

Surfacing Teacher and Student Voices: The Implications of Teaching Practices for
Student Attitudes Toward Revision

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This dissertation titled
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ABSTRACT

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Research in revision has failed to capture the impact of instructors' teaching practices on students' perceptions of revision. This dissertation addresses the current gap in revision research by privileging students' and teachers' voices. Three first-year writing classes and their instructors participated in this study. The following kinds of data were collected from students and teachers: student surveys at the beginning and end of the class; first and final drafts for each major essay; interviews with six students from the classes; surveys completed by instructors at the end of the class; instructors' course materials; and interviews with each instructor.

Analysis of the data revealed that teaching practices influence students' perspectives about revising and whether or not they value it. Four specific practices were found to be effective in helping students to value revision: first, the use of student texts in modeling how to give effective feedback; second, beginning the course with a focus on global, not local, issues in writing; third, continuing that focus on global issues by implementing activities focusing on collaborative learning and writing; and fourth, a workshop-centered classroom that further enhances students' focus on global writing issues. Many students in classes that implemented these practices appear to have learned the following: a) to value their peers' feedback as a critical element of revising; b) to see

revision as a key element in helping them not only to improve a particular assignment but, most importantly, in helping them to grow as writers; c) to develop personal agency as writers. The study ends with recommendations for teachers and implications for future research.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Most university English departments feature a bookshelf where they keep the books instructors may use for freshman composition courses. Some of these books are part of a recommended or required list, while other books may be there for reference use. If you were to peruse these books, you would find that the majority of them contain at least some information on revision. Indeed, revision has become such a commonplace in composition studies that to publish a writing textbook *without* a section on revision might seem strange or unusual.

During the writing of this dissertation, I decided to visit the bookshelf in my own university's English department in order to discover how the composition textbooks we use discuss revision. In my perusal of the bookshelf, I found that almost all of the books featured revision in some way. Table 1.1 presents a few examples of my findings; the books in the table are in alphabetical order by title and were chosen randomly. Most of these are texts used with some frequency in the composition courses taught at this university.

Table 1.1

Summary of Revision in Sample College Composition Textbooks

Title of Book	Authors	Edition; Publication Date	Discussion of Revision
<i>The Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing, Concise Edition</i>	John D. Ramage, John C. Bean, June Johnson	5 th Ed; 2009	Part 3, “A Guide to Composing and Revising,” is a fairly extensive discussion of strategies for revision (271-327)
<i>Fieldworking: Reading and Writing Research</i>	Bonnie Stone Sunstein, Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater	3 rd Ed; 2007	Chapter 8, “Fieldwriting: From Down Draft to Up Draft,” features both scholarly essays and exercises for helping students compose and revise their work (419-470)
<i>Fresh Takes: Explorations in Reading and Writing</i>	Wayne Stein, Deborah Israel, Pam Washington	2008	Chapter 2, “How to Become a Better Writer,” devotes sections of the chapter to both peer review (76-93) and revising (38-76)
<i>On Writing: A Process Reader</i>	Wendy Bishop	2004	Chapter 4, 5, and 6 focus on as discovery. Chapter 6 focuses on “Drafting, Responding, and Revising” (312-397)
<i>Rewriting: How to Do Things with Texts</i>	Joseph Harris	2006	Chapter 5 focuses specifically on “Revising,” and includes both writing on revision as well as projects to help students develop revising strategies (98-123)
<i>The World is a Text: Writing, Readings, and Thinking about Visual and Popular Culture</i>	Jonathan Silverman, Dean Rader	3 rd Ed; 2009	In Part Three of the Introduction, called “How Do I Write about Popular and Visual Texts? A Tour through the Writing Process,” there are two pages devoted specifically to revision (40-41)
<i>Writing About Literature: A Portable Guide</i>	Janet E. Gardner	2 nd , 2009	Chapter 2 of this book is devoted to “The Writing Process,” and includes sections on both “Drafting, Revising, and Editing” (22-28) and “Peer Editing and Workshops” (28-31).

