GENERATION 1.5 IN THE WRITING CENTER:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF WRITING TUTORIALS WITH IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
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By

Eve O. Rebennack, B.A.

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Master’s Examination Committee:

Dr. Alan Hirvela, Adviser

Dr. Evonne Kay Halasek

Approved By

[Signature]

Adviser
College of Education
ABSTRACT

Increasing numbers of foreign-born immigrant students are graduating from American high schools and pursuing higher education. The term "Generation 1.5" may be used to describe this student population, indicating their transitional status in terms of both English language learning and sociocultural identity. Although English may be the language of such students' academic literacy, they face many unique challenges at the university level, particularly within the composition classroom. Recent scholarship indicates that Generation 1.5 performs lower in college and has less control over writing processes than international students. One tool available to assist these students in the composition classroom is the university writing center (WC), but there is currently little research to validate popular WC pedagogy with Generation 1.5.

This exploratory study investigates the shape, content, and significance of writing center tutorials by observing five immigrant students paired with five writing center tutors over the course of six weeks. This study attempts to determine the degree to which a student's sociolinguistic and educational background shaped the tutorials. The study also attempts to locate when and how frequently tutors assist Generation 1.5 students in understanding and utilizing the writing process, as well as to establish common tutor practices with these students.
Analysis and comparison of the five case studies suggest that knowledge of students' sociolinguistic and educational background is neither being discussed nor fully utilized in WC tutorials. Moreover, although tutors' practices are closely aligned with current WC pedagogy, these methods may not be flexible enough to meet the specific needs of Generation 1.5. Accordingly, this study also discusses possible implications for the training of tutors to increase the efficacy of WC practices.
Dedicated to my husband for his unceasing, unfailing support.
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VITA

1978........................................... Born – Union Mills, IN

2001........................................... B.A. Speech Pathology and Audiology
(Minor – German)
Ball State University, Muncie, IN

2001 – 2003......................... Language Instructor
Language Training Center, Indianapolis, IN

2003 – 2004......................... Language Instructor
Columbus/Mount Vernon, OH

2004 – Present......................... Graduate Teaching Associate
Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing
The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Education – Teaching and Learning

Areas of Specialization: Foreign/Second Language Education
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

This chapter aims to introduce the nature of a qualitative study wherein the writing center (WC) tutorials of five immigrant students were observed. This study is exploratory in nature and aims at providing an example of the difficulties facing immigrant students when they enter the university-level composition classroom. To that end, this study intends to provide a detailed description of the aforementioned tutorials, presenting a holistic picture of the five case studies for the reader.

This study was motivated by the need to give a voice to a student population that is currently under-acknowledged and under-researched: immigrant students or “Generation 1.5” (see “Key Terms,” p. 3). This term alludes to such students’ distinct position as both English Language Learners (ELLs) and American high school graduates. Because immigrant students are familiar with American schooling and may speak English with a high degree of fluency, they are difficult to locate within the university classroom in which they are an increasing presence. However, research has shown that such students often struggle with university-level course work (see Chapter 2) and with composition, in particular. To that end, the WC serves as a viable tool for Generation 1.5 students, providing a means by which to discuss composition and the writing process (see “Key Terms,” p. 3). Unfortunately, there is very little
research that validates current WC pedagogy when working with Generation 1.5, an issue this study explores in further detail.

The study is aimed at an audience of both qualitative researchers and educators. In terms of researchers, I have discussed relevant gaps in the current research in the field of second language literacy and writing, as well as in regards to immigrant students in the context of higher education, and made suggestions for future research (including an extended version of this study). The study further speaks to educators – both those who train future WC tutors and those who have immigrant students in their composition classrooms.

Guiding Questions

The overarching goal of this study was to determine the shape of WC tutorials with tutors who are native speakers of English and immigrant students who belong to the so-called Generation 1.5. One guiding query was to determine tutor beliefs about their own practices when working with non-native English speakers. This study also aimed to locate when and how frequently tutors assist Generation 1.5 students in understanding and successfully utilizing writing processes. Moreover, this study investigated the role of tutor knowledge of a student’s socio-cultural background in the tutorial.

The following questions served as the initial principle guidelines for information gathering and data analysis:

1) How do tutors identify students as belonging to Generation 1.5, and does tutors’ knowledge of students’ sociolinguistic and educational
background appear to affect the instruction given during a writing tutorial?

2) In what ways do tutorials with immigrant students appear to align with tutors’ claims of their beliefs about the writing process?

3) To what extent do writing center tutors help draw immigrant students’ attention to writing processes instead of focusing on the written product at hand?

The above questions were used to guide the development of this study, and as such, they serve to prepare the reader for the scope of the data and analysis.

Definition of Key Terms

Several key terms are used throughout this study. Understanding the way in which they fit into the study is essential to understanding the study:

- *Generation 1.5* — “non-native speakers of English who have emigrated to the United States and hold permanent resident or citizen status in this country and who have spent significant time in American schools before entering the college writing classroom (Hirvela, 1999, p. 150)”; also refers to the transitional nature of immigrant students in terms of literacy, language, and identity

- *academic literacy* — refers to the knowledge, skills, and language necessary for a student to successfully navigate through the university classroom and the reading and writing required therein

- *academic writing* — refers to the writing done for academic purposes, often generated for specific university classes; “good” academic writing is judged as academic writing perceived as having successfully met expectations outlined by an instructor, tutor and/or student

- *writing process* — refers to the manner in which papers are developed, including composing, organizing, and revising

- *product* — refers to a paper or other written work that is the outcome of the writing process
• agency – refers to the ownership of a written text and displays of ownership over that text

• “setting the agenda” – refers to the WC process in which a tutor and/or client outlines what will be discussed, and in what order, in a give tutorial; this usually occurs within the first five minutes of a tutorial

• prompt – refers to the instructions an instructor gives a student to define the parameters of a written text

• decoding – refers to the process of deconstructing the prompt so that it is comprehensible

Assumptions of Study

This study assumed that as tutorials continued and the study progressed, the student would grow more comfortable with the culture of WC’s and that the relationship between each student-tutor pair would strengthen over time. Moreover, it was expected that these factors would positively affect the students’ behavior in the tutorials, thus increasing the students’ willingness to participate in the tutorials. The students’ continued participation in the study was therefore considered an indicator that the students felt satisfied with the nature of the tutorials. Furthermore, it was assumed that achieving higher grades on writing assignments addressed in the tutorials would also positively affect the student’s perceptions of the efficacy of the tutorials.

Limitations of Study

This study was exploratory in nature and therefore, rather limited in scope. It did not compare the tutors’ performance with other students, nor did it investigate the students’ classroom and/or composition performance. Data collection for this study
took place over a six-week period, a relatively short timeframe, which also limited the study to a certain extent. This study is also somewhat limited by its qualitative nature, and as with any qualitative research, it is up to the reader to determine the degree to which the cases discussed in this study can be generalized.

Chapter Outline

This study is presented in five interrelated chapters with suggested cross-references when applicable. The present chapter (Chapter 1, “Introduction to Study”) provides a general overview of the motivation and parameters of the study. Chapter 2, “Background Information,” reviews relevant research and presents general information about composition classes in the larger setting (i.e., the university) in which this study took place. Chapter 3, “Study Design and Procedures,” details the theoretical framework behind the collection and analysis of data. The largest chapter is Chapter 4, “Introduction to Five Case Studies,” which presents each case study individually in terms of shape, content, and significance of tutorial interactions. The final chapter, Chapter 5, “Cross-Case Analysis: Findings and Implications,” further examines each case in relation to the research questions that guided this study.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a discussion of the relevant research in relation to both English Language Learners (ELLs) and Generation 1.5 (in more detail). Moreover, the difficulties Generation 1.5 faces when composing in academia are reviewed. This chapter aims at providing the reader with the background information necessary to successfully understand the design, procedure, and presentation of data as presented in the study.

*English Language Learners and Composition*

*Academic Writing*

Writing in an academic environment (e.g., a university) presents a universal problem for nearly all undergraduate university students, and it is of great concern for ELLs\(^1\) in particular. General writing development in a second language (L2) is compounded by the complexity of university-level writing, which frequently requires an understanding of a lexicon particular to academic English, Western rhetorical styles, and knowledge of organizational techniques, all of which may vary by

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\(^1\) The term English Language Learner (ELL) will refer to students whose first (“native”) or heritage language is not Standard English and who do not have “native-like” mastery of written, Academic English.
discipline (Leki, 1992). Critics argue that universities should not admit ELLs who cannot write sufficiently well, but very few undergraduate students come to the university fully prepared for university-level composition, regardless of their English language proficiency (Harklau, Losey, & Siegal, 1999). Moreover, the term “sufficiently well” is rather subjective as its definition varies by instructor, discipline, and genre of writing.

Like most language students, ELLs may not have much experience with writing. That is, they are still learning the language, not just writing conventions. When writing, ELLs are likely to violate much more basic categories of English (e.g., placement of adjectives) than native speakers of English. They are also more likely to misunderstand classroom interactions and may understand only a fraction of classroom management talk (due to both language and cultural barriers). For ELLs, even “fun” assignments, like watching TV or listening to the radio, can be hard work (Leki, 1992).

ELLs are not all alike; in fact, the only consistent similarity between them is that English is not their native language. They may be undergraduates or graduates, newly arrived immigrants, graduates of U.S. high schools, or international students studying on a visa, strong or poor writers or even illiterate in their first language, eager to return “home” or hoping to settle in the U.S, etc. These differences should be taken into account when working with ELLs. Moreover, irritability, lethargy, and seemingly low motivation may indicate that a student is going through a difficult

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2 The phrase “native speaker of English” will refer to students and educators whose first (“native”) and heritage language is English (regardless of dialect).
stage of cultural adaptation. Moreover, this may be compounded with beginning the
rigors of university life (Leki, 1992).

*Student-Instructor Relationships*

Another important factor is acknowledging that it may take time for ELLs to
determine exactly what their relationship with an instructor is. Many come from
cultures, such as China, where teachers are highly respected but are also expected to
behave more like mentors, to involve themselves in students’ lives and to guide them
in moral, personal, or educational decisions. These students may then be disappointed
to find this is not usually the case in the U.S. (Leki, 1992).

Because of the myriad variables, a great deal of room exists for both
misunderstanding and resentment during confrontations involving different cultural
styles. It is primarily the international students who are expected to make the great
part of the adjustment to accommodate U.S. classroom expectations, but an instructor
who is aware of some of these students’ expectations (particularly about instructors)
can ease the adjustment process. Anticipating some of the behaviors that may be
present in culturally mixed groups can increase tolerance and perhaps reduce
inhibitions about explaining what is inappropriate behavior from the perspective of
the U.S. classroom (Leki, 1992).

Most ELLs have spent many years in educational systems different from the
U.S. They are a diverse group and come with different assumptions about writing. As
they become acclimated to a new education system, they will require patience and
help from their composition instructors who can anticipate certain problems, provide
explicit instruction for how to deal with those problems, and/or be willing to
accommodate them and their struggles. For example, when giving writing prompts, it may be helpful to verify how familiar and comfortable ELLs are with the topic and the task itself (Leki, 1992).

Keeping an open mind in responding to the content of ELLs’ written work is particularly important since their assumptions about the world may seem quite foreign or even offensive, especially if the instructor has no experience with the realities upon which the assumptions are based. As in dealings with any students, instructors walk a fine line between respecting ELL students’ rights to their own views and challenging their own assumptions. When an ELL’s (particularly international students) view is challenged, they are essentially alone in their defense; it is important for instructors to remain sensitive to the burden of constant cultural assaults many ELLs face (Harris & Silva, 1993; Leki, 1992).

Writing Processes and Genres

Composing processes in both L1 and L2 will vary across cultures and educational backgrounds, again representing the diversity often present among ELLs. This may be further complicated by a student being placed into a certain writing class based on their perceived language proficiency, as general language proficiency does not directly correlate to writing abilities (just as with native speakers of English). In fact, fluency in spoken language may obscure poor writing skills; conversely, lack of spoken fluency can lead to underestimating a student’s writing skills (Harris & Silva, 1993; Leki, 1992). A certainty for nearly all ELLs (grounded in research findings) is the need for more time to complete assignments. More time and energy are spent not only on writing but also on reading (often a precursor for any writing task). Extending
time limits or reducing workloads may create more equitable working conditions (Harris & Silva, 1993; Leki, 1992).

Contrasting rhetorical conventions (along with an underdeveloped sense of U.S. audience) may lead ELLs to produce written works that violate the expectations of native speakers of English (Connor, 1996). Cultures may value suggestiveness, precision, conciseness, leisureliness, effusiveness, or traditional patterns of organization, among other rhetorical conventions; the combination and extent will most likely vary by culture and language. As ELLs may not be aware of the rhetorical constraints affecting their writing, in-class discussions where students reflect on some requirements of their own rhetorical traditions will broaden the entire class’ awareness of and respect for other traditions (Connor, 1996; Harris & Silva, 1993; Leki, 1992). Awareness of contrastive patterns in rhetoric does not necessarily produce better writing, but it does allow students to view certain writing problems as part of a new cultural experience (rather than a personal failure) (Connor, 1996). In any language, writers make choices that indicate relationships of ideas. Recognizing that writing consists of making such choices is a valuable insight for young writers (Leki, 1992).

Pedagogical Considerations

As knowledge of rhetorical conventions is important, it appears that university-level composition instructors should educate ELLs about U.S. rhetorical conventions (thus making their future papers “more gradable”) (Connor, 1996). However, composition instructors should also keep in mind what it means to be asked to choose a foreign way of expressing oneself. Encouraging students to “express
themselves,” “find their voices,” or “be themselves” in their writing may cause them to realize how much their “voices” — which represent their selves to a large degree — are in a language other than English. Consequently, they may also discover that the only way to fulfill such a writing requirement is to not be themselves but to create an “English self,” one able to speak clearly, directly, and explicitly, as their real selves cannot (Leki, 1992). This is further problematized by considering that ELLs within the American school systems may have been pulled out of “mainstream” composition courses at the secondary school level in order to take stratified ESL (English as a Second Language) courses. ESL courses of this nature tend to focus on general language development, rather than fostering specific academic skills. Therefore, even ELLs who go through the U.S. educational system may not have learned composition as a curriculum prior to entering the university composition classroom and would not be fully acculturated to the ways in which writing is used at that level.

Many of the techniques used when giving feedback to native speakers of English also apply to ELLs. However, ELLs may need additions to the traditional methods (Cooper & Odell, 1999). For example, while native speakers of English may be very familiar with peer response and peer editing groups, ELLs may need the conventions of such groups explicitly explained to them. Similarly, native speakers of English may need to be directed to focus on content and organization with ELLs (rather than focusing exclusively on grammar issues). Moreover, when looking at local issues (e.g., grammar) in an ELL’s text, focus should be put on identifying patterns (rather than isolated errors) (Leki, 1992).
Oral commentary can also be very valuable to ELLs. However, ELLs are typically not able to remember as much in English as a native speaker would, so written feedback should not be entirely replaced by oral comments (Cooper & Odell, 1999). It is also important to remember that, as with reading and writing, ELLs may need more time to adequately revise a text. Furthermore, scholars argue that beyond a certain level of proficiency, ELLs’ texts do not have to exactly mirror those of native speakers of English. Proponents of this argument claim that instructors should evaluate texts written by ELLs from a less parochial perspective, viewing minor errors (even when numerous) as a written—rather than spoken—“foreign accent” (Belcher & Braine; Connor, 1996; 1995; Leki, 1992).

*Generation 1.5 and University-Level Composition*

*Composition at the University*

Most universities offer a series of undergraduate writing courses arranged in a vertical structure that appears to assume strong writing skills develop over time. This arrangement implies students will progress through these courses toward the endpoint of being an effective writer. For example, The Ohio State University (OSU) offers several series of writing courses into which undergraduate students are placed: English 106, 107, and 108 (for ELLS), 109.01 and 109.02 (for developmental writers), and 110W or 110 (for all first-year, undergraduates), all of which focus on analyzing and producing different genres of writing, collecting and citing sources, and gaining command of the aspects of academic literacy. OSU also offers a series of 367 courses. These courses are available to students after completing English 110W or 110 and
center on writing-across-the-curriculum, thereby fostering the development of writing skills within the context of certain disciplines (conversation with Kay Halasek and Alan Hirvela, December 2005).

In addition to writing courses, many universities have writing centers (WCs) where members of the university community can receive additional writing assistance. Although WCs most often function independently of university classes, the tutorials often focus on coursework and have to account for teacher feedback and university regulations, as well as student concerns and expectations. WCs are generally open to all university students, and WC tutors are trained to work collaboratively with students on a variety of documents (e.g., coursework, resumes, statements of intent) at any stage in the writing process (e.g., brainstorming, thesis development, overall coherence) (Bruce & Rothford, 2004). Traditional WC theory and practice suggest that tutors take non-directive, collaborative approaches to tutoring, often using leading questions to help students discover their own plans for revision. Moreover, many tutors are trained to avoid or postpone focusing on grammar, frequently suggesting that students' first focus on the text, as a whole (Williams & Severino, 2004). There appears to be an underlying assumption that focusing almost exclusively on the writing process will develop better writing.

The Writing Process

The "writing process" refers to a paradigm shift that occurred during the 1970s. Previously, the development of writing skills emphasized the acquisition of formulaic structure and grammatical correctness in order to produce an acceptable finished product. Conversely, writing process approaches stress reflection on and use
of writing strategies such as composing, planning, starting, and reformulating (Dahl & Farnan, 1998). While the effectiveness of the conceptualization of this paradigm shift is debatable, other literature supports the belief that teaching process-writing fosters the development of successful writing and critical thinking skills (Applebee, 1986).

Beginning in the early 1990s, increasing numbers of ELLs began to utilize WC services. As such, WC research began to focus on the various aspects of WC practices regarding ELLs. The resulting literature advised on “cross-cultural differences in interaction with ELLs and how to manage them, typical [ELL] error profiles in terms of syntax, morphology, and lexis, and how tutors should address these, strategies for assisting [ELL] readers, and the insights of contrastive rhetoric, including how such differences might affect students’ approaches to text” (Williams & Severino, 2004, p. 166). Recent findings suggest a need for a balance between providing writers who are ELLs with the information and guidance they appear to need and the common WC practice of having writers maintain ownership of their own texts (Thonus, 2004). However, differences in interactional structure between WC tutors and ELLs have only begun to be explored; there is not yet comprehensive empirical data on the role of ELLs within WCs (Williams & Severino, 2004).

