with laughter. It may be that Ming laughs because he does not know how to interpret David's response. However, David affiliates with Ming by sharing his laughter with him, thus treating the environment as laughing at him and transfers *laughing at* into *laughing with*.

Although David says "sure yes why not" (line 10), he initiates a long post-utterance laughter invitation turn, which is also ambiguous in that it may indicate that David treats his response as funny or he is not sure whether his answer is correct and laughs because now he is embarrassed. Although David and Ming seem to work on clarification of David's answer, they seek support of and affiliation with each other.

When Ming and David watched this video segment, they explained what was going on there differently. Ming commented that in Chinese culture, "yes" always means agreement, but when David said "yeah" he seemed to be kidding. Ming explained that sometimes he does not know what David is talking about and that was one of the examples of that. That is why he was joking, "yeah means yes". Although this difference in meaning could be the cause of cross-cultural misunderstanding, Ming, figured it out. David commented: "I am arbitrarily saying yes, and he knew that I am arbitrarily picking yes; he knew exactly what I was doing." Thus, this

exchange demonstrates that although Ming was not sure what David's response meant, he applied his observation of how "yeah" is used in American English and with the help of laughter he was able to make David believe that he knows that David was not sure whether his answer was correct.

The exchanges included in this group show that the instructors treat students' vague responses as teases. Since teases usually follow a problematic utterance which is strange in some way (Drew, 1987), the students' responses make the instructor's questions somehow problematic, vague, and unclear. Following Drew's schema, the students' responses transform the instructors' identity as normal teachers into the instructors who ask unclear questions. When teasers treat the instructor's utterances and, consequently, identity as deviant, they exert social control over the instructor. Therefore, the instructors re-assert their authority either by initiating a repair on the students' tease, which functions as a *target switch* (ex. 44, 46) in which students become the butts of the teases, or by providing a response which changes the environment from *laughing-with-a-student* to *laughing-with-an-instructor* (ex. 45). At the same time, by initiating shared laughter the participants create environments in which affiliation of the instructors with the students is relevant.

Affiliating While Responding to the Students' Challenging Questions

Sometimes students ask questions that challenge the teacher's status. These exchanges are similar in that students, by nominating themselves as next speakers, initiate questions that threaten the instructors' authority because the instructors find those questions difficult to answer. Similar to the groups of exchanges where students provide challenging responses to the instructors' question, the instructors do not just re-assert their authority in these exchanges. They

re-assert their authority while affiliating and aligning with students, so affiliation and authority negotiation go hand in hand.

During his lecture (ex. 48), Wen provides the data on the distribution of the foreign direct investment (FDI) among countries and shows that 50 poorest countries receive only 1.4 % of FDI. Mary asks a clarification question in which she exaggerates: actually these countries receive no money (line 10).

- | | | | |
|------|----|-----------|---|
| (48) | 1 | Mary: | question for you 1.4 is that of the remaining |
| | 2 | | 20 [percent?] or is that of |
| | 3 | Wen: | [yes] |
| | 4 | Mary: | a total amount? |
| | 5 | Wen: | 80 % goes to the North, and and and amount of 20% |
| | 6 | | of the remaining FDI, 73% goes to ten developing |
| | 7 | | countries, and 1.4 goes to South South African |
| | 8 | | countries you know the poorest states |
| | 9 | Mary: | ok |
| | 10 | Matilda: | so actually they get zero ha? ~ ~ ~ |
| | 11 | Clarissa: | hah hah [hah hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 12 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 13 | Wen: | actually yea-hah. [they they get money.] (.) am but |
| | 14 | S3: | [hah hah hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 15 | | poor ok but |

Matilda's question challenges the information that Wen provides and even makes it ridiculous.

Matilda treats her clarification question as laughable (line 11) and initiates a silent laughter invitation. While Matilda invites others to laugh with her at her witty remark, her laughter invitation also reinforces the environment of laughing at the information that Wen has just provided thus, challenging Wen. Other students join and share laughter with Matilda. Wen, first, goes along with the tease by agreeing with the student "actually yea-hah" and providing within-speech affiliative laugh. Then, he pursues a serious response to the tease "they get money," and after a short pause he corrects himself, "but poor" (lines 13, 15). Thus, the student's tease made

him seriously respond to Matilda's tease to correct "the teasing version, as in some way putting it right" (Drew, 1987, p. 228).

The next exchange occurred during class break (ex. 49) when a student asked Wen whether he was in China during the events they were talking about in class. Wen mentioned that at that time he was 11 years old. One of the students was surprised that Wen was only 28 years old, and challenged him with a question "you were eleven years old in 1989". With this question he put the instructor in a position that he is too young to teach him (line 1).

- | | | | |
|------|----|-------|--|
| (49) | 1 | Bill: | you were eleven years old in 1989, |
| | 2 | | (.) |
| | 3 | Wen: | yeah (.) Too young to teach you mean hah hah |
| | 4 | | [hah hah hah] |
| | 5 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah] |
| | 6 | Bill: | get out of [here |
| | 7 | Wen: | [I know hah hah |
| | 8 | John: | I was seven |
| | 9 | Bill: | I like teachers older than me |
| | 10 | Wen: | what |
| | 11 | Bill: | I like teachers older than me (.) |
| | 12 | | [hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah |
| | 13 | Wen: | [~ ~ ~ ~] |
| | 14 | | I know |

The instructor vocalizes what the student insinuates by challenging him back with a tease (line 3), which allows him to take control over the conversation, "too young to teach you mean". Wen also initiates a laughter invitation. The laughter invitation by the teaser creates a *laughing at* environment (Glenn, 1995) and students share laughter with him at Bill who becomes the butt of Wen's tease (lines 4, 5). After Bill got laughed at, he says, "get out of here" and his response overlaps with Wen's serious "I know" and Wen's affiliative laughter invitation. Bill, however, does not show any attempt at affiliation with the instructor. On the contrary, he gets even more aggressive saying, "I like teachers older than me". Wen initiates repair in line 10, "what". Sometimes when students initiate a humorous utterance that is aggressive or inappropriate in

some way, they opt for not repeating it (see ex. 57, 58). Bill pursues aggressiveness and repeats that he likes teachers older than himself and invites laughter. Wen affiliates with Bill by releasing silent laughter and then opts for the serious response, “I know”. Exchange 49 is threatening to the teacher’s authority because the student initiates three challenges in the same exchange. Only the instructor’s serious response stops the student from further challenging contributions and leads to re-asserting his authority.

Example 50 that occurred in Rana’s class when students were watching a news clip also shows how students challenge the instructor and how the instructor reasserts his authority. Rana stops the clip on the words: “remember the classic song” (line 1).

- | | | | |
|------|----|--------|-------------------------------------|
| (50) | 1 | Voice: | remember the classic song ((music)) |
| | 2 | Derek: | what was [the classic song?] |
| | 3 | Ss: | [what was the classic song] |
| | 4 | Ss: | hah hah hah hah hah hah |
| | 5 | Rana: | ☺it’s a news clip, not a movie |
| | 6 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 7 | Rana: | [☺] |
| | 8 | Max: | what was [that song?] |
| | 9 | S1: | [na-na-na] |
| | 10 | Rana: | ☺I am an old guy I don't know |
| | 11 | | much about the songs ☺ |
| | 12 | Ss: | hah hah hah hah [hah hah hah] |
| | 13 | Rana: | [ok folks] |

Derek asks Rana what the song was, thus focusing not on the news but on the song. Students treat this question as funny and appreciate student’s humor. This question seems challenging for Rana because he may not know the song or he may not want to get off topic and answer the student’s irrelevant question. To avoid answering the student’s question, he initiates an affiliative smile and performs a delayed target switch by teasing the student that it was not a movie, but a news clip (line 5). His tease is challenging for the students because it transforms the students’ normal identity to the identity of students who cannot distinguish between movies and news

clips. Students appreciate Rana's humor with laughter (line 6) and Rana aligns with them by initiating a smile (line 7).

Students appreciate Rana's humor, but at the same time, they pursue challenging the instructor (line 8). To deal with this question, Rana can either avoid answering the question again, or stop the students' teasing somehow. Rana chooses to tell them that he does not know the song because they are from different generations and, therefore, he does not know much about the songs (line 10). When saying that he is "an old guy", Rana disaffiliates with his students and his disaffiliation assists him in getting out of the challenging situation. Although it was a classic song that people from different age groups might know, Rana responds as if it was a modern popular song that young people know. By providing such a response, Rana re-asserts his authority because not knowing a classic song would be embarrassing, but not knowing a popular song is O.K. because he does not belong to that age group that listens to those types of songs. Rana's re-asserting his authority is accompanied by his affiliative smile (lines 10, 11) and students appreciative laughter of Rana's self-denigrating humor.

A challenging exchange from Wen's class (ex. 51-1)¹² also exemplifies how re-assertion of the teacher authority can occur simultaneously with affiliation and building rapport with the students. When talking about the One Child Policy in China, Wen expressed his personal opinion that not having a sibling, people miss emotional attachment (lines 6-10). In line 18, a student asks Wen whether it is weird for him not to have siblings and Wen responds that it is not weird for him because all his friends are like that (lines 19, 20).

(51-1) 6	Wen:	if you have ask me personally what I think about what I
7		think about, you know, you know you're missing you miss
8		something as a person you do not have siblings, you do not
9		have the sort of emotional attachment to a sibling which for

¹² This humorous exchange is part of a longer talk on the topic. Example 51-1 is the first part of the analyzed sequence, and 51-2 is its second part.

10 me is a um which is a problem,
 11 Matilda: [oh]
 12 Wen: [ok] so, let's go back to child policy in China
 13 [A-he-heh-nd the other you know
 14 Matilda: [hah hah hah hah]
 15 Ss: [hah hah]
 16 Wen: [other than other than]
 17 Matilda: [ha hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 18 Mary: is not it weird for you
 19 Wen: its you know its not really, because all my friends
 20 are the same thing=
 21 John: =I'll be your brother if you want me to=
 22 Ss: [HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH]
 23 Wen: [☺]
 24 Ss: [HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH hah hah hah]
 25 Wen: [you know in China hah hah hah hah hah]
 26 [that's that's i mean] [that's not an easy]
 27 Ss: [((laughter))]
 28 S2: [you argue a lot]
 29 Ss: HAH HAH HAH HAH

According to Teresa, Wen looked upset when he said that he missed an emotional attachment.

Wen also felt that he looked very upset, as he said when viewing the video. So, John responded to his comment with a tease “I’ll be your brother if you want me to (line 21).

John’s tease evokes a burst of students’ laughter and the instructor’s smile. One of the students affiliates with Wen by teasing John back “you argue a lot” (line 28), insinuating that Wen may not accept his brotherhood because John argues a lot with Wen in class. Wen, however, seems to respond to the student’s offer seriously with a story that in China, offering brotherhood is not a joke, because people who want to become brothers swear to die on the same day.

(51-2) 30 Wen: in China that's not an easy joke because if you say I
 31 am gonna be your brother you know we need to go
 32 through a ritual, to worship a god and and drink and
 33 have some drinks and say and claim that from now
 34 on even if we are not born on the same day, the
 35 same month, or same year, we claim that we'll be

36 we'll be dying on the same day, same month, same
 37 year, that's sort of a ritual that we go
 38 [through]
 39 John: [I'll take it back]=
 40 Wen: =[you are not gonna do that]
 41 Ss&John: [HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH] HAH HAH HAH
 42 Wen: [HAH HAH HAH HAH]
 43 Ss: HAH [HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH]
 44 Wen: [HAH HAH HAH HAH]
 45 HAH
 46 Ss: hah hah hah hah hah
 47 Wen: yeah [so other than] the controlling the fertility rate
 48 Ss: [ha ha ha ha]

When John hears that he will have to die with Wen on the same day, he retreats and says that he takes his words back (line 39). As John explained during a stimulated recall session, Wen is older than him, which is why he said “I take it back”. Since John is younger than Wen, it suggests that he might have to die earlier than he otherwise would in order to die together with Wen. John becomes the target of Wen’s tease and a potential butt of the tease. However, John orients to the *laughing at* environment by initiating a response which overlaps with the end of Wen’s utterance (lines 38, 39), thus attempting to pre-empt students’ potential laughter at him. By retreating, John invites students’ laughter at his humorous comment and simultaneously terminates the humorous exchange.

In this exchange, Wen first allowed students to laugh, thus accepting being the butt of John’s tease, but then he performed a delayed target switch, which grew into trapping John. Recall, a *trap* is an outcome of a *target switch* sequence when the initiator of the last *target switch*, Wen in this situation, construts the *target switch* in a way that makes the other participant terminates the play frame by seriously admitting that the play cannot be continued. Although Wen’s target switch is delayed, it was strong enough to trap John. During a stimulated recall, Wen said that the story was a joke because in China, they do not do this ritual anymore. Wen’s

joke not only amused the students, but also assisted Wen in re-asserting his authority by means of the *target switch* and *trap*. As the exchange illustrates again, affiliation and authority re-assertion are two activities that occur simultaneously.

Affiliating While Passing Authority to Students

Passing authority to students occurs when students use an opportunity to hold the floor and continue talking on a different topic without asking instructor's permission to do so, and the instructor does not terminate their turn, but passes authority to students to continue their talk. This happened only twice, in Rana's class, when students were given the floor to make a report on the news and they used their opportunity to hold the floor to tell other news, which are entertaining, but not relevant to the class topic. Although students usurp authority to remain in front of the class and talk, Rana does not resist, but affiliates with the students.

Sandra (ex. 52) is talking about a hurricane in Maine. After she finishes talking about the hurricane, she continues, "also, this is not related to the environment" (line 1) and introduces another piece of news about a representative from Florida, Mark Foley, who was involved in a scandal. Sandra's move is rather threatening to the teacher's authority because she does it without his permission. Rana, however, does not initiate any move to prevent her from telling the story. Rather, he initiates the first laugh and affiliates with Sandra and students who provide funny comments on the topic.

- | | | | |
|------|----|------------|---|
| (52) | 1 | Sandra: | and also I noticed cloudiness in the water too also this is |
| | 2 | | not related to the environment like the |
| | 3 | | representative from Florida Mark [Foley] he was um |
| | 4 | Rana: | [hum] ~ ~ ~ |
| | 5 | Sandra: | caught emailing and IMing a 16-year-old male |
| | 6 | Student 1: | yu::: |
| | 7 | Sandra: | [a:::nd] |
| | 8 | Rana: | [hah] |
| | 9 | Ss: | hah hah hah |
| | 10 | Sandra: | [☺it says that while he was doing this he was of |

11 Rana: [☺]
 12 Ss: [& & & & & &
 13 Sandra: alcohol abuse but um when um it was um when
 14 people found out about this he just abruptly um
 15 resigned=
 16 Student 2: =hah
 17 Sandra: so yeah
 18 Student 3: right,
 19 Sandra: and its also one of the biggest headlines right now
 20 Rana: yes

Apparently, students do not have many chances to talk in class because the teacher gives lectures most of the time. Students also do not have rights to change the class content, even if it is boring for students, e.g., global demographic and health issues, environment, and issues in international trade and economic relations. Therefore, they use their opportunity of being a speaker to hold the floor and to tell something to entertain others and make the class more amusing.

However, even holding the floor, it does not seem to be so easy for students to introduce an entertaining story. To share entertaining news with the class, a student who currently holds the floor needs to act quickly before the instructor takes control over the conversation or the audience initiates applause and dismisses the speaker. Sandra (ex. 52) transits to the second news quickly, without a pause (line 1), so that the instructor and the audience do not have a chance to deprive her, a student, the right to speakership.

Unlike Sandra, Paul (53) struggles to retake the floor after he loses the right to his speakership. Paul was delivering news and at the first relevance transition point, when Paul stopped talking (line 3), students and Rana initiate applause.

(53) 1 Paul: it was a magnitude of 9.5 earthquake off the coast of
 2 Indonesia, which was the highest kill in history of
 3 that region, and s-s-
 4 Ss: XX[XX[X]X]
 5 Rana: [X]
 6 Paul: [no no no no no]
 7 Ss: [a-hah-hah]

8	Rana:	[a-hah ok]
9	Paul:	[I gotta] I gotta light news xxx target
10	Student:	[hah hah hah]

To regain the floor, Paul rejects their applause (line 6). His rejection evokes students' and the instructor's laughter. After Paul's humorous rejection of applause, Rana gives his permission to Paul to finish his news report (line 8) and then Paul says, "I gotta light news" (line 9). Although Paul insists on holding the floor, Rana does not resist; rather he affiliates with the class while permitting Paul to take the floor (line 8).

These exchanges appear to be threatening to the teacher authority because students take control over the class activities. By bringing entertaining news to class, students resist what they may feel is boring, the content that they have to talk about. When viewing the video, Tenesha said that on the day of Sandra's news presentation, the topic was the hurricane in Maine, which was boring. A representative of Florida being caught, however, was interesting and entertaining because "everyone would say sleek comments and it was funny." Although Rana was not very happy about the student telling this news because, according to Rana, he would prefer that students present something related to the class topic and not about the sexual relations of a representative, he did not stop the student and even laughed with the class when Sandra was telling the news. Similarly, when Paul, who was dismissed by the students and the instructor with their applause after a long talk, regained the floor, Rana passed authority to him to deliver light news. As he commented during a stimulated recall session, he allowed Paul to deliver entertaining news because the point is to get used to talking in front of the class. Although the students' taking over class activities is rather challenging to the instructor's authority, Rana opts for allowing students to do so. As the data from the stimulated recall sessions demonstrate, for

Rana, getting students interested in the subject was very important; therefore, he traded his authority for students' interest in the subject.

Extended Sequences

This group includes exchanges initiated either by instructors or students with humorous responses to humor. In these exchanges teachers share their authority with the students when they negotiate class issues and when they participate in a collaborative construction of meaning, or when students and instructors compete for the authority while negotiating their political views in the Political Science class. I first discuss the category *affiliating while sharing authority* with students and follow with the category *affiliating while competing for authority*.

Affiliating While Sharing Authority with Students

The practice of instructors' sharing authority with students occurs when ITAs and their students shift their social roles to negotiate class issues or to construct meaning collaboratively. An example of negotiation of class issues is when students bargain for fewer questions on the test whereas an example of collaborative construction of meaning is when students together with the instructor explain a concept to another student.

Sharing Authority During Negotiation of Class Issues

When participating in negotiation, instructors seem to share their authority with students by allowing for students' suggestions and requests and by negotiating students' suggestions with them. Ten out of twelve sequences from this group occurred in Wen's class, one in Ming's class, and one exchange happened in Rana's class.

The first two examples (ex. 54 and ex. 55) demonstrate how through affiliation instructors comply with their students' requests not to include maps on the final test and reconsider the grades if a student fails the quiz. Affiliation occurs when the negotiators enter the

play frame and try to negotiate. Rana's student, Tenesha, asks Rana not to include map questions on the exam (ex. 54, line 1).