This brief overview of current textbooks reveals that revision is frequently a part of composition textbooks in some way. All of these texts are fairly recent publications within the past five years, with the exception of Bishop's *On Writing*, which remains a popular textbook in this department. All of these texts also include some discussion of revision. Four out of the seven texts feature either an entire section, or at least a chapter, devoted to revision. Three of the seven texts feature parts of chapters that focus specifically on revision.

This small investigation into the composition textbooks on my own department's bookshelf demonstrates the extent to which revision is a part of how instructors are expected to teach writing. Enough textbooks now include a section on revising, making it fairly easy for instructors to include it in their curriculum. However, what these textbooks say about revision is important as well; these descriptions of revision highlight what composition textbooks *value* with regards to revision:

Bishop's *On Writing*: "It should come as no surprise then to realize that to journey from ideas to final written products, writers plan, practice, try and try again. They draft, gather responses from readers, and revise." (312)

Gardner's *Writing About Literature*: "Most successful writers will tell you that it is in the revision stage that the real work gets done, where the writing takes shape and begins to emerge in its final form. Don't skimp on this part of the process or try to race through it." (24)

Harris' *Rewriting*: "*Revising* is thus a particular form of what throughout this book I've called *rewriting*: it names the work of returning to a draft of

a text you've written in order to make your thinking in it more nuanced, precise, suggestive, and interesting." (98)

Ramage, Bean, and Johnson's *Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing*: "In the early stages of writing, experienced writers typically discover what they are trying to say, often deepening and complicating their ideas rather than clarifying them. Only in the last drafts will such writers be in sufficient control of their ideas to shape them elegantly for readers." (272)

These sample descriptions of revision exemplify several of the revision concepts that are currently held as commonplaces in composition pedagogy. One is the idea that revision leads to better, more interesting, more complicated written texts. These texts also suggest that revision is something that "experienced" or "successful" writers do, but that it is difficult to do well. Most importantly, all of these discussions of revision tell students that in order to be successful writers in their freshman composition courses, they need to learn how to revise. Sometimes the textbooks feature sample student drafts that demonstrate the changes students make between essay drafts, sometimes they feature exercises to help the students revise their own work, and sometimes the textbooks feature only a description of what revision is, without concrete examples of how to do it.

This dissertation attempts to address revision by examining how instructors and students practice it from within the classroom. It explores the aspects of the composition curriculum that are seen as vital to teaching students how to practice effective revision, such as specific teaching practices, peer feedback, and instructor feedback. With these elements in mind, this dissertation attempts to understand how students' revising

strategies are impacted by their instructors' teaching practices. Based on three case studies of three different first-year composition classes, in which I draw from a wide variety of data, as well as a review of textbooks and the literature in the field, this dissertation examines the following questions.

- How do instructors' teaching practices influence students' revising strategies? And, how do these strategies change from the beginning of the quarter to the end?
- How do students and instructors perceive peer feedback as a part of revision?
- How do students and instructors perceive instructor feedback, at any stage in composing, as a part of revision?

History of Revision in Composition Studies

Although inspired by my own interest in the way revision is currently taught in composition classrooms, the above research questions also have their basis in the trajectory of the study and teaching of revision in composition studies. Because the debate over process pedagogy has become largely resolved,¹ revision itself has an assumed value in composition theory. At this point in time, the teaching of revision is a

¹ While the idea of "writing as process" has been debated, as seen in the work of scholars such as Kenneth Bruffee, Sharon Crowley, and Thomas Kent, the idea that writing itself is process is generally considered a commonplace in composition theory. The issue that arises is whether writing is a linear or recursive process, or if writing should simply be defined as process itself. However, it is important to note that some instructors still teach writing as a linear, non-recursive act, and emphasize product over process. The distinction between revision theory, where process is typically valued over product, and revision pedagogy, where what is valued may still be up for debate, does exist.

requirement in some form in most composition courses: process pedagogy has inculcated us to embrace revision's value as a component of composing. Instructors teach it because they assume revision is a necessary aspect of students developing as writers; however, as this dissertation explores, the extent to which instructors enact revision teaching practices, and the extent to which students perceive learning revision strategies as a necessary component of writing, depends upon an instructor's teaching practices. This dissertation extends the current literature by juxtaposing student and instructor voices as a means to understand how instructors teach revision, and the impact these teaching practices have on student perceptions and practices of revision.