Generation 1.5

Another issue affecting WCs only recently investigated is the dichotomy present within the ELL population (as previously defined), which consists of both international and immigrant students (Williams & Severino, 2004). International students refers to those who are in the U.S. for the purpose of academic study and will
return to their respective home countries upon completion of their studies.

Conversely, immigrant students refer to “non-native speakers of English who have emigrated to the United States and hold permanent resident or citizen status in this country and who have spent significant time in American schools before entering the college writing classroom” (Hirvela, 1999, p. 150). International and immigrant studies can differ greatly in terms of levels of spoken and written English proficiency. For example, many international students are studying at the graduate-level in the U.S., implying that they have appropriate (or even advanced) academic writing skills in their first language (L1). Immigrant students are often undergraduates and so, may not necessarily have the same cognitive level and maturity as international students.

In addition, they may lack the foundation in L1 literacy skills that international students possess. As research has shown, the lack of such a foundation complicates the acquisition of L2 literacy skills (Belcher & Braine, 1995; Harklau, Losey, & Siegal, 1999; Leki, 1992).

As previously mentioned, current WC research focuses almost exclusively on graduate-level ELLs who are presumably also international students. However, conditions are changing as immigrant students are becoming increasingly more common in the university classroom. The 2000 U.S. Census states that more than 11% of the total American population has been born abroad, a record high that appears to be continually increasing (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The foreign-born population of students who enter American schools is known as “Generation 1.5” to indicate their transitional status between Generation 1 (parents who emigrated as adults and primarily speak their heritage, or “native,” language) and Generation 2.

As noted earlier, many students belonging to Generation 1.5 struggle to obtain writing proficiency. Depending on the length of time spent in American schools, immigrant students may be highly fluent in spoken English, but this fluency does not necessarily correlate with writing ability (Hirvela, 1999; Leki, 1992). Studies have shown that when these students are compared with international students at the same level of English-language proficiency, the immigrants display less understanding and control of writing processes. Furthermore, the overall academic performance of immigrant students in college tends to be lower than that of international students, indicating that the immigrants’ academic achievement was not significantly influenced by their American high school experience (as cited in Hirvela, 1999 and in Lucas, 1997).

Generation 1.5 students may or may not self-identify as ELLs, due mainly to the complex and constant negotiation of social identity and cultural adaptation and/or preservation processes immigrant students often experience (Leki, 1992; Lucas, 1997). The students’ identities may actually be in a state of constant re-negotiation as their environments change. Leki claims that language minority students, such as members of Generation 1.5, often identify themselves by the forms of English unique to them, even when subservient to the dominant Standard English (1992). Thus, a student’s sense of identity may be in direct conflict with the language (formal or Academic English) that student is required to communicate in when writing at the university.
Such issues of sociocultural and academic identity further complicate the role of Generation 1.5 in WCs. It is understandably difficult to effectively train WC tutors to anticipate the broad and shifting set of needs immigrant students face when writing. Thus, the question arises as to what extent WCs can successfully assist Generation 1.5 in strengthening their identities as “writers” and increasing their knowledge and control of writing processes. Mastery of these processes appears to be a goal of the university setting, and perhaps even more important is the implication that Generation 1.5 will rely on their ability to successfully employ various writing processes upon leaving the university (Leki, 1992; Lucas, 1997). Hence, this study is motivated by the need to better understand the writing development of Generation 1.5 students and consequently, the necessity to clearly identify how WCs can best assist “1.5ers” in effectively developing both the writing and their identities as “writers.”
CHAPTER 3

STUDY DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The general methodology of this study will be discussed in this chapter. This chapter aims to clarify the design of the study, as well as the procedures involved in collecting and analyzing data. Student and tutor participants, as well as the student-tutor pairings, will be introduced. Additionally, coding methods are described in detail.

Research Questions

As stated previously, the following questions served as the initial principle guidelines for this study:

1) How do tutors identify students as belonging to Generation 1.5, and does tutors’ knowledge of students’ sociolinguistic and educational background appear to affect the instruction given during a writing tutorial?

2) In what ways do tutorials with immigrant students appear to align with tutors’ claims of their beliefs about the writing process?

3) To what extent do writing center tutors help draw immigrant students’ attention to writing processes instead of focusing on the written product at hand?
Participants

For this study, I observed tutorials between five pairs of students and writing center (WC) tutors over a period of six weeks.

Student Participants

In order to participate in the study, the students had to meet the following criteria:

1. be undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes at The Ohio State University
2. hold permanent residence or citizen status in the U.S.
3. have graduated from an American high school
4. be non-native speakers of English (have a first language other than English)

Students were solicited either via email (from surveys) or in person (from direct contact). I initially emailed 23 undergraduate students who provided their contact information and self-identified as having a native language other than English, on surveys completed after tutorials at the WC. Four students responded to this email, but only one of the respondents (Marshall) met the requirements for participation.

In addition to the email mentioned earlier, I also emailed five English 109 instructors (see Chapter 1, p. 12), seeking contact with students who might qualify for this study. Two instructors did not respond, and two others responded that none of their students met the given criteria (although Marshall, the first student participant, was actually in one of these instructors’ English 109.02 course sections). One of the
instructors\(^3\) identified two students (Hakeem and David) who met the above criteria, and the students agreed to participate in the study. The remaining two student participants were solicited through coincidental and direct contact with me. In these cases, the students’ socio-linguistic and educational backgrounds came up during the course of the tutorials I had with them. Both students met the aforementioned criteria and, after being briefed on the nature of the study, also agreed to participate.

After agreeing to participate, each student was offered the chance to schedule two tutorials per week (with the same tutor). Although it is possible to make regular WC appointments with the same tutor (week to week), the usual WC scheduling policy restricts most students to only one appointment per week. Overall, the students took advantage of this, although some more than others (see Table 3.2, p. 24 and Table 3.3, p. 25). This also benefited the study by allowing for more observations per week and ensuring that, in most cases, at least one tutorial per tutor-student pair would be observed weekly (even if the second were canceled or missed). However, it was made clear that this benefit would only last for the length of the study or the duration of the students’ participation in the study.

\(^3\) I had direct contact with this instructor as I served as a “Success Challenge Tutor” – a WC tutor paired with a peer writing group – for this instructor’s 109.02 course for the quarter during which this study took place.
Table 3.1 provides important demographic information about the participants themselves, as seen below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Country of birth</th>
<th>Other languages spoken</th>
<th>Undergraduate level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>1st year - 2nd quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mani</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Kutchi</td>
<td>2nd year - 2nd quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Amharic</td>
<td>1st year - 1st quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hakeem</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Mauritania and Wolof</td>
<td>1st year - 2nd quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Somali</td>
<td>1st year - 2nd quarter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Introduction to student participants.

Collectively, the five student participants represented a balanced cross-section of Generation 1.5 students: two female student participants (Mani and Sandra) and three male student participants (Marshall, Hakeem, and David) from five different countries, each speaking a different language before learning English. The student participants were all undergraduates, with four in their collective first year at the university-level (with one in her first quarter) and the fifth in her second year.
With respect to the tutorials, Figure 3.1 illustrates how often each student participant attended an observed tutorial:

![Graph showing the number of tutorials attended each week by different students.]

Figure 3.1: Ratio of tutorials observed per week for each student participant over the duration of the study (six weeks).

As mentioned previously, the study was conducted over a period of six weeks. Because these volunteers were students first and study participants second, scheduling conflicts and illness sometimes caused the students to miss some of the weekly tutorials (e.g., Sandra in Week 3 or Mani in Week 5). Similarly, only three students attended tutorials during Week 6 of the study, which was the week of final examinations. Per my suggestion, only one tutorial was scheduled for each student that week, and only those students who were still actively working on writing
scheduled tutorials. Scheduling conflicts most notably affected David, who didn’t begin the study until Week 3 and was only able attend tutorials through Week 5 (see Chapter 4, “David and Leroy,” p. 78).

Figure 3.2 provides more context concerning the tutorials by comparing the total number of tutorials I observed for each participant:

![Bar Chart]

Figure 3.2: Ratio of total tutorials observed for each student participant.

Ideally, each student would have attended twelve tutorials (two each week for six weeks), but as stated earlier, scheduling conflicts restricted participation to a certain extent. The number of tutorials David attended (five) was of particular concern, but he was still included in this study because his tutorials yielded some noteworthy implications (see Chapter 4, “David and Leroy,” p. 77-86).
Tutor Participants

Because the student participants were the population of focus for this study, the only criterion for tutor participants was that they were currently employed as a WC tutor (and willing to participate in the study). Tutor participants were solicited in person for participation in the study since I, the researcher, was also a WC tutor and familiar with all of the tutors.

In some cases, the tutors altered their regular work schedules to better accommodate the schedules of the students (as well as my own schedule). However, no observed tutorials were conducted in excess of the tutors’ normal workload. That is, tutorial hours were not added to the tutors’ pre-existing schedules, although their schedules may have changed. Furthermore, tutors were able to count any time spent on interviews for the study as “project hours,” which are non-tutoring hours regularly built into tutors’ weekly schedules.

Table 3.2 introduces the tutors via important demographic information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutor</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Level of Study</th>
<th>Experience at WC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiametta</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Graduate (Doctoral)</td>
<td>3 quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivy</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Graduate (Master)</td>
<td>2 quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trenton</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>6 quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>2 quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leroy</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Graduate (Master)</td>
<td>8 quarters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Introduction to tutor participants.
Like the student participants, the tutor participants represented the diversity present at the large, mid-Western public university where this study took place. This is most noteworthy because not all WCs employ students at different academic levels or from disciplines other than English. In the study, there were tutors at the bachelor, master, and doctoral level and from three academic disciplines. The two female tutor participants (Fiametta and Ivy) and three male tutor participants (Trenton, Colin, and Leroy) all spoke English as their first language.

*Tutor-Student Pairs*

Each of the five student participants was paired with a different WC tutor, as presented in Table 3.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutor</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiametta</td>
<td>Marshall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivy</td>
<td>Mani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trenton</td>
<td>Sandra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin</td>
<td>Hakeem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leroy</td>
<td>David</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3: List of participant pairings.

Students were paired with tutors largely based on scheduling compatibility. That is, there was no deliberate pairing of students with tutors based on any obvious similarities (e.g., gender) or differences (e.g., academic level). In one case, the student participant (Mani) requested a new tutor, Ivy, after having one tutorial with another
tutor. Mani continued to work with Ivy for the duration of the study, and the original tutor (Jim) did not participate in the study thereafter.

Data Collection

Because qualitative research also allows for the study of “things in their natural settings, attempting to...interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (as quoted in Creswell, 2004, p. 15), this study explored tutorials with immigrant students as they would normally occur in a typical writing center (WC) environment. While quantitative research involves a few variables and many cases, qualitative research most often relies on a few cases and many variables (as cited in Creswell, 2004). Writing centers (WCs) most often have a diverse clientele which is served by individual tutors whose tutoring style can vary greatly. Therefore, this study used qualitative inquiry to create a holistic picture of WC tutorials with Generation 1.5 students.

Instruments

As a participant-observer and a WC tutor,¹ I served as both a researcher and an instrument of research. This dual role increased my trustworthiness with both the student and tutor participants. Students could assume that I was truly observing the tutorials for educational research purposes, rather than evaluating their performance. Moreover, because I am a tutor/student, the students could view me as a peer-collaborator (much like any other WC tutor), rather than just a researcher. In the case of the tutors, I had worked with each for one or two quarters prior to the start of the study.

¹ I was in my third quarter as a WC tutor at the time this study took place and continued to tutor for two subsequent quarters.
study. This suggests that the tutors were familiar with my personality, as well as my area of study. Due to this familiarity, my research was likely to be perceived as naturally motivated by my studies and previous work at the WC, rather than a means of “exposing” bad practices of tutors. The tutors were also presumably more comfortable with talking to me – a peer – than an unfamiliar researcher. The nature of my relationship to the study participants increased my trustworthiness as a researcher and, thus, increased the overall validity of this study.

In keeping with my role as a participant-observer, the tutors often asked for collaboration (e.g., word choice, input on genre conventions, etc.) when working with the student participants. This is a regular practice when other WC tutors are available, and the study did not seem to change or impede this practice. To that end, Colin and I often had informal discussions regarding “best practices” when tutoring English Language Learners. These conversations came up as a natural part of working together and, although within the scope of the study, were not initiated in direct reference to the study. Furthermore, tutor and student participants were given a general overview of the findings of this study via a short presentation (and/or the chance to read the presentation). This kind of member checking provided the participants with the chance to vocalize any comments or concerns about the findings (although none did) and thus increased the validity of the study.

5 The study was presented to the tutor participants at a WC staff meeting in the quarter following data collection and shortly thereafter, the presentation slides were e-mailed to student participants and tutors not in attendance.
As qualitative methodologies call for multiple sources of evidence to increase construct validity and present a holistic analysis of each case (Cresswell, 2004), data for this study principally came from three sources:

1) initial information-gathering surveys of both tutors and students to identify field of study, completed university writing classes (students only), level of experience with writing center tutorials, expectations of tutorials, and experience with English language learners (tutors only)

2) audiotapes and field notes from observations of tutorials over a six week period, as well as copies of tutors’ summaries of tutorials and all writing produced during the tutorials

3) interviews with tutors and students throughout and/or at the end of the study wherein they provided feedback regarding their perception of the nature and perceived success of the tutorials

Short surveys were also administered to the student participants after each tutorial and another survey was emailed to the students during the quarter following their participation in the study. The former is a regular writing center practice intended to assess the perceived success of the overall experience at the WC (see Appendix L, “Blank Client Evaluation Form,” p. 114-115). The latter was very similar in scope to the questions posed in the final interview with the student participants (see Appendix J, “Electronic Post-Study Email and Survey with Responses from Three Students,” p. 108-111). However, the data yielded from both sources fell outside of the narrow scope of this study and thus, was not included.

Because this study dealt with human subjects, a proposal was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at The Ohio State University (where the study took place). The IRB reviewed the proposal to ensure that the study participants would not
be harmed or subjected to undue stress as a result of their participation in this study.

This study was approved (project number 2005E0189) and study stayed within the proposed guidelines.

*Analysis of Data Sets*

All collected materials were coded according to the following categories and subcategories:

1) reference to research question #1 (product vs. process)
   a. reference to global issues in the paper
   b. reference to local issues in the paper
   c. reference to past work (on previous or current papers) to establish patterns
   d. reference to future work (on current or later papers) to establish process-oriented focus

2) reference to research question #2 (student’s background)
   a. tutor-initiated dialogue regarding students’ sociolinguistic and/or educational background
   b. student-initiated dialogue regarding students’ sociolinguistic and/or educational background
   c. negotiation of global or local issues that appear to originate from students’ status as NNS (e.g., recurring homonym errors)
   d. explicit reference to the student’s identity/status as a non-native speaker (NNS) of English (e.g., addressing error patterns as being typical to NNS)

3) reference to research question #3 (tutor beliefs and practices)
   a. tutor-comments or actions that directly correlate to philosophy of tutoring (as stated in tutor interviews)
   b. tutor-comments or actions that directly disagree with philosophy of tutoring (as stated in tutor interviews)

After initially coding the data, the following three categories (and related subcategories) were added to enable further data analysis:
4) displays of student vs. tutor ownership over paper(s)
   a. student-initiated agenda setting
   b. student-initiated questions
   c. student-initiated revisions or suggestions for revisions
   d. student writing (on paper or notes)

5) displays of negotiation in revisions
   a. student question following tutor suggestion
   b. student revisions based on but different from tutor
      suggestions or models
   c. student-initiated dialogue regarding intended meaning of
      particular point
   d. tutor-initiated dialogue regarding intended meaning of
      particular point

6) outlying factors
   a. collaborative input from participant-observer (tutor-
      researcher)
   b. instructor feedback, as written on paper or indicated by
      student
   c. student comments on success/shortcomings of paper in
      relation to instructor evaluation (e.g., grade)
   d. explicit instruction on the conventions of a give genre

Data generated from the observations (including student papers, tutor and/or
student notes, tutor-written summaries of tutorials, and my own notes) was color-
coded according to each category and then by symbol according to each subcategory.
Cross-references were noted when appropriate. Similarly, student and tutor interviews
were initially coded by similarity in responses and then coded according to their
relation to the above categories and subcategories. Similarities across students or
tutors were noted as appropriate. Once coded, data from each tutor-student pair was
organized and analyzed as a case study, framed by the aforementioned research
questions. The findings and implications of the study are addressed in Chapter Four,
"Introduction to Five Case Studies” and Chapter Five, “Cross-Case Analysis.”
CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO FIVE CASE STUDIES

This chapter takes an in-depth look at the tutorials and participants that comprise the five case studies. It aims at providing examples and, when appropriate, explanations of what took place in the observed tutorials. Each case is presented as an independent narrative, wherein the following is discussed: participant characteristics, general shape of the tutorial, and chronological representation of emergent trends. The significance of each tutorial is briefly discussed at the end of each section. The cases are presented by the order in which my observations began with each student-tutor pair, and each case is written with a similar structure in order to highlight parallel trends. Throughout the chapter, there are references to the key terms and the research questions which drove this study (see Chapter 1, p. 2, or Chapter 3, p. 18); the latter, however, is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, “Cross-Case Analysis.”

Case 1: Marshall and Fiametta

Student: Marshall

Marshall was in the second quarter of his first year at The Ohio State University (OSU) during the time of this study. He was from Egypt and identified his
first language as Arabic. He first moved to the U.S. when he was in the first grade (approximately seven years old) and then moved back and forth between Egypt and America, living in each country for a few years at a time. He returned to the U.S. in middle school (seventh grade) and continued on in America throughout high school. Marshall placed into the English 109 series (see Chapter 2, p. 12) and was enrolled the second course in this series during the observations conducted for this study (see Table 3.1, p. 21).

*Tutor: Fiametta*

Fiametta was a doctoral candidate in English (finishing her dissertation) and was in her third quarter of tutoring at the writing center (WC) at the time of this study. She had taught several beginning composition courses at OSU and at a small, private Ohio university before this study began (see Table 3.2, p. 24).

*Introduction to Tutorials: Shape and Content*

Marshall and Fiametta were paired together for 10 WC tutorials over six weeks (see Figure 3.1, p. 22). In each tutorial, they met, one-on-one, for approximately 50 minutes. Throughout the study, Fiametta and Marshall sat across from each other at a small table (big enough for four people) with the paper of focus being addressed in between them. The location of the paper shifted positions between Marshall, the middle of the table, and Fiametta, depending upon who was reading, referencing, or writing on it.