- | | | | |
|------|----|----------|----------------------------------|
| (54) | 1 | Tenesha: | no map? |
| | 2 | Rana: | ☺ ((rubs his hands))= |
| | 3 | Tenesha: | =Don't act like that Mr. C. |
| | 4 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 5 | Rana: | [☺ ok no maps] [no <u>maps</u>] |
| | 5a | | (((Raises Hs up))) |
| | 6 | Ss: | ((applaud)) |

After Tenesha's question, Rana initiates an affiliative smile and playfully rubs his hands together, thus switching to a humorous mode and opening a play frame with a tease. By making a request, Tenesha threatens Rana's negative face because requests are impositions. She also threatens Rana's authority because students do not have power to tell instructors what to do. With her request, Tenesha also threatens her own face because Rana may treat such a request as inappropriate and make a direct refusal. The social roles of instructor and students that involve power relationships appear to be an obstacle for negotiation. To start negotiation, Rana opens the play frame with his gestures, which seem to communicate a mischievous threat to make the exam more difficult by including maps (line 2). Tenesha, who was the original target of the tease, enters the play frame and initiates the target switch by which she appears to make a plea not to be mean by including maps: "Don't act like that Mr. C¹³" (line 3).

Tenesha's target switch is challenging for Rana because he needs to make a decision either to refuse Tenesha's request to not include maps or to comply with it. Both outcomes are threatening to his authority: by refusing the request he may seem mean to students; by agreeing with it he may damage his teacher status. According to Glenn (1995), affiliation occurs when the target of the tease transforms *laughing at* to *laughing with* environment; Rana, however, does not laugh. He affiliates by initiating a smile and by agreeing not to include maps on the test and

¹³ This is how students addressed Rana.

students immediately align with him by applauding. Although Rana's agreeing with students to not include maps on the exam may be threatening to his authority, the negotiation within the play frame allows for mitigation of this face threatening activity.

Wen affiliates with a student with shared laughter while negotiating the quiz scores. John is not prepared for the quiz and asks whether Wen is going to drop the lowest quiz score (ex. 55, line 1).

- | | | | |
|------|----|---------|---|
| (55) | 1 | John: | are you going to drop the lowest one? |
| | 2 | Wen: | I am not dropping the lowest but I am thinking to |
| | 3 | | narrow down the range for the last two quizzes. The |
| | 4 | | last two (all) supposedly on the world map, all |
| | 5 | | countries on the list. but I am thinking to narrow |
| | 6 | | down the list= |
| | 7 | John: | =but I'll get [zero on this one] ~ ~ ~ ~ |
| | 8 | Wen: | [to make it easier] |
| | 9 | Clara: | u:m-hah hah hah |
| | 10 | John: | [but I'll get a zero on this one |
| | 11 | Mariel: | [hah hah |
| | 12 | Wen: | ☺ hah hah hah |
| | 13 | | well if somebody does, I am gonna reconsider it |
| | 14 | John: | ok |

When the instructor says that he will not drop the lowest quiz score, John makes himself the target by saying that he will get a zero; he does not say seriously that he is not ready. John's joke that he will get a zero on the test communicates that he is not ready for the quiz and at the same time functions as an indirect request to drop the lowest quiz score. Since instructors, but not students, have authority to decide on the class policies, for John it may not be appropriate to ask Wen to drop his lowest score. Therefore, John makes himself the target of his humor, which minimizes his threat to his own positive face and simultaneously minimizes his imposition on Wen when asking to drop the lowest test score. Other students laugh and a sense of bonding unites the students and Wen. As he shares in the laughter with the students, Wen says that if somebody gets a zero on the quiz, he will reconsider the policy.

While the two previous examples show how entering the play frame and affiliating by sharing a laugh assists in sharing the authority and negotiation of students' requests, the next exchange illustrates how a student opens a play frame and attempts to humorously exert authority, but the instructor resists her attempts by trapping her. During negotiation of how many questions will be on the test (ex. 56), Matilda, who had previous experience with a different test format, asks for fewer test questions.

- (56) 1 Diane: How many questions are gonna be=
 2 Matilda: =five
 3 Wen: huh?
 4 Diane: how many question=
 5 Wen: =how many questions?
 6 wow, I have not decided yet maybe=
 7 Matilda: =five
 8 Wen: for what.
 9 Matilda: five [hah hah hah hah [hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 10 Wen: [five is too much]
 11 Ss: [five is too much?]
 12 Wen: [☺ I tell you five is too much]
 13 Matilda: [hah hah hah hah HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH]
 14 Wen: [yeah]
 15 Matilda: [HAH A [HA HA HA HA HA]
 16 Clarisse: [he says five is too much]
 17 Matilda: OH, REALLY? [OH?]
 18 Wen: [five is] too much, yeah i mean for

When Diane asks Wen how many questions will be on the test, Matilda opens a play frame and mischievously responds to Diane's question using the instructor's turn (line 2). In her response, she intentionally minimizes the number of questions to five. When Wen said that he has not decided how many questions he would include in the test, she even finishes an utterance for him (line 7). Since for Matilda, answering Diane's question would not be appropriate because she does not have authority to do so, she creates a play frame and, within the frame, humorously steals his turns to respond to Diane's questions as if she had the authority to do so (lines 2, 7, 9).

Although Wen enters the play frame, he does not accept her proposition, and thereby does not appear to share authority with her. First, Wen challenges Matilda by initiating repair “for what” (line 8). Matilda does not answer his question, but pursues her proposition “five” and initiates a long laughter invitation thus orienting to her bargaining as not serious and attempting to get support from other students. Simultaneously with her laughter invitation, Wen initiates the target switch with his response that five questions are actually too much (line 10). Since Wen planned to include essay questions instead of multiple choice, five questions on the test would be too many. However, the students including Matilda did not know that; therefore, his response that five questions are too much surprises other students (line 11), and he repeats again that five questions are too much. This time, however, he plays along with Matilda and initiates an affiliative smile (line 12). Matilda, on the other hand, is so amused with her bargaining (lines 13, 15), that she does not hear that she was actually bargaining for more rather than for fewer questions. When Clarisse tells Matilda that Wen said five questions are too much, Matilda was trapped with Wen’s target switch and expressed serious surprise (line 17).

This exchange shows that although Matilda creates a play frame and Wen plays along with her, Matilda’s negotiation for fewer questions was not successful because at the end of the exchange Wen seems to leave everyone to believe that he was joking. Apparently, entering the play frame allows not only for minimization of the face threat of sharing authority, but also for mitigation of a refusal to do so. By creating the play frame, Matilda made an attempt to share authority with Wen; by entering the play frame, Wen played along with Matilda, but he did not allow for sharing authority by initiating the target switch, which led to the trap.

The next exchange also demonstrates that entering the play frame is relevant when the instructor refuses to share authority with a student. After Matilda failed to negotiate for fewer

questions on the exam, Roger initiated an attempt to bargain for fewer questions. Since Wen said that five questions were too much, Roger asked for three or four questions. In this exchange, like in the previous one, Wen appears to accept the play frame in order to refuse sharing authority with a student. He again initiates a target switch, which leads to trapping a student, Roger.

- (57) 1 Roger: [Is it] gonna be like three or four questions?
 2 Wen: what? ☺
 3 Roger: no.(.)
 4 Student: heh [heh]
 5 Ss: [hah hah [hah hah hah]
 6 Khalila: [how many qu-heh-stions
 7 Wen: I did not hear you=
 8 Roger: =[yeah, you'll give] maybe five questions
 9 Ss: [[[unintelligible)]]
 10 Wen: u::m a-hah ☺ no, no, no. I'll give you sufficient
 11 options

After Wen says that five questions are too much, Roger decides to try another number, three or four (ex. 55, line 7). Students, as they commented during the stimulated recall, interpret his utterance as a laughable. John describes Roger's question as stupid because "he completely was not listening" to Wen's explanation that five questions were too much. Clayton says that Roger was trying to make a joke and that he was not serious. Roger's question, like Matilda's, challenges the instructor's authority because the instructor, but not students, decides how many questions to include on the test, and, in addition, the instructor had already responded to Diane that he had not decided yet. Although some of the students, e.g., Clayton, treat Roger's question as not serious, they do not laugh at Roger's question and leave the situation to the instructor to take care of.

The instructor, however, did not hear or understand Roger's question. When watching the clip, he said: "I did not hear that clearly because ... I think, ... personally, I have a problem with listening. ... Especially in noisy environment, I can't pick what people all of a sudden [say]." To

deal with this situation, Wen initiates repair by saying “what?” (line 2), which operates as a *target switch* and simultaneously as a *trap* because Roger has to repeat his utterance. As a result, Roger does not perform the repair and responds “no”. Roger, perhaps, treats his utterance as not appropriate to repeat, as do other students who start laughing (lines 4, 5). With his refusal to repeat the utterance, Roger, who makes himself the target, creates a situation where *laughing at* is relevant and leads to *laughing with*. Thus, by means of repair initiation, which operates here as a *target switch*, Wen makes Roger, who has challenged his authority, refuse to repeat the challenging utterance and become the butt at the end.

When Wen states that he did not hear Roger’s question, another student, Khalila, repeats his question, but she changes it and just asks how many questions are going to be on the test. Wen says again that he does not hear what the student has just said (line 7) and then, Roger repeats his question (line 8), but he changes the number of questions from three or four, as he suggested initially (line 1), to five (line 14). Roger’s changing the number of questions to a bigger number seems to illustrate that he treats his initial request as not appropriate.

Roger, like Matilda in the previous example, opens the play frame by initiating his question. Roger needs a play frame to perform his bargaining because what happens within a play frame is not serious and, consequently, less face threatening. Wen seems to need a play frame because his not hearing/understanding what Roger said may be interpreted by students that he either does not understand Roger’s humor or does not understand what Roger says. Wen enters the play frame with a smile and conducts a repair on Roger’s utterance with “what?”. Roger, however, leaves the play frame by saying “no” (line 3). When Wen gets Roger’s question, he denies Roger’s suggestion, “u::m a-hah ☺ no, no, no” (line 10). However, he does it

within a play frame and only after affiliating with the student by means of a within-speech laughter and a smile.

The exchanges with Matilda and Roger illustrate that no matter what the outcomes of the negotiation are, the instructors and students conduct the negotiation within a play frame.

Students enter the play frame with an attempt to share authority with the instructor, and the instructor enters the play frame to either share or refuse sharing authority with the students.

While examples 56 and 57 demonstrate that entering a play frame mitigates the instructor's refusal to sharing authority with the students, the following example that also comes from Wen's class shows that not entering the play frame also constrains sharing authority and conducting negotiation. Example 58 occurred after the test that students negotiated in exchanges 56 and 57. All students did poorly on the test because the format of the test was different from what students were used to. The students were upset and even angry when they knew that the highest score after the curve was 90, as Clayton and John commented during the stimulated recall sessions.

- | | | | |
|------|----|------------|------------------------------------|
| (58) | 5 | John: | the highest score is ninety? |
| | 6 | Wen: | n-nine zero |
| | 7 | Ss: | ((talk to each other)) |
| | 8 | Student 1: | uh-hum= |
| | 9 | Clayton: | =<let's curve it to one hundred> |
| | 10 | Wen: | (1) huh? |
| | 11 | Clayton: | nothing ~ ~ |
| | 12 | Student 2: | heh heh heh heh heh |
| | 13 | Ss: | hh hah hah |
| | 14 | Wen: | and I wanna I wanna go through the |

Clayton said that he was very irritated that the highest score was only ninety and he “was kind of a smart alec” when he yelled out with his right hand raised up, “let’s curve it to 100” (line 9).

John also said that Clayton’s utterance was not serious, “he did not seriously expect the change, but he seriously would like it.”

Clayton's utterance has been created as a tease because it is challenging for Wen, who is the target, in that he asks Wen to curve the test to one hundred rather than 90 as Wen already did. Although Clayton's utterance is a tease, nobody laughs because if students laugh, their laughter could be interpreted as a *laughing at* environment since, according to Glenn (1995), teasing creates *laughing at*. Therefore, as in example 57, the students leave the situation to the instructor. Wen, like in the previous example, initiates a repair by saying "huh?" (line 10), which again operates as a *target switch* and leads to a *trap*. Although Wen performs a *target switch*, he does not seem to indicate his entering a play frame with a smile. When Clayton reveals that he will not repeat the utterance, students laugh (lines 12, 13). Similar to example 57, Wen makes Clayton repeat the utterance. However, Clayton refuses to do so by saying "nothing" (line 11). By seriously stating that he will not repeat the utterance, Clayton leaves the play frame and simultaneously creates a situation where he becomes the butt as a result of Wen's target switch.

Wen seems to disaffiliate with Clayton and does not enter the play frame. While in example 57, Wen insisted on the students' repetition of the laughable and participated in negotiation, this time he moves on, thus orienting to the laughable as not even appropriate to repeat, and Clayton's request as not appropriate to negotiate. According to Wen, he "did not catch what [Clayton] said" because Clayton was talking too fast. Wen just heard "that's still out of 100", but it seemed to him it was a joke and Clayton was making fun of him. Like in exchange with Roger (ex. 57), Wen regains his authority, which was threatened, with the help of repair initiation and punishes the teaser with the trap. While in example 57 Wen orients to affiliation with the students by initiating further repair, in this example, Wen does not re-align with the students and continues serious talk.

Examples 57 and 58 are interesting not only because they demonstrate how Wen deals with students attempting to share authority with him, but also because they exemplify how this instructor deals with a listening or hearing problem. Since Wen experienced another challenge, not understanding students' fast speech, during these exchanges, he had to maintain his teacher status and, simultaneously, not to let students know that he does not understand what they were saying.

Wen appears to cope with both problems successfully. First, he initiates repair, which operated as a *target switch*. The target switch allows him to re-assert his authority by making students repeat the utterances that were challenging to the instructor's authority. Students also deal with Wen's challenge successfully. Since they become potential butts of the teases anyway, by confessing that they are not going to repeat what they had just said, they make themselves the butts of the jokes in order to create affiliation with the others. If students did not make themselves the targets, they could be laughed at as a result of the instructor's target switch. To become the butt of somebody else's tease is more threatening than to make oneself the target and, consequently, the butt of one's own humor (Glenn, 1993). Laughing at somebody leads to alienation while inviting others to laugh at self leads to bonding.

When Wen noticed that students were very upset with the test results, he decided to let students talk about how they felt about the test. He also invited students' suggestions of how he could make the next test better for them. Some students made comments that seemed absurd even to their classmates, as both John and Clayton reported during stimulated recall sessions. Wen, however, dealt with all students' comments calmly, no matter how far from being realistic the students' comments were.

Wen opens a play frame when agreeing with a student to try a multiple-choice test. Wen, personally, does not like multiple choice; however, after one of the students suggested that Wen change his tests to multiple choice format, Wen responds that they may try it on the next text (lines 1-4).

- | | | | |
|------|----|----------|---|
| (59) | 1 | Wen: | ok, good, that's good-, that's good suggestion, we'll |
| | 2 | | try that, we'll try that in test two. or alternatively, |
| | 3 | | alternatively we'll try multiple choice. |
| | 4 | | [on test tw-hoh hah-.h] |
| | 5 | Ss: | [uh-hu::h] |
| | 6 | John: | let's take both and you'll take the highest grade |
| | 7 | Wen: | [☺ [hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 8 | Student: | [hah hah [hah hah hah hah] |
| | 9 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah hah hah I have a class] |
| | 10 | Wen: | ☺It's not gonna happen you know what I I I I like |
| | 11 | | your point I like |

Accepting students' suggestions is threatening to the instructor's authority; therefore, to reduce the face threat and to allow for more negotiation, Wen creates a play frame with a within-speech laughter invitation. Students, however, do not accept Wen's laughter invitation and agree with his suggestion "uh-huh" (line 5).

Although Wen seems to accept the students' suggestion to try a multiple-choice test next time, John teases the instructor and humorously makes another, suggestion, "let's take both and you'll take the highest grade" (line 6). John teases Wen with a mock challenge (it is not realistic to have student take a test in two different formats and to take into account their highest grade) in response to Wen's agreement to try multiple choice and evokes both the instructor's and the students' laughter. Both the teacher and the students align and laugh together at John's joke. Although John's tease targets the instructor and challenges his authority even more, it also seems to mock students whose suggestions become more and more unrealistic. Wen appreciates John's humor; however, he does not leave his comment without a response and says "it's not gonna

happen” (line 10). Although Wen says it with a smile, his response brings students back to the serious mode where status relationships are not altered.

Wen’s opening of the negotiation of class issues brings more and more students’ suggestions which seem unrealistic. Nicky asked whether students can choose the essay questions from the list suggested by the instructor and prepare only for the questions they have chosen (lines 4-6).

- | | | | |
|------|----|----------|--|
| (60) | 1 | Nicky: | Can we get the answers that we can choose our |
| | 2 | | essay questions? |
| | 3 | Wen: | you mean like I give you [two options] |
| | 4 | Nicky: | [you give] |
| | 5 | | us the list, like you gave us eleven |
| | 6 | | questions and we pick the five |
| | 7 | Wen: | o:h, no:: why don't I give you ju-hah-st five |
| | 8 | | questions at [the beginning? u:m no, I mean that's |
| | 9 | Student: | [xxxxx |
| | 10 | Ss: | [((students look at each other)) |
| | 11 | Wen: | the point- that's the point of having an exam, |
| | 12 | | right, otherwise we don't need the exam, if you |
| | 13 | | know what to expect |

This exchange seems to begin in a serious mode (lines 1-6), but Wen, in line 7, denies Nicky’s request. Wen first provides a serious response “oh no” (line 7) and then, he initiates a tease “why don’t I give you ju-hah-st five questions at the beginning” (lines 8, 9). As John said when watching the clip, “everybody wanted more and more” and that is why Wen responded with a tease to Nicky’s suggestion. Apparently, for Wen to say directly that students ask for too much would be rather face threatening because he invited students to express their opinions and to give suggestions. At the same time, to accept the student’s suggestion would be damaging to his teacher authority. Therefore, he responds to Nicky’s suggestion with a tease, thus treating it as not appropriate.

The examples of negotiation from Wen's class show that Wen was able to successfully negotiate class-related issues with his students even though students' suggestions, questions, and requests were rather challenging for his teacher authority. Apparently, shifting negotiation to the play format was beneficial because the play frame deludes participants from reality, thus mitigating participants' face threatening actions. Although they negotiate serious issues, they still have some leeway to say that what they talk about is not serious. Even students who were participating in those exchanges admitted that the exchanges were challenging for the teacher status.