The current beliefs about revision – that it is something experienced writers always do, that it is difficult to teach, that with a little work, anyone can learn to revise, and that it is an essential component of composition pedagogy – have their origins in expressivist rhetorical theory. In order to understand how revision theory and pedagogy culminates in the descriptions from the above textbooks, it is important to see the evolution of the current beliefs about revision through a rhetorical lens.

This discussion of the connections between current trends in revision pedagogy and theory and expressivist pedagogy and theory is framed within the idea that expressivism is a term that was not coined by the “expressivists” themselves; rather, others in the field of composition studies (primarily Berlin, who the following discussion draws from) gave to them. Also, while Berlin's reading of expressivism has been greatly criticized within the field, it does create a category of research and theory that can be useful. In the context of this dissertation, Berlin's discussion of expressivism helped me

identify commonalities between previous trends in composition pedagogy and current trends in revision pedagogy. This in turn demonstrates the importance of continuing research in the field of revision; although revision pedagogy is not limited to expressivist pedagogy and theory, the connections between the two exemplify how concepts and practices we currently associate with revision pedagogy have been a part of the field for much longer than we might have anticipated.

Ideas that we associate with revision – that revision is difficult but important to teach, that it asks writers to re-see their perspectives on a topic, and that writers who revise should privilege process over product – are ideas that are originally associated with both the first and second expressivist movements in rhetoric. Out of early expressivist rhetoric, several ideas emerge that are vital to understanding the teaching of revision, as they are points that the later revision scholars will continue to develop. According to James Berlin, expressivist rhetoric emerged in the 1910s and 1920s, when scholars argued for a connection between good writing and “the cultivation of the self” (*Rhetoric* 73). Berlin is careful to delineate expressivist rhetoric from Romanticism; although both privilege the self, Berlin explains that expressivist rhetoric has its origins “in the postwar [World War I], Freudian-inspired, expressionistic notions of childhood education that the progressives attempted to propagate” (73). Expressivist rhetoricians, then, believed that education should focus on the cultivation of the ego (or self), and that “each individual has uniquely creative potentialities” that teachers should help students develop (73). Thus the focus of the 1920s expressivist rhetoric was on the “individual transformation” (74) of students, on the idea that writing was art, and that “creativity in the writing classroom”

(74) could help a student to develop in what Lawrence Cremin called “socially useful channels” (209) that would enable the student to become more successful both in and outside of the classroom.

The first idea important to revision out of expressivist rhetoric is the idea that all writing is art. Therefore, because writing is art, it “can be learned but not taught” (Berlin *Rhetoric* 74). Therefore, teachers cannot “teach” writing to students, but instead provide an atmosphere in which students can develop their “private and personal vision[s]” into “normal, everyday language” (74). This transference of the private into the public helps the student delve into the unconscious; Berlin argues that expressivists believe this to be a “creative process [that] is organic, representing the merger of form and content” (75) that again, cannot be taught, but must be encouraged.