From the beginning, Fiametta and Marshall easily engaged in casual conversation outside of the discussions regarding writing. Marshall attended two tutorials prior to beginning this study and was somewhat familiar with the culture of
WCs, which includes agenda setting, reading papers aloud, collaborating, etc., this may have aided in establishing rapport. Marshall appeared to be comfortable with the collaborative nature of WC tutorials. As the study progressed, Fiametta and Marshall joked with each other, and Marshall openly talked about his busy schedule and the struggle of balancing family responsibilities, work, and school. Similarly, Marshall seemed to be comfortable with explaining the purpose of his paper and his writing and revising strategies. He acknowledged a need for improvement and never became defensive about suggestions from Fiametta.

A typical tutorial began with Marshall giving Fiametta a recently revised version of a paper. In the first tutorial, Fiametta established a way of beginning the tutorials, which initially included her setting the agenda. Then Fiametta read Marshall’s papers to herself and asked clarifying questions while reading (e.g., “Does this refer to…?” or “What did you mean by this…?”), as well as making notations on the paper (i.e., underlining a word or making a note to return to a certain point). After reading the paper to become familiar with it or with the current changes, Fiametta asked Marshall what he wanted to focus on for that tutorial (e.g., “What are your specific concerns?”). Marshall then directed Fiametta to a specific point in the paper or asked a specific question, such as, “Do I want to bring in [the concept of] ‘happy’ here?”

The tutorials between Marshall and Fiametta were generally collaborative in nature, which allowed for both participants to present and negotiate their ideas. For example, Fiametta might ask Marshall what he meant at a particular point or to re-read the paragraph in question. This seemed to serve as a cue for Marshall, who then
discussed what he intended that paragraph to express or identify why it was weak. In the former case, Fiametta might ask Marshall leading questions to help him recognize the lack of supporting evidence. In the latter, she frequently modeled possible changes. During this process, Marshall typically wrote and read the revisions aloud. The pair then negotiated organization and final phrasing or word choice of the added evidence.

Initially, Fiametta initiated this process of identifying and revising weaknesses (although Marshall almost always recorded these revisions). With time, Marshall appeared to grow more confident in his own ability to recognize weaknesses of the paper. He first displayed agency over the revision process by stopping Fiametta (when she read the paper aloud) to question the strength or validity of a point. He then started to direct Fiametta’s attention to his concerns about the paper as she was reading it to herself (to review revisions from the prior tutorial). Finally, he began to set the agenda, stating explicitly what he felt they should work on in that tutorial. Marshall did not overshadow Fiametta’s own perspective but employed agency over his own paper, creating an environment in which changes were negotiated through a constant collaborative effort.

Fiametta occasionally recorded revisions onto Marshall’s papers when he was struggling to determine the point he was trying to make. At such times, Marshall spoke freely while Fiametta took note of what he said. Fiametta’s notes were not full sentences that could be directly appropriated into the paper or even serve as model sentences. It is important to note that this technique was used as a tool to help Marshall organize his thoughts before writing them in his own words. In general,
Fiametta avoided writing extensively during the tutorial and only made marks on Marshall’s paper as reference points to return to after reading through the paper.

Over the course of the study, Marshall brought to the tutorials three different analysis papers from his English 109.02 class. These papers comprised the majority of his grade for the course. Marshall brought his first paper, “Out of Sync,” to the first tutorial for its final revision. During the second tutorial, Marshall and Fiametta focused on the first revision of Marshall’s second paper, “There Is More Than the Eye Can See”; they continued to revise this paper a total of six times over the next four weeks. Marshall introduced his third paper, “Once Upon a Time,” into the ninth tutorial and focused exclusively on final revisions for paper three in the last tutorial. Because all of Marshall’s papers were analytical in nature, this was the only writing genre of focus during the study. Although Fiametta’s comments were often genre-specific, she did present general guidelines for “good academic writing” (e.g., “establish an organizational structure,” “use clear, direct language,” etc.)

The first tutorial focused on Marshall’s first paper, “Out of Sync,” which was in its final draft stage and soon due for a grade. Marshall did not come to the first tutorial with specific questions about his paper. He asked for “help [with]” key points in my essay,” and when Fiametta asked him to talk about his “specific concerns,” he reiterated the comments his instructor had written on the paper. These comments consisted largely of what Fiametta called “stylistic issues” (e.g., word choice), and she suggested they focus principally on content. She then began to discuss “carrying

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6 Brackets are used here to denote that “with” was originally written in an abbreviated form; the following words are similarly noted when the quotation comes from a written text: [and], [paragraph(s)], and [the (number) paragraph].
ideas through” the whole paper with Marshall. Fiametta helped Marshall identify areas of the paper that weren’t strongly connected with the overall theme of the paper. They then collaborated on inserting phrasing that referred to earlier sections of the paper, with Fiametta offering suggestions or models that Marshall appropriated into his own writing style. Fiametta emphasized that “a strong analysis of claims” should have a “timeline” which can be seen through the transitional words used to introduce paragraphs (e.g., “moreover,” “consequently,” “therefore,” etc.).

The notions of “transitioning [and] importing the theme into existing [paragraphs]” and “making sure each claim in the [paragraphs] was relevant” were revisited in nearly every tutorial. In my early observations, Fiametta continued to help Marshall identify areas where the connection between paragraphs or with the overarching theme of the paper was not clear. Accordingly, there were many discussion about “how the microanalysis fit [with] the larger claims in terms of [paragraph] structure.” As the tutorials progressed, Marshall began to ask specific questions about the need for a transition – or a similar structural concern – at a particular point in his writing. In later tutorials, he also identified areas where he clearly needed a transitional phrase and constructed such transitions by talking aloud and getting feedback from Fiametta.

After the first tutorial, Fiametta suggested Marshall practice “self-editing tense” and that he “work on [the first paragraph] before our next [meeting].” From this point on, Fiametta began regularly making suggestions at the end of each tutorial for what to work on between tutorials. It was similar in nature to the agenda setting that occurred in the beginning of each tutorial in that a goal was established (i.e., what

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to revise) to be achieved over a specific period of time (i.e., the days between tutorials). As the study progressed, Marshall began to state what he would do in terms of revisions before the next tutorial, as well as what he wanted to address in the following tutorial. In the same way, he also initiated agenda setting within each tutorial with greater frequency and surety as time passed. In taking these initiatives, Marshall appeared to have an understanding of the writing process and the need for multiple drafts and revisions of a paper.

Marshall raised another concern that continued to be discussed throughout the duration of the study: developing effective introductions. Marshall said that he often just “sat down and started writing” his papers, “just like I did in high school,” without first thinking about the claim(s) he was going to make in the paper. Accordingly, he felt he often lacked a true introduction to the theme or ended up with an introduction that did not “match” or reflect the rest of the paper. He appeared to be aware of this disconnect largely because of negative feedback he’d received from his English 109.02 instructor, wherein the instructor commented that she wasn’t satisfied with his introduction and that he needed a thesis that was “more clear” (written on the first submitted draft of “There Is More Than the Eye Can See”). Upon having received this feedback, Marshall became very concerned with “fixing” the paper in order to do “what [the instructor] wants” and “make [the writing instructor] happy!”

Although Fiametta and Marshall spent time in the second tutorial on “introducing a cohesive theme to a first draft” in order to “[get] a thesis in place,” Fiametta did not address the introduction of “There Is More Than the Eye Can See” explicitly until the fifth tutorial. This was in response to written feedback Marshall
received from his instructor stating that the introduction (including the thesis) needed revision. At this point, she felt that “attending to the instructor’s concerns” was necessary. According to Fiametta, “getting the thesis in place seemed most important” to both Marshall and his instructor, particularly since the instructor’s suggestion for a thesis quite dramatically changed the focus of the paper from “innocent only at first glance” (Marshall’s original version) to “the concept of ‘cool’ and ‘locker room humor’” (based on the instructor’s suggestions for revision). Marshall and Fiametta then “reworked the [introduction] together [and] got the thesis in line.” The same type of work comprised the subsequent two tutorials; they strove to clearly define the aforementioned ideas and “reshaped the conclusion to reflect these ideas.”

It is important to note that from this point on, the instructor – although not physically present – played an active role in shaping the subsequent tutorials. In one case, Marshall said “I have no idea what’s going on – [the instructor] scribbled junk here,” referring to the instructor’s suggestions for revising the concept presented in a certain paragraph. Although he often appeared confused or uncertain about what the instructor wanted, he was always willing to defer to her suggestions. He seemed to judge the worth or strength of his paper based on the instructor’s approval. This is clearly illustrated when Marshall said, “let’s start at the conclusion – oh, [the instructor] like it too, so my changes were okay.” Moreover, rather than writing to learn, Marshall seemed to write in order to please the instructor (“— hope she jumps up and down when she reads this!”); in his quest to achieve “the perfect ‘A’,” he
became highly product-oriented. He also requested that the instructor be notified of each tutorial.

The prompt for Marshall’s third paper, “Once Upon a Time,” was introduced in the seventh tutorial, and Fiametta and Marshall collaborated on the entire development of this paper. They initially “brainstormed the shape of the argument” and then “mainly focused on setting up the argument for the final paper – building from the [established] thesis.” In the following tutorial, Fiametta “looked over the already restructured start of the paper – making sure that transitions [within paragraphs] were strong.” They also “worked on setting up the rest of the essays – focusing particularly on beginnings and ends of [paragraphs],” thus revisiting the theme of transitions). Finally, Fiametta and Marshall “talked about conclusions generally [and] then constructed a conclusion following these tenets.” Conclusions were a concern for Marshall in the previous papers (again, based largely on the instructor’s feedback), but it wasn’t until the final two tutorials that the constructs of an effective conclusion were explicitly discussed.

Marshall and Fiametta both felt that this paper “shaped up” quicker and with less revision than the second paper (“There Is More Than the Eye Can See”) because Marshall was more familiar with the tenets of analytical writing in an academic context. As this was the final assignment of the quarter, it should be noted that there was less time for revision of this paper, and no feedback on this paper was received from the instructor. Moreover, this was the only paper in which Marshall collaborated with Fiametta before beginning to construct the paper on his own.
Throughout my observations, Fiametta drew Marshall’s attention to patterns of grammar errors and sentence-level concerns, such as use of articles (e.g., adding “the”) and preposition usage (e.g., “in” instead of “on”). Of particular concern was Marshall’s incorrect use of dependent clauses, often leading to sentence fragments. This began in the first tutorial when they discussed clauses and Fiametta noted that there would be “more on this in the future.” In the third tutorial, Fiametta spent a significant amount of time on explicit grammar instruction – again, primarily focused on clauses. She acknowledged that the grammatical focus reshaped the tutorial: “We did some fairly intense sentence-level [and] internal [paragraph] structure work…We ran into a few issues – sentence fragments [and] some preposition issues, and discussed these. He seems to get the idea of dependent clauses – but I want to check this out further.” Consequently, Fiametta and Marshall spent a considerable amount of time discussing dependent clauses in the fourth tutorial, when Fiametta said, “We didn’t get to talk about the [large] issue – but he seems to have a pretty firm grasp of sentence structure issues.”

In later tutorials, grammatical issues and sentence level concerns were not discussed as frequently. When concerns did arise, it was usually Marshall who initiated the discussion, often by asking general questions such as, “Is the grammar weird here?” Rarely did Marshall identify what, specifically, his grammar concern was. In such cases, Fiametta typically responded with comments like, “The grammar didn’t stop me.” If Marshall didn’t then move on to another topic or concern, Fiametta tried to point Marshall toward the specific point of error or awkwardness without offering a way to correct it: “You do have –ing at the beginning, out of
habit.” Throughout later tutorials, Fiametta stated that certain grammar concerns were recurring, in particular that they were “still working on avoiding sentence fragments.” Although Fiametta made an effort to reduce explicit grammar instruction, she continued to make comments like “I found myself giving a lot of sentence hints – “by ___-ing” and “don’t start sentences [with] for,” which indicated that grammar was still a point of concern for her.

Significance of Tutorial

As mentioned previously, one issue that emerged during the course of these observations was the significance of an external influence on the tutorials: Marshall’s English 109.02 instructor. This term “third voice” is used to encapsulate a presence, or “voice,” other than that of the tutor or student which obviously influences the tutorials. This third voice could be brought into the tutorial by either student- or tutor-initiation, most often in response to written and/or verbal feedback given by an instructor. To that end, an instructor is the most likely third voice, particularly in the case of a composition instructor, but other influences could also be considered third voices (e.g., peer feedback, selection committees, etc.). The label “third” is meant to indicate the outside presence of the voice, emphasizing that the “speaker” is not physically present within the tutorial. Despite this, the third voice often appears to be difficult to negotiate and may become a stronger voice than that of a tutor, as well as overpowering a student’s own voice.

In this case, the third voice sometimes shifted as Marshall was exposed to feedback from Fiametta, his English 109.02 classmates, a Success Challenge Tutor, and his English 109.02 instructor. While he valued the opinions of both tutors, he
seemed to be able to negotiate them with his own perspectives and goals for the paper. However, tutorials that took place after receiving feedback from his instructor were very different in nature from other "non-influenced" tutorials. That is, the instructor’s feedback established authority over and reshaped the tutorial, thus giving her a definite voice within the tutorial regardless of proximity. In such tutorials, the level of talk and negotiation between Fiametta and Marshall diminished as they focused almost exclusively on making the suggested revisions. Fiametta’s role as a collaborator was also severely diminished, and the focus of the tutorials seemed to shift from using the product as a means for discussing writing processes to "fixing" the paper. It also seemed that Marshall expected the instructor’s comments to diminish with submission of each revision (each "better version" of the paper) and that he aimed to get the paper to a point where the instructor would not have any suggestions for improvement.

Fiametta expressed concern in her final interview about the level to which the instructor’s feedback influenced Marshall’s writing and the tutorials. She felt that this may have been due to Marshall’s position as an English Language Learner belonging to Generation 1.5 and transitioning into an American university setting where "being more American is cool." She also felt that the instructor had "personal issues" with Marshall; this may have been the result of cross-cultural misunderstandings or the instructor’s misinterpretation of Marshall’s behavior, which showed his constant identity shifting (from Arabic-immigrant to American college student) in the classroom.
In the final interviews with Fiametta and Marshall, both claimed that the tutorials, on the whole, were successful. In particular, Marshall stated that he felt he had improved as a writer through learning the components of a successful paper (e.g., strong introduction and conclusion, clear purpose, support of argument throughout paper). Marshall reported that before participating in this study (i.e., before attending repeated writing tutorials), he believed “good writing” depended upon which instructor was evaluating the work – that each instructor had a different idea of the product they wanted. At the end of the study, he stated that a strong paper would be so perceived regardless of the reader. He also appeared to have a clear understanding of various revision strategies and the importance of revising a paper multiple times as part of the writing process. Accordingly, Fiametta and Marshall both claimed that participating in a series of writing tutorials (for this study) raised Marshall’s level of awareness of and ability to control writing processes.

**Generation 1.5 Issues**

Marshall was representative of belonging to Generation 1.5. As stated earlier, Marshall confirmed that Arabic was his first language at the beginning of the study. To that end, Marshall reported that he spoke Arabic with his father but code-switched between Arabic and English with his siblings or if American friends were present (i.e., as a translator). He also stated that he was more comfortable with writing in English, both formally (in class) and informally (out of class). It is important to note that Marshall also acknowledged still being in the process of learning the conventions of written Academic English (e.g., “I can’t write like a native speaker.”). However, in a final interview, Marshall claimed that his status as a non-native speaker of English
did not have either a positive or negative affect on the observed tutorials. Furthermore, he said that this would only have been a point of concern “for students whose language skills aren’t as good as mine.” This apparent contradiction showed that while Marshall felt he was not an “ESL student” (i.e., struggling with the basic tenets of English), he was not a “native speaker” either (i.e., a master of both spoken and written conventions of English).

Fiametta was an example of a “typical” WC tutor. While she did not have a significant amount of specialized training to work with English Language Learners (ELLs), she and Marshall both perceived the collaboratively-revised papers as clearly written with appropriate levels of analysis and supporting evidence for beginning-level university writers. Neither participant took the initiative to address the issue of Marshall being a “non-native speaker of English” (Fiametta’s words) or an ELL, but this appeared to not have had a negative impact upon the tutorials. This may have been due to Marshall’s advanced proficiency in spoken, conversational English; that is, he appeared fluent in English with an apparent mastery of colloquialisms, no discernable “foreign accent,” and no overt grammatical mistakes.

Case II: Sandra and Trenton

Student: Sandra

Sandra was in her first quarter at The Ohio State University (OSU) during the time of this study. She was from Ethiopia and identified her first language as

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7 The term “typical” is because none of the tutors participating in this study had taken any special courses designed around working with ELLs, nor had they ever worked as English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors.
Amharic. She moved to the U.S. when she was 15 and attended three years at an American high school. At the time of this study, Sandra had neither taken nor was she enrolled in any writing-specific courses at the university level (see Table 3.1, p. 21).

_Tutor: Trenton_

At the time of this study, Trenton had completed his undergraduate studies, held a Bachelor’s degree in English, and was preparing to begin a Master of Fine Arts graduate program (with an emphasis on poetry). He was in his sixth quarter as a writing center (WC) tutor and had taken the required preparatory course for undergraduate WC tutors (English 693) several years prior to this study (see Table 3.2, p. 24).

_Introduction to Tutorials: Shape and Content_

Sandra and Trenton were paired together for nine WC tutorials over six weeks (see Figure 3.1, p. 22). They met one-on-one for approximately 50 minutes during each tutorial. For the duration of the study, Sandra and Trenton sat across from each other at a small table with the paper being addressed in between them. The location of the paper shifted between Sandra, the center of the table, and Trenton, depending on who was reading, referencing, or writing on it.

Although Sandra and Trenton had a good working rapport in that Sandra appeared to implicitly trust Trenton’s guidance and advice, their relationship was very much that of a student and tutor throughout the study. For example, they never discussed anything beyond that which pertained to Sandra’s writing habits and written products. Sandra had attended one tutorial prior to this study, but it was a 20-minute “walk-in” tutorial (with a different WC tutor) at a satellite location which has
a very different culture than the main WC location (e.g., greater time restrictions, less
privacy, etc.). Therefore, Sandra was not familiar with the culture of writing centers
prior to her first tutorial with Trenton. She was also very soft-spoken and at first,
seldom negotiated any aspect of revision – responding instead to Trenton’s
suggestions with “yes” and “okay.” Adding to this, Trenton expressed that being
observed for any reason makes him feel nervous, and he expressed that such feelings
may have affected his tutoring relationship with Sandra.