Clayton, for example, said that it does not happen to all teachers, "it happens to people who're like him, who do not speak English very well." At the same time, Clayton corrected himself and said that Wen speaks well, but sometimes he does not understand some expressions. According to Clayton,

maybe because when somebody asks a question, he asks 'what?' A lot of people in the class feel that they can, like they can bully or bone him in a way, you know, what I am saying? It's almost the way of saying to him, 'its not how we do it here' ... his accent gives an impression that he is a foreigner ... usually it happens with older teachers who are not aware what students are saying and kids make smart comments which are rude and almost attack the teacher, that's kind of what I felt what they were doing here, it's weird. I felt bad for him, because I felt he was being attacked and he shouldn't have been.

John also said that what was happening in class was "more than usual situation"; however, to him, Wen did not seem insecure during that talk.

During a stimulated recall session, Wen did not say that he felt insecure about students' suggestions. When I turned off the camera, he said that he noticed that the students were very upset with their grades and even angry, so he initiated this discussion so that they could vent their emotions and the students actually did. The fact that students could express their worries in class also shows their rapport with the instructor, as they were not scared to express their feelings

and suggestions. Wen said that after the students vented their emotions, they calmed down and the rest of the class went smoothly. Similarly, John said that “the discussion of the test was helpful” because after the discussion “people calmed down”. It seems that through participating in negotiation, the participants bonded through challenging interaction, which was possible because negotiation occurred in a humorous mode.

Although Wen sometimes avoided conducting negotiation (ex. 56-58), he revealed it as soon as possible during the exchange. Ming was also avoiding negotiation, but he also avoided letting his students know that negotiation was not possible. In exchange 61, a student, David, attempts to negotiate with Ming when Ming is going to return students’ assignments that he collected a week ago.

- (61) 1 David: Oh, by the way, the practice you had us do with the
 2 three sheets, the three problems, it was like last
 3 Thursday or something
 4 Ming: Uh, yeah
 5 David: did you give those back?
 6 Ming: Oh, no=
 7 David: =ok=
 8 Ming: I just I just make comments on [(them)]
 9 David: [oh]
 10 I was I was just wondering [if you are going]
 11 Ming: [but the]
 12 first problem we already used that home[work]
 13 David: [yes]
 14 that's why I was wonde-heh-ri-heh-heh-ng
 15 Joe: yes that's why xxx
 16 Ming: ye-he-ah so i did not xxx
 17 David: I was wondering whether you are going to give it
 18 back to us 'cause if you were then I was gonna use
 19 [it hah hah] [hah] [hah hah hah] khe heh
 20 Joe: [hah hah hah] [yeah] [hah]
 21 Ming: [☺]
 22 David: well, it had the basic concepts, so I don't have to
 23 like rethink the problem ok
 24 Ming: ok hah it's a simple problem
 25 David: yeah, it's a simple problem
 26 Ming: I also give example according to

As David reported during a stimulated recall session, Ming gave an impression that he was going to give problems in class and upload the solutions on the website and that the homework problems would be different. Later, Ming decided to use the problems the students did in class as problems for homework. David thought that Ming did not give the problems back to the students because they already did them; however, David wanted the problems back to help him do his homework assignment.

When David starts the negotiation of getting the assignments back, Ming responds that he has not graded them yet. Ming, however, does not say when he is going to return the assignments to students. David makes four attempts to make Ming respond to his question (lines 5, 10, 14, 17-19), but Ming does not provide the answer to his question of whether he will return the students' homework assignments, instead continuing his answer to David's original question. Ming responds that he made comments on the assignments already and that they used already one problem from that assignment in homework (lines 11, 12). In lines 13-14, David initiates a within-speech laughter invitation when explaining that since they did already that problem, they would like to have the assignment back to use it as an example for solving other problems. Apparently, David laughs because the situation seems uncomfortable: he keeps asking the same question and Ming does not provide the answer to it.

Another student, Joe, also makes an attempt (line 15) to negotiate this issue, but also in vain because Ming does not state when he would give the assignments back. After David's utterance that he wants to use the assignment to do his homework, Joe affiliates with David by sharing laughter with him, and Ming by smiling affiliates with them too. However, Ming does not initiate the next turn and David continues the negotiation (lines 22, 23). Although Ming shares a smile with his students, it seems that he either does not understand what students are

talking about or he does not interpret their contributions as attempts to negotiate the issue of getting their assignments back. Only after David says that the assignment has a basic concept (lines 22, 23) does Ming respond that it is a simple problem (line 24).

This example seems to show that Ming experiences difficulty with conducting negotiation and saying that he wants students to solve this problem again without relying on the previous solution. Possibly, it happens because he does not understand what students are talking about. Ming affiliates with the students by smiling, but at the end he initiates a short laugh and performs a rather face threatening utterance “it’s a simple problem” (line 24). While Ming tries to affiliate throughout this exchange by smiling, with his response he seems to criticize his students doing what Sarkisian (2006) recommends not to do: “Do not point out that the problem is very simple or that every high school student ought to be able to solve it” (p. 13).

Although Wen also did not always satisfy his students’ suggestions or requests and avoided negotiation, at the same time, he did not appear to criticize his students and did not seem to be overly authoritative. Ming, by not providing a response to the students’ questions, exerts his authority and creates a greater distance between himself and the students. Students orient to the greater distance by using negative politeness strategies to minimize the imposition on the instructor (lines 10, 14, 17-18). David also tries to affiliate with a post-utterance laughter invitation (lines 19, 20), but Ming does not respond except with a smile. When I asked Ming why David was laughing and Ming was smiling, he said that David always talks about the test, but he does not have a particular point. Ming’s response appears to demonstrate that he did not interpret the exchange as negotiation. David, however, gave me a different account of this situation. He said that the instructor was not going to make it easier on students and “it was kind of funny because of getting the homework back.”

Exchanges involving instructor-student negotiation of classroom issues demonstrate that both instructors and students participate in activities that challenge each other's status. When negotiating classroom issues, the participants may choose to shift to the humorous mode and enter a play frame. Instructors do not always enter a play frame. They do so when negotiation is relevant. Entering the play frame reduces the distance between the instructor and the students because within the play frame they tend to share the authority at least for the time of negotiation, which makes their negotiation easier. The play frame also mitigates instructor's refusal to share the authority with students. The exchange from Ming's class shows that the instructors may have difficulty in conducting, or even interpreting, negotiation. Although the examples included in this section show that Wen and Ming were able to deal with students' challenging requests, they did it differently. While Wen negotiated class issues by balancing his authority with permissiveness and by affiliating and aligning with his students, Ming by not responding to the students' questions accelerated his authority and, finally, stopped the negotiation process with a critical remark.

Sharing Authority While Constructing Meaning Collaboratively

Sharing authority also occurs when instructors and students collaborate to construct meaning. During collaborative construction of meaning students and the instructor seem to orient to equal rights of participation during exchanges, as shown in example 60.

Bill asks Wen to explain the concept of a free rider again. Initially, Wen explained that a free rider is a member of an organization who does not want to pay the costs of membership but still enjoys the benefits of being the member of the organization. He also explained this concept using the example of a study group: if a member of a study group does not contribute with her or

his notes to the group, then this person is a free rider. Bill, however, does not understand the concept and his request to explain the concept leads to the following exchange.

- (62) 1 Bill: before you go on could you please explain this free
 2 rider thing again?
 3 Wen: free rider thing
 4 Bill: yeah
 5 Wen: Is- does that study group case, example help huh?
 6 Bill: I don't think so,
 7 Wen: ok, [let me repeat them again]
 8 Bill: [I did not hear that]
 9 Student 1: it's like a free loader
 10 Student 2: it's a free loader xx
 11 Wen: hu-huh
 12 Teresa: right, it's like you have house roommates and
 13 everyone collectively pays \$10 for groceries and
 14 there's one guy who eats all food, does not give
 15 \$10 but he eats more than his shares of food, does
 16 that make sense?
 17 Bill: yeah=
 18 Wen: good, good
 19 Beth: Its like one guy buys a bunch of beer and then
 20 another guy comes around like wants [a beer but
 21 Wen: [hah hah hah
 22 Beth: [he has not paid you are getting beer you know
 23 Ss: [hah hah hah hah hah
 24 Wen: [hah hah hah
 25 Ss: HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH [HAH HAH] HA
 26 Student: [right]
 27 Ss: HAH HAH HAH HAH
 28 Beth: friends and free loaders
 29 Student 3: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
 30 Ss: hah hah hah hah hah HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH
 31 HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH
 32 Wen: [yeah, but the basic idea is, the implied action is that
 33 [((laughing))]

When Wen wanted to explain the concept again, two students who are not seen on the video self-select and explain the concept to Bill by giving their own examples. Although the students take the instructor's turn to explain, Wen does not stop them; rather, he approves of Teresa's example (line 18). Beth also self-selects and gives a similar example but she substitutes groceries in

Teresa's example with beer (lines 19, 20, 22). Beth's example evokes both Wen's and the students' laughter (lines 21, 23-25, 27).

Although this example demonstrates that students start talking without the instructor's permission, this exchange does not seem to be harmful to the teacher's authority. By providing their examples, students demonstrate their understanding of the concept and Wen approves it (line 18, 32). The students and the instructors in this exchange share the right to speakership and collaboratively, as a group sharing the same goal, construct the knowledge. While the humorous examples help students to make a point, humor is used as both a face-saving strategy and a rapport-building device. Bill's revealing in front of his peers that he does not understand the concept of free rider is quite threatening to his positive face. Bill's not understanding the concept also appears to set him apart from the rest of the students, who understand what it means. By using humor, students soften the threat to Bill's positive face and simultaneously create a situation in which bonding is relevant. Students bond on the basis of shared experience of having a free-loader in their group and unite against this hypothetical other. Wen also aligns with the students by laughing with them at Beth's joke. Although for a moment Wen shares his authority with students when they collaborate to explain the concept to Bill, Wen exerts his authority to bring students back to the serious talk and to summarize the idea of the concept (line 32).

While it might seem that students' talking without Wen's permission in his conversational turn threatens Wen's authority, during a stimulated recall session, Wen evaluates the atmosphere in the class positively describing it as "quite light" when students "feel less pressured". This exchange is an example of what Pailors (1984) calls an interactive dialogue between students and the instructor. Although Pailors warns that this kind of interaction may lead to an authority problem, Wen seems to succeed in balancing his teacher authority with

permissiveness. While students were participating in exchange by taking on the teacher role of explaining the concept, Wen remains in charge of the talk by approving of students' examples and summarizing the concept.

While a collaborative exchange from Wen's class shows how sharing authority with students allows for constructing knowledge while establishing in-group relationship, an example from Ming's class demonstrates that sharing authority with students does not always lead to creation of a teacher-student bond. However, like the example from Wen's class, it also shows that sharing of authority does not necessarily lead to an authority problem, as Pialorsi (1984) cautions.

Students in Ming's class also collaborate when solving a problem in programming. Ming shows his students a computer program that does not work and asks them to find the error that causes the problem. Students are looking for an error in the program to make it work (lines 1-15) and come up with huge numbers, and when Ming inserts one of the numbers, the program gives a strange error message.

- (63) 1 David: Can you try putting in instead of that 50000 um try
 2 putting in 2 1 4s, you wanna keep some of those
 3 zeroes um ok cool
 4 Ming: How many zeroes [you wanna keep] after 211
 5 David: [um] ok it's it's 2
 6 billion one hundred forty seven million and there's
 7 gonna be six zeroes one four seven
 8 Ming: yeah, exact six zeroes
 9 David: yeah, four seven
 10 Ming: four seven right?
 11 David: yeah. yeah
 12 Ming: ok that's how much long
 13 David: yeah
 14 Ming: ok
 15 David: that (4) xxxxxxxx no. ok. yeah. too much.
 ((during the four-second pause the participants see the error
 message))
 16 Ming: [~ ~]

17 Max: [dear Jesus]
 18 David: hah hah hah hah hah hah hah
 19 [hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 20 Max: [hah hah hah hah hah hah]
 21 David: hah hah hah hah hah
 22 Max: just you see [we killed it y-hah-hah-eah]
 23 David: [brilliant]
 24 David: you're brilliant! [hey xxx huge number]
 25 Ming: [☺_____]
 26 Max: program we are using
 27 S1: [ha ha ha ha ha]
 28 Ming: [So I tested]=
 29 David: =yeah yeah=

When Max sees the message he gets very surprised (line 17) and jokes that the students killed the server (line 22). As Max explained when viewing the video segment, he had never seen such a message before and he had never heard that somebody would break the server. David also reported during stimulated recall that he was surprised by the error message and that is why he said sarcastically “brilliant” (lines 23 and 24) meaning that it was brilliant of students to be able to break the machine.

Although the exchange shows that students collaborate with Ming in fixing the error (lines 1-15) and that both Ming and the students react to the error message, the stimulated recall sessions with Ming and David revealed that while Ming collaborates with his students in finding the error, he does not collaborate with his students during the humorous exchange. Although the classroom video shows that Ming reacts to the error message with a smile (line 16), David responds to it with a comment, “no. ok. yeah. too much.” (line 17), and Max with an exclamation “dear Jesus” (line 17), Ming’s collaboration with the students appears to stop at this moment. While Max makes a joke, “we killed it” (line 22), referring to the huge number that the students asked Ming to put in the program and David responds to Max’s comment with “brilliant” (line 23), Ming does not pay attention to the students’ joking (or maybe he does not understand the

joke or what Max and David said). When I asked Ming during a stimulated recall session why David said “brilliant”, Ming explained that they just guessed another number and reached their goal. Although, as he acknowledged, the program had a problem, they reached their goal anyway because now they know how big this number is to make a problem. David, however, when he viewed the video segment, explained Ming’s not participating in the humorous exchange differently. He said that Ming “is professional enough not to spend much time laughing at this kind of stuff”.

Although, like Wen, Ming shares his authority and the rights to speakership with students, he does not explore this opportunity for rapport building with his student. While, according to David, Ming separates from the students who are not professional enough, Wen appreciates students’ comments and bonds with them. As a result, on the surface, Ming demonstrates his alignment with the students; but in reality, he does not use the opportunity to bond with them.

Sharing authority with students during humorous interactive practices allows for students’ participation in knowledge construction while establishing in-group relationships. Although in Ming’s class, Ming and his students shared authority while participating in finding the error together, their interaction lacks the rapport-building practices that united Wen and his students in the previous exchange.

Affiliating While Competing for Authority

Seven exchanges that constitute this group occurred in Wen’s and Rana’s political science classes. When students and instructors discuss political issues, they seem to shift their social role of instructor and students to new roles of political opponents. They orient to their new roles by initiating more aggressive humor and even by teaming together against their mutual

opponent in order to stand for their political views or even to contest even others' views.

Students are more likely to nominate themselves to be the next speaker; as a result, the pauses maximized in classroom talk are minimized in these exchanges, the participants' utterances often latch, and even overlap.

One of the features of the exchanges that involve the instructor's and students' confrontation because of their political views is that they make fun of each other's beliefs. The aggressiveness of the teases is obvious and it accelerates when political arguments heat up. Six exchanges occurred in Wen's political science class where one of Wen's students, John, does not share an environmentalist position with the rest of the class and expresses anti-environmentalist views. Wen, like the other students, supports environmentalists. Every time environmentalist and non-environmentalist issues are raised during lectures, John, Wen and other students make their political identities relevant.

The first example in this group illustrates that although participants of the exchanges affiliate, at the same time they orient to contesting their opponent's political views, thus competing to gain more authority during their political discussion. Wen runs out of time and skips several slides in his power point presentation. John notices a slide on anti-environmentalists and tells Wen that he wants to see that slide.

- | | | | |
|------|---|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| (64) | 1 | John: | i want to see that slide |
| | 2 | Clarisse: | so we don' t [have] |
| | 3 | Wen: | [environ[mentalists? heh heh heh] |
| | 4 | John: | [hah] |
| | 5 | | anti-environmentalists= |
| | 6 | Wen: | =yeah |

In response to John's request to show the slide on anti-environmentalists, Wen teases John for his political interest, "environmentalists?" (line 3) which overlaps with John's first laugh (line 4). Wen's tease orients John to the *laughing at* environment and he initiates affiliative laughter (line

4) before Wen invites it at the end of his utterance (line 3). Although John affiliates with Wen and creates *laughing with*, he perhaps does it only to avoid being laughed at. In the next line he disaffiliates with Wen by initiating a repair on Wen's utterance and correcting it to "anti-environmentalists" thus also correcting Wen's tease. With this repair, John reveals his political views and disaffiliates with Wen whose political views are different.

Later in class, Wen asks students what causes global warming (ex. 65) and Bill responds to his question. This interaction is more aggressive than the previous one because John, first, self-selects to be the next speaker and, second, does not stop teasing after Wen tells him that they will talk about it later.

- | | | | |
|------|----|----------|--|
| (65) | 1 | Wen: | Think about polar bears you know, they used to be |
| | 2 | | living around the Arctic Arctic um circle, but due |
| | 3 | | to the melting of ice, they will lose the habitat (.) in |
| | 4 | | the future. what are causes of the global warming. |
| | 5 | | you probably learned it from the other courses. |
| | 6 | Student: | green house |
| | 7 | Bill: | (2) the fumes um evaded um um by factories, um |
| | 8 | | the poison the gas that that's that's too= |
| | 9 | Wen: | uh-huh |
| | 10 | Bill: | um car emissions, |
| | 11 | Wen: | then what I mean= |
| | 12 | John: | =human breath exhales= [breath exhales] |
| | 13 | Ss: | [~ ~ ~] |
| | 14 | Wen: | = [☺hhh] |
| | 15 | | (.) hah hah hah ok. well i'll get back to you |
| | 16 | Student: | hah hah [hah] |
| | 17 | Ss: | [hah hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 18 | | [~ ~ ~ ~] |
| | 19 | John: | stop breathing to stop the warming= |
| | 20 | Wen: | =ok |
| | 21 | Bill: | =and they go up and they they affect they affect the |

Bill starts talking about the causes of global warming and mentions fumes from factories and car emissions (lines 7, 8, 10). When Wen initiates his contribution to the talk (line 11), John self-selects and before Wen finishes his utterance, he creates a play frame and says that another cause

of global warming is exhalation of human breath (line 12). John's extreme example mocks environmentalists and those who support their views and makes them look obsessed with environmental protection. John's mocking of his instructor's and peers' political position and also entering classroom talk without Wen's permission is damaging to the instructor's authority and to the instructor's and students' political beliefs.

Wen regains his authority by taking control over conversation and responding to John "ok. I'll get back to you" (line 15). By doing so he also attempts to stop this exchange. However, first, he appreciates John's tease, thus creating a *laughing with* and only then he provides a serious response "I'll get back to you" as if John was asking a question. Although Wen indicates the end of the discussion with his utterance, John elaborates on his initial tease and says "Stop breathing to stop the warming" before Wen or the student who was talking take the next turn (line 19). Wen uses his authority to initiate a transition to the serious talk "ok" at the next relevant transition place (line 20). His transition latches with the end of John's utterance and apparently secures Bill's further talk (line 21).