The next important idea to emerge out of the 1920s expressivistic rhetoric is especially important to revision literature and pedagogy: during this time period the argument for “process” over “product” appears (75). Berlin cites a number of examples, including Charles G. Osgood’s “Humanism and the Teaching of English.” In this article, Osgood advocates for the importance of creativity in composition. He writes:

My whole contention would be that our teaching of English today errs in, and suffers from, a mismanagement, or maladjustment, or distortion, of these two elements of expression – inspiration and technical criticism. We neglect the first, we set all store by the second.... We seek perfection in mere apparatus and in practice in manipulating it. (160)

Here Osgood makes clear one of the main arguments for privileging process over product. He argues that the state of teaching English is too focused on “technical criticism” and “perfection,” or in the resulting product of a written text. He instead advocates for more focus on “inspiration,” and claims that teachers should strive to encourage students to reach a “balance” (161) between the two so that students are taught to “see, think, [and] hear clearly” just as much as they are taught “clearness, force, [and] correctness” (161). The process by which students arrive at clarity is thus equally important to the clarity itself.

Finally, although the expressivists argued that writing is art, and that it can be learned but not taught, they also believed that all students were capable of learning to write. Berlin cites scholars like Oakley Calvin Johnson, who believed that “teachers must themselves be writers” and teach by model, helping students to “master tools and techniques” in order to learn to properly express themselves (76). Berlin also references a popular textbook of the time, Adele Bildersee’s *Imaginative Writing*, which incorporated the work of essayists, poets, and fiction writers in order to demonstrate different methods of composing for students. Berlin argues that Bildersee “felt that while writing is indeed an art, it is one that all can learn. It is within the reach of every student, with the necessary caveat that the student be prepared to work” (76). Berlin’s discussion of Bildersee’s textbook and her philosophy behind it suggest that expressivists did believe that despite writing’s artistic nature, with a little work, students would be able to produce good writing.

The later expressivist movement of the 1960s and 1970s in rhetoric extended the ideas of the expressivists of the 1910s and 1920s. Berlin explains that the later expressivists embraced the idea of writing as art, “the original expression of a unique vision” (*Rhetoric* 147) which emerged as the idea of “writing as self-expression” (149). Based on this idea, expressivist scholars such as Ken Macrorie, Peter Elbow, and Donald Murray advocated for similar concepts in writing as the early expressivists, such as writing for individual transformation, writing as an art that anyone can do, and privileging the process of writing over the produced written text. These encouraged inexperienced writers to write in order to discover their topics, as opposed to writing with a topic of focus already in mind. These concepts could easily be applied to revision scholarship, as scholars concentrating on that field (such as Donald Murray) also focused on similar issues in composition theory and pedagogy.

Like early expressivist scholars, the expressivist scholars of the 1960s and 1970s defined writing as based in the personal, or in the unconscious. The subheading of the introduction to Ken Macrorie’s *Telling Writing* is “The Unconscious in Writing;” like Osgood almost fifty years earlier, he argues in this section that English teachers only “set the conscious to work and [have] ignored the unconscious” (1). In *Write to Learn*, Donald Murray extends this idea by suggesting that writers’ “writing will instruct [them]” (1). Elbow further adds to the idea of writing as discovering the power of the unconscious in *Writing with Power*; he advocates for freewriting as a way to help writers “think of topics to write about” and adds that if writers “keep writing [and] follow threads where they lead,” writers “will get to the ideas, experience, feelings, or people that are just

asking to be written about” (15). Both Murray and Elbow discuss the importance of writing as discovery; this concept continues today beyond “expressivist” practices in teaching to also include the idea of revision as recursive.

The scholars of the 1960s and 1970s were also interested in writing as a process, as opposed to writing in order to develop a final, error-free product. This is again evocative of the work of earlier scholars, such as Osgood, who argued that teachers spend too much time on correctness and not enough time on inspiration. In *Telling Writing*, Ken Macrorie defines composing as “more of a coming-to than a putting-together” (1). He adds:

When we write we have an idea of where we’d like our meaning to go, but we don’t know what words or sentences will take us and our readers there. If we’re traveling well, we don’t know all the things or people we’re going to run into on the way, what we’ll pick up, what we’ll learn – and especially, what events, sights, or insights will sneak up on us. (1)

This definition of composing focuses more on the process of composing by creating the metaphor of a journey. In the above description of writing, Macrorie sees it as a process that begins with “an idea of where we’d like our meaning to go,” and that incorporates experiences and ideas as the journey progresses (1). In *Writing With Power*, Elbow adds that creativity is vital to the writing process, and like Osgood, asks his audience to learn to separate creativity and critical thinking (8).