A typical tutorial began with Trenton reading over Sandra’s concerns, as
expressed on the form clients (i.e., students) print when they arrive for a WC tutorial
(see Appendix K: Blank Client Sign-In Form, p. 112-113). After Trenton read the
checked and/or type-written concerns, Sandra would give him her writing and explain
what it was (e.g., “Psychology paper”), and Trenton then confirmed that what Sandra
had typed on the form was what she wanted to target in that tutorial. Next, Trenton
usually read the paper, silently, and made notations (i.e., underlining a word or
making a note to return to a certain point); he rarely made any comments before
reading the paper entirely. After reading, Trenton usually began identifying areas of
the paper that he felt were unclear or confusing, which served to set the agenda for
each paper (rather than for the whole tutorial, as is traditional).

As previously mentioned, in the beginning there was seldom an observable
pattern of negotiation between Sandra and Trenton, and thus, their tutorials were only
somewhat collaborative. Throughout the typical tutorial, Trenton asked many
clarifying questions to which Sandra gave short replies (e.g., “Yes.” or “I don’t
understand.”). If necessary, Trenton further explained his point and often wrote his
suggested “corrections” (Trenton’s word) on Sandra’s paper. During this process, Sandra wrote extensive notes on blank paper but said very little. Because her replies were so brief and unelaborated, Trenton stated in an interview (approximately halfway through the study) that he did not believe the tutorials were successful or effective. During a similar interview with Sandra, she had stated that she was “really happy” with the tutorials, so it appears that her initial quietness was caused by something other than dissatisfaction with the tutorials – perhaps shyness or reserve because this was Sandra’s first quarter at the university.

Throughout most tutorials, Sandra gave her paper(s) to Trenton and then usually left them facing him, out of reach from her. Although this positioned Trenton to write extensively on her papers, she did not appear to mind (i.e., this pattern did not change significantly over time). Trenton wrote extensively on Sandra’s papers, as mentioned previously. This did not seem to bother Sandra, as she allowed the paper to most often be facing Trenton, out of reach from her. When questioned about this, Trenton replied that he felt “justified writing on the papers because of the language issues” in this case. This implied that Trenton felt the need to supplement his spoken advice and instructions with written comments. It can also be inferred that he viewed Sandra as not only an English Language Learner but also a student with low English proficiency (despite Sandra having attended and graduated from an American high school and not being placed in the English 109 series).

Over time, the tutorials between Sandra and Trenton did grow more collaborative, and Sandra displayed more agency over her writing. Communication patterns between the two included more negotiation, and Sandra began to initiate
discussions with greater frequency and, in general, interact more directly with Trenton. This can be seen from the progression of her questions, which developed from, “How?” to “Do I need to explain it more?” to “From the beginning, does it show the prompt clearly?” This indicated that she felt more confident in the tutorial, as well as more secure in her own ability to communicate ideas clearly through her writing, although she continued to seek confirmation from Trenton after revising (i.e., waiting for him to say, “It’s fine”). She also began revising directly on her papers, which meant she physically moved the paper from Trenton’s side of the table to her own (and back to Trenton when she was done). Sandra often relied upon Trenton’s suggestions for content and model phrasing for grammar throughout the study, but her revised writing was generally constructed in her own voice.

During the study, Sandra brought a series of two-page psychology essays and two philosophy papers in for discussion. In both classes, the writing assignments comprised the majority of her course grades. In the case of the psychology papers (summary of short journal articles that also related to course material), she brought each to the tutorial in a nearly complete state and expected to make revisions as needed. Conversely, she worked with Trenton on various stages of the philosophy papers, ranging from drafting to building analysis to decoding instructor feedback for revision. At the end of the study, Trenton helped Sandra develop a resume to use when applying for her first job. Because of the varied nature of Sandra’s writing assignments (products), Trenton focused primarily on presenting general guidelines for “good academic writing” although there was a certain degree of explicit genre instruction in each case – particularly in the case of the resume.
Sandra’s first tutorial focused on revising a draft version of a psychology essay. Trenton read her paper and offered preliminary specific feedback about areas of the paper he identified as “not phrased well,” signaling this with phrases such as, “The only problem with the first paragraph is...” No true agenda setting took place, and such was the pattern until Sandra herself began stating her concerns with papers at the beginning of later tutorials. In this instance, if a sentence was unclear, Trenton clarified Sandra’s meaning and then offered a suggestion or model for revision (e.g., “You could take off ‘because’ at the beginning, and this sentence would be fine.”). In the beginning, Trenton made comments exclusively regarding the general conventions of academic writing, rather than genre instruction.

Sandra did ask questions at the end of the tutorial but only after Trenton asked if she “had any other concerns with this paper.” At that point, they were very specific, including, “What about fragments and run-ons?” and “How to specify sentences -- to add details?” Trenton responded to these questions with direct answers, but he appeared to have difficulty understanding what Sandra meant (e.g., “I’m sorry -- I’m just not sure what part you mean.”). After answering Sandra’s questions, Trenton reviewed the large concerns that were addressed in the tutorial (e.g., “run ons [sic] and some things with sentence structure”) and indicated what they might want to focus on in the next tutorial (e.g., “the introduction and transitions”). Over time, Sandra appropriated this pattern of recapping and setting the tone for the subsequent tutorial; at this time, however, she simply wrote it in her notes.

In the next few tutorials, Sandra and Trenton continued the established pattern of Trenton reading through a psychology paper and making suggestions for
improvement. Gradually, Sandra appeared to grow more comfortable with the culture of WCs, particularly their collaborative nature. This could be seen when she began to initiate more questions (e.g., “I want to put in some of teacher’s [sic] comments. Can you help me?”) and asked more clarifying questions in regard to Trenton’s suggestions (e.g., “How am I gonna mention that…?” and “Does it make sense to say it this way?”).

Tutorials with Sandra and Trenton were often not bound by a set of thematic concerns (e.g., transitions). They discussed many aspects of writing at least once, ranging from differentiating between homonyms to citing according to APA conventions to strengthening an analytics argument. Often, a wide range of topics was discussed within a single tutorial. For example, Trenton reported that in one tutorial, “We looked at some issues with nouns [and] verbs, organization, sentence combinations, and use of a diagram.” This indicates that Sandra was not only somewhat unfamiliar with the conventions of academic writing, including general organizational structure, but also that she was not always successful in employing grammatical rules when writing (i.e., neither fluent nor accurate). Despite this, general organizational structure did emerge as a concern in nearly every tutorial.

In the early tutorials, Sandra and Trenton discussed various methods that could be used to organize the main ideas of a paper. Trenton suggested that Sandra “try to go from general to specific” and that she try to “split up” long paragraphs (i.e., those which contained several different ideas). Within a few tutorials, Sandra appeared to have improved her control over organizing the structure present within her psychology essays, as Trenton acknowledged in the fifth tutorial: “Your
composition structure has been pretty good for these last few papers.” Despite this, there were a few recurring grammatical and spelling issues – mainly Sandra’s incorrect use of verb tense (e.g., progressive versus past) and usage (e.g., noun versus verb versus adjective word form). In response to these issues, Trenton encouraged Sandra to use a language that was “more direct” to make her writing style more clear.

The overarching issue of what information was appropriate to include in introduction, body/support, and conclusion paragraphs continued to be an ongoing concern in the tutorials. This issue was further complicated when Sandra brought her philosophy papers in for revision help – particularly with the second such paper (beginning in the sixth tutorial). At this point, the instructor had already given Sandra feedback about her first philosophy paper (mainly sentence-level editing corrections), which Trenton had successfully helped Sandra incorporate into the paper (i.e., Sandra reported she “got an ‘A-’ on the rewrite,” up from ‘B’). In terms of the second paper, the instructor had not given feedback but rather explicit guidelines (to the class) regarding the organizational pattern her students should follow to present the metaphor and analysis (i.e., the “five-paragraph essay” structure; see below). Sandra brought this information to the sixth tutorial, wherein she and Trenton negotiated between the instructor’s comments, Trenton’s opinions, and Sandra’s own meaning. This negotiation was exemplified in the following exchange:

Sandra: “[According to the instructor], I should put the introduction, [one] paragraph each for the sun, line, and cave, and the fifth paragraph should be the conclusion with all three – should I mention the cave first?”

Trenton: “If you put the concept first, it might be easier for
the readers – but you should follow your instructor’s guidelines.”

Negotiations continued in this way throughout the remainder of the tutorials observed for this study. Around this point, the rapport between Sandra and Trenton appeared to grow as Sandra began to not only engage in more negotiation but also display more agency over her work (e.g., writing on her own paper and then positioning it so that she and Trenton could read it together).

In the eighth and ninth (final) tutorials, Sandra and Trenton worked to outline Sandra’s first resume. During this, Trenton very explicitly detailed the conventions of the genre of resume writing. For example, he stated that Sandra should begin each “bullet point” with a verb, such as “catalogued.” He also made interpretive comments like, “Focusing on skills helps the employer know what skills you [already] have.” He spent considerable time helping Sandra develop enough material to fill up nearly one page (the standard, accepted resume length).

Beyond specific work on her papers and resume, Sandra also wanted to “talk about writing” and appeared very eager to know, “How can I see my [writing] progress?” She appeared to be asking not only how to improve her writing but also to know how her development as a writer would progress. This is not a question that WC tutors typically receive, but Trenton gave the same answer each time Sandra raised this question: “develop your self-editing skills.” Finally (in the seventh tutorial), Trenton said that although he usually “only talk[s] about papers” (i.e., products), he would talk with Sandra about improving her writing skills (i.e., the writing process). Upon learning that Sandra did not usually reread her papers, he
strongly encouraged her to do so, stating that “rereading materials really helps to develop stronger introductions and conclusions.” Sandra replied to this that she “can’t catch errors when I read.” Trenton then promoted focusing on high-order concerns (e.g., coherence, cohesion, etc.), claiming that “grammar is less important than content – focus on the points you’re making in your paragraphs when rereading.” Trenton also recommended that if Sandra didn’t have an outline, she could “begin by writing a general introduction and then the body; then focus on the body for the conclusion and rewriting the intro.” Finally, Trenton overtly aligned himself with the process-oriented approach by stating that both “rereading and rewriting” would increase the clarity (and presumably the quality) of Sandra’s papers.

Significance of Tutorial

As previously mentioned, an issue that emerged during the tutorials was that of a third voice. In this case, the third voice principally represented Sandra’s philosophy instructor. While this complicated the tutorials, it appeared to help, rather than hinder, because it provoked Sandra and Trenton to negotiate the importance of the instructor’s input. This initial act of negotiation apparently encouraged Sandra to become a more active, collaborative participant in later tutorials, as seen by an increased frequency of Sandra initiating the negotiation, as well as an increase in the amount of time spent negotiating various points. Additionally, Sandra seemed to seek a balance throughout the study between revising the product for improvement (i.e., for a grade) and her expressed interest in becoming more knowledgeable about the writing process.
Sandra and Trenton initially had very different perspectives on the progress of the tutorials (successful and unsuccessful, respectively). By the final interview, they both stated that the tutorials were, overall, successful. Trenton stated that he felt this way now (at the end of the study) because Sandra “played a more active role in the last few tutorials.” For her part, Sandra affirmed that she was generally pleased with the work she had produced as a result of the tutorials. Moreover, she said Trenton “really helped me know about good writing, how to organize and how to get better.” Sandra also claimed that she was going to continue attending tutorials so that she could “keep getting better” (even if she was not able to work with Trenton in the future). This implied that she found both the collaborative nature of the tutorials and the writing processes involved to be valuable.

*Generation 1.5 Issues*

Although relatively “new” to the country (i.e., in America less than four years), Sandra was still representative of Generation 1.5. Sandra confirmed that Amharic was her first language at the beginning of the study, as stated earlier. To that end, she reported that she spoke Amharic with her family and a small number of friends who were also from Ethiopia. Although she spoke English at all other times (e.g., in school, at the hospital where she volunteered, etc.), she stated that Amharic was her preferred language for both speaking and writing. It is important to note that Sandra acknowledged that she was “still learning English.” In her final interview, Sandra claimed that in the tutorials, she “learned a lot about English, like spelling, new grammars [sic], transitions, and how to organize.” Here Sandra appeared to connect with being both an ELL and a member of Generation 1.5 in that she was still
learning a few basic tenets of the English language, as well as skills specifically needed for writing.

As a typical WC tutor, Trenton did not have a significant amount of specialized training to work with English Language Learners (ELLs). In the information-gathering interview prior to the start of the study, Trenton acknowledged that he was “not as comfortable with ESL (English as a Second Language; Trenton’s words) tutees” as he was “with Native Speakers.” He elaborated that he was also not “very comfortable” working with Sandra because he was “never sure if she understood him.” Therefore, Trenton seemed to consider Sandra an “ESL tutee” because of her language proficiency level (spoken and/or written). Furthermore, neither participant took the initiative to address the issue of Sandra being a “non-native speaker of English” or an ELL, although it is unclear whether this had an adverse affect on the nature and progress of the tutorials.

Case III: Mani and Ivy

Student: Mani

Mani was in her second year, second quarter, at The Ohio State University (OSU) during the time of this study. She was from India and identified Kutchi as her first language. She moved to the U.S. when she was four and became an American citizen at seven. Mani was an Honor student at OSU and was not enrolled in any writing-specific courses at the time of this study (see Table 3.1, p. 21).
Tutor: Ivy

Ivy was a second-year graduate student, pursuing a Master degree in English. During this study, she was in her first quarter of tutoring at the writing center (WC). She had served as a “Success Challenge Tutor” in the quarter prior to the study. Additionally, Ivy had worked as a WC tutor at another university as an undergraduate student (see Table 3.2, p. 24).

Introduction to Tutorials: Shape and Content

Although Mani attended seven total WC tutorials over five weeks, she was only paired with Ivy for six tutorials (over four weeks; see Figure 3.1, p. 22). Mani was first paired with Jim, a tutor with years of WC experience. After the first tutorial with Jim, Mani requested a new tutor, and I readily complied in order to ensure her continued participation in the study. The cause for the change could have been due, in part, to Mani wanting to be paired with a tutor she had worked with prior to beginning the study. In fact, she suggested pairing herself with one of two tutors whom she had previously worked with. The requested tutors were both female, but when questioned, Mani stated that gender (i.e., Jim being male) was not an issue of concern for her. Rather, she stated, “I feel that I have exhausted all the possible help from [Jim] for my personal statement.”

Per her request, Mani was paired with Ivy during Week 3 of the study and thereafter was tutored by Ivy, one-on-one, for approximately 50 minutes per tutorial. Throughout the study, they sat in close proximity, one on each adjacent side of a small table. In this way, they were both able to comfortably view, reference, and/or write on the paper of focus without shifting the paper back and forth between them.
Ivy deliberately chose to sit nearby – rather than across from – Mani, reflecting her regular tutoring style: “I prefer to sit next to the students because it encourages collaboration.”

From their first tutorial, Mani and Ivy appeared to have a strong rapport. As mentioned previously, Mani had attended two tutorials prior to the start of this study and was thus somewhat familiar with the culture of WCs (i.e., signing in, agenda setting, reading papers aloud, etc.), which may have assisted the pair in establishing rapport, and Mani seemed to be comfortable with the collaborative aspect of the WC “culture.” In addition to Mani’s writing, they often discussed how the quarter was progressing for each of them, in terms of academic work. Moreover, Mani appeared to feel confident in articulating what her concerns were with each paper, as well as explaining what revisions she had made (from tutorial to tutorial), and she appeared to be very receptive to Ivy’s suggestions for improvement.

For Mani and Ivy, a typical tutorial began with Mani giving Ivy a recently revised version of a paper. Mani would locate and review her revisions and then share her current concerns with Ivy. It is important to note that from the first tutorial, Mani initiated the agenda setting and also suggested that Ivy read the paper aloud (a practice Jim did not undertake). Ivy confirmed that this was a regular practice for her, as it allowed the student (Mani) to “read” the paper from a different perspective. Generally, Ivy read a paper completely without writing on it or asking any clarifying questions. After the initial read, Ivy usually first pointed out strengths of the paper.

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8 One exception was when Mani brought in two papers written in Spanish; then Ivy would occasionally confirm the meaning or translation of a Spanish word.
(particularly if these were related to previous suggestions or revisions) and then began commenting on Mani’s concerns.

Mani and Ivy’s tutorials were collaborative in nature, allowing both participants to present and negotiate their thoughts. Often, Mani would ask a specific question, to which Ivy would respond; Ivy’s responses were often counter-questions (see dialogues on p. 59). This created a cadence that reinforced the collaborative nature of the tutorials and quickly became a pattern. This pattern was further supported by the positioning of a given paper, which allowed Mani and Ivy to view it simultaneously and make changes in writing without the paper being removed from view of either participant.

Most often, Ivy and Mani did not discuss papers from beginning to end. Rather, Ivy initially focused on the revision or concern perceived by Mani as most important. Other revisions and concerns were addressed in order of descending importance. Ivy felt that conducting tutorials in this way assured that she “gave [Mani] some useable feedback for her specific concerns.” This also appeared to assist Ivy in avoiding sentence-level instruction, as she rarely went through a paper (or section of a paper) line-by-line.

During the tutorials, Mani usually wrote small changes directly on her paper, and she also took more extensive notes (e.g., Ivy’s suggestions, model phrasing, etc.) on blank paper. To that end, Ivy tried to avoid writing directly on Mani’s paper (as stated in an interview) but occasionally underlined phrases of concern or made small notes about key concepts relating to content: “law is a language.”
During this study, Mani primarily worked on developing essays for two upcoming scholarship applications; although the scholarships were different (one was to study abroad and the other for admission into an Honor Society), a similar essay was used for both. That essay was also used as a basis a third academic application which consisted of answering a few short essay questions. Mani also brought in two papers for a Spanish composition course (both Ivy and Mani are conversant in Spanish); because Ivy principally emphasized high-order concerns (e.g., clarity, organization) in both cases, I have included a brief discussion of the Spanish papers. This was in contrast with the earlier tutorials where Ivy often made suggestions based on the conventions of the genre of personal statements and explicitly discussed these conventions with Mani. Genre instruction returned to a certain extent in the final tutorial, when Mani wanted to discuss creating a resume and appropriate cover letter.