Although Wen laughs at John's tease, he does not get engaged in the political discussion at this point and prevents political debate by not entering the play frame. However, at the first convenient occasion, Wen uses his teacher status to pay John back for his mocking of environmentalists and thus other people's political views. It seems that Wen and John compete for proving whose beliefs are right.

The competition continues when John raises his hand and Wen teases him "yes, you don't breath?" (ex. 66, line 5) for his mocking of environmentalists. This time, however, another student, Clayton, who is also environmentalist, competes with John for his political beliefs.

(66)	1	Wen:	So eventually you guys into another vicious circle,
	2		that the earth is warmer and warmer unless we stop

3 the emission of carbon dioxide
 4 John: ((raises hand))
 5 Wen: yes you don't breathe heh=
 6 John: =no. [what] are the other
 7 S2: [hah]
 8 John: climate changes that we had through our history, I
 9 mean, that for men a regard there, we still are in
 10 these fluctuations, so [what's] the problem?
 11 Student 1: [yeah but]
 12 [we have (carbon dioxide) in the air]
 13 Student 2: [carbon dioxide too] xxxxxxxx
 14 John: So ok, we all die, life starts all over what is the
 15 problem?=
 16 Clayton: =The problem is that we all die.
 17 Wen: [HAH HAH HAH
 18 Ss: [HAH HAH HAH [HAH HAH HAH HAH HAH
 19 John: [su-huH-rely, surely, surely]
 20 Ss: HAH HAH
 21 Wen: maybe the generation thing xx is not addressed in
 22 your concern

John responds to Wen's question "you don't breathe" with "no" and, without entering a play frame, expresses another opinion confronting environmentalists and challenging both the instructor and his peers: human activities are not an issue because in the course of the history climate has undergone many changes (lines 8-10). Then, John becomes even more aggressive by expressing an even more challenging view, "we all die, what is the problem" (line 14, 15) and the discussion heats up. Although John's utterance is not humorous, it has its targets, which are the instructor and the students. Clayton, who is an environmentalist and who becomes one of the targets of John's aggression, initiates a target switch making John the target and the butt of his tease, "the problem is that we all die" (line 16). Clayton's target switch evokes appreciation of the students and the instructor. Although John attempts to pursue serious talk (line 19), students' laughter does not allow him to continue the topic (lines 18, 20) and, in line 21, Wen takes over the talk.

This example illustrates that when students and teachers orient to political discussion, they also orient to different social roles even if this discussion occurs in the classroom. The political allies affiliate and team together against their political opponents. Unlike teacher-centered classroom talk in which the instructor is the mediator of all the turns (McHoul, 1978), several students may start talking together and at any transition point (lines 10, 11 and 12, 13). While in previous exchanges, only the instructor and the students participating in the conversation with instructor initiated the target switch, in exchange 66 a student who did not participate in the discussion self-selects and initiates the target switch. This is because he is also the target of John's utterance and, therefore, has the right to re-direct John's aggression. Such situations may grow into a bigger debate since students make their identities as political opponents relevant and, as the targets, may choose to switch the targets at any transition relevant place. For instructors, such situations may become threatening to their authority because they may lose control over the conversation. To return the political discussion into the teacher-student-teacher triad, Wen makes a transition to the serious talk by evaluating the student's response (line 21).

Example 67 is even more aggressive than example 66 because Wen combines his identity as a political opponent with his teacher identity. He uses his authority to initiate a tease within his lecture turn to pinpoint that John's beliefs are wrong (lines 5, 6).

- | | | | |
|------|----|-------|--|
| (67) | 1 | Wen: | so these are the longest summers and most severe |
| | 2 | | storms actually, I have data to show that 1991 and |
| | 3 | | 2000, um have seen the warmest um winter, right in |
| | 4 | | the entire history I mean when we have record |
| | 5 | | when we have records on climates if we don't |
| | 6 | | control, John (.) |
| | 7 | Ss: | hah |
| | 8 | John: | ~~~~~ |
| | 9 | Wen: | [the sea level is expected to rise by 4 to 6 to 37 |
| | 10 | John: | [hah [hah hah |

11 S2: [hah hah hah [hah
 12 S3: [hah hah hah [hah hah hah hah]
 13 Ss [hah hah hah hah]
 14 [hah hah hah]
 15 Wen: [inches] which means a lot of seriously, a lot of
 16 S3: [hah hah hah]
 17 island island states will disappear. and people on
 18 Wen: those islands will just have no place to live. ☺is not
 19 that bad [enough]?
 20 John: [☺we'll take] them on the boats
 21 we'll take them [somewhere else]
 22 Wen: [(☺oh seriously seriously
 23 we'll take them to U.S.)]
 24 John: ~~~~
 25 Teresa: so it'll be more overpopulated here?
 26 Wen: [heh heh heh heh heh]
 27 John: [(☺ oh man~~~)]
 28 S2: [xxx all right?]
 29 Wen: also, I have some data, I have some interesting data
 30 to show you carbon dioxide

While students are laughing at John (lines 11-14), Wen continues to give examples of the problems arising from climate change (line 9, 15). Then, Wen opens a play frame by initiating a smile and asks a rhetorical question “is not that bad enough?” (lines 18, 19). This question operates as a tease, which targets John again. Since teases create a *laughing at* environment, John, the target of Wen’s tease, becomes a potential butt of the tease as it happened in lines 7, 10-14, and 16. John orients to this possibility and initiates a response, which overlaps with the end of Wen’s question, thus pre-empting a possible laughter turn (lines 19, 20). In his response, John denies Wen’s tease by saying “we’ll take them on the boat, we’ll take them somewhere else” (lines 20, 21). John’s response operates as a *target switch* because it challenges Wen. Now, John’s target switch makes Wen a potential butt of the tease and Wen, similar to John, also orients to this possibility. His response “oh seriously, seriously, we’ll take them to U.S.” (lines 22, 23) overlaps with the end of John’s utterance and functions as a *reverse target switch*. The

overlapping target switches demonstrate that Wen and John “engage in competitive overlapping talk” (Jefferson, 1979, p. 88), which “terminates with no other parties joining laughter” (p. 88).

John seems to be too exhausted to argue and has a silent laugh, but Teresa, who also supports environmentalists, initiates a humorous bite, which also targets John, “so it’ll be more overpopulated here?” (line 25). Teresa’s wit amuses Wen whereas John has nothing to say but “Oh, man!”

Similar to exchange 66 where Clayton teams with Wen against John, in exchange 67, two political allies, Wen and Teresa, team together against him. This exchange is an example of three target switches applied by the participants to challenge each other which ends with two teases targeted at John initiated by two different people, Wen (lines 22, 23) and Teresa (line 25). Wen’s target switch in lines 22, 23 “oh seriously, seriously, we’ll take them to U.S.” is backed up with Teresa’s tease “so it’ll be more overpopulated here?” Although Teresa addresses her question to the instructor when she humorously implies that it is probably not a good idea to bring people to the U.S., she makes John’s argument worthless and her tease, finally, makes John the butt of the tease (line 25). As in examples 65 and 66, when the political arguments heats up, Wen uses his teacher authority to terminate the political debate and brings the talk back to serious mode (line 30). As this exchange shows, at certain points of interaction, Wen leaves the political debate and makes his teacher identity relevant to stop political discussion and to shift to classroom talk. Although John while standing for his political beliefs is often teased by the instructor, he does not get offended. When watching this video segment he laughed and said that Wen was picking on him because Wen does not agree with him; however, he characterized Wen’s picking on him as friendly.

As the examples show, when it comes to political discussion, Wen makes his identity of a supporter of environmentalists' views relevant. When political debates heat up, he makes his teacher identity relevant. Wen's juggling his teacher and political identities is also emphasized with his body moves (ex. 68a). Although Wen addresses John when presenting the data on the climate change (lines 6a-e), Wen performs his teacher identity by educating students on how harmful climate change is to mankind. This part of the exchange has a pattern similar to joking incorporating a brief humorous comment in the serious utterance without leaving the serious talk. Wen enters the engagement space after he addresses John (lines 7a-f) and stays there till he finishes educating students on the climate change.

(68a)	5a	Wen:	TR/Xpaper_____TL_____
	5b		when we have records on climates if we don't
	5c	Ss:	XTch/notes_____
	6a	Wen:	_____MB__ MR((faces John))
	6b		control, John (.)
	6c	Ss:	hah
	6d		_____XTch/John
	6e	John:	XT_____LB~~~~
	7a	Wen:	MF_____T_____TL/XJohn
	7b		[the sea level is expected to rise by 4 to 6 to 37
	7c	John:	[hah [hah hah ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
	7d	S2:	[hah hah hah [hah
	7e	S3:	[hah hah hah [hah hah hah hah]
	7f	Ss:	[hah hah hah hah]
	7g	Ss:	XJohn/Tch_____
	7h		& & & & & &
	8a	Wen:	_____ML_____S_____
	8b		[inches] which means a lot of seriously, a lot of
	8c	Ss:	[hah hah]
	8d	Ss:	XT_____
	9a	Wen:	S/X_____
	9b		island island states will disappear. and people on
	9c	Ss:	_____

- 10a Wen: _____ Xpaper XJohn
 10b those islands will just have no place to live. ☺is not
 10c Ss: _____
- 11a Wen: _____
 11b that bad [enough] ☺
 11c John: [☺we'll take] them on the boats
 11d XT _____ LHF _____
 11e Ss: _____ XJohn/notes _____
- 12a John: _____
 12b we'll take them [somewhere else]
 12c Wen: [(☺oh seriously seriously we'll take
 12d _____ MF _____ MB/ Xpaper _____
- 13a Wen: S _____
 13b them to US)]
 13c John: ~~~~~
 13d Ss: _____
- 14a Ss: _____ XS1 _____ XTch
 14b ((not seen))☺ _____
 14c Teresa: so it'll be more overpopulated here? ☺
 14d Wen: _____ MF/XTeresa _____
- 15a Wen: ((not seen on the tape))
 15b [heh heh heh heh heh]
 15c John: [(☺ oh man~~~)]
 15d S2: [xxx all right?]
 15e John: HsSides _____
- 16a Wen: MB/Xpaper _____
 16b also, I have some data, I have some
 16c Ss: XTch _____

Wen's rhetorical question "is not that bad enough" (lines 10-11) elicits John's response. John emphasizes his entering the conversation with moving his left hand forward (line 11d). Only after that does Wen also enter the engagement space (12d) to perform the target switch "seriously, seriously, we'll take them to U.S." and he leaves it immediately before he finishes this utterance as if he is distancing himself from his tease. Teresa initiates her tease (14a-d) and Wen moves towards her showing his conversational commitment to Teresa. After Teresa's tease,

John demonstrates his disappointment by saying “oh man” (line 15c) and simultaneously with saying this, he moves his hands wide open (lines 15e). Wen immediately terminates the exchange and withdraws his commitment from the humorous talk by pursuing the topic. His transition to the serious talk is supported with his leaving the engagement space (e.g., he moves backwards, he moves his gaze from the students to the paper). Exchange 68 shows that the instructor supports his roles within the exchange both verbally and bodily. He relocates in space and emphasizes his change of social roles with his moving into and leaving the engagement space.

While in Wen’s class the different political affiliations of the students and the instructor lead to political confrontations, this does not seem to happen in Rana’s class, although he also taught political science. Although once a student revealed his political views, Rana did not make fun of him but instead shut down that discussion. Exchange 69 occurred when Rana’s student Viktor asks him what nepotism is.

- | | | | |
|------|----|----------|---|
| (69) | 1 | Viktor: | what's nepotism? |
| | 2 | Rana: | Ah-ah nepotism is yes, Tenesha, go ahead |
| | 3 | Tenesha: | you want me answer? |
| | 4 | Rana: | yes sure |
| | 5 | Tenesha: | distributing your resources to your family or people |
| | 6 | | who have family [connection]= |
| | 7 | Viktor: | [ok] |
| | 8 | Rana: | =ok, Saddam Hussein Saddam Hussein was um the |
| | 9 | | president of Iraq, what are his son' names? |
| | 10 | Viktor: | I don't |
| | 11 | Ss: | (Odai and Qusai Hussein) |
| | 12 | Rana: | Odai and Qusai right? well if one is the head of the |
| | 13 | | secret services and another is head of the army |
| | 14 | | or head of the industries (main) = |
| | 15 | Viktor: | =yeah |
| | 16 | Rana: | that is nepotism= |
| | 17 | Viktor: | yeah |
| | 18 | Rana: | they are not entitled to that position but for the fact |
| | 19 | | that they are related to Saddam |
| | 20 | Viktor: | Like Bush |

21	Rana:	hah [no]	
22	Ss:	[hah hah hah hah]	
23	Rana:	George Bush won the elections fair and square	
24	Student:	yeah	
25	Viktor:	but George didn't	
26	Rana:	hah	
27	Ss:	hah hah hah	
28	Rana:	((Stops, bent over computer, X down))	
29		[that's a different issue]	
30	Ss:	[hah hah hah]	hah hah hah
31	Rana:	ok have you	

After Rana explained to the student on the example of Saddam Hussein's family what nepotism is (line 8-19), Viktor provides a challenging example, "like Bush" (line 23). Rana initiates the first laugh and then a serious response, "no" (line 21). It seems that Rana appreciates Viktor's humor but at the same time he disaffiliates from Viktor. Students also laugh at Viktor's comment. In line 23, Rana says that George Bush won the election fairly thus implying that Viktor's example is not an example of nepotism. Viktor, however, pursues his point of view and disagrees with Rana thus disaffiliating with him. Rana again laughs at Viktor's comment and the students do too (lines 26, 27). Although Rana laughs at Viktor's comments, neither Rana nor students enter the debate or initiate a target switch in spite of the fact that Viktor's tease might be offensive to the students who supported Bush's party. After the students' laughter, at the first relevance transition place, Rana shifts to the serious mode by saying "it's a different issue" (line 29), thus shutting down the exchange. Similar to example 68a, he does not just initiate the transition to the serious mode; he supports it with his body moves. When he responds to Viktor that Bush's election is a different issue (line 29), he withdraws his commitment to the interaction by stopping near the computer and beginning to look something up on the computer (line 28) thus indicating that he is moving to the next segment of talk. After that, he performs the transition verbally (line 31).

While in Wen's class both the instructor and students were standing for their political beliefs and were competing for the win, in Rana's class, this does not happen. Perhaps, in Rana's class the topic of the fairness of the President's election is more sensitive than the topic of environmentalism. As Tenesha explained during a stimulated recall session, Viktor often acts as "a smart alec". Smart alecs, in Tenesha's words, try to be funny and are offensive at times. Viktor, according to Tenesha, "is trying to be offensive because when he said "like Bush", he does not know whether there is somebody in class who supports Bush's party; those people who are republicans are offended because he said that Bush won the elections unfairly". Although Rana laughs at Viktor's comments, he does not support Viktor. He also leaves the discussion by moving to the next segment of talk when Viktor insisted on his opinion.

Exchanges included in this group show that instructors' and students' political identities emerge when their opinions conflict and they orient to a political discussion. The status relationship between the instructor and the students may shift during discussion of political issues, which is reflected in turn organization. These discussions are aggressive in that students and the instructors, as political opponents, orient to winning the political debate and compete for taking the next turn. The political discussions are marked with such features as latching, overlapping, target switches, and even participants' teaming together against their political opponent. Although the participants affiliate during political debate, this talk is challenging because the instructors by allowing students to talk (otherwise it would not be a discussion) may lose control over the class. Therefore, to return a political discussion to class talk, instructors withdraw themselves from the debate and make their teacher authority relevant to make a transition to a new topic.

Non-native Identity: Foreigner and a Non-native Speaker

Although ITAs sometimes make grammatical errors, use vocabulary incorrectly, experience comprehension problems, speak with a non-native accent, or demonstrate a lack of sociolinguistic and cultural knowledge, they made their non-native speaker identity relevant only once. This happened in Wen's class when he used the word "filthy" to describe rich people, which evoked students' laughter (ex. 70, line 2). As Clayton explained during stimulated recall session, the expression "filthy rich" is used in informal English, whereas Wen uses it during academic lecture. This is how Clayton explains the reason for the students' laughter. Unlike Clayton, John believes that students laughed because Wen talked negatively about the rich people and used exaggerated, "subjective emotional words".

Wen, however, seems to treat students' laughter as laughter at his incorrect use of the word rather than laughter at his witty remark and creates a *laughing with* environment by initiating laughable targeted at himself, "I just learned this word, adjective" (line 5).

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| (70) | 1 | Wen: | so the point is that due to wasteful consumption |
| | 2 | | habits (.) those extremely filthy rich people |
| | 3 | Ss: | hah hah [hah hah hah [hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 4 | Wen: | [that [hah hah hah] |
| | 5 | | I just [learned] learned this word adjective |
| | 6 | S: | [hah hah] |
| | 7 | Ss: | hah [hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah] |
| | 8 | Wen: | [hah hah hah hah due to that reason um] you |
| | 9 | | know there is a market for |

Wen explained to me that in China, there is an expression to describe extremely rich people. He asked his American friend whether there is an equivalent in English and his friend suggested the expression filthy rich. When Wen heard students' laughter, he immediately thought he used the expression incorrectly because he did not know whether there were other meanings of this expression.

Wen's laughter also illustrates that Wen seeks affiliation with the students by creating a *laughing with* environment. In line 4, when students laugh at his comment, Wen initiates the second laugh to share laughter with students. This environment is ambiguous because his laughter could indicate that he is laughing together with students at his own joke describing rich people as "filthy rich". However, his comment in line 5 indicates that he appears to treat the student's laughter as laughter at his incorrect use of the word "filthy" because he explains that he just learned that word. Although Wen's comment presents him as a not quite competent speaker of English, at the same time, it characterizes Wen positively because although he is the instructor, he is able to laugh at himself. Students laugh at Wen's comment and Wen joins the laughter, aligning himself with the students.

The data show that the identity of a non-native speaker does not always emerge on the surface, as it occurred in the previous example. Most of the time even if there is any non-native problem, it is masked by the participants' subsequent activities.

Exchange 71, which was discussed above as example 47, does not seem to reveal any non-native speaking problems. Ming, however, said that for him David's response "yeah" (line 6) was a bit problematic because in Chinese culture, "yes" always means an affirmative response. That is why Ming humorously clarifies whether by saying "yeah" David really means it.