These scholars’ statements on process over product are in turn reminiscent of the privileging of process in more current textbooks. For example, Ramage, Bean, and

Johnson's description of revision in *The Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing* focuses on revision as discovery, a "deepening" and "complicating" of ideas, as opposed to fixing or cleaning up grammatical errors (272).

Finally, these scholars also embrace the idea that although writing is an art that can be learned, and not taught, everybody can learn to write. Peter Elbow's ideas on this subject are the most popular, and are also reminiscent of the ideas of earlier scholars such as Adele Bildersee, who also believed that anyone could learn to write. In the introduction to the second edition of *Writing Without Teachers*, Elbow writes that "everyone in the world wants to write," but that people often "had bad experiences writing, so they seldom talk[ed] about their dream" (xi). *Writing Without Teachers*, along with Elbow's later text *Writing With Power*, is a text designed to help anyone who wants to learn how to write. In the Preface to *Writing Without Teachers*, which advocates for the possibility of a teacherless writing class where students learn from each other, Elbow makes clear the distinction between teaching and learning:

The teacherless writing class is a place where there is learning but no teaching. It is possible to learn something and not be taught. It is possible to be a student and not have a teacher. If the student's function is to learn and the teacher's to teach, then the student can function without a teacher, but the teacher cannot function without a student...I think teachers learn to be more *useful* when it is clearer that they are not *necessary*. (vii)

Elbow's statement in the Preface of *Writing Without Teachers* makes clear both Elbow's philosophy and goal for the text: that anyone can learn to write and that teachers are not

necessary in order to learn writing. Both *Writing Without Teachers* and *Writing with Power* are texts that provide exercises and advice that could potentially enable anyone to learn to write – still with Bildersee’s caveat of hard work.

This brief history of expressivist rhetoric brings us to the current theories of revision. Current trends in revision pedagogy extend the ideas of privileging process over product, that anyone can learn to revise, and that revision depends on writers’ abilities to develop ideas that may originate in their personal thoughts into a final reader-based product. These ideas will be explored through this dissertation, especially by surfacing the impact teaching practices have on students’ perceptions and practices of revision. Two of the three assumptions about revision discussed in this dissertation also have their origins in expressivist rhetoric: first, that revision leads to better written texts, and second, that peer feedback is a necessary vehicle to enacting good writing and revising practices and producing good written texts.²

This second assumption, that peer feedback is a necessary vehicle for effective revision, has a long history within composition studies. Peer feedback is often considered a vital part of the composing process; most textbooks also include information on peer review, and most composition classes feature a peer feedback component. In fact, for freshmen composition courses at the midsize Midwestern university where I teach, and where this dissertation study takes place, one of the rhetorical competencies students

² The third assumption, that instructor feedback is a necessary vehicle to enacting good revising practices and producing good written texts, stems from the more traditional understanding that the instructor is the authority in the classroom, and as such, is the sole provider of quality feedback for students. This will be discussed in more detail in the literature review.

must fulfill is “Respond to and assess student writing rhetorically.” This includes objectives such as:

- Learn to develop their own ideas in relation to the ideas of others.
- Identify and understand their peers' rhetorical purposes, audiences, and situations and the relationship among these throughout the drafting and revision process. (*First-Year English Rhetorical Competencies*.)

The importance of peer feedback in freshman composition courses begs the examination of the history of peer feedback in composition studies. By surfacing the important issues that arise with regards to peer feedback over time, we can begin to understand why this university values peer feedback so highly, and how this translates to instructors’ teaching practices and students’ perceptions of the value of peer feedback to revision.