As Ivy had worked on a personal statement-like essay with Mani once before the study, they began the first tutorial by referring back to the content and structure of that essay. This essay was considered successful (i.e., Mani was admitted to the Honor Society to which she applied) and discussing it briefly appeared to help establish a basis of comparison for the pair. Mani then expressed concern about the transitions between paragraphs in her current essay and suggested that Ivy "could read it aloud." In this way, Mani set the agenda for the tutorial and continued to guide it with specific questions about connecting ideas through the use of transitions and developing clear, succinct language. She did the same in subsequent tutorials, always pointing Ivy towards her concerns: "I've changed some stuff...and highlighted the
changes and the new paragraph we talked about.” Ivy acknowledged this by reporting that they “focus[ed] on passages and lines that [Mani] had underlined.”

As mentioned previously, Ivy appeared quite comfortable with this nature of tutorial, but she countered Mani’s yes-no questions with questions that returned the agency to Mani, as can be seen in the following two exchanges:

Mani: “Is this law paragraph okay then?”
Ivy: “Do you think it does what you need it to?”

Mani: “Do I need to be specific about the type of law [I’m going to practice]?”
Ivy: “Well, what example would you give?”

In doing this, Ivy appeared to be encouraging Mani to further analyze her own writing, rather than strictly relying on Ivy’s assessment. Ivy often used a similar deflective technique to circumvent Mani’s requests to evaluate her writing. For example, when Mani asked, “Are there other problems?” Ivy replied, “Well, I can’t really evaluate it, but it seems nearly complete.”

As a way of addressing the need for transitions, Ivy worked with Mani to identify “a larger theme that could draw the whole essay together.” Once the theme “multicultural experiences and interests” emerged, the paragraphs were restructured (when necessary) to reflect that theme. Mani and Ivy then discussed the most linear organization of the paragraphs and reordered them, as needed (this occurred over the course of three tutorials). From here, transitions were discussed, and Mani observed that “having a logical order to the paragraphs” allowed for greater ease of transition (her initial concern). Ivy concluded that “all of the paragraphs [then served] a dual-
function and interrelate[d]” to each other and the overarching theme of the essay. It should be noted that when a friend of Mani’s reviewed her essay, the friend was concerned that the recurring theme put the focus of the essay “outside of the scope of the prompt” (the friend’s comments). Ivy and Mani considered the friend’s feedback and negotiated the presentation of the theme. Overall, Mani refuted her friend’s suggestions of reducing emphasis on the theme and thus, seemed secured in her revisions.

Another issue that emerged when re-ordering the paragraphs was the general “five-paragraph essay” structure of the personal statement. This structure was intentional as Mani had originally written her essay to closely follow the tenets of the prompt. When Mani worked with Jim, he stated that such a structure was “pretty typical” and “not outstanding in essays of this nature.” Consequently, Mani was concerned with a “lack of creativity,” fearing that it might diminish the worth of her personal statement in the eyes of the selection committee. Mani and Ivy initially attempted to “vary the essay to avoid over-reliance on the prompt” but ultimately agreed that the five-paragraph structure was an effective way to present her essay, particularly since it had to be less than one page in length.

As the personal statement was revamped over several tutorials, it ultimately morphed into two slightly different essays. Although the overarching theme remained the same, the essays were each tailored for the purpose of a specific application. Ivy and Mani frequently discussed the writing conventions typical to the genre of personal statements. For example, Ivy encouraged Mani to create a written identity: “The reader is really getting to know you in the essay – who you are, how you see or
define yourself, and what you value.” To exemplify genre characteristics, Ivy also referred back to Mani’s essay from the earlier tutorial (before this study began) and emphasized the similarities between the three “versions of the same essay.” Mani and Ivy further developed the original text into a third version: a series of responses to short essay questions still reflecting Mani’s theme of “multicultural experiences and interests.” In addition to meeting genre conventions, the revision process within and across essays appeared to have the goal of meeting the perceived needs of the selection, as can be seen when Ivy said, “Your answers are a little quirky and clever, which is probably something the review panel wants.” This statement encapsulates the dual-focus on a written identity and satisfying the committee.

In part of the fifth and all of the sixth tutorials, Mani brought in two Spanish papers, one of which was a position paper and the other was expository. Mani stated that she had to use “new Spanish vocabulary” for both papers and that these papers were “the most [she’d] ever written in Spanish.” Because neither Mani nor Ivy considered themselves fluent (and thus, grammatical “experts”) in Spanish, there was minimal discussion about word choice and grammatical issues. Instead, Ivy again focused the discussion on clarifying a unified theme to be carried through each paper. This allowed Ivy to once again draw upon issues discussed in previous writing tutorials, which was particularly helpful when the familiar topic of revising paragraph order arose.

Mani did show more control over the writing process by having a particular theme in mind when she wrote the second Spanish paper (e.g., “I picked the theme of environment and try to give news and commentary about the environment.”); she was
able to identify the theme before writing the first draft of the paper. This control, however, did not appear to extend to organizational structure. When Ivy asked, “How did you decide the order for the parts [of this paper]?” Mani replied, “I guess as it came to me.” Hence, Ivy further advised her to “think about strategic decisions in the paper – the reason for how you’ll order the points of that theme,” as with the personal statements and the previous Spanish paper. They then collaboratively discussed possibilities for revising the current organization of the paper.

The final tutorial with Mani returned more closely to the idea of balancing audience expectations (like the selection committee) while interweaving a theme. In this case, Mani wanted to write a cover letter to send with her resume and so, the theme was Mani’s strengths as a future employee. While reviewing the conventions of the cover letter (genre), Ivy drew upon previous tutorials and reminded Mani that she would be “constructing a version of [her]self” to present to the potential employer, just as she’d done with her personal statements. Ivy continued this trend of building upon prior discussions by telling Mani that her strengths “could be intertwined, like they are in your other applications.” Mani appeared to be familiar and comfortable with these conventions, as they so closely paralleled that of personal statements, although there were no further opportunities to observe how successfully she was able to employ this knowledge.

Throughout the tutorials, grammar never appeared to be a primary concern either Mani or Ivy had. Occasionally, Mani would ask general questions about phrasing, such as, “Does the phrasing sound okay, not awkward?” In such cases, Ivy typically countered with a question, like “Can you tell me what you’re specifically
worried about?” If Mani could name a specific point, Ivy then discussed it with her in detail and provided multiple options for restating the point. Most often, however, Mani could not locate a grammatical concern; she appeared to be seeking confirmation of the paper “sounding okay,” rather than seeking explicit grammatical advice.

Significance of Tutorial

Although Mani did not revise any of her work (in the tutorials) based on an instructor’s feedback, the issue of third voice was not altogether absent from the tutorials when her personal statements were discussed. In addition to conjecturing as to what the selection committee wanted to read, Mani often referred back to feedback she had received from other WC tutors (including both Jim and myself) and was concerned about incorporating feedback given by her peers who had “proofread” her personal statements. Mani displayed the ability to maintain agency over her own work while negotiating among her voice, Ivy’s voice, and these multiple third voices. Furthermore, Mani seemed to be primarily (and understandably) concerned with producing a finished product that was “acceptable.” That is, revisions came as a result of Mani wanting to “improve the essay,” rather than revising for the sake of strengthening her writing through the medium of an essay.

In Mani and Ivy’s final interviews, both indicated that the tutorials had been successful. Ivy said that Mani had become “a stronger writer, overall,” and Mani claimed to have a better sense of when and where transitions were needed and how to successfully employ them. Mani and Ivy both stated that Mani had also improved in terms of recognizing the need for and developing linear organization in her papers.
Moreover, each felt, in particular, that the finished personal statements were “much more clear” (Mani) and “very polished” (Ivy). Because these essays were revised repeatedly, it can be assumed that Mani had a clear understanding of not only various revision strategies (e.g., reading aloud, obtaining multiple perspectives, etc.), but also the importance of drafting a paper multiple times.

**Generation 1.5 Issues**

Mani was a clear representative of Generation 1.5. In the beginning of the study, Mani confirmed that her first language was Kutchi. Accordingly, she stated that she spoke only Kutchi with her older relatives, principally when she visited India. In terms of her immediate family, she claimed to code-switch between English and Kutchi with English serving as the base language because “It’s what I’m most comfortable speaking.” Moreover, Mani cannot read or write well in Kutchi, nor can she speak in any language other than English when communicating with Indians whose native language is not Kutchi. It should be noted that Mani acknowledged writing “okay,” but she still emphasized that she didn’t “use English like a native speaker.” Despite this, Mani did not explicitly mention that WC tutorials were helpful for her as an English Language Learner (ELL). This appeared to suggest that she did not correlate perceived improvements in her writing development with improving her language skills.

Ivy was a typical WC tutor in that she did not have a significant amount of specialized training to work with ELLs. Despite this, both Ivy and Mani felt that her personal statements were void of phrasing and grammatical mistakes that might “mark” Mani as a non-native speaker of English (as expressed in respective
interviews). While Mani expressed this concern in the final stages of revising her essays, neither participant took the initiative to discuss Mani’s language or literacy learning experiences or why Mani had such concerns about being seen as someone whose “English is not perfect because it is not my first language” (Mani). Ivy and Mani did have natural opportunities to talk about her past history, as Mani’s personal statements included an anecdote about her gaining American citizenship at age seven, but again, the pursuant discussions did not go beyond the content of this “story.” Ivy claimed that “[Mani] was not a typical ESL (English as a Second Language) student” and hence, she was not “overly concerned about addressing any ESL issues” with Mani, which did not appear to have an adverse effect on the tutorials. Ivy’s comments may have been due to Mani’s status as an Honors Student at OSU, as well as Mani’s advanced proficiency in spoken, conversational English (i.e., fluency in English with an apparent mastery of colloquialisms, no discernable “foreign accent,” and no overt grammatical mistakes).

Case IV: Hakeem and Colin

Student: Hakeem

Hakeem was in his first year, second quarter, at The Ohio State University (OSU) during the time of this study. He was from Senegal, and he identified multiple first languages: Mauritania and Wolof as his first spoken languages (with equal regard to both) and French as his first academic language. He moved to the U.S. when he was 15 and attended four years at an American high school. Hakeem placed into the
English 109 series (see Chapter 2, p. 12) and was enrolled in English 109.02 during the course of this study (see Table 3.1, p. 21).

*Tutor: Colin*

Colin was in his third year of undergraduate studies, pursuing a dual-major in Anthropology and Comparative Studies at the time of this study. The study took place during his second quarter as a writing center (WC) tutor. He had previously worked as a Peer Writing Consultant in English 110W after taking the corresponding training course (English 647) and had also taken the required preparatory course for undergraduate WC tutors (English 693; see Table 3.2, p. 24).

*Introduction to Tutorials: Shape and Content*

Hakeem and Colin were paired together for seven tutorials over four weeks (see Figure 3.1, p. 22); this pair did not meet during Week 6 of the study because Hakeem no longer had any writing assignments on which to work. In each tutorial, they met, one-on-one, for approximately 50 minutes. Hakeem and Colin met at two different locations (the WC and the WC's satellite location), which affected their seating arrangements. At the WC, Hakeem and Colin sat across from each other at a small table with the paper of focus being addressed in between them. In this case, the location of the paper shifted positions between Hakeem, the middle of the table, and Colin, depending on who was reading, referencing, or writing on it. At the satellite location, Hakeem and Colin sat diagonally from each other, one on each adjacent side of a table; this change in positioning was necessitated by the size of the table. In this way, they were both able to comfortably view, reference, and/or write on the paper of focus without shifting the paper across the table.
Although Hakeem had not attended a tutorial prior to this study, he and Colin easily established a strong rapport and readily engaged in casual conversation beyond the confines of the tutorial. Colin often used phrases like “cool” and “awesome” to show that he was listening to Hakeem, as well as relating his own college experiences to Hakeem’s. This behavior seemed to set the tone for rather relaxed tutorials wherein both participants felt free to express their views and feelings, as could be seen when Hakeem once put his head down on the table and said he was “too tired.” Hakeem expressed in an interview that he did not “really like writing,” but he did appear to be highly receptive to utilizing Colin’s advice to improve his writing.

A typical tutorial for Hakeem and Colin began with Hakeem giving his paper to Colin. Colin always initiated the tutorial by asking what Hakeem’s concerns were and then setting the agenda around them. Colin also encouraged Hakeem to read the paper aloud. Hakeem was initially reluctant to read his own work, but he became more open and participatory in this aspect as the study progressed. This indicated that he began to value “hearing” the paper, probably because he could most easily recognize his grammatical errors in this way. After the paper was read, Colin would usually ask Hakeem, “What do you think?” reshaping the question until Hakeem gave an answer regarding a specific point of concern (e.g., “What do you mean by flow?” or “What specifically don’t you like about this?”). Colin would then discuss this point with Hakeem and offer suggestions (e.g., model phrasing, organizational patterns, etc.). Once this point was clear, the question-and-answer pattern would begin again. If Hakeem could not identify a weak point or clearly articulate his concerns, Colin located a point of concern and asked Hakeem leading questions like, “Why did you
decide to put this paragraph here?” or “Do you think you jumped to this point?”

Another key phrase Colin used was, “Tell me what you’re trying to say,” prompting Hakeem to speak freely until his thoughts were more clearly defined.

Conversely, Hakeem did not ask Colin many direct questions. On the other hand, he did phrase many of his answers in a way that was questioning (e.g., “I didn’t like the flow — ?”), as if he were unsure or not confident in his own opinions or even answering Colin with “I don’t know.” Nonetheless, the tutorials were largely collaborative in nature; Colin’s questions appeared to require Hakeem to be involved and find a voice in the tutorials. As the study progressed, Hakeem displayed more agency over his papers, as can be seen as he moved from, “Can I ask a question?” to “I think this needs a better transition — do you think I jumped to here?” to “It needs a different ending…more to it.” In terms of recording revisions made, both Colin and Hakeem wrote directly on Hakeem’s papers. Colin appeared to be very conscious of appropriating the paper, and at one point he said, “[Hakeem.] you can write what you want; I’m done writing,” and pushed away his pencil.

Hakeem brought three papers from his English 109.02 class to discuss in the observed tutorials. These writing tasks served as individual contributions to a group project: a ‘zine designed and developed by his Success Challenge peer writing group. Hakeem was required to write a “feature article” (an expository essay) and an opinion piece; the topics of each were up to him as long as they fit into the group-established parameters for the ‘zine and, once chosen, were group-approved. Hakeem brought his feature article, “Sports and Recreation,” to the first tutorial in a draft.

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9 “Zine” is an alternative term that refers to a small-scale, independently published local or underground magazine.
stage. This paper was continually revised throughout the tutorials, often also incorporating peer and instructor feedback. The opinion piece, “More to College,” was outlined in the first and second tutorials and revised in subsequent tutorials (again, incorporating peer and instructor feedback).

Because Hakeem’s writing tasks were written for a specific audience (designated by his peer group), the concept of being aware of the readers, or “audience,” was frequently discussed in the tutorials. Colin also briefly discussed the genre of persuasive/opinion papers with Hakeem, and there was one notable point where Colin gave Hakeem explicit information regarding the conventions of “academic writing” as a genre: “American academic writing [emphasis added] is usually direct with linear organization and a logical progression of ideas with transitions.” The majority of the focus, however, was on general guidelines for “good academic writing.” In keeping with this, Colin and Hakeem rarely negotiated sentence-level phrasing unless related directly to a larger concern, such as adding a transitional phrase.

The first tutorial initially began with the pair discussing Hakeem’s feature article, on which he had already received peer feedback. Hakeem brought the article with him with the feedback written directly on it and gave it to Colin to read over. Colin observed that the feedback indicated Hakeem “should move from being general to specific”; hence, this point was the first topic of discussion. At this point, there was no agenda setting. Colin next asked Hakeem what he planned to do to revise the paper, to which Hakeem replied, “Add some examples.” Colin then asked Hakeem more questions, apparently to help Hakeem clarify his own thoughts and generate
specific examples (e.g., “Like what?” and “What else – what’s important?”). Hakeem was not extremely conversant at this point and often gave short replies (e.g., “Relaxing.” and “To escape.”). The pair then established a clear general question-answer-specific question pattern which was used throughout this tutorial and in most later tutorials, as can be seen in the following exchange:

Colin: “How would the article change if the audience changed?”
Hakeem: “A lot.”
Colin: “Would the specifics [about OSU] still be relevant?”
Hakeem: “The general ideas would still be –”
Colin: “Okay, so if OSU is the example, how would that benefit other university students? Does the OSU example work?”
Hakeem: “Yeah, I think it might –”
Colin: “How?”
Hakeem: “It shows what a different college has to offer – so people can choose the best.”

Colin’s tactic of asking first a general question and then moving to more specific questions appeared to aim at forcing Hakeem to negotiate the overarching theme of his paper (as well as to increase his involvement in the tutorial). This concept was re-examined when Hakeem introduced his opinion paper in the latter part of this tutorial, as can be seen below:

Colin: “What about the opinion piece?”
Hakeem: “Just talk about what I like.”
Colin: “Do you have to argue or persuade someone of your point of view?”
Hakeem: “Just what I do and don’t do.”
Colin: “And why you do that –?”
Hakeem: “To escape.”
Colin: “Okay, so you could argue that – escaping the serious for [the] fun.”
Here Colin asked a similar series of leading questions which again appeared to aim at negotiating with Hakeem in order to develop a cohesive theme for the paper. However, Colin’s language was somewhat more directive in this exchange, which is evident when he phrases the final comment as a suggestion rather than a question (e.g. “...you could argue...”).

After another question-answer-question dialogue (like the two mentioned earlier), Colin asked Hakeem, “What’s the most important thing you’re trying to say in this article?” When Hakeem replied by listing “three strong components” (Colin’s words), Colin asked how they would be organized. Thus the issue of organizational structure was introduced and later revisited in more detail. The inclusion of more detail was also embedded in this discussion (e.g., Colin: “What about the specifics?”), which brought the tutorial back to the point of incorporating the feedback given by Hakeem’s peer writing group. Finally, the idea of expanding a central theme was reintroduced, and Colin and Hakeem negotiated possible similarities among the “three strong components” until they agreed upon “the idea of finding balance [in college life] as the theme to increase the flow of [the] paper.”