- | | | | |
|------|---|--------|--|
| (71) | 1 | Ming: | Can we use this expression= |
| | 2 | S1: | =yes= |
| | 3 | David: | =um go back up to the top heh heh heh yeah |
| | 4 | | this xxxxx yeah um |
| | 5 | S1: | right there |
| | 6 | David: | yeah |
| | 7 | Ming: | yeah [heh heh heh heh heh heh] |
| | 8 | David: | [heh heh heh heh] |
| | 9 | Ming: | yeah means yes or heh heh |

10 David: sure yes why not heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
11 heh heh heh heh

Ming's repair initiation does not give David any doubt that Ming understood what David meant. According to David, Ming knows that David is "arbitrarily saying yes" and "he knew exactly what [David] was doing." Max also commented that Ming wants students to think, but David was just guessing and Ming "caught him on that". David's repair initiation led students to believe that Ming's actions meant something other than the real problem source for his repair initiation.

The data demonstrate that in spite of the fact that Wen, Ming, Rana, and Alexandros speak English as an additional language, their identities as non-native speakers do not seem to emerge during humorous exchanges, with the exception of the one time Wen made his identity of a learner relevant. The fact that NNS identity did not come to surface does not mean, however, that the ITAs do not have any difficulties with comprehension or production of humor. The difficulties with comprehension of humor could be masked as well. For example, not understanding humorous utterances could be camouflaged by not hearing them. While in exchange 57 Wen says that he does not hear what Roger said (line 7), it does not mean that this is the real problem because in the stimulated recall session he said that he sometimes does not understand fast speech. Ming, on the other hand, often smiles in response to the students' humor, but example 63 demonstrates that he did not hear or did not understand or maybe did not pay attention to what the student said. ITAs may not use humor at all, but not using humor is not evidence for having difficulty with its production. The use of humor may be related to the instructors' beliefs about whether humor is a valuable tool to use when teaching. While all four ITAs used humor in their classrooms for different instructional and social purposes, not all of them consider humor to be very important in the classroom. I conclude this chapter with a short summary of each ITA's attitudes toward the use of humor in the classroom that emerged during

stimulated recall sessions and discuss their attitudes in relation to how they actually used it while teaching.

The Role of Humor in the Classroom: The ITAs' Perspective

Although all four ITAs used humor in their classrooms, the stimulated recall reveals that Ming, Wen, Alexandros and Rana have different attitudes toward its role in the classroom. In this section, I summarize their thoughts about the role of humor in teaching in comparison to their students' ideas about the value of humor in learning and to what the ITAs actually do with humor in their classrooms. I begin with Ming, Alexandros, and Wen whose beliefs seem to be consistent with what they do with humor, and then continue with Rana, whose convictions do not always match his actions.

Ming

During stimulated recall sessions Ming reported that he almost never uses humor in class because before using it, one needs to test it, otherwise, "it can make trouble". Indeed, in Ming's four videotaped classes, Ming initiated humor only three times out of the eight humorous exchanges that occurred. According to Ming, if an instructor uses humor inappropriately, students may forgive him once, but they cannot forgive him forever. Although Ming thinks that humor is not very important in the classroom, at the same time he believes that "it can add some color and give some credit to the class".

While Ming did not make many jokes, there was still laughter in the classroom. Students sometimes laughed when solving problems that Ming brought to class and Ming often smiled when students were laughing. It gave me an impression that something funny was going on that I could not understand because I lacked shared background knowledge with the students. The stimulated recall sessions with David and Max, the students who did most of the laughing,

revealed that there is a little humor with computer science itself. David explained, “there is some implicit irony in coding; it is easy to write and read your own code, but it is not easy to read somebody else’s code”. Ming seems to share this idea with David because once, after he showed students a program that he wrote himself, he laughed quietly and said, “When you write your own poem, it’s very easy, right? When you want to pick up some errors from others’ poem, it’s a little bit difficult, right?”

Students’ laughter during finding errors in the codes seemed to substitute for conversational humor in Ming’s classroom. While most laughter came from David and Max who seemed to be enjoying the activities, the other students did not seem to be amused during that time. For Joe, as he reported during the stimulated recall, problem solving was not fun because he did not understand the material and did not think the problems were funny. Joe’s response suggests that, similar to conversational humor which requires conversationalists to share some background knowledge in order to understand it, humor in coding also requires shared background knowledge. While David and Max understood the class material better than other students, for them, problem solving was both a classroom exercise and a rapport building activity. For others, like Joe, such activities were not beneficial not only because students did not learn much from these activities, but also because students felt alienated from David, Max, and Ming. If Ming could encourage the students’ involvement in class activities, students would not feel estranged and, at the same time, they would learn more from Ming and from their more experienced classmates.

Alexandros

While Alexandros’ class was as technical as Ming’s, with his humorous comments, Alexandros engaged all students in problem solving and the students’ involvement in class

activities made a difference. Similar to Ming's classroom, humor in Alexandros' class was related to the class content; however, Alexandros' attempts to make students understand the content provided them with the background knowledge required for understanding Alexandros' jokes and, consequently, class material.

Humor and laughter played an important role for Alexandros. According to Alexandros, without humor, the class would be very depressing because they talk about life, death, and life insurance, "stuff boring to some people". Alexandros believes that with humor, "there are ways to make the material interesting by exaggerating something, by emphasizing things". Students' laughter responses meant a lot to Alexandros because for Alexandros, students' laughter is their demonstration of their awareness of what he is talking about. No laughter is an indication that students are not following his explanation. If students do not know what he is talking about, his joke is not funny to them and students "look like [he is] speaking Greek". If Alexandros thinks students are not following his lecture, he asks them questions, or as he said, he "picks on them".

Nancy, Jack, Alex, Stephen, and Melanie, students from Alexandros class, reported that humor and laughter keep them awake and lighten the mood of the classroom. Laughter makes Nancy relax and helps her to "go back to concentration". During a stimulated recall session after watching the video segments that I showed to her Melanie said that she did not realize that they laughed so much: if they do not understand something, they laugh; if they feel stressed, they laugh. Laughter, according to Melanie, also helps to build camaraderie among students. Stephen reported that although the material of this class is not fascinating, the way Alexandros teaches the class makes the class interesting. The students' and Alexandros' comments suggest that humor not only lightens the classroom atmosphere, but also assists in focusing on important, although sometimes boring, material and helps them to overcome difficulties together.

Wen

Wen believes that he is not a joking person and that as a teacher he needs to be serious in the classroom. Although Wen thinks that he needs not only to have serious attitude to his teaching but also to look serious, , at the same time, he points at reasons in favor of using humor in teaching:

When I enter the classroom, I know, I am not here to joke, I am not here to please the students, I am here to teach. I am here to give them lectures, things that are important for the knowledge. But when I am giving those lectures, I am presenting the contents. I want students to receive those kinds of knowledge easier, in an easier way, and, occasionally being humorous...Having for them jokes, would be helpful for them to receive that knowledge, like the credit card case: it's a very easy way for them to understand outsourcing.

The moments when students and the instructor have a good laugh, according to Wen, “do not destroy the entire atmosphere” of the classroom, instead, these moments lighten the atmosphere of the classroom and make his lectures flow easier.

Like Alexandros, who believes that humor assists him in making the class content livelier, Wen considers that humor helps him to make the class content that is not interesting for everybody less boring. Humor also relaxes Wen's students who come to class after work and are already tired after a long day. He also feels comfortable when students respond to his humor with humor because students who make jokes in class help other students feel relaxed and make them acquire knowledge easier. Wen also believes that students understand his desire to make them feel entertained, relieved, and less pressured. According to Wen, his goal is to provide illustrative and interesting examples, and students' responses to his humor indicate that this goal is achieved.

Humor also helps Wen and his students to create rapport and build relationships. Teresa said that Wen's and the students' jokes “make everyone personable” and reveal something about their lives. Teresa also wants to tell jokes in class and to make students laugh because during

such a long class, students need entertainment. John also commented that students need laughter to stay awake because, sometimes, the content gets dry. While laughter keeps students focused, it also makes the class more enjoyable.

Rana

Although Rana, like Wen, claimed that he is not a humorous person and that humor does not play an important role in his teaching, he often used humor in his classroom. While Rana believes that the humorous exchanges I showed to him “were not of much significance for teaching”, Rana’s students Tenesha and Nick have different opinions on that account.

While Rana believes he is not a funny person, Tenesha reported that she loves Rana’s class because Rana “knows how to be funny and how to relax”. Nick feels that it is important that students feel free to make jokes in Rana’s class. He explained that Rana’s class is one of the core classes that undergraduate students have to take even if they are not interested in the subject. For Nick, for example, the content of the class is sometimes boring, which is why he often says something funny, and humor “keeps [him] from falling apart in the class”. According to him, Rana is tolerant of students’ jokes and students appreciate it because “he has the ability to take students' jokes; he maintains their level” and laughs at their jokes together with students unless they are really disruptive. Students respect him for that and feel that he is very accessible. As Nick said, “with some teachers I don't laugh”, but having Rana, students “have a teacher to come to, to talk to”. He feels comfortable in asking Rana questions when he does not understand something. While students can fail classes because some teachers can be irritated by students’ questions, Nick believes it is not possible with Rana because he listens to his students and responds to their questions. Interestingly, while Rana does not believe that humor plays a significant role in teaching, for students, humor is important because through humorous

exchanges they build relationships with Rana which help them in asking questions, expressing their opinions and, therefore, learning.

Although Ming, Wen, Alexandros, and Rana sometimes had different opinions on the importance of using humor in the classroom, all of them participated in humorous exchanges with their students. Participation in humorous exchanges, however, does not mean that all the instructors used humor to the same extent. While using humor for pedagogical purposes such as to explain class material, to give students feedback, and to manage the classroom, Wen, Alexandros, and Rana built relationships with their students. Ming, on the other hand, used humor for similar educational purposes, but did not extensively explore the social function of humor to bond with his students and to create the feeling of in-group inclusion.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Scholars conducting research on ITAs propose that one of the problems that ITAs, as well as native speaking TAs, may encounter in the classroom is that ITAs, who are students themselves, may identify themselves with the students when participating in rapport-building activities (Unger-Gallagher, 1991) and their students may feel more freedom when negotiating different types of classroom behaviors (Pialorsi, 1984; Shaw & Bailey, 1990). Establishing rapport with students without maintaining social boundaries may allow students to test their relationship with their instructor in order to see how far they can go with it (Unger-Gallagher, 1991). Behavior negotiation is also identified as risky because students, knowing that their instructor is an ITA, may feel more freedom for behavior negotiation (Pialorsi, 1984). Perhaps because some of the social functions of humor are shown to be bonding, creating intimacy, building rapport and seeking affiliation (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997; Glenn, 1995; Holmes, 2005; Holmes & Marra, 2006), it is thought to lead to creating comembership of the ITAs with their students. Although researchers seem to believe that ITAs' student identity may emerge in the classroom through the use of humor (Unger-Gallagher, 1991), to the best of my knowledge, there are no studies that demonstrate how it may happen.

This study is the first study that contributes to the body of research on ITAs by investigating what attributes of ITAs' identities emerge through the use of humor in the classroom, how these attributes shape the teacher-student relationship, and what role humor plays in the identity negotiation process. The findings of the study have implications for research on identity, and especially on the role of humor in identity construction in institutional settings. In addition, the study has theoretical implications for humor research, and, finally, it finds its

practical implications in (I)TA training and is useful in general for those who teach in American universities and those who work with (I)TAs.

I continue this chapter with a brief summary of findings as related to the research questions. Then I follow with an explanation of how the findings of the study fit the theoretical framework of identity construction. I also discuss the findings on the role of humor in the classroom and continue with the implications of the study for (I)TA training, research on humor in institutional settings, and the theory of humor. Finally, I provide direction for further research.

Summary of Findings

The three research questions that guided this study are all concerned with the relationship between the humor and identity. Although each of them has a narrow focus, all of them together represent a picture of how ITAs and their students construct their identities as teachers and students.

Research Question #1: What Attributes of ITAs' Identities Emerge During Humorous Exchanges With Their Students?

While different attributes of ITAs' identities emerge during humorous interaction with their students, most of the time universalistic attributes of teacher identity emerged. The most important universalistic attribute of ITA teacher identity appears to be teacher authority. ITAs exercised their authority to provide positive and negative feedback to students' responses, questions, and students' behavior, and to manage the classroom. While giving lectures, ITAs maintained their authority by making a point, explaining class material, and drawing students' attention to the important points. If ITAs damaged their authority by saying something inappropriate (errors, going off subject), they opted for its recovery. If the ITAs' authority was challenged by students, the ITAs reasserted it. Sometimes, ITAs balanced authority with

permissiveness when giving students a chance to continue holding the floor. The ITAs also shared their authority when participating in negotiation with the students and constructing knowledge collaboratively with students. Sometimes ITAs and students competed for authority, in which situations particularistic attributes of the ITAs' and their students' political identities emerged in addition to the universalistic attributes that were more consistently apparent. In other words, depending on the different teacher practices in the classroom, different degrees of authority were relevant.

Although authority emerged as the most important attribute of the ITAs' teacher identity, the ITAs used it differently. For instance, while all ITAs exerted and reasserted their authority at some points of their classroom interaction, Wen and Rana competed for authority with their students. While Wen, Rana, and Alexandros maintained and recovered their authority through humorous interaction during lectures, Ming did not apply these practices. Wen, Ming, and Rana shared authority with students whereas Alexandros did not do so. Finally, Rana was the only one who passed authority to students when students continued to hold the floor without his prior permission to do so.

While authority emerged as a "normal" attribute of the ITA teacher identity, participants made "strange" attributes of teacher identity relevant as well. When Alexandros tried to manage students' attention, he and his students constructed his identity as an overly suspicious teacher. Rana was a teacher who tried very hard to pique students' curiosity in the subject he taught. Ming and his students made Ming a teacher who did not return students' homework assignment. Wen acquired an identity of a teacher who did not like multiple choice and who gave tests different from other teachers. All of the ITAs gained an identity of a teacher who asked vague or

ambiguous questions. Interestingly, identity negotiation occurred mostly when ITAs or their students made the “strange” attributes of the ITA identity relevant.

Some particularistic attributes of the ITAs’ identities that they revealed in class sometimes allowed them to establish comembership with their students. Wen, for example, established comembership on the basis of political beliefs and his attitude toward the One Child Policy in China. Wen also revealed his young age compared to some students in his class and that he is still a learner of English. Rana made his older age compared to the students in his class relevant. Alexandros revealed his identity as a doctoral candidate once (when he dropped the bag with his laptop and said that it was his dissertation). Particularistic attributes of Ming’s identity, however, were not salient in the humorous exchanges with his students.

Research Question #2. How Do the Attributes of ITAs’ Identity Shape Their Relationships With Their Students?

While the universalistic attributes of the ITAs’ identities shape the ITAs’ and students’ relationship as teachers and students, the attributes that characterize ITAs in an unusual way appear to compromise ITAs’ teacher identity. For example, when Alexandros called on students suspecting them of not paying attention, by applying a practice of switching the target from themselves to Alexandros students constructed Alexandros’ identity as an overly suspicious teacher. When Ming did not tell students whether he was going to return students’ assignments, by asking the same question several times students constructed Ming’s identity as a teacher who did not return students’ assignments. When Rana could not take students’ attendance at a lecture, by asking how they could prove that they went to the lecture, students made Rana’s identity as a teacher who tries too hard to get students’ interested in the subject relevant. When Wen gave

students low grades (after the curve) on the test, by making unrealistic suggestions students constructed Wen's identity as a teacher who gives difficult tests.

Particularistic attributes of ITAs' identities shared with the students facilitated rapport building, as was also shown by Erickson and Schultz (1982). The particularistic attributes that were not shared by the participants instigated identity negotiation and also led to rapport building and affiliation. Although Wen's political affiliation with environmentalists led to rapport building with some of the students and to humorous confrontation with the student who did not associate himself with environmentalists, through the use of humor Wen and the student who did not share his political beliefs with Wen created affiliation. While Wen's young age evoked resistance of an older student, their identity negotiation during humorous exchange led to affiliation. By making his older age relevant, Rana was able to create affiliation with his students while gracefully avoiding answering the students' question about a popular song.

Research Question #3. What is the Role of Humor in the Identity Negotiation Process Between the ITAs and Their Students?

Although some particularistic attributes of the ITAs' identities could lead to disaffiliation, negotiation of identities within a play frame allowed for avoiding direct confrontation, disagreement, and alienation. It also provided opportunities for affiliation through transformation of a *laughing at* into *laughing with* environment. While humor played an important role in mitigating participants' face threat and aggressiveness, laughter offered opportunities for bonding, demonstration of belonging, and creating a sense of being part of a group. The choice of humorous genres appeared to depend on the purpose of humorous utterances in the classroom and led to alignment on different base.

Teasing was one of the most common humorous genres used by the ITAs in this study. It was used for multiple functions, including exerting authority. Exerting authority was linked to teasing used to mitigate negative evaluations of students' responses, questions, and behavior and also to eliminate the bias against praise. Exerting authority is also associated with more aggressive forms of teasing, the *target switch*, when the participants switch the targets from themselves to their teasees during authority negotiation. Although teasing is an aggressive humorous genre because it requires a human target, it creates a play frame, which allows for simultaneous confrontation and affiliation. While teasing can both bond people and harm their relationships, it functioned as a device for alignment rather than separation during the humorous exchanges of the ITAs with their students. Those who became the butts of the teases tended to seek affiliation with the teaser in order to transform *laughing at* into *laughing with*.

While teasing was used to exert authority, it was also used when instructors opted for sharing their authority with students and when students and teachers competed for authority. Sharing authority occurred during negotiation of class issues and competing for authority happened when political identities were negotiated. During negotiation, the parties are involved in face work, which requires graceful interaction. When competing for authority, the parties stand for their political beliefs and their exchanges acquire features not very common for classroom talk, such as overlapping, latching, and reduction of pauses. Similar to the social function of teases through which authority is exerted, the social function of teases in negotiations is to minimize the effect of confrontation and disagreement by means of reasserting a social bond.

Teasing also was used with the purpose of re-asserting teacher authority challenged by the students. By teasing students in response to their challenging responses and questions, ITAs reasserted their authority and created an environment where affiliation is relevant.

The ITAs' used narrative jokes and cartoons, joking about an absent other or joking without a target to make a point and to explain class material, thus maintaining their teacher authority. Through these genres they also built rapport with students.

Self-denigrating humor was used to recover ITA authority that was damaged in some way, e.g., when ITAs made errors. While the purpose of self-denigrating humor is to downplay authority by presenting oneself as "not altogether competent" (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997), it leads to rapport building through affiliation when participants laugh together at the humorist. Students also use this humorous speech genre to recover their positive image that has been damaged. However, when recovering their positive image they enhanced their instructors' authority by seeking the instructors' appreciation of their humor and recognition of their self-criticism.

One of the ITAs passed authority to students when students kept the floor without explicit permission to do so. While passing authority to students was rather face threatening for the instructor, by means of humor, for the instructor and students created affiliation and established rapport between them.

Although participants used various humorous genres for multiple purposes, they demonstrated a tendency for bonding and affiliation in every humorous exchange. However, their striving for a social bond did not lead to the making of their student identity relevant.

ITA Identity: Teacher or Student?

While some scholars (e.g., Unger-Gallagher, 1991) seem to view rapport-building through exchanging jokes and sharing personal information as an opportunity for the TA to reveal their student identity and the first step to elimination of the role boundaries between them and their students, this did not happen in this study. Although the ITAs exchanged jokes with their students and sometimes revealed personal information, they did not make their student identity relevant during these exchanges. While the use of humor and revealing personal information led to rapport building, the rapport between the ITAs and their students did not lead to the elimination of teacher-student boundaries.

Erickson and Schultz (1982) argue that during interaction, participants co-construct their performed social identities which consist of universalistic and particularistic attributes that participants reveal to each other during an institutional encounter. Although Erickson and Schultz propose that in theory, participants should reveal primarily universalistic attributes of their identities within an institutional encounter, in reality, particularistic attributes of the participants' identities that they have outside the encounter emerge as well. The shared particularistic attributes are fundamental to creating participants' comembership.

ITAs may mention during the interaction that they are students; however, the mentioning of their student status that they have outside the classroom does not necessarily mean that the social boundaries between the ITAs and their students could be eliminated. For example, the analysis of Alexandros' (as well as other ITAs') humorous interactions with his students does not show the emergence of his student identity in the classroom. At the same time, Melanie, a student from Alexandros' class, reported during stimulated recall that because "he is a student himself", he "always catches why [students] are laughing" and laughs with them. Melanie also

stated that Alexandros identifies himself with the students because he mentions that he has just had the same professional exam for which he prepares his students and he talks about his professors. However, Melanie further reports that “nobody thinks about [Alexandros] as a student” but as “a cool teacher” who “understands where [students] are”.

Identity is not what we *think* people are, but, as Erickson and Schultz (1982) argue, identity is what they actually *do* to construct their identities at specific moments of interaction. Although Alexandros mentions that he has just taken an exam, thus revealing his student identity that he has outside this encounter, in the classroom, Alexandros and his students co-constructed Alexandros’ identity as a “cool teacher” who understands his students. His identity as a “cool teacher” was co-constructed through numerous classroom interactions, not just by his telling the students that he is a teacher. Alexandros’ mentioning of the exams he took and his talking about other professors does reveal some attributes of his student identity, but they specifically point to the student identity that he has outside of the classroom encounter. Consequently, these attributes of his student identity function similar to particularistic attributes that affect the outcome of the institutional encounter, but do not lead to a teacher-student role shift within the encounter. This goes in line with Erickson and Schultz (1982) who argue that sometimes participants “seem to be deliberately trying to discover shared attributes of status outside the encounter” (p. 35). The shared student identity outside the classroom encounter seems to lead to rapport-building which, according to Erickson and Schultz’, could be beneficial for interpersonal relationships.

Although this study does not reveal the emergence of ITAs’ student identities in the humorous exchanges with their students, it does demonstrate that through the use of humor ITAs and their students built rapport, create a sense of in-group inclusion, and align with each other. Creating rapport and affiliation appears to be essential in the classroom because, as the study

shows, some classroom behaviors are inherently aggressive and humor, while being aggressive itself, offers opportunities for uniting and for emotional connection.

Behavior Negotiation in the Classroom

As Shaw and Bailey (1990) argue, the American classroom fosters a variety of behaviors, which are negotiated by the professor and students. The negotiation of what is allowed in a certain classroom makes each of the classrooms unique. This study supports this claim and also shows that some classroom behaviors are intrinsically aggressive, or threatening either to student face or/and to teacher authority.

While certain behaviors are common to most of the classrooms, some of the classrooms cultivate more aggressive behaviors than others. These behaviors seem to depend in part on the subject taught in the classroom and, consequently, the activities used to teach the subject. Although the subject and the ways of teaching appear to affect classroom behaviors, personal characteristics of the teachers seem to be influential to the classroom behaviors too. Since I cannot make any general conclusions because of the small number of the participants and the descriptive character of the study, I will illuminate how four ITAs, Wen, Ming, Rana, and Alexandros participated in aggressive behaviors and how humor shaped their identities and their relationship with their students during these exchanges.

One of the instructor's tasks is evaluation of students, or providing negative or positive feedback to their responses, questions, or behavior. In spite of the fact that evaluations of students are part of the instructors' responsibilities in the classroom, the instructors and students treated them as face threatening activities. When the instructors needed to evaluate students' responses, questions, or behavior negatively, they used teases to do so. Since teases are usually initiated in response to some previous activities treated by the teaser as strange (Drew, 1987), it

is not surprising to find teasing in evaluations. Using humor for evaluating students also parallels Holmes' (2000) findings on the use of teasing for the same purpose in the workplace. Similar to the social functions of teases to mitigate imposition and to encourage collegial relationships in Holmes' (2000) study, the social functions of teases in the classroom were also to soften criticism, to reduce imposition, and to create rapport between the instructors and students.

While instructors' evaluation of students is one of the instructors' primary responsibilities, the exchanges that involve humorous evaluations underscore how complex the relationship between instructors and students could be during these usual interactions. While affiliation between the instructors and students is important, two examples show that sometimes affiliation among the students is important as well. Instructors tend to seek students' support as evidence of the students' agreement with their criticism. The student evaluated negatively and singled out of the group seeks reunion with the class. Twice one student offered support to the students who have just been negatively evaluated, thus demonstrating her solidarity with the students. The instructors' and students' orientation to their social connection while being involved in aggressive behavior such as humorous evaluations, seems to be a manifestation of a "desire for protection, for security, for safety, for surety" (West, 1992, p. 20).

Another important finding of this study is that often identity negotiation occurs through highly aggressive interactions of the instructors and students that involve transformation of the participants' identities from normal to "strange". The identity transformation occurs not only by means of the initial tease as suggested by Drew (1987), but also by means of a *target switch* as this study shows. While Glenn (1995) describes the situations when conversationalists manipulate their laughter to transform the environment from *laughing at* to *laughing with*, laughing with the teasee does not change the teaser's normal identity to the "strange" one. Some

humorous exchanges from Alexandros', Wen's, and Rana's classes show how the instructors and students, through re-directing a *laughing at* environment by means of a *target switch* make the teasers' "strange" identities relevant. In spite of the fact that they participate in aggressive interaction, locating the interaction within a play frame allows for softening of the aggressive behavior and for affiliating with each other. Although Alexandros, Wen, and Rana used this type of aggressive humor, Alexandros and Wen used this practice consistently for certain purposes. However, the exchanges used in Alexandros' and Wen's classes have a slightly different structure, which perhaps depends on the purposes of its use.

Alexandros, for example, opts for a rather aggressive activity of calling on students that he suspects of not paying attention because the content of this class is important for passing the professional exam necessary for the students' future occupation. Since the content of the class is difficult and not exciting for some of the students, the students sometimes lose their attention or fall asleep. Since Alexandros' calling on students immediately transforms students' normal identity into identity of students who are not attentive in class, they tend to recover their normal identity and make Alexandros' "strange" identity relevant by applying a *target switch*. The structure of these exchanges suggests that Alexandros and his students create a play frame to negotiate their identities. The opening of the play frame for negotiation of Alexandros' and his students' identities allows for bonding and reasserting their relationship. Alexandros applied this practice consistently and with the same purpose of revealing whether students pay attention or not. While the exchanges from Alexandros' class exemplify Shaw and Bailey's (1990) argument that in a college classroom the instructors and students establish norms "that will hold for that group of participants for the time that constitute a class group" (p. 321), these exchanges also

provide evidence that the norms are sometimes established for the purpose of negotiation of the instructors' and students' identities.

Wen's classroom fostered two types of behaviors involving aggressive humor such as negotiation of class issues and participating in political discussions. While Ming and Rana also conducted negotiation with their students, Alexandros did not do so. Although Rana, like Wen, taught Political Science, participation in political discussions was not common in his classroom. Similar to the exchanges from Alexandros' class in which he managed students' attention, negotiations and political discussions are conducted within a play frame that allows for reducing the social distance between the instructors and students. Negotiations conducted within the play frame also allow for sharing authority thus making negotiation easier. The political discussions realized within a play frame provide opportunities for even more aggressive behavior – competing for authority – while standing for their political views. The creation of the play frame, however, does not guarantee that negotiation will occur, nor does it give any warranty that the parties enter the political discussion.

Although Pialorsi (1984) warns that for ITAs with little experience in participating in interactive dialogue with their students, negotiation of the class behaviors could be challenging, Wen demonstrated how gracefully he can get out of challenging situations and negotiate his and the students' identities with the help of rather aggressive humor. Participation in identity negotiation by means of humor, however, requires excellent communicative competence, the knowledge of sociocultural norms of the American classroom, and the ability to accurately interpret the negotiation opening. While Wen, Alexandros, and Rana demonstrated all these qualities and participated in identity negotiation with their students, Ming did not always use this opportunity. Partially it could be assigned to the lack of knowledge of sociocultural norms and

particularly to his language skills. As a result of not participating in identity negotiation, Ming missed the opportunity for bonding with his students. Although Wen's, Alexandros', and Rana's students often challenged them with their humor and threatened their authority, the identity negotiation allowed not only for reasserting their authority, but also for establishing instructor-students relationship.

In conclusion to this section I would like to stress that one of the most important functions of humor in the classroom is promoting teacher student relationship, in-group inclusion, rapport, and a sense of wholeness. Both teachers and students in their humorous exchanges in the classroom demonstrate their desire to belong together. Belonging together and affiliating with each other seems to create a safe environment for the instructors and students to participate in classroom activities which, as the study shows, are often aggressive in different ways.

Contributions and Applications

Since the present study incorporates several research domains such as the study of identity, research on ITAs, the study of humor in general and the study of humor in educational settings, the contributions of this research fall into these domains. In this section I briefly describe how this study contributes to these fields and explain how the results of the study can be applied.

Contribution to the Study of Identity

This study makes several contributions to the research on the social identity. First, the study shows that even if conversationalists have more than one institutional identity, e.g., an identity as a teacher and an identity as a student, the identity relevant to the role conversationalists perform within an encounter, the role of a teacher, is more likely to emerge.

Second, the use of humor by the participants of the study did encourage the building of rapport between the teachers and students and establishing of relationships, but it did not lead to the ITAs' identification with their students. Third, while different classroom behaviors require alteration of the instructors' and students' roles, teacher authority emerged as one of the central attributes of the teacher identity. Even when roles of the instructor and students were altered during conducting negotiation or participation in class discussions with the students, authority was always negotiated during the exchanges and reasserted at the end.

Contribution to the Research on ITAs

This study contributes to the research on ITAs in that it shows that ITAs were able to participate in different classroom behaviors: besides giving lectures, they engaged students in discussions, provided evaluations of students, conducted negotiation of the class issues with the students, and managed student attention. These behaviors seem to depend on the subject taught and the character of the classroom. Political discussions were mostly employed in Wen's Political Science class during an interactive activity when students expressed different political views on different topics. Negotiation of class issues also occurred mostly in Wen's class. Possibly, the negotiation was needed because Wen introduced a test format that students were not familiar with so they needed to negotiate what would be included on the test. Negotiation also appeared to be needed when students were not happy with the test results and Wen invited students' comments after the test. Although the subject taught and the character of the classroom seem to affect classroom behaviors, the instructors' individual attitudes toward teaching appear to be an influential factor as well. While each of the classrooms required students to pay attention to understand the class material, only Alexandros' classroom generated the instructors' behavior of managing students' attention.

Although ITA preparation manuals (e.g., Byrd, Constantinides, & Pennington, 1989; Sarkisian, 2006) caution that using humor in a second language is risky because it is rooted in the culture which ITAs or their students may not know well, this study demonstrates that ITAs used humor often. However, they mainly used conversational joking that was rooted in the local context of the classroom. This suggests that even the ITAs who do not have much experience with American culture in general may still be capable of spicing their teaching with humor. It should be noted that most of the time the ITAs used teasing.

I suggest that ITAs used teasing extensively because they were familiar with this humorous genre and its social functions from their first language experience. Teasing is one of the humorous genres that seems to be common to many cultures and is one of the humorous genres that even children as young as two are able to interpret and perform (Eisenberg, 1986; Miller, 1986; Shieffelin, 1986). The use of teasing requires the knowledge of social rules (Eisenberg, 1986) and while learning how to tease, children learn how to tease without violating the boundaries of behavior suitable for small children. Since in some cultures, including American culture, teasing is part of small children's socialization process, which function as a device for social control (see Eisenberg, 1986; Miller, 1986; Shieffelin, 1986), the participants' familiarity with this genre and its social functions allows for quick transfer of this humorous genre to their second language without violation of cultural norms.

Another contribution of this study to the research on ITAs is that while ITAs were creating rapport and affiliation and establishing a social bond with their students, at the same time they reasserted hierarchy in the classroom. Although teasing offers plentiful opportunities for conversationalists' alignment, the instructors used it to exert or re-assert authority and, thus, hierarchy existed between the instructors and students.

Contributions to the Study of Humor

This study contributes to the research on humor in that it enhances our understanding of the concepts of the target and the butt of humor which provide us with better and deeper understanding of identity negotiation through the use of humor. This study also introduces a phenomenon that has not been described in the literature before, which I term a *target switch*.

The scholars studying humor and laughter seem to use the terms the target and the butt interchangeably although these terms seem to refer to different concepts. By not distinguishing between these two concepts, humor research appears to treat the targets as passive recipients of one's aggression. Glenn (1995), however, assigns butts a more active role: they can transform a *laughing at* into a *laughing with* environment. However, while transforming *laughing at* into *laughing with*, the butt still remains the victim of someone's humorous aggression.

This study demonstrates that the target of the tease is capable of more than transforming *laughing at* into *laughing with* by playing and laughing along. In fact, the target of the tease can actively avoid becoming the butt of the tease, instead making the original teaser the butt by performing a particular kind of a counter tease, which I call a *target switch*. While a counter tease is not new to the research of humor, such a phenomenon as a *target switch* has not been described in the literature before.

As previous studies show (see Glenn, 2003; Homes & Marra, 2006), a counter tease may appear in several locations. For example, in Holmes and Marra's (2006) data, a counter tease, which they call contestive humor, appears in the second turn after the initial tease and is separated from it by a laughter appreciation turn (example 4, line 4, p. 127). In Glenn's (2003) data, a counter tease appears two turns after the initial tease, specifically, after the target's acknowledgment of the tease and the teasee's subsequent laughter (last example on p. 126).

Although a counter tease is supposed to be performed by the teasee and be directed at the initial teaser by challenging the teaser back, Holmes and Marra (2002a) seem to treat the teasee's self-denigrating humor as a counter tease (see example 2, pp. 1687, 1688, line 4), which they call "ironic, mock-modest claim" (p. 1688) and which, as they say, challenges the teaser's claim.

This study shows that a *target switch* is a particular kind of a counter tease performed by the teasee in response to the initial tease placed in the turn immediately following the initial tease. By means of the *target switch* the teasee redirects the humor back to the teaser. By locating the *target switch* in the next turn after the initial tease, the initial target of the tease pre-empts the *laughing at* environment, thus not allowing for appreciative laughter and, therefore, avoiding becoming the butt of the tease. The *target switch* creates another *laughing at* environment where the initial teaser, who becomes the target of the teasee's *target switch*, has an opportunity to become the butt of the tease. The *target switch* is aggressive because of its quick appearance in the next turn, which eliminates the possibility for the initial teaser to amuse the audience.

A *target switch* may lead to several outcomes. The initial teaser can get laughed at and become the butt of the tease or she or he can initiate a *reverse target switch*, which is located in the next turn after the *target switch*. The *reverse target switch* is stronger than the *target switch* in that it may lead to making the initial teasee the target for the second time and, finally, the butt. The redirection of the target may recur until one of the conversationalists becomes the butt of the tease.

A *reverse target switch* may also lead to trapping. A *trap* is an outcome of a *target switch* sequence when the initiator of the last *target switch* in this sequence constructs the *target switch*

in a way that makes the teasee terminate the play frame with a serious response, which overtly signals the teasee's withdrawal from the humorous exchange.

The force of the *target switch* is measured by how close it is located to the initial tease. If the teasee fails to initiate the *target switch* in the next turn after the initial tease, the teaser's humor is appreciated and the teasee becomes the butt. The teasee can initiate a *delayed target switch*, which is located in the turn following the laughter turn. However, the *delayed target switch* is less aggressive because both humorists share the experience of being the butt.

The social function of a *target switch* is transformation of the teaser's normal identity into a strange one. While Drew (1987) shows how "po-faced", or serious, responses to teases transform the teasee's deviant identity to normal one, with the help of a *target switch*, a teasee redirects humorous aggression to the teaser and makes her or his identity "strange". If participants engage in a target switch sequence, they bounce their aggression back and forth, thus contesting who gains a normal identity in the end. A *trap* is a severe outcome of the target switching sequence because a teasee (the last one in a sequence) is trapped to seriously acknowledge that she or he cannot continue the play and becomes the butt.

Contribution to the Research on Humor in Educational Settings

This study shows that in the classroom, teasing used for student evaluations can be used for an additional function – engaging students in the lecture. When providing humorous feedback to the students' responses or questions. Alexandros, Wen, and Rana elaborated on their humor to invite students' laughter. As a result, not only the student evaluated and the instructor participated in interaction, but also the entire class was involved in the evaluation activity as the audience. This function of teasing has not been mentioned in the literature before, perhaps because it is more relevant to the classroom environment where students' engagement in the

class activities is important. Students' participation in the lecture facilitates their attention to the important information or awareness of possible errors. While Wen, Alexandros, and Rana used humor in evaluations to engage most of the students in the lectures, Ming did not use this strategy. As a result, Ming's not attempting to engage all students by offering more amusement resulted not only in Ming's detachment and alienation from his students, but also in students' loss of interest in participation.

Since many classroom routines are intrinsically aggressive in that they are directed at the students, the realization of these routines is accompanied with more aggressive types of humor, which is also directed at the students. These findings suggest several applications of this study that I propose in the next section.