At the end of this tutorial, Colin advised Hakeem to “think about the opinion article in terms of audience.” This appeared to serve as a guideline for what Hakeem should expect to work on between tutorials or in the following tutorial when revision was not possible during that time. This became a regular practice of Colin’s and could be seen as a type of agenda; although it did not occur in the beginning of the tutorial (as is traditional), it did appear to set the goal and/or parameters for the following tutorial. The most significant occurrence of this was after Colin read Hakeem’s paper
aloud in the second tutorial. During that tutorial, Hakeem began to read the paper aloud himself and was able to identify many grammatical errors without Colin’s prompting. At the end of that tutorial, Colin implied this was a successful practice by suggesting, “Maybe next time we’ll start that way, by reading aloud together.” In this way, the agenda was set—at least, in part—for later tutorials. This trend continued throughout the study (e.g., Colin: “Maybe in the next tutorial, you can bring in your peer comments, and we can look at those.”).

During the second tutorial, another point of concern had emerged: use of topic sentences as transitions to paragraphs. This issue arose because after Hakeem read his feature article aloud, he felt it was awkward in certain parts. He said, “I think this needs a better transition. Do you think I jump to here?” After asking what Hakeem thought (Colin’s “signature” response), the pair discussed utilizing the main theme of the paper to connect each paragraph; Colin then assisted Hakeem in outlining the main point of each paragraph as it related to the overarching theme of the paper. Colin also asked Hakeem guiding questions, such as, “Are there too many different points [in this paragraph]?” When Hakeem agreed, Colin drew his attention to the structure of the previous paragraphs: “I like the paragraphs with the introduction and topic sentences, like in the others—can we add that to the third paragraph?” In later tutorials, Colin continued to ask leading questions (e.g., “How does it relate to the rest of the paper? Think about why it’s here—what’s the connection?”) and/or confirm that Hakeem had identified another weak transition (e.g., “It does seem disconnected. Let’s work on a transition.”). Both practices led to similar negotiations of the possible ways in which to add or revise transitions in later tutorials.
Colin and Hakeem’s discussions appeared to significantly affect Hakeem’s perception of the writing process. In the third tutorial (slightly before the halfway point), Hakeem began to say things like, “I like what you said about transitions,” followed by making a note to himself to revise that section or sentence. This behavior indicated that he saw value in the process of revising his paper (in this case, by creating clear inter-paragraph transitions). Furthermore, working to develop strong transitions and interrelation between paragraphs seemed to lead Hakeem to employ more agency over his writing. For example, Hakeem seemed to ask for clarification and/or confirmation in the early stages of working with transitions: “Can I ask a question – if I say this [for a transition sentence] will you know what I mean?” Later, Hakeem employed agency by self-editing his papers – specifically for transitions – when reading them aloud in the tutorials. This was most evident in a later tutorial when Hakeem stated, “Some sentences before didn’t fit the paragraphs now – I need to fix those.” This was a clear contrast with his earlier comments regarding transitions and revision.

A third issue presented itself during the fifth tutorial, at which point Hakeem had received feedback from his instructor regarding his feature article. The instructor was concerned with both the introduction and conclusion in Hakeem’s paper. She gave specific advice for the introduction, suggesting that it have “more of an attention-getter” (Colin’s words), a better connection from the attention-getter to the thesis (i.e., the main theme of the paper: recreation); in terms of the conclusion, she also recommended that Hakeem expand the conclusion beyond simply reiterating (“listing” – the instructor’s word) key points. In response to this, Colin encouraged

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Hakeem to first think about the ‘zine’s target audience (i.e., college students) and what might gain their attention. After Hakeem replied, “I have no idea,” the pair negotiated possible options in relation to how they appealed to Hakeem as a college student. Regarding the conclusion, Hakeem agreed that it “need[ed] a different ending [with] more to it.” Colin proposed that the “next logical step might be a counter-argument” and then detailed a model counter-argument, which Hakeem appropriated as a conclusion (in conjunction with the listed points of review he already had).

It is important to note here that neither the introduction nor the conclusion had been labeled as points of concern prior to the instructor’s feedback. Similarly, neither was discussed extensively beyond the context of her feedback. That is to say that although the instructor’s voice was present as a third voice in certain tutorials, it appeared to influence – rather than control – the tutorials. For example, Hakeem brought his instructor’s feedback on his opinion piece to another tutorial, stating, “I don’t really know how what [the teacher’s] saying fits in with what I’m saying.” Colin explained, “There are two types of instructor feedback – things you should [emphasis added] include and suggestions for you to think over – I think she means these for suggestions.” Colin’s statement further shows the degree of influence (or possibly, non-influence) the instructor had on the pair’s tutorials. Furthermore, the instructor’s comments were not negotiated beyond Colin’s seeming dismissal of them.

Significance of Tutorial

Although Hakeem once requested that his English 109.02 instructor be notified about his WC tutorial, she did not appear to be largely influential in the
overall scope of the tutorials (as mentioned earlier). Regardless of how direct her influence was, her voice, a third voice, was clearly present within the tutorials. In this case, the third voice appeared to be easily negotiated with Colin and Hakeem’s own voices. Furthermore, Hakeem did not seem to be either composing or revising purely for the sake of achieving a gradable or successful product; rather, he wanted to “learn to be better at writing so that it comes easier.” This may have been because Hakeem did not view writing as a purely academic habit, as determined when he claimed to “write mainly for class and for email” in the initial information-gathering interview.

In their final interviews, both Colin and Hakeem claimed that the tutorials were largely successful. Hakeem also said he liked “the environment [sic]” of the WC, indicating that he was comfortable with the style of tutorial he and Colin had adopted (at least by the end of the study). In addition, Hakeem reported that he appreciated how Colin “challenged me to come up with what I should talk about on [sic] my essay” and “gave me his input of what would make a [sic] essay good and bad.” The latter comment implied that Hakeem had an increased awareness of the key concepts for “good academic writing” by the end of the study. Colin’s comments also supported this notion: “Hakeem seems to have improved his intuitive or instinctive understanding of writing. He is also able to self-edit better.”

*Generation 1.5 Issues*

Although he speaks multiple “first” languages, Hakeem was representative of belonging to Generation 1.5. In the beginning of the study, Hakeem confirmed that English was not his first language but rather his fourth. He grew up code-switching between the local dialects of Mauritania and Wolof and learned to read and write in
French (at school). Hakeem reported that he now speaks French as a principle
language, even with his family, and that he is most comfortable both speaking and
writing in French. According to him, English is his “second best language,” again in
terms of both speaking and writing. Although Hakeem’s multilingualism was drawn
upon in the WC tutorials, the multiple “first languages” and shifting linguistic
identities further indicates his location within Generation 1.5.

Colin was a typical example of a WC tutor in that he did not have a significant
amount of specialized training to work with English Language Learners (ELLs).
Neither participant took the initiative to address Hakeem’s status as either a “non-
native speaker of English” or an ELL, a point which Colin expressed regret over in
his final interview. Without offering a reason for not doing so, Colin stated that he
believed he could have “improved the tutorials if I had drawn upon Hakeem’s
existing knowledge of writing in another language.” Colin claimed the tutorials would
have further benefited from comparing the rhetorical styles of Hakeem’s first
language and English (i.e., employed contrastive rhetoric). Colin also acknowledged a
shift in his tutoring, stating that he “became more directive” as a response to Hakeem
being an “ESL student.” It is not clear whether Colin’s change in tutoring style had a
positive or negative affect on the tutorial, if any at all.

Case V: David and Leroy

Student: David

David was in the second quarter of his first year at The Ohio State University
(OSU) during the time this study took place. He was originally from Somalia and
identified his first language as Somali. He immigrated to Kenya with refugee status at age eight, but he continued to speak Somali while there. When he was 16, he moved to America and attended three years at an American high school. David placed into the English 109 series (see Chapter 2, p. 12) and was enrolled in English 109.02 at the time of this study (see Table 3.1, p. 21).

*Tutor: Leroy*

Leroy was completing coursework and student-teaching to fulfill the requirements for a Master of Education degree, specializing in English Education, at the time of this study. He was in his eighth and final quarter as a writing center (WC) tutor. Additionally, he had been serving as the Assistant Coordinator for the Online Writing Center for three quarters (including the quarter in which this study took place), wherein most of his tutorials took place online instead of face-to-face. Prior to the study, he had taken the required preparatory course for undergraduate WC tutors (English 693; see Table 3.2, p. 24).

*Introduction to Tutorials: Shape and Content*

David and Leroy were paired together for five tutorials over three weeks (see Figure 3.1, p. 22). David did not attend the first scheduled tutorial (during Week 2), and this pair did not meet during Week 6 of the study because David no longer had any writing assignments on which to work. Tutorials with David and Leroy were very different in shape from the previous four cases, largely because each tutorial lasted only 15-20 minutes. Throughout the study, David and Leroy sat across from each other. David did not always bring a written text to the tutorials, and much of the time was spent with Leroy outlining strategies for developing and organizing papers. That
is, Leroy would typically write on a piece of paper and then give that paper to David at the end of the tutorials. Thus, there was rarely any sharing or passing of papers between them (as in the other cases).

David and Leroy did not have casual conversations outside of writing discussions. This may have been because at the time of this study, Leroy was involved primarily in online tutoring, wherein it is less common to spend time establishing rapport. Throughout the study, David was often quiet and seldom spoke unless a direct question was asked of him (e.g., “Do you see what I mean?” or “Was this a helpful strategy?”), but he did not seem to be uncomfortable receiving suggestions and/or feedback from Leroy. Neither Leroy nor David initiated conversation about David’s writing habits or his concerns about them; instead, the pair often discussed specific genres of writing (e.g., five-paragraph essays and persuasive/opinion essays). It should be noted that David reported in an interview that while he did not dislike writing, he never had to write for classes within his major fields of study (Business and Finance).

In this case, a typical tutorial began with Leroy asking what David wanted to work on or what concerns David had. If David brought a paper to revise, Leroy would begin by asking such questions as, “What’s this paper supposed to be about?” or “What are you trying to say in this paper?” After this, David often explained the parameters of the assignment, usually in terms of what the instructor “wanted”: “she wants me to give my opinion” or “she said I should expand it.” Leroy did not usually read through the paper in its entirety or write on it, although he often generated other writing for David’s reference. To that end, Leroy usually outlined the organizational
strategies or main points of a given paper for David to keep as a post-tutorial reference; David took notes but wrote very little, overall. At the end of most tutorials, Leroy asked David, “Do you have any more questions?” Leroy often followed this question with others, such as “Will you be able to remember the strategies we talked about?” or “Will this be helpful for other papers?”

As discussed previously, David displayed very little agency over his own papers; this did not increase in a noticeable way over the course of the study. Similarly, I observed very few negotiations between David and Leroy. There were points where David asked Leroy clarifying questions, and vice versa, but very few opportunities for negotiation were presented during my observations. There was no discernable increase in negotiation as the study progressed.

During this study, David brought to the tutorials three different papers from his English 109.02 class. All of David’s writing assignments, along with those written by his Success Challenge peer writing group, were to be compiled into a student-developed ‘zine. The first paper David shared with Leroy was a “feature article” (an expository essay), an article centered on an interview, and the second was an opinion piece. No written product was brought to the first or fourth tutorials. David did not bring drafts to the tutorials unless he had previously written them for required submission (in pre-assessment “draft” form) to his instructor. A third English 109.02 assignment, developing an advertisement, was discussed, but David did not bring the written product in for review.

Although David did not bring a written text to the first tutorial, he noted, “I don’t have the topic that I should write about and I would like some brain storming
[sic] of different topics I can choose that can enable me to have a good paper” (on the client sign-in form). Leroy responded by asking David clarifying questions about class expectations and reading through the prompt David’s instructor had provided (for feature articles). Although Leroy did not explicitly state that his actions were to establish goals for the current tutorial, this appeared to serve as agenda setting.

From there, Leroy decoded the prompt for David (i.e., “It seems like your teacher means…”) and then began “brainstorming” with him, wherein Leroy primarily asked whether David’s personal or academic interests would make good topics. According to Leroy, “We made a list of possible topics then narrowed it down with details.” Once a topic and a few supporting details were chosen, Leroy provided a model for organization: the five-paragraph essay. He then outlined the organizational structure, filling in the outline with phrases that could be used as content for David’s selected topic. Leroy explained each step he made while outlining and qualified most content suggestions as being “just some examples for [David].” He also confirmed he was writing about suitable topics by periodically asking David yes-no questions such as, “– Right?” or “Do you agree?” Leroy claimed that what he wrote was “basically [David’s] words,” as he prepared a model outline for David to refer to after the tutorial. During this process, David mainly agreed with Leroy’s points; although he said, “I’ll take notes – ,” he wrote sparingly throughout the tutorial.

As previously mentioned, Leroy’s usual tutoring style appeared to involve stating explicit genre characteristics – in this case, those of the five-paragraph essay. Leroy used signal phrases like, “Most people would say…” or “We usually write this
way...” to highlight genre conventions. One such example occurred when he said
"Writers normally have a ‘hook’ – ” to which David replied, “– to get people’s
attention.” Here, David became more involved in the tutorial and provided his own
example of a “hook” for Leroy to use in the outline.

In addition to explicit genre instruction, Leroy also mentioned general
guidelines for “good academic writing.” These included advice like, “Going from
larger to small organization is easier for readers to understand – present it like that in
your thesis, even” and “For conclusions, you can pretty much restate the
introduction.” Such comments came at the end of the first tutorial and were stated in a
directive manner (e.g., “In a 500-word essay, try not to repeat yourself.”). This
pattern occurred in subsequent tutorials and appeared to serve as a review of what
Leroy had discussed with David during that tutorial. This type of review is a typical
way to end WC tutorials, and the listing is particularly common in online tutorials.
Additionally, Leroy asked if David found the tutorial and/or the “strategies we talked
about” helpful. This was also incorporated into the typical ending for David and
Leroy’s tutorials. In his final interview, Leroy explained, “I try to give [students] a
chance to ask questions and if they don’t have questions, I don’t really push them
further.” Therefore, if David did not raise additional questions during this time (i.e.,
when Leroy asked him if he had “any other questions”), the tutorial ended.

In the subsequent tutorials, David brought drafts of the feature article, which
had been written in reference to the outline developed in the previous tutorial. David
also brought the outline itself, which allowed the pair to refer back to strategies
developed in the previous tutorial (e.g., “What were our ideas last time?”). Leroy also
extended the previous outline by writing in sub-topics when David expressed that he “got stuck” trying to generate supporting ideas and/or details for each paragraph. Similarly, Leroy provided David with new rhetorical models for paragraph structure (e.g., “Paragraph 1: example; Paragraph 2: example from different perspective; Paragraph 2: progression from point 1 to point 2”). When David felt he “was stuck” because he was “repeating information from another paragraph,” Leroy assured him that it was okay “because you have different rhetorical strategies,” including different examples illustrating the main point of each paragraph. This served as another example of Leroy presenting a “universal theme” of academic writing.

Another concern that arose was the conclusion, which David and Leroy also “touched on” (Leroy’s words). To that end, Leroy asked, “What about the conclusion?” David looked over the created outline and replied, “Just sum up the point.” Accordingly, neither the conclusion nor the introduction was discussed in explicit detail at that time. When feedback from his instructor later prompted David to ask more questions about the introduction and conclusion, Leroy referred back to the outline developed in the first tutorial. He claimed, “I tried to relate this issues [sic] to one we have addressed lately in our tutorials, such as elements of an intro[duction].” Another example of this occurred when Leroy said “an intro[duction] for a normal paper would...match up with the body, like [we talked about] last week.” In this way, Leroy tried to build upon what he had already discussed or reviewed with David.

Upon further helping David decode his instructor’s feedback (e.g., “What do you think?” and “Do you know what your teacher means?”), Leroy implied that utilizing the instructor’s suggestions was negotiable by saying, “It seems like the
feedback was only for some small changes, so you’re basically okay.” David appeared receptive to this, and he did not ask questions regarding validity or “worth” of the instructor’s comments. Hence, there was no further decoding or discussion of the instructor’s feedback, even in subsequent tutorials.

While David’s opinion piece developed without an outline from Leroy (as with the feature article, many points of concern were revisited during the revision process (in the final tutorial). Leroy felt there was a need for “some major organizational changes” and often referred back to tactics used to improve the previous paper (e.g., “We’ve talked about this before”). Familiar concerns were revisited: matching the paragraphs with the order presented in the thesis, organizing from larger to smaller points, adding examples to extend analysis, and lengthening the conclusion. During this tutorial, Leroy often offered advice, including, “Here’s the solution – add examples” and “You could be more specific there.” Such explicit phrasing implied that Leroy did not feel David needed to further discuss the issues at hand.

David and Leroy also briefly discussed two other minor writing tasks (in the fourth tutorial): an advertisement and an individual assessment. The former was required for the ‘zine and had to “appeal to the ‘zine’s audience” (David’s words); the latter was a letter to David’s English 109.02 instructor. The discussion over both the advertisement and assessment was very brief. In regards to the advertisement, the most noteworthy point was that Leroy asked David explicit questions about its purpose and then scripted several for David (including sketch drawings of graphics), of which David picked one to further develop on his own. In terms of the assessment,
David suggested that Leroy write about his experiences at the WC. Leroy replied to this by asking, “Should it break down like other papers? Maybe the intro[duction] and conclusion were helpful [sic].” Leroy appeared to interpret this as a sign of David’s increased understanding of the components of a cohesive paper, saying “[it] seems like you’re becoming familiar with the specific parts of a paper.”

Significance of Tutorial

Although David twice requested that his English 109.02 instructor be notified of the WC tutorials, she did not seem to play a highly active role in the tutorial. As stated earlier, there were a few occasions when the instructor’s prompts were decoded and one occurrence where her feedback was explicitly discussed. It is important to note, however, that her voice was still present as a third voice; it was simply a voice that was considered as negotiable as both David and Leroy’s voices. This may have been because she (the instructor) served as the Success Challenge “Tutor” for David’s peer writing group and thus, made suggestions from the perspective of a “peer” (rather than an instructor). Moreover, while David only composed to fulfill class requirements, it did not appear (based on his comments throughout tutorials and interviews) that his primary objective in writing was to produce a paper that would receive a high grade.