Pedagogical Applications of the Study

Although the ITA training literature mentions the importance of humor in the classroom and gives some recommendations on how to use humor with students, this study provides us with a new insight into how humor is actually used by ITAs and suggests some recommendations for ITA training. While Sarkisian (2006) advises that the safest humor to use in the classroom is funny stories and funny examples related to the teaching material and Byrd, Constantinides, and Pennington (1989) even provide students with the principle of generating jokes, in this study narrative jokes and cartoons were not used often. Narrative jokes and cartoons were used five times by the instructors and once by a student, whereas teachers used funny examples 19 times. Funny examples, narrative jokes and cartoons thus constituted only approximately 22% of the humorous exchanges. Sarkisian (2006) also mentions self-denigrating humor, which was used seven times by instructors and three times by the students (approximately 10% of the humorous

sequences). The remaining 68% of the humorous exchanges involve teasing, which is not mentioned in these study guides.

This study suggests that many classroom behaviors are aggressive either to students or to the instructor. In spite of the fact that teasing is also an aggressive speech genre, it creates a play frame, which minimizes the aggression. Raising ITAs' awareness that they may use teasing while participating in face threatening behavior can be beneficial for ITAs in a way that they may not only soften the impact of the face threat but also provide opportunities for themselves and the students to establishing and build relationships.

While Sarkisian (2006) and Byrd, Constantinides, and Pennington (1998) caution ITAs that telling jokes in class may not be a good idea because jokes which are funny in one culture may not be funny in another one, the present study reveals that ITAs, actually, use culture-based humor in a general sense very rarely. Most of the time, ITAs use humor rooted in the local context of their classrooms familiar to both students and teachers. This, again, suggests the idea of the importance of teasing because teasing is a way of characterizing someone's behavior as strange (Drew, 1987) and, thus, may not require knowledge of American culture in general. What could be characterized as a "strange" behavior in one classroom, e.g., students are not looking at the instructor during the lecture, may not be considered as a "strange" behavior in another classroom. By means of teasing, ITAs can establish rules unique for their classroom and also negotiate the rules.

While Sarkisian (2006) warns that non-native speakers should not use irony because irony can be interpreted as sarcasm and students may think that the teacher is making fun of them, the participants of this study made fun of each other during political discussions by using teasing. This study did not show any negative effects of this practice because the instructor and

students negotiated this type of behavior. It would be beneficial to inform ITAs that this type of behavior needs to be negotiated and accepted by the parties as appropriate. Otherwise, students may be offended and the negative effect may be inevitable.

Although exchanging jokes with students sometimes challenges teacher authority, at the same time, challenging humor assisted in re-asserting the participants' roles. Role negotiation is easier in the humorous mode because humor cushions the impact of negotiation and simultaneously assists in establishing relationships between the students and ITAs. Since through challenging humor the instructors and students can negotiate their roles while maintaining rapport with the students, I suggest that the training programs include the topic of the negotiation of the conversationalists' roles through the use of humor.

The study also suggests that ITAs from different disciplines should be aware of which classroom behaviors are the most common when teaching the subjects in those disciplines. For example, while teaching both Political Science and Math may involve giving lectures, in the Political Science class students may be engaged in political discussions whereas in Math class, students are more likely to be involved in problem solving. The awareness of what ITAs are more likely to do when teaching will help them to think which humorous genres would be appropriate to use in class. If ITAs want to spice their lectures with humor but not to be too disruptive, short humorous comments structured in a way that constrain students from exchanging jokes with their instructors would be appropriate. Class discussions, on the other hand, may involve teasing if the participants may need to negotiate their political beliefs. Building awareness of the possible behaviors in the classroom may help ITAs think of what to expect in the classroom and how to deal with it.

While raising ITAs' awareness of the role of humor in the classroom seems to be a crucial step in their preparation for teaching, the question of how to do it also arises. One step towards building awareness is analyzing humorous interaction of other professors or ITAs with their students. Watching a video of some humorous interactions would be especially helpful, as video provides a rich context of the humorous interaction including body language, facial expressions, and teacher and students' reactions to the humor. Observation of classes would be useful too. Finally, ITAs' videotaping their own classes and analyzing how they used humor would be also beneficial because playing and replaying video segments allows for noticing details which may not be visible at first, but which could be crucial to the outcomes of the humorous exchanges.

Limitations

The results of this study should be taken with caution because of its limitations. Although all four ITAs were from the most represented graduate student populations in terms of their fields of study and their country of origin, except for Alexandros, the number of the participants is still small to provide a general picture of the ITAs in the U.S. universities. Although all of them had a good command of English, their cultural and teaching experiences may differ from other ITAs. Their long stay in the U.S. and their own experience with American classroom culture could make them aware of how humor is used in the American classroom. Perhaps ITAs with different experiences might act differently in similar settings.

Another factor that could affect the results of the study is self-selection of the participants. Although the participants of this study did not know that the purpose of the study was to investigate how non-native speaking teaching assistants use humor in the classroom, they seemed to feel rather confident in their teaching skills. Even Ming whose command of English

was a bit lower than the command of the rest of the participants agreed to participate maybe because he was knowledgeable in the area of his expertise. It could be that novice ITAs with less teaching experience and less confidence in their teaching would use humor differently or would not use it at all.

Finally, all four participants were males. Possibly, in the classroom where instructor is female, the use of humor and humorous interaction between the instructor and students could be different.

Directions for Further Research

The ITAs from this study represent such disciplines as Political Science, Computer Science, and Business. Conducting research that involves ITAs teaching in other disciplines might reveal behaviors not found in this study and also show what behaviors could be treated as typical for many classrooms. This would assist in preparing ITAs to teach in different fields. The participants of this study are all male; engaging females in research would build a more varied pool of participants.

Of particular interest for further research is investigation of non-native speakers' comprehension of humor initiated by native speakers. This study did not reveal any overt indications of comprehension problems; however, several exchanges suggest that ITAs camouflage their comprehension difficulties. They do this by either smiling in response to the students' humor or by initiating repair that may be interpreted as a hearing rather than a comprehension problem. When commenting on such situation, Wen mentioned that he has problems with listening, but he referred to both comprehension and hearing problems: "I did not hear that clearly because ...I think, ... personally, I have a problem with listening. ... Especially in noisy environment, I can't pick what people all of a sudden [say]." Wen's comments seem to

demonstrate that although Wen says that he does not understand students' utterances, he blends the two problem sources, thus masking his comprehension problem. Research in the area of comprehension would investigate how non-native speakers cope with comprehension problems, what strategies they use to do so, and how their comprehension of humor could be improved.

I would like to conclude by pointing out that this study brought an optimistic insight in the research on ITAs and research on the use of humor by non-native speakers in general. The ITAs in this study, although each had their own problems, demonstrated excellent performance of their role of a teacher in their second language. They demonstrated not only excellent language skills, but also their awareness of second language culture. Their command of English and knowledge of American classroom culture allowed them to participate in multiple classroom behaviors and establish the behavior patterns (e.g., management of student attention, negotiation of class issues, participation in political discussions) in their own classrooms, and enjoy humorous interaction with their students. Even Ming, who differed from Wen, Rana, and Alexandros in his language skills and awareness of sociocultural norms of the U.S. classroom, used humor and responded to the students' humor in a way that did not lead to misunderstandings in the classroom. By using humor, ITAs not only avoided conflicts, made interactions that involved confrontations go smoothly and even with amusement, made teaching and learning more engaging, they also were able to cope with the most difficult task of balancing their authority with permissiveness and balancing their good relationships with students with maintaining status boundaries.

REFERENCES

- Attardo, S. (2000). Irony as relevant inappropriateness. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 32, 793-826.
- Attardo, S. (2001). *Humorous texts: A semantic and pragmatic analysis*: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Attardo, S., Eisterhold, J., Hay, J., & Poggi, I. (2003). Multimodal markers of irony and sarcasm. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 16(2), 243-260.
- Bailey, K. M. (1984a). A typology of teaching assistants. In K. Bailey, F. Pialorsi & J. Zukowski/Faust (Eds.), *Foreign teaching assistants in U.S. universities* (pp. 110-125). Washington, D.C.: National Association for Foreign Student Affairs.
- Bailey, K. M. (1984b). Foreign teaching assistants at U.S. universities: Problems in interaction and communication. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17, 308-310.
- Bailey, K. M. (1984c). The "foreign TA problem". In K. Bailey, F. Pialorsi & J. Zukowski/Faust (Eds.), *Foreign teaching assistants in U.S. universities* (pp. 3-15). Washington, D.C.: National Association of Foreign Student Affairs.
- Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an ecology of mind*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Bell, N. D. (2002). *Using and understanding humor in a second language: A case study*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.
- Bergmann, J. R. (1992). Veiled morality: Notes on discretion in psychiatry. In P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional setting* (pp. 137-162). Cambridge: UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bloome, D., Carter, S. P., Christian, B. M., Otto, S., & Shuart-Faris, N. (2005). *Discourse analysis and the study of classroom language and literacy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Boland, R. J., & Hoffman, R. (1983). Humor in a machine shop: An interpretation of symbolic action. In L. R. Pondy, G. Morgan, P. J. Frost & T. Dandridge (Eds.), *Organizational symbolism* (pp. 187-198). Greenwich, Connecticut, London, England JAI Press Inc.
- Boxer, D., & Cortés-Conde, F. (1997). From bonding to biting: Conversational joking and identity display. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 27, 275-294.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Byrd, P., Constantinides, J. C., & Pennington, M. C. (1989). *The foreign teaching assistant's manual*. New York, NY: Collier Macmillan Canada, Inc.

- Chin, H.-K. K., & Rajika, B. (2007). *Open doors 2006: Report on international educational exchange*. Retrieved June 17, 2007, from <http://opendoors.iienetwork.org/>.
- Coates, J. (2007). Talk in play frame: More on laughter and intimacy. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39, 29-49.
- Cole, G. D., Campbell, T., Friedlander, A., Garner, R. H., Hagood, A. D., Hydak, M. G., et al. (not dated). A university's commitment to its FTA program. Unpublished Manuscript. University of Alabama.
- Condon, W. S. (1964). Process in communication. Unpublished manuscript.
- Davies, C. E. (2003). How English-learners joke with native speakers: An interactional sociolinguistic perspective on humor as collaborative discourse across cultures. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35, 1361-1385.
- Davies, C. E., Tyler, A. E., & Koran, J. J. (1989). Face-to-face with English speakers: An advanced training class for international teaching assistants. *English for Specific Purposes*, 8, 139-153.
- Denzin, N. K. (1970). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE Book of Qualitative Research* (pp. 1-32). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Drew, P. (1987). Po-faced receipts of teases. *Linguistics*, 25, 219-253.
- Drew, P. (1992). Contested evidence in courtroom cross-examination: The case of trial for rape. In P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional setting* (pp. 470-520). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Drew, P., & Heritage, J. (1992). Analyzing talk at work: An introduction. In P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional setting* (pp. 470-520). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Drew, P., & Sorjonen, M.-L. (1997). Institutional dialogue. In T. A. v. Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary Introduction* (Vol. 2. Discourse as social interaction in society, pp. 92-118). London: SAGE.
- DuFon, M. A. (2002). Video recording in ethnographic SLA research: Some issues of Validity in data collection. *Language Learning and Technology* 6 (1), 40-59.

- Duncan, W. J., & Feisal, J. P. (1989). No laughing matter: Patterns of humor in the workplace. *Organizational Dynamics*, 17(4), 18-30.
- Duranti, A. (1997). *Linguistic Anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eder, D. (1993). "Go get ya a french!": Romantic and sexual teasing among adolescent girls. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Gender and conversational interaction*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eisenberg, A. R. (1986). Teasing: Verbal play in two Mexicano homes. In B. B. Schieffelin & E. Ochs (Eds.), *Language socialization across cultures* (pp. 183-198). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eisterhold, J., Attardo, S., & Boxer, D. (2005). Reactions to irony in discourse: Evidence for the least disruption principle. *Journal of Pragmatic*, 38(8), 1239-1256.
- Erickson, F. (1982). Audiovisual records as a primary data source. *Sociological Methods and Research (Special Issue on Sound-Image Record in Social Interaction Research)*, 11(2), 213-232.
- Erickson, F. (1985). Listening and Speaking. *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics (proceedings)*, 294-319.
- Erickson, F. (1992). *Ethnographic microanalysis of interaction*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, Inc.
- Erickson, F. (1995). Ethnographic microanalysis of interaction. In M. D. LeCompte, W. L. Millroy & J. Preissle (Eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education* (pp. 201-225). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Erickson, F. (1996). *Ethnographic microanalysis*. New York: Cambridge.
- Erickson, F., & Schultz, J. (1982). *The counselor as gatekeeper: Social interaction in interviews*. New York: Academic Press.
- Fiksdal, S. (1988). Verbal and non-verbal strategies of rapport in cross-cultural interviews. *Linguistics and Education*, 1, 3-17.
- Gass, S., & Mackey, A. (2000). *Stimulated recall methodology in second language research*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Geisler, C. (2004). *Analyzing streams of language: Twelve steps to the systematic coding of text, talk, and other verbal data*. New York: Longman.
- Gibbs, R. (2000). Irony in talk among friends. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 15(1/2), 5-27.

- Gill, S. P., Kawamori, M., Katagiri, Y., & Shimojima, A. (2000). The role of body moves in dialogue. *RASK*(12), 89-114.
- Glenn, P. J. (1989). Initiating shared laughter in multi-party conversations. *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 53, 127-149.
- Glenn, P. J. (1995). Laughing at and laughing with: Negotiation of participant alignments through conversational laughter. In P. t. Have & G. Psathas (Eds.), *Situated order: Studies in social organization of talk and embodied activities* (pp. 43-56). Washington, D.C.: International Institute for Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis & University Press of America.
- Glenn, P. J. (2003). *Laughter in Interaction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goodwin, C. (1981). *Conversational organization: Interaction between speakers and hearers*. New York: Academic Press.
- Gorham, J., & Christopel, D. M. (1990). The relationship of teachers' use of humor in the classroom to immediacy and student learning. *Communication Education*, 39, 46-62.
- Grainger, K. (2004). Verbal play on the hospital ward: Solidarity or power. *Multilingua*, 23, 39-59.
- Guba, E. G. (1990). The alternative paradigm dialog. In E. G. Guba (Ed.), *The paradigm dialog* (pp. 17-30). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Gumperz, J. J. (1986). *Discourse strategies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gumperz, J. J. (1992). Contextualization and understanding. In A. Duranti & C. Goodwin (Eds.), *Rethinking Context: Language as an interactive phenomenon.*: Cambridge University Press.
- Have, P. t. (1999). Transcribing talk-in-interaction. In P. t. Have (Ed.), *Doing conversation analysis: A practical guide* (pp. 75-98). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hay, J. (2000). Functions of humor in conversations of men and women. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 32, 709-742.
- Hay, J. (2001). The pragmatics of humor support. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 14(1), 55-82.
- Heath, C., & Luff, P. (1993). Explicating face-to-face interaction. In N. Gilbert (Ed.), *Researching social life* (pp. 306-326). London: Sage.

- Heritage, J. (2004). Conversation analysis and institutional talk. In D. Silvermann (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice* (2nd ed., pp. 222-245). London: SAGE Publications.
- Heritage, J. (2005). Conversation analysis and institutional talk. In K. L. Fitch & R. E. Sanders (Eds.), *Handbook of Language and Social Interaction* (pp. 103-147). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Heritage, J., & Atkinson, J. M. (1984). Introduction. In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structure of social action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heritage, J., & Greatbatch, D. (1991). On the institutional character of institutional talk. In D. Boden & D. H. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Talk and social structure* (pp. 93-137). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Holliday, A., Hyde, M., & Kullman, J. (2004). *Intercultural communication: An advanced resource book*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Holmes, J. (2000). Politeness, power and provocation: how humor functions in the workplace. *Discourse Studies*, 2(2), 159-185.
- Holmes, J. (2005). Story-telling at work: a complex discursive resources for integrating personal, professional and social identities. *Discourse Studies*, 7(6), 671-700.
- Holmes, J. (2006). Sharing a laugh: Pragmatic aspects of humor and gender in the workplace. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38(1), 26-50.
- Holmes, J. (2007). Making humor work: Creativity on the job. *Applied Linguistics*, 28(4), 518-537.
- Holmes, J., & Marra, M. (2002a). Having a laugh at work: How humor contributes to workplace culture. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 24, 1683-1710.
- Holmes, J., & Marra, M. (2002b). Over the edge? Subversive humor between colleagues and friends. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 15(1), 65-87.
- Holmes, J., & Marra, M. (2006). Humor and leadership style. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 19(2), 119-138.
- Holmes, J., Marra, M., & Burns, L. (2001). Women's humor at the workplace: A quantitative analysis. *Australian Journal of Communication*, 28(1), 83-108.
- Jefferson, G. (1979). A technique for inviting laughter and its subsequent acceptance declination. In G. Psathas (Ed.), *Everyday language: Studies in Ethnomethodology* (pp. 79-95). New York: Irvington Publishers.

- Jefferson, G. (1984). On the organization of laughter in talk about troubles. In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structure of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis* (pp. 346-369). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Jefferson, G. (1985). An exercise in the transcription and analysis of laughter. In T. A. v. Dijk (Ed.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (Vol. III, pp. 25-34). London: Academic Press.
- Jefferson, G., Sacks, H., & Schegloff, E. A. (1987). Notes on laughter in the pursuit of intimacy. In G. Button & J. R. E. Lee (Eds.), *Talk and social organization* (pp. pp. 152-205). Clevedon, Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.
- Jenkins, S. (2000). Cultural and linguistic miscues: A case study of international teaching assistant and academic faculty miscommunication. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 24, 477-501.
- Kendon, A. (1972). Some relationships between body motion and speech: An analysis of an example. In A. W. Siegman & B. Pope (Eds.), *Studies in dyadic communication* (pp. 177-210). New York: Pergamon Press.
- Kotthoff, H. (1996). Impoliteness and conversational joking: On relational politics. *Folia Linguistica* 30(3-4), 299-327.
- Kotthoff, H. (2003). Responding to irony in different contexts: On cognition in conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35, 1387-1411.
- Kozlova, I. (2005). *How Ph.D. Students Establish Their Identity Through the Use of Humor*. Paper presented at the International Society of Humor Studies (ISHS) Annual Conference.
- Kreuz, R. J. (1996). The use of verbal irony: Cues and constraints. In J. Mio & A. Katz (Eds.), *Metaphor: Implications and applications* (pp. 23-38). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers.
- Kreuz, R. J., & Glucksberg, S. (1989). How to be sarcastic: The echoing reminder theory of verbal humor. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 118(4), 374-386.
- Kreuz, R. J., & Roberts, R. M. (1995). Two cues of verbal irony: Hyperbole and ironic tone of voice. *Metaphor and symbolic activity*, 10(1), 21-31.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 163-188). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Madden, C. G., & Myers, C. L. (1994). *Discourse of international teaching assistants*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

- McHoul, A. (1978). The organization of turns at formal talk in the classroom. *Language in Society*, 7, 183-213.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Miller, P. (1986). Teasing as language socialization and verbal play in a white working class community. In B. B. Schieffelin & E. Ochs (Eds.), *Language socialization across cultures* (pp. 199-212). Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Modaff, D. P. (2003). Body movement in the transition from opening to task in doctor-patient interviews. In P. J. Glenn, C. D. LeBaron & J. Mandelbaum (Eds.), *Studies in language and social interaction: In honor of Robert Hopper* (pp. 411-422). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Nelms, J. L. (2001). *A descriptive analysis of the uses and functions of sarcasm in the classroom discourse of higher education*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Florida.
- Neuliep, J. W. (1991). An examination of the content of high school teachers' humor in the classroom and the development of an inductively derived taxonomy of classroom humor. *Communication Education*, 40, 343-355.
- Norrick, N. (1993). *Conversational joking: Humor in everyday talk*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Norrick, N. (2003). Issues in conversational joking. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35, 1333-1359.
- Norton, B. (1997). Language, identity, and the ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(3), 409-429.
- Norton Peirce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(1), 9-31.
- Ochs, E. (1979). Transcription as theory. In E. Ochs & B. B. Schieffelin (Eds.), *Developmental Pragmatics* (pp. 43-72). New York: Academic Press.
- Pialorsi, F. (1984). Toward an anthropology of the classroom: An essay on foreign teaching assistants and U.S. students. In K. Bailey, F. Pialorsi & J. Zukowski/Faust (Eds.), *Foreign teaching assistants in U.S. universities* (pp. 16-21). Washington, D.C.: National Association for Foreign Student Affairs.
- Plakans, B. S. (1997). Undergraduates' experiences with and attitudes toward international teaching assistants. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(1), 95-119.