In Leroy and David’s final interviews, both expressed that they perceived the tutorials as having been successful. David explained this further by stating that he felt he learned the basic components (e.g., “introduction, examples, and conclusion”) needed in a paper. David also said that he liked writing “a little more” because of his increased understanding of “good writing” after attending the tutorials. However, it
did not appear that David developed a deeper understanding of, appreciation for, or control over the revision process during his five observed tutorials. His lack of understanding and/or control seemed evident in his last tutorial, wherein his paper needed similar revisions to his earlier paper, and neither he nor Leroy commented otherwise when asked how they perceived David’s improvement “as a writer.”

**Generation 1.5 Issues**

Despite having only been in America for three years, David was a good representative of Generation 1.5. He confirmed in the beginning of the study that his first language was Somali, and he still spoke Somali on a regular basis, both with his family and in the community. David reported that, “If people speak Somali, I speak Somali; if people speak only English; I speak English”; however, he did not claim to code-switch if a speaker was bi-lingual. It should be noted that David stated a dislike for writing, in general, regardless of whether he wrote in Somali or English, “although now [after the study], English is getting easier.” This lack of affinity for one language over the other is not atypical among Generation 1.5, and thus, David’s case further speaks to the transitional status of this generation.

Leroy was a typical WC tutor in that he did not have a significant amount of specialized training to work with English Language Learners (ELLs). Nonetheless, he claimed David’s “understanding the process of writing in English” improved over the course of this study. Moreover, neither participant took the initiative to discuss David’s status as an “ESL client” (English as a Second Language; Leroy’s words) or an ELL. This did not appear to have a negative affect on tutorials.
Closing Remarks

It is clear that there parallel trends are present across all five cases, particularly in reference to the students’ collective Generation 1.5 status, tutors’ beliefs and practices, and the relationship between the writing process and the written product. Further analysis of each of these is offered in Chapter 5, “Cross-Case Analysis.”
CHAPTER 5

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS: FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter further explores the findings of the study, as well as the implications of these findings. It aims to introduce the key findings of the cross-case analysis, as well as the implications of this study. The five cases are presented here in conjunction with each other, as they relate to the research questions (see Chapter 1, p. 2, or Chapter 3, p. 18). In general, analysis and comparison of the five case studies suggest that knowledge of students’ sociolinguistic and educational background is neither being discussed nor fully utilized in writing center (WC) tutorials. Furthermore, although tutors’ practices are closely aligned with popular WC pedagogy, these methods do not appear to be flexible enough to fully meet the needs specific to Generation 1.5. Accordingly, this chapter discusses possible implications for training tutor in order to increase the efficacy of WC practices. Possible applications of this study and suggestions for future research are also proposed.

Discussion by Research Question

The data lends itself to several levels of analysis when framed by the research questions. The simple, or obvious, answer often presents itself early, but a deeper understanding can be achieved through further consideration of the findings.
R1: How do tutors identify students as belonging to Generation 1.5, and does tutors’ knowledge of students’ sociolinguistic and educational background appear to affect the instruction given during a writing tutorial?

As presented in Chapter 4, none of the tutor participants initiated a discussion with the students about that student’s sociolinguistic or educational background; neither did the student participants instigate such a dialogue by offering such information to the tutor. In one case (Mani and Ivy), the topic of the student’s writing identified the student as “Generation 1.5.” Mani’s personal statement included a short passage regarding her experience of becoming an American citizen at age seven. Mani and her tutor, Ivy, discussed this anecdote at length because they negotiated which details were imperative and which could be excluded for the sake of brevity. Ivy made comments like “Wow, what a formidable thing for you to experience so young!” but neither she or Mani further discussed the implications of her changing country of citizenship, being raised bilingual, or the strength/weakness of her first language (L1: Kutchi) literacy skills.

While the other cases did not present such obvious opportunities to engage in a conversation about the students’ backgrounds, there were other indicators that the students were treading the line between two populations but were neither “native speakers of English” (NS) or “non-native speakers of English” (NNS). The most poignant example of this is that students were relatively fluent in spoken English (with the possible exception of Sandra) — enough so to not be labeled “ESL” (English as a Second Language) by the university or tracked into ESL composition classes. Moreover, two of the participants did not even have a discernable “foreign accent” that is often considered an “obvious marker” of NNS. Despite this fluency of speech,
the students, as a group, were not able to achieve a comparable level of accuracy when writing (as noted by the time spent discussing on sentence-level/phrasing concerns, grammatical errors, and rhetorical conventions of English).

Given this, it seems apparent that if the tutorials with these students had been reshaped, they might have better reflected the students’ unique needs. For example, tutors could have established and then drawn upon the students’ previous writing experiences (especially those in English), as well as the language in which the students preferred to write. This study also exemplifies how each student within the same population (Generation 1.5) varies in terms of individual needs. This is presumably the case with all student writers, whether labeled ELL (English Language Learner), ESL, NNS, Generation 1.5, or even NS. Despite these variances, all five tutors affirmed that they did not significantly alter their tutoring/instructional styles in acknowledgement of working with an ELL (regardless of possible language and/or cultural barriers).

Later, each tutor was specifically asked to reflect on whether knowing their student’s sociolinguistic and/or educational background would have helped with the tutorials relevant to this case. Four tutors – Fiametta, Trenton, Ivy, and Leroy – independently agreed that this information would not have reshaped the tutorials in any way and was thus irrelevant to their tutoring. They consequently concluded that this information would have had no affect on the methods each employed during the observed tutorials, which is presumably true in light of their earlier claims that they, as a whole, would not alter tutoring styles based on the sociolinguistic or educational background of a given student.
The one exception to this was Colin, who voiced concern over not asking Hakeem to explain or expound on any multilingual literacy experiences he may have had. As mentioned earlier, Colin felt that such information would have led to dialogues regarding Hakeem’s strengths and weaknesses as a “writer” – not only a writer of English as a Second (Fourth, in this case) Language – and thus, have been beneficial to the overall progression of the tutorials. Colin was the only tutor to express such an idea, which may have been due to his relative “new-ness” to the WC; that is, his tutoring philosophy appeared to be less rigidly set than the other tutors’.

It can be reasonably assumed that not discussing students’ sociocultural or educational backgrounds does not render writing center (WC) tutorials altogether ineffective (i.e., student and tutor participants unanimously agreed that the tutorials discussed here were successful). That is not to say that discerning students’ sociolinguistic and educational background would not make WC tutorials more efficient and effective. For example, Mani’s comments after her first tutorial with Jim implied that she did not respond well to his approach to tutoring, which was largely minimalist in nature. Given that, it seems that maintaining flexibility in the approach to tutoring is imperative for successful tutorials with Generation 1.5 (and probably with other students, as well). It also appears reasonable to assume that knowing a student is Generation 1.5 would allow for tailoring tutorials to a greater degree in consideration of that student’s needs. If, like the indication here, tutors have a uniform way in which they approach tutorials regardless of student’s background and experiences, they are then not able to fully assist their students. Moreover, other research supports the idea that drawing upon both students’ first and second language
literacy knowledge and skills is a valid way of extending and enriching students’ comprehension and consequently improving tutorials (Harklau, Losey & Siegal, 1999; Leki, 1992).

This raises the issue of how tutors are trained both to “see” and “tutor” students. At the time of this study, none of the tutors were aware of Generation 1.5, including the criteria and distinct challenges this group faces, particularly in composition. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that WC tutor training include information regarding Generation 1.5, as distinct from international students, in addition to what training already encompasses issues of tutoring ELL/ESL students. However, this does not come without a word of caution regarding how or whether, to a certain extent, tutors should initiate discussions regarding students’ status as language learners. The best way to engage in such dialogues may be to wait for a natural opportunity, such as presented itself with Mani. This could be particularly problematic with Generation 1.5 students who spend considerable time negotiating sociocultural and linguistic identities and thus, may be averse to “outing” themselves as having a first language other than English.

R2: In what ways do tutorials with immigrant students appear to align with tutors’ claims of their beliefs about the writing process?

When the tutors were asked to state their philosophy or style of tutoring, there was a certain degree in range among the replies. For example, some (like Fiametta and Colin) preferred to engage their students in casual conversation as a means of establishing a strong rapport. Others (like Leroy) did not feel the need to elicit
discussion outside the realm of the students’ immediate writing concerns. There were also a few notable “universal” trends which all tutors claimed to privilege:

1. high-order writing concerns (e.g., cohesion, coherence, etc.) but did not entirely avoid low-order issues (e.g., sentence structure, verb tense, etc.)

2. using non-directive language and tutoring tactics (e.g., “What do you think?” or “What do you want it to say?”)

The five tutors also seemed to regularly refer back to issues discussed in previous tutorials, but this cannot be considered useful as not all clients (students) work with the same tutor repeatedly or have recurring tutorials (although both are always options).

The tutors’ claims regarding their own practices were surprisingly accurate assessments of their individual tutoring methodology. This was particularly true in the case of the two “universals” mentioned above, which closely correlates with common WC pedagogy. Nonetheless, such pedagogical practices are largely grounded in research on tutorials with students whose first language is English (i.e., NS) in studies which most often do not consider students whose first language is not English, including Generation 1.5. Moreover, this pedagogy does not allow for a great deal of flexibility, while more recent second language writing research claims that so-called NNS may benefit from a more directive approach to instruction, as well as explicit genre instruction (Johns, 1995 & 1997, Ramanathan & Kaplan, 2000). The implications regarding this again center on adapting or supplementing tutors’ current knowledge base, ensuring that it includes information regarding tutorials with NNS from a second language writing perspective. Although Generation 1.5 students may
have academic literacy only in English, the scope of second language writing research
does not exclude “1.5ers” in that English was not their first language, generally
speaking (and may not be their first language in regards to literacy either). Having
knowledge of pedagogical practices from both perspectives (e.g., using “minimalist,”
non-directive tutoring with students who are native speakers of English while being
more directive and explicit with those who are not, as appropriate) may best allow
tutors the optimum base for flexibility in their tutoring styles.

R3: To what extent do writing center tutors help draw immigrant students’ attention
to writing processes instead of focusing on the written product at hand?

The term “writing process” is somewhat difficult to characterize, particularly
when considering its complex relationship with the “product.” In terms of the
tutorials observed here, the tutors principally utilized the process-oriented approach
and favored high-order concerns; while they did not avoid addressing product-
specific issues (i.e., word choice, thesis statement), the emphasis was largely on
organizational patterns, genre instruction, cohesion, and how to effectively revise
papers. Moreover, the tutors overtly drew upon discussions from previous tutorials;
this appeared to be done in an effort to increase the students’ knowledge of and
control over the writing processes. In general, the tutors universally stressed that the
students should appropriate and employ these strategies in order to improve their self-
editing skills and further revise papers on their own.

Utilizing the process-oriented approach does not necessarily negate the value
of the product. Were it not for the desire to produce acceptable and well-received
products, there would be little need for WCs and tutorials. To that end, students are
generally motivated to write for acceptance – either in the form of a high grade as
with Marshall, to revise for a higher grade like Sandra, or as part of an application
seeking money and/or opportunities as with Mani. Therefore, the findings of this
study indicate that writing processes and the written product are not necessarily
separable. Rather than being independent entities, product and process appear to be
correlated. That is, the product seems to be a means of addressing the writing process
involved in composing, while the endpoint of composing is to produce a usable
written product.

In terms of this study, the tutors did not always explicitly refer to the “writing
process” when working with their student partners. However, the students were often
implicitly made aware (or reminded) of the writing process as they drafted multiple
revisions of papers. Furthermore, the tutors tended to draw the students’ attention the
tо the writing process at the end of most tutorials through reviewing which parts of
the process had been utilized in that tutorial or by referencing various stages of the
process when discussing what the student would next do (either after or in subsequent
tutorials). In many cases, the tutors and students named the writing process in their
final interviews, specifically when asked in what ways they identified development of
the students’ papers (i.e., products). This further indicates that the writing process
does not have to be explicitly discussed in order for students to be aware of – or even
use – it, particularly if the process is addressed implicitly through revising a product.
Discussion of Outlying Factors

There were several factors that clearly influenced the shape, content, and significance of the tutorials which did not fit into the parameters of the research questions. In the nature of qualitative research allowing for multiple variables, the three most prominent will be discussed here: the presence of a third voice, the role of WC culture, and explicit genre instruction (Socioliteracy theory). These topics, although not related, were notably present across each case study and merit further discussion in relation to both WCs and Generation 1.5.

As mentioned previously, the issue of third voice was clearly present in various tutorials with each student-tutor pair. It was of particular concern with Marshall because his instructor’s voice seemed to dominate the tutorials after a certain point, thus diminishing the collaborative nature of Marshall’s relationship with his tutor, Fiametta. That this was a concern for him and a point of influence for the other four students indicates that Generation 1.5 may struggle with negotiating the role of an instructor’s feedback. It could also be the case that beginning level writers in their first year at the university-level (four of five) have difficulty negotiating the authority of a third voice. However as the more advanced writer in this study (Mani, an upperclassman Honors student) also labored over negotiating the role of a third voice (the selection committee’s “presence”), this study cannot conclusively say whether “1.5ers” struggle with this issue more so than beginning writers.

A student’s familiarity with WC culture appeared to be correlated with how successful that student was in the tutorials. That is, the more familiar a student seemed to be with navigating through WC culture, the more successful the tutor and
student perceived the tutorial. In Marshall and Mani’s cases, they were familiar with
WC culture and thus, quickly established rapport with their tutors and settled into a
seemingly comfortable rhythm of negotiation and revision. In the other three cases,
the students (Sandra, Hakeem, and David) were not familiar with WC culture prior to
their first tutorial as part of this study. Accordingly, it took longer for each student to
collaborate actively in the tutorial and/or to negotiate with the respective tutors
(Trenton, Colin, and Leroy). Moreover, Trenton stated that his tutorials with Sandra
were unsuccessful in the beginning but successful in the end (see Chapter 4, “Sandra
and Trenton,” p. 46-47). This directly reflected her level of active participation in
tutorials over the course of the study (more participation led to greater perceived
success of tutorials). Thus, if understanding and/or appropriating components of WC
culture (e.g., agenda setting, collaboration, negotiation, etc.) are relied upon as
indicators of successful tutorials, Generation 1.5 and other students may benefit from
being explicitly introduced to the tenets of that culture.

The Socioliteracy theory, which promotes the explicit instruction of genres
(specifically, the “genres of power”\footnote{See Anne Johns’ book Text, Role, and Context (1997), her article “Genre and pedagogical purposes” (1992), and Via Ramanathan and Robert B. Kaplan’s article “Genres, authors, discourse communities: Theory and application for (L.1 and L.2 writing instructors” (both in the Journal of Second Language Writin) for more information regarding the Socioliteracy theory.}) played a visible role in several tutorials with
each student-tutor pair. It was identifiable by when the tutors (or students, on some
occasions) referred explicitly to the conventions of a certain genre of writing. For
example, both Ivy and Trenton outlined the structure and content typically seen when
constructing a resume. As a resume is a distinct type of writing with several generally
agreed-up conventions, it can be considered a genre. This explicit instruction speaks
to the Socioliteracy theory because it went beyond identifying themes for “good writing” and provided Mani and Sandra, respectively, with a concrete way in which they could easily create (or recreate) a resume, a product of this genre. Another case of this was when Leroy presented his student, David, with the tenets of the “five-paragraph” essay. Trenton and Ivy also discussed this with Sandra and Mani, respectively, but to a lesser degree. The advantage of this approach is that it validates explicit instruction, which may be more beneficial for Generation 1.5 students than a less directive approach. Specifically, this could increase the efficacy of short (e.g., walk-in tutorials) or short-term tutorials with Generation 1.5 students, wherein students do not have several tutorials in which to discuss and revise a written product.

Need for Future Research

In addition to the aforementioned factors (i.e., WC culture, third voice, and Socioliteracy theory), there are other topics which would benefit from future research. As stated in Chapter 2, no significant amount of research exists on Generation 1.5 at the university level, as writers, or in WCs. As more “1.5ers” pursue higher education and universities strive to meet the unique needs of this population, the need for this type of research will only increase. A few particular topics to investigate might include:

- How would tutorial interactions play out with Generation 1.5 students who were truly struggling with fundamental language learning issues (e.g., vocabulary, sentence structure, etc.), as well as basic composition issues (e.g., organization, clarity, etc.)?
- How do Generation 1.5 students distinguish between the expectations of an “audience” and a “third voice”? How does each term distinctively
influence a tutorial with immigrant students? How do tutors effectively help such students “broker” between audience and third voice?

- How could the influence of an instructor’s third voice be effectively utilized within a tutorial with Generation 1.5 students without changing the process-orientation to a product-orientation?

- How can tutors be better trained in understanding the importance of educating Generation 1.5/ELLs about WC culture? What would this training consist of? What would its implementation look like in tutorials?

- Could the Socioliteracy, or “post-process,” orientation be a more effective way of providing composition instruction to Generation 1.5/ELLs? How could the two approaches be used to compliment and/or extend each other?

In terms of writing centers, there is very little (if any) accessible research on how WC tutors are trained to work with Generation 1.5 (as distinct from international and native-born students). WCs would benefit from knowing what type of training is most effective for working with this student population and having a more clearly defined pedagogy in which to operate during tutorials with “1.5ers”

In regards to this study and its researcher, the field of second language literacy and writing research would strongly benefit from a study which compares the writing development of university level native-born and international students with that of Generation 1.5 students. Additionally, extending case studies like that of Marshall or Hakeem beyond the narrow scope of the WC (e.g., incorporating the composition class – like the English 109 series) could allow for the writing development of such students to be further tracked and evaluated.
APPENDIX A

SOLICITATION LETTER TO STUDENTS

[date]

Dear Student:

I am writing to request your participation in a study titled, “Analysis of Writing Center Tutorials with L2 Writers.” This study will examine the interactions that occur when English language learners participate in writing center tutorials and should provide a better understanding of these interactions. As a graduate student in Language, Literacy and Culture and Graduate Teaching Associate at the Writing Center, I am interested in the processes, the pedagogical content knowledge, and experiences which shape an English language learners writing development as they pursue higher education.

The project will begin in the Spring Quarter, 2005, and continue throughout the end of the quarter. I will interview you three times, at the beginning, middle, and end of the study. The initial interview will aim at identifying general background information about you and your prior experiences with writing centers. The medial and final interviews will provide a chance for you to reflect on your perception of how the writing center tutorials observed for this study affected you. Both interviews will last about 20 minutes and will be audio-taped. I will also be observing the weekly writing center tutorials in which you participate throughout February and March. During my observations, I will be taking notes on the type of interactions I observe between you and your tutor, as well as audio-taping the tutorial for later analysis. This study will include quantitative analysis of the evaluative survey typically completed after each writing center tutorial. Finally, I would also like permission to photocopy all writing projects addressed in the tutorials to provide a record of the types of work with which you, as a student, are typically concerned. All audiotapes, surveys, field notes, and photocopies will be stored in a secure place within my home during the project and erased or destroyed two years after the project.

Pseudonyms will be used in all reports of the project, and you will be allowed to withdraw, without penalty, at any time. Please note that I am also requesting your permission to include quotes from interviews or from printed documents and artifacts that I collect during the project in presentations I make and papers I publish related to
this research. Your participation in writing tutorials and interviews and completion of the related surveys will be the only requirements for this project; participation will not require additional writing assignments beyond your normal assignments and student routines. No risks are involved, and participation in the project should prove beneficial.

If you have any questions about the project, feel free to call me at 614.378.9644 or e-mail me at rebennack.2@osu.edu.

Sincerely,

Eve Rebennack, Graduate Teaching Associate
APPENDIX B

SOLICITATION LETTER TO TUTORS

[date]

Dear Tutor:

I am writing to request your participation in a study titled, "Analysis of Writing Center Tutorials with L2 Writers." This study will examine the interactions that occur when English language learners participate in writing center tutorials and should provide a better understanding of these interactions. As a graduate student in Language, Literacy and Culture and Graduate Teaching Associate at the Writing Center, I am interested in the processes, the pedagogical content knowledge, and experiences which shape an English language learners writing development as they pursue higher education.

The project will begin in the Spring Quarter, 2005, and continue throughout the end of the quarter. I will interview you three times, at the beginning, middle, and end of the study. The initial interview will aim at identifying general background information about you and your experiences as a writing center tutor. The medial and final interviews will provide a chance for you to reflect on your perception of the writing center tutorials observed for this study. Both interviews will last about 15 minutes and will be audio-taped. I will also be observing the weekly writing center tutorials in which you participate throughout February and March. During my observations, I will be taking notes on the type of interactions I observe between you and the student you work with, as well as audio-taping the tutorial for later analysis. Additionally, I will provide you with evaluative surveys every other week which will be used for quantitative analysis of the tutorials, as well as an email survey after the observations have been completed (at the end of the Spring Quarter). Finally, I would also like permission to photocopy the notes typically provided by tutors at the end of each tutorial as a record of what issues were addressed in that tutorial. All audiotapes, surveys, field notes, and photocopies will be stored in a secure place within my home during the project and erased or destroyed two years after the project.

Pseudonyms will be used in all reports of the project, and you will be allowed to withdraw, without penalty, at any time. Please note that I am also requesting your permission to include quotes from interviews or from printed documents and artifacts
that I collect during the project in presentations I make and papers I publish related to this research. Your participation in writing tutorials and interviews and completion of the related surveys will be the only requirements for this project; participation will not require additional writing assignments beyond your normal assignments and student routines. No risks are involved, and participation in the project should prove beneficial.

If you have any questions about the project, feel free to call me at 614.378.9644 or e-mail me at rebennack.2@osu.edu.

Sincerely,

Eve Rebennack, Graduate Teaching Associate
APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Protocol # ____________

CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

I consent to participating in research entitled: Analysis of Writing Center Tutorials with L2 Writers.

Dr. Alan Hirvela, Principal Investigator, or his authorized representative, Eve Rebennack, Co-Investigator, has explained the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and the expected duration of my participation. Possible benefits of the study have been described, as have alternative procedures, if such procedures are applicable and available.

I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to obtain additional information regarding the study and that any questions I have raised have been answered to my full satisfaction. Furthermore, I understand that I am free to withdraw consent at any time and to discontinue participation in the study without prejudice to me.

Finally, I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: _____________________________  Signed: _____________________________

(Participant)

Signed: _____________________________  Signed: _____________________________

(Principal Investigator or his/her authorized representative)  (Person authorized to consent for participant, if required)

Witness: _____________________________

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APPENDIX D

INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. What country are you originally from?

2. What is your first language?
   a. What do you consider to be your “native” language?
   b. What language is currently spoken with your family (in your home)?

3. What is your preferred language for a) speaking and b) writing?
   a. What language do you feel strongest in when writing academic papers?

4. How long have you been in the U.S.?
   a. How many years and where have you studied in the U.S. (prior to entering college)?

5. How long (how many quarters or years) have you been enrolled at The Ohio State University (OSU)?
   a. What are you studying (declared or intended major(s) and minor(s))?
   b. What writing class(es) have you taken at OSU?

6. How did you first learn about the OSU Writing Center?
   a. Did you have any experiences with the Writing Center before starting this study?

7. Why did you agree to participate in this study?
   a. Do you hope to gain anything from participating in this study?
APPENDIX E

INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TUTORS

1. What degrees do you hold and/or are you currently pursuing?

2. What experience do you have with writing instruction and/or writing centers?

3. How would you describe your tutoring style/philosophy (i.e., non-directive, collaborative, etc.)?

4. Does your tutoring style change at all when working with English Language Learners (ELLs vs. native speakers of English)?
   a. Do you have any particular concerns when working with ELLs?
   b. Have you identified any personal strengths/weaknesses or likes/dislikes when working with ELLs?

5. Why did you agree to participate in this study?
   a. What, if anything, do you hope to gain from participating in this study?
   b. Do you have any additional thoughts on participating in this study?
APPENDIX F

MEDIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. How has attending tutorials at the Writing Center helped you to improve the papers you brought to the tutorials?

2. How has attending tutorials at the Writing Center helped you to improve as a writer?
   a. What has been most helpful for you as a writer (please explain)?
   b. What has been most successful for your overall development as a writer (please explain)?

3. Do you feel that your tutorials thus far have been successful? Why or why not?

4. Do you feel you and your tutor have been working on specific patterns (areas of difficulty or recurring errors) in the tutorials (please explain)?

5. How does attending tutorials twice per week benefit you (versus once per week, as non-study participants)?

6. How would you describe your relationship with your tutor?
   a. Who do you feel controls or guides what is worked on in the tutorials?
   b. After each tutorial, who do you feel “owns” the papers you worked on – you, the tutor, or both?

7. Do you feel that there will be any long-term implications from participating in this study? That is, will attending tutorials twice per week with the same tutor have any long-term affects on your writing?
APPENDIX G

MEDIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TUTORS

1. How do you feel attending tutorials at the Writing Center has helped (insert name of student) to improve the papers he/she brought to the tutorials?

2. How do you feel attending tutorials at the Writing Center has helped (insert name of student) to improve as a writer?
   a. What has been most successful for his/her overall development as a writer (please explain)?

3. Do you feel that the tutorials thus far have been successful? Why or why not?

4. Do you feel you and your student have been working on specific patterns (areas of difficulty or recurring errors) in the tutorials (please explain)?
   a. How often do you address the same issues (i.e., multiple times per tutorial, once per tutorial, once per week, etc.)?
   b. Do you address these issues in each tutorial?

5. How does working with a student twice per week affect the tutorials?

6. How would you describe your relationship with your student?
   a. Who do you feel controls or guides what is worked on in the tutorials?
   b. After each tutorial, who do you feel “owns” the papers you worked on – you, the student, or both?

7. Do you feel that your tutorials with (insert name of student) reflect your philosophy as a tutor?
   a. Are these tutorials reflective of the tutorials you typically have with undergraduate students (please explain)?
   b. Are these tutorials reflective of the tutorials you typically have with English Language Learners (please explain)?

8. Do you have any additional comments, questions, or concerns about working with your student?
APPENDIX H

FINAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. How did attending tutorials at the Writing Center help you improve the papers you brought to the tutorials?

2. How did attending tutorials at the Writing Center help you to improve as a writer?
   a. What was most successful for your overall development as a writer (please explain)?

3. How can you tell that your writing has improved?

4. What is your opinion about writing, in general?
   a. Did participating in this study change your opinion toward writing (please explain)?
   b. How do you view yourself as a writer?

5. Do you feel that your tutorials were, on the whole, successful? Why/why not?

6. What did you typically work on in your tutorials?

7. How would you describe your relationship with your tutor?
   a. Who did you feel controlled or guided what was worked on in the tutorials?
   b. After each tutorial, who did you feel “owned” the papers you worked on – you, the tutor, or both?

8. Did your tutor ever discuss your educational or socio-cultural background with you?
   a. If so, how did that affect your relationship with your tutor?
   b. If not, do you feel that conversation would have benefited your tutorials?

9. Do you feel that participating in this study will have any long-term implications on you?
APPENDIX 1

FINAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TUTORS

1. How did you feel attending tutorials at the Writing Center helped (insert name of student) improve the papers he/she brought to the tutorials?

2. How did you feel attending tutorials at the Writing Center helped (insert name of student) improve as a writer?
   a. What was most successful for his/her overall development as a writer (please explain)?

3. Do you feel that your tutorials were, on the whole, successful? Why or why not?

4. What did you typically work on in your tutorials?

5. How would you describe your relationship with your student?
   a. Who do you feel controlled or guided what was worked on in the tutorials?
   b. After each tutorial, who did you feel “owned” the papers you worked on – you, the student, or both?

6. Did you ever discuss your student’s educational or socio-cultural background with him/her?
   a. If so, how did that affect your relationship with the student?
   b. If not, do you feel that conversation would have benefited your tutorials?

7. Did you feel that your tutorials with (insert name of student) reflected your philosophy as a tutor (please explain)?

8. Do you have any additional comments, questions, or concerns about working with your student?
APPENDIX J

ELECTRONIC POST-STUDY EMAIL AND SURVEY WITH RESPONSES FROM THREE STUDENTS

[Body of email]

Dear (insert student's name):

Thank you for participating in my study. I appreciate that time that you committed to attending writing tutorials and participating in several interviews. I have attached a survey to this email that is the final part of my data collection. Please take a few minutes and respond to the questions in the attachment. You can type directly into the Word document and then email your answers back to me as an attachment or you can copy the questions and your answers into the body of an email. If you have any trouble with downloading or responding to the attachment, please notify me as soon as possible by email (rebenack.2@osu.edu) or phone (614.378.9644).

Again, thank you for time!

Sincerely – Eve Rebennack

PS – I will send another email to debrief you about the study in late June.

[Attachment]

1. Do you still attend tutorials at the Writing Center?

   - **Mani:** Yes
   - **Sandra:** Yes, I still attend tutorials at the Writing Center surprisingly I have an appointment tomorrow.
   - **Marshall:** Yes

   a. If so, how often (weekly, once or twice per quarter, etc.)? Which tutor(s) do you work with?
• **Mani:** It depends on the schedule or nature of papers I have to do. If it is quite important, I try to go once a week until it is done. I basically work with any tutors.

• **Sandra:** I usually attend the Writing Center when I have writing project this quarter I think I had so far nine or ten appointments. I usually work with [Trenton].

• **Marshall:** Twice, [Trenton], and you
  
b. If not, why not?

• **Not applicable:** this question was not responded to by the three participants who returned the survey.

2. Do you feel that attending tutorials at the Writing Center last quarter has helped you with your writing in this quarter (please explain)?

• **Mani:** I have not had many papers or need to go in Spring quarter for help, so this is not very applicable. All other quarters it has been very helpful.

• **Sandra:** Yes, attending tutorials last quarter helped me in so many ways, for example in my writing I am able to summarize the main idea using short paragraph and write short sentences. I did not see a change in editing my own writing I still have a problem using possessive, plurals (s) and making verb/noun agreement. I think that I need to continue working at the Writing Center because my writing needs improvement.

• **Marshall:** Yes, it smoothed out my paper more.

  a. Do you feel you have been successful with your writing this quarter?

• **Mani:** Yes, but once again I did not have much need for the Writing Center this quarter due to the nature of my classes and assignments.

• **Sandra:** I can't say because I still need improvement in identifying my own mistake in my writing (editing).

• **Marshall:** Yes

  b. Do you feel you've been more confident in your writing this quarter?

• **Mani:** Yes.

• **Sandra:** I think that I always have confidence in my writing even before I started working with the Writing Center but I have difficulty in writing academic paper (essay) because English is my second language. In general, I think I am improving.

• **Marshall:** No
3. How can you tell whether or not your writing has improved since participating in the study?

- **Mani:** I can tell because I myself start to notice various impediments that the tutors point out to me and I am more able to address my writing weaknesses.
- **Sandra:** Well, I think that my writing is going in the process of improvement because I try to write my essay using short sentences. In my previous paper (Spring quarter) my tutor hardly found fragment sentences.
- **Marshall:** I guess I understand more what the professor is asking me to do.

a. What measures do you use to judge improvement in your writing?

- **Mani:** I check to see how verbose I am (I am usually quite wordy), whether or not my essay answers the prompt given to me, and how creative it is.
- **Sandra:** How many mistake I made in my writing when my tutor corrects my paper.
- **Marshall:** My writing style

4. What is your current opinion about writing, in general?

- **Mani:** I believe it is a very useful tool for communication.
- **Sandra:** My opinion about writing in general is that writing for different subject requires a different approach. For example, last quarter I wrote a philosophy paper and it is totally different from writing an English paper using an MLA format. My philosophy paper requires me to focus on summarizing a story using my interpretation and needs to be very clear in terms of the idea and clarity understood by the reader. On the other hand, my English paper focuses on developing and evolving the thesis.
- **Marshall:** It's super sweet

a. Has your opinion about writing changed since ending the study (please explain)?

- **Mani:** Not too much, only because I have been in the states for basically my whole life, so I am too affected by a language barrier.
- **Sandra:** No, I don't think my opinion about writing changed because in order to change my opinion I need to see improvement in my writing, in terms of editing my own paper.
- **Marshall:** No, it's such a great help my opinion has been very positive towards it.
5. Have you felt any long-term implications from participating in the study?

- **Mani:** It has helped me basically address more in depth my writing weaknesses.
- **Sandra:** No
- **Marshall:** Yes

6. Do you have any additional comments about attending writing tutorials or participating in the study?

- **Mani:** I really enjoy going to the writing center to receive help because the tutors are friendly and very knowledgeable. The study was very interesting, and I look forward to seeing the results.
- **Sandra:** No
- **Marshall:** Thanks for allowing me to participate, hope everything goes well
APPENDIX K

BLANK CLIENT SIGN-IN FORM

Client Information

Name: ___________________________ E-mail: ___________________________ Street Address: ___________________________

City: ___________________________ State: Ohio ___________________________ Zip: ___________________________

Phone number #1: ___________________________ Phone number #2: ___________________________

Quarter/Year: Autumn 2001

Please tell us about yourself:

Have you been to the Writing Center before? Yes ☐ No ☐

What is your native language? ___________________________

What is your rank at or relationship with OSU? Fr ☐ So ☐ Jr ☐ Sr ☐ Master's ☐ Ph.D. ☐ Faculty ☐ Staff ☐ Other (Please specify) ___________________________

What college are you enrolled in? ___________________________

What major have you declared? ___________________________

The following information is optional but is used for budget and funding purposes:
Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?

- [ ] Asian/Pacific Islander
- [ ] African
- [ ] African-American
- [ ] Caucasian (white)
- [ ] Hispanic
- [ ] Middle Eastern
- [ ] Native-American
- [ ] Other

Age: [ ] Under 17
[ ] 17-25
[ ] 26-35
[ ] 36-50
[ ] Over 50

Gender: [ ] Male
[ ] Female

Do you have a diagnosed learning disability? [ ] Yes
[ ] No

**Session Priorities**

Are you requesting help for a specific course? [ ] Yes
[ ] No

If "yes", what course is it?

What kind of assignment or project are you working on? (e.g., term paper, book review, resume, personal statement, letter)

In order to focus your tutoring session and get the most out of your time, please take a few minutes to think about the kinds of questions you have about your work. In the space below, please write a brief description of your concerns.

Some frequently asked questions are

- How do I begin? What is the prompt asking me to do?
- Do I have a thesis (main idea) and do I stick to it? Do I support my thesis?
- Does my first paragraph prepare my reader for the rest of the paper? How are my paragraphs organized and are they arranged in a logical order? Have I tied my ideas together?
- What's the last thing I want my reader to know?
- Does my paper make sense? Do you understand what I am saying?
- How do I use MLA, APA, Chicago, etc., style?
Most instructors are encouraged by your visit to The Writing Center and your interest in improving your writing. Would you like us to send a letter to your instructor to let him/her know of your visit? □ Yes □ No

If "yes", please fill out the following information:

Instructor's name: ____________________________  Department: ____________________________

E-mail address: ____________________________
APPENDIX L

BLANK CLIENT EVALUATION FORM

Writing Center Evaluation
Spring 2005

Tutor’s name: ____________________________

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation. Your responses help us continue improving our services.

1. What is your rank at OSU?
   □ a) freshman □ b) sophomore □ c) junior □ d) senior □ e) master’s
   □ f) doctorate □ g) faculty □ h) staff □ i) non-OSU (please list)

2. Is English your native language? □ a) yes □ b) no

3. How did you hear about the Writing Center?
   □ a) my professor/TA recommended I visit
   □ b) my class attended an information session at the Writing Center
   □ c) a friend/classmate recommended the Writing Center
   □ d) I saw an advertisement
   □ e) I found the Writing Center on the web
   □ f) my parents suggested it
   □ g) other (please list) ____________________________

4. Is this your first visit to the Writing Center this quarter? □ a) yes □ b) no

Continued on back

5. I had no trouble scheduling my appointment. Strongly
   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5
   Neutral
   Strongly
   Agree 3 4 5

6. The tutors and staff were friendly.
   1 2 3 4 5

7. Overall, I felt comfortable in the Writing Center
   1 2 3 4 5

8. The advice I received will help me improve my paper.
   1 2 3 4 5

9. The advice I received will help me improve as a writer on future assignments.
   1 2 3 4 5

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10. My tutor was interested in hearing my writing concerns.  1 2 3 4 5
11. I felt comfortable asking questions during my tutorial.  1 2 3 4 5
12. I felt comfortable stating my opinions during my tutorial.  1 2 3 4 5
13. My tutor explained things clearly.  1 2 3 4 5
14. I would work with the same tutor again.  1 2 3 4 5
15. I will use the Writing Center again.  1 2 3 4 5

Comments?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Optional: If you would be willing to answer some more in-depth questions about your experience here, please write your name and e-mail address below. Your personal information will be removed before your tutor sees your responses on this form.

Name ___________________________ E-mail ___________________________

Thank you!
REFERENCES