- Pomerantz, A. (1978). Compliment responses: Notes on the co-operation of multiple constraints. In J. Schenkein (Ed.), *Studies in organization of conversational interaction* (pp. 79-112). New York: Academic Press.
- Randcliffe-Brown, A. R. (1952). *Structure and function in primitive societies*. London: Cohen and West.
- Raskin, V. (1985). *Semantic mechanisms of humor*. Dordrecht, Holland D. Reidel Publishing Company.
- Sacks, H. (1989). An analysis of the course of a joke's telling in conversation. In R. Bauman & J. Sherzer (Eds.), *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking* (2nd ed., pp. 315-353). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sacks, H. (1995). *Lectures on conversation* (Vol. II). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. A., & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language*, 50, 696-735.
- Sarkisian, E. (2006). *Teaching American students: A guide for international faculty and teaching assistants in college and universities* (3rd ed.). Cambridge, MA: Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning Faculty of Arts and Sciences
- Schegloff, E. A. (1992). On talk and its institutional occasions. In P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional setting* (pp. 101-136). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Schwandt, t. A. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 189-213). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Shaw, P. A., & Bailey, K. M. (1990). Cultural differences in academic settings. In R. C. Scarcella, E. S. Andersen & S. D. Krashen (Eds.), *Developing communicative competence in a second language* (pp. 317-328). New York: Newbery House.
- Shieffelin, B. B. (1986). Teasing and shaming in Kaluli children's interactions. In B. B. Shieffelin & E. Ochs (Eds.), *Language Socialization Across Cultures* (pp. 165-181). Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, L. T. (2005). On tricky ground: Researching the native in the age of uncertainty. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE book of qualitative research* (pp. 85-107). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Smith, R. M., Byrd, P., Nelson, G. L., Barret, R. P., & Constantinides, J. C. (1992). *Crossing pedagogical oceans: International teaching assistants in U.S. undergraduate Education*. Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University.

- Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 443-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Straehle, C. A. (1993). "Samuel?" "Yes, dear!" Teasing and conversational rapport. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Framing in discourse* (pp. 210-230). New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tannen, D. (1994). *Talking from 9 to 5*. New York: William Morrow and Company.
- Tapper, F. (1999). Topics and manner of talk in undergraduate practical laboratories. *International Journal of Scientific Education*, 2(4), 447-464.
- Unger-Gallagher, V. J. (1991). The role of the TA in the interactive classroom. In J. D. Nyquist, R. D. Abbot, D. H. Wulff & J. Sprague (Eds.), *Preparing the Professoriate of the Tomorrow to Teach: Selected Readings in TA Training* (pp. 275-283). Dubuque, IA: Kendal/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Wanzer, M. B., & Frymier, A. B. (1999). The relationship between student perception of instructor humor and students' reports of learning. *Communication Education*, 48, 48-62.
- West, C. (1992). A matter of life and death. *Autumn*, 61, 20-23.
- White, G. W. (2001). Teachers' report of how they used humor with students perceived use of such humor. *Education*, 122(2), 337-347.
- Woods, D., & Fassnacht, C. (2006). Transana v2.12. <http://www.transana.org>. Madison, WI: The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System.
- Zajdman, A. (1991). Contextualization of canned jokes in discourse. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 4(1), 23-40.
- Zimmerman, D. H. (1992). The interactional organization of calls for emergency assistance. In P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional setting* (pp. 418-469). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Georgia State University

Department of Applied Linguistics & ESL

Informed Consent for International Teaching Assistants

Title: The Use of Language in University Classrooms

Student Principal Investigator: Iryna Kozlova

Principal Investigator: Dr. Gayle Nelson

Co-principal Investigator: Dr. Stephanie Lindemann

I. Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to investigate how language is used by international teaching assistants (ITAs) and students in university classrooms. You have been selected because you are an ITA teaching one of the GSU courses. A total of six ITAs and approximately 400 students will be involved in this research. Participation will require approximately 10-18 hours of your time over the semester, 5-13 hours of teaching and up to 5 hours of interviewing. It is not possible to tell you exactly what is being investigated because it would interfere with the study. At the end of the study you can choose whether or not you want your information used. The research will be conducted on GSU campus during the Fall 2006 semester.

II. Who will look at the resulting data?

This study is conducted for research purposes. Only the principal investigators and co-principal investigator will have access to all the video data. Additionally, selected clips will be shown to the external coder to code the data. The external coder will be asked to sign a Code of Ethics for this study. Transcriptions and short video clips with no identifying information may be presented in the context of scholarly publications, academic symposia, university classes, and professional training activities. No more than 5-10 minutes of the entire video will be used.

III. Procedures:

If you decide to participate, with your permission, I will videotape up to five of your classes over the fall semester. I will also videotape up to five interviews, one after each videotaped class. The interview will be conducted in an office in the Department of Applied Linguistics & ESL or in your office. I will show you the segments from the videotapes and will ask you to explain what

was happening. I will try to avoid interfering with the activity during filming. However, you will always be aware when videotaping is taking place.

IV. Risks:

There is the possibility that you may be recognized by face and voice on the videotape by colleagues and students when small clips of video are shown in the context of scholarly publications, academic symposia, university classes, and professional training activities.

V. Benefits:

Participation in this study may not benefit you personally, but it may be beneficial to other students. Overall, we have to gain information about how language is used by university professors and students in university classrooms. The results of this study may be beneficial for the field of Applied Linguistics in that it may be applied to teacher training. This information may be valuable since it may help new teachers better integrate into the academic culture and develop better relationships with their students. This research may be beneficial for veteran professors as well.

V. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary. You have the right to not be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VII. Confidentiality:

I will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. I will use a study number and number under which you will be coded rather than your name on study records. The videotapes will be stored in a locked cabinet in my office at home. Video clips will be stored on my computer with a password. The key to the codes will be stored in a different file separately from the data. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when I present this study or publish its results. You will not be identified personally. The data will be kept after the study for the future use for research purposes only. I will continue to protect the confidentiality of the data and will not make them available to other researchers not involved in the current study.

VIII. Contact Persons:

If you have questions about this study, call or e-mail

Dr. Gayle Nelson at (404) 651-2940; gaylenelson@gsu.edu

Dr. Stephanie Lindemann at (404) 651-0254; eslsl@langate.gsu.edu

Iryna Kozlova (404) 467-1793; esliskx@langate.gsu.edu

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-463-0674 or svogtner1@gsu.edu.

IX. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

_____	_____
Participant	Date
_____	_____
Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent	Date

Thank you for considering participating in our research study.

APPENDIX 2: INFORMED CONSENT FOR VIDEOTAPING STUDENTS SITTING IN THE CLASSES

Georgia State University

Department of the Applied Linguistics & ESL

Informed Consent for Videotaping Students Sitting in the Classes

Title: The Use of Language in University Classrooms

Student Principal Investigator: Iryna Kozlova

Principal Investigator: Dr. Gayle Nelson

Co-principal Investigator: Dr. Stephanie Lindemann

I. Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to investigate how language is used by teachers and students in university classrooms. You have been selected because you are taking a course taught by a teacher who is participating in this study. A total of six teachers and approximately 400 students will be involved in this research. Participation will require approximately 5-13 hours of your time, hours that you will spend sitting in class as usual. It is not possible to tell you exactly what is being investigated because it would interfere with the study. At the end of the study you can choose whether or not you want your information used. The research will be conducted on GSU campus during the Fall 2006 semester.

II. Who will look at the resulting data?

This study is conducted for research purposes. Only the principal investigators and co-principal investigator will have access to all the video data. Additionally, selected clips will be shown to the external coder to code the data. The external coder will be asked to sign a Code of Ethics for this study. Transcriptions and short video clips with no identifying information may be presented in the context of scholarly publications, academic symposia, university classes, and professional training activities. No more than 5-10 minutes of the entire video will be used.

III. Procedures:

If you decide to participate, you will be videotaped as a member of the class that you are taking with this teacher. If you do not want to be videotaped, you can sit in a seat that is not within range of the camera. The camera will be set up on a tripod and will, therefore, be stationary.

IV. Risks:

There is the possibility that you may be recognized by face and voice on the videotape by colleagues and students when small clips of video are shown in the context of scholarly publications, academic symposia, university classes, and professional training activities.

V. Benefits:

Participation in this study may not benefit you personally, but it may be beneficial to other students. Overall, we have to gain information about how language is used by university professors and students in university classrooms. The results of this study may be beneficial for the field of Applied Linguistics in that it may be applied to teacher training. This information may be valuable since it may help new teachers better integrate into the academic culture and develop better relationships with their students. This research may be beneficial for veteran professors as well.

VI. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary. You have the right to not be in this study. If you do not want to be videotaped, you may sit in the front or the back of the room and to the right or the left. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VII. Confidentiality:

I will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. I will use a study number and number under which you will be coded rather than your name on study records. The videotapes will be stored in a locked cabinet in my office at home. Video clips will be stored on my computer with a password. The key to the codes will be stored in a different file separately from the data. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when I present this study or publish its results. You will not be identified personally. The data will be kept after the study for the future use for research purposes only. I will continue to protect the confidentiality of the data and will not make them available to other researchers not involved in the current study.

VIII. Contact Persons:

If you have questions about this study, call or e-mail

Dr. Gayle Nelson at (404) 651-2940; ESLGLN@langate.gsu.edu

Dr. Stephanie Lindemann at (404) 651-0254 ; esls@langate.gsu.edu

Iryna Kozlova (404) 467-1793; esliskx@langate.gsu.edu

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-463-0674 or svogtner1@gsu.edu.

IX. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

Participant

Date

Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent

Date

Thank you for considering participating in our research study.

APPENDIX 3: INFORMED CONSENT FOR THE INTERVIEW WITH THE STUDENTS

SITTING IN THE CLASSES

Georgia State University

Department of the Applied Linguistics & ESL

Informed Consent for Students Participating in Interviews

Title: The Use of Language in University Classroom

Principal Investigator: Dr. Gayle Nelson

Co-principal Investigator: Dr. Stephanie Lindemann

Student Principal Investigator: Iryna Kozlova

I. Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to investigate how language is used by teachers and students in university classrooms. A total of six teachers and approximately 400 students will be involved in the study. You have been selected for the interview because you participated in classroom interaction with your teacher. Participation in one interview will require approximately one hour of your time. It is not possible to tell you exactly what is being investigated because it would interfere with the study. At the end of the study you can choose whether or not you want your information used. The research will be conducted on GSU campus during the Fall 2006 semester.

II. Who will look at the resulting data?

This study is conducted for research purposes. Only the principal investigators and co-principal investigator will have access to all the video data. Additionally, selected clips will be shown to the external coder to code the data. The external coder will be asked to sign a Code of Ethics for this study. Transcriptions and short video clips with no identifying information may be presented in the context of scholarly publications, academic symposia, university classes, and professional training activities. No more than 5-10 minutes of the entire video will be used.

III. Procedures:

If you decide to participate, with your permission, I will videotape an interview with you. The interview will be conducted in an office in the Department of Applied Linguistics & ESL. I will show you segments from the videotapes and will ask you to explain what was happening there.

IV. Risks:

There is the possibility that you may be recognized by face and voice on the videotape by colleagues and students when small clips of video are shown in the context of scholarly publications, academic symposia, university classes, and professional training activities.

V. Benefits:

Participation in this study may not benefit you personally, but it may be beneficial to other students. Overall, we have to gain information about how language is used by university professors and students in university classrooms. The results of this study may be beneficial for the field of Applied Linguistics in that it may be applied to teacher training. This information may be valuable since it may help new teachers better integrate into the academic culture and develop better relationships with their students. This research may be beneficial for veteran professors as well.

VI. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary. You have the right to not be in this study. If you do not want to be videotaped, you may sit in the front or the back of the room and to the right or the left. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VII. Confidentiality:

I will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. I will use a study number and number under which you will be coded rather than your name on study records. The videotapes will be stored in a locked cabinet in my office at home. Video clips will be stored on my computer with a password. The key to the codes will be stored in a different file separately from the data. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when I present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in a group form. You will not be identified personally. The data will be kept after the study for the future use for research purposes only. I will continue to protect the confidentiality of the data and will not make them available to other researchers not involved in the current study.

VIII. Contact Persons:

If you have questions about this study, call or e-mail

Dr. Gayle Nelson at (404) 651-2940; ESLGLN@langate.gsu.edu

Dr. Stephanie Lindemann at (404) 651-0254 ; esls@langate.gsu.edu

Iryna Kozlova (404) 467-1793; esliskx@langate.gsu.edu

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-463-0674 or svogtner1@gsu.edu.

IX. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

Participant

Date

Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent

Date

Thank you for considering participating in our research study.

APPENDIX 4: INSTRUMENT FOR THE STIMULATED RECALL PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN STIMULATED RECALL

Instructions for Participants

Now we are going to watch the video. We will not watch the entire video from the last class. I edited the videotape and now I will show you only the clips of interactions between you and your students. I am interested in what you were doing and why in these situations. I can see and hear what you and your students were doing and saying, but I do not know anything about your intentions of performing certain verbal actions. I would like to know what these interactions mean to you. I am also interested in what you think your students were doing and saying in these situations, why, and what their activities mean to you.

I am going to put the remote control on the table and you can stop the video at any time that you want. So, if you want to comment on something what you were doing or thinking at that moment, or if you want to comment on what your students were doing, or if you want to tell me why you or them were saying something, you can press the pause button. I will also stop the video if I have questions regarding any segments of the video.

Instructions for Researcher

Read the instruction to the participant.

Model how to stop the video and ask the participant a question.

If participants pause the video, listen to what they say.

If you stop the video ask something general like

Can you tell me what is going on here?

What did he/she say?

What did you say?

Why do you think he/she said it?

Why did you do it?

What did you think at this moment?

How did you feel at this moment?

How do you perceive this interaction?

Researcher should not give concrete reactions to participants' responses or give feedback because they may change the nature of the participants' comments. A preferred response is backchanneling or non-response. For instance,

uh-huh

I see

OK

APPENDIX 5: INSTRUMENT FOR THE STIMULATED RECALL PROCEDURE FOR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Instructions for participants

Now we are going to watch the video. We will not watch the entire video from the last class. I edited the videotape and now I will show you only the clips of interactions between you and your students. I am interested in what you were doing and why in these situations. I can see and hear what you and your students were doing and saying, but I do not know anything about your intentions of performing certain verbal actions. I would like to know what these interactions mean to you. I am also interested in what you think your students were doing and saying in these situations, why, and what their activities mean to you.

I am going to put the remote control on the table and you can stop the video at any time that you want. So, if you want to comment on something what you were doing or thinking at that moment, or if you want to comment on what your students were doing, or if you want to tell me why you or them were saying something, you can press the pause button. I will also stop the video if I have questions regarding any segments of the video.

Instructions for Researcher

1. Read the instruction to the participant.
2. Model how to stop the video and ask the participant a question.
3. If participants pause the video, listen to what they say.
4. If you stop the video ask something general like

Can you tell me what is going on here?

What did he/she say?

What did you say?

Why do you think he/she said it?

Why did you do it?

What did you think at this moment?

How did you feel at this moment?

How do you perceive this interaction?

Researcher should not give concrete reactions to participants' responses or give feedback because they may change the nature of the participants' comments. A preferred response is backchanneling or non-response. For instance,

uh-huh

I see

Ok

APPENDIX 6: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

Transcription conventions are adapted from Jefferson (1984) and Goodwin (1981).

Utterances and laughter

[overlapping]	Utterances started simultaneously are marked with a left-hand square bracket. The right-hand brackets indicate the end of simultaneous speech.
[overlapping [speech	Open right bracket indicates that the end of overlapping utterances is difficult to locate
=	Latching
.	Sentence/clause/phrase falling intonation
?	Sentence rising intonation
,	Phrase raising intonation
-	Interruptions of speech
<louder>	Louder speech
>quieter<	Quieter speech
(best guess)	Transcriber's best guess
xxx	Unintelligible speech; x corresponds to one syllable
((comment))	Transcriber's comment
XX	Applause
Laughter	
hah hah	normal laughter
HAH-HAH	Loud laughter
☺	Smile
~ ~	Silent laughter, one can see how one laughs, but cannot hear

Pauses

- (.) A brief pause, less than a second
- (3) The number inside the brackets indicates the length of the pause

Prolongation

o::h! Prolongation of a sound is indicated with a colon

Boys Underlined word is emphasized in speech

Body moves

- M Movement on the same spot
- MF Movement forward
- MB Movement backward
- MFop Movement forward, but in opposite direction to the previous movement
- S Participant stops
- Stand Participant is standing
- Sit Participants are sitting
- T Participant turns
- L Left
- R Right
- Kn Participant goes on knee(s)
- & Change of body posture
- Wen: MB_____ A line above or below the utterance or both indicates the length of
[hah hah and the body moves in relation to the utterance
- Tch Teacher
- H(s) Hand(s)

Gaze

Gaze is marked either above or beneath the utterance. X marks a starting point of looking at somebody/something. After X there is an indications what a participants is looking at.

XTch	Gaze on teacher
XS	Gaze on student
X on slides	Gaze on slides
Xnotes	Gaze on notes
Xaway	Gaze away from the conversationalists