The history of peer feedback is rich and detailed and demonstrates many of the tenets of peer feedback that are still held by scholars and instructors today. In *Writing Groups: History, Theory, and Implications*, Anne Ruggles Gere locates the origins of the first writing groups as student-organized groups forming as early as 1719 at Harvard (10). These writing groups were considered literary societies; by the late 19th century, peer discussion of student texts was happening in composition classrooms (16). In 1902, Robert G. Valentine discusses a method whereby students take home each other’s papers, comment on them “in red ink,” and then meet with the writer and the teacher to go over the comments (459). This is similar to current practices, where instructors may ask students to take their peers’ work home, read it, and prepare a response for class or for a

small group workshop. The value ascribed to students having the opportunity to read peer essays before giving feedback has been in place for over one hundred years and demonstrates that this practice is still viewed as important.

The importance of social interaction to revision has also been a focus of research with regard to the literature on peer review. A 1919 article by C.J. Thompson called “A Study of the Socialized Versus the Academic Method of Teaching Written Composition” argues that a student who wrote according to the socialized method wrote from a perspective of a “social problem of communicating his thoughts and feelings to his audience” (112). Thompson finds that overall, students writing according to the socialized method wrote with a “greater degree of general excellence,” with “fewer mechanical errors” (114) and improved their writing abilities more quickly than students taught according to the academic method (115). Although Thompson’s research focuses on a high school class, his findings can be applied to composition courses as well.³ In some composition courses, instructors may ascribe to the importance of a social approach to revision; however, the extent to which their students also adopt this perspective is dependent upon the approach instructors take in encouraging social interaction among their students.

As is shown in the above two examples, peer feedback and collaborative learning have been a part of composition studies since the field’s inception. Although peer feedback and collaborative learning have an extensive history within the field, the most significant time period associated with collaborative learning in composition studies

³ For more on the history of writing groups in academia, see Gere, *Writing Groups: History, Theory, and Implications* (1987).

begins in the 1960s with M. L. J. Abercrombie's text *The Anatomy of Judgment*.

Abercrombie, a zoology and medical teacher, offers an alternative approach to involving medical students in diagnosing patients. Instead of asking them to diagnose patients individually, she asks the students to collaborate on diagnoses. As a result, the students become better at diagnosing and learn from each other in the process.

According to Abercrombie, her reason for using this approach to teach medicine originates in a distinction she makes between collaborative and traditional forms of teaching. In traditional teaching, Abercrombie argues: "The student makes an observation, and finds it to be correct or incorrect by comparison with the teacher's (or the currently accepted) version" (17). She claims that this approach to teaching enables students to memorize great amounts of information, but does not help them develop as problem solvers and critical thinkers, both important abilities in science (15). Abercrombie experiments in having students discuss diagnoses in small groups in order to improve their observation and critical thinking skills; she hypothesizes:

We may learn to make better judgments if we can become aware of some of the factors that influence their formation. We may then be in a position to consider alternative judgments and to choose from among many instead of blindly and automatically accepting the first that comes; in other words, we may become more receptive, or mentally more flexible. (17)

Abercrombie's hypothesis that collaboration yields agency is vital to this study, as two of my research questions explore the extent to which students see instructor and peer feedback as parts of the revising process. One hope might be that students could gain

agency from having a stake in the feedback process; through an analysis of case studies and the research questions, dissertation demonstrates the extent to which this does, in fact, occur.

Many of Abercrombie's approaches in *The Anatomy of Judgment* are important elements of peer review in composition classes today. Abercrombie advocates that students take responsibility for the work of collaboration (71), that instructors take "the role of listener" (75), and that teachers "encourage transfer of training" (78) from themselves to the students. These aspects of peer review clearly relate to the work of composition theorists such as Peter Elbow and Kenneth Bruffee, as well as to some current trends in composition instruction.

I have already discussed Peter Elbow's text *Writing without Teachers* because of Elbow's argument that, with a little work, anyone can write. Elbow also advocates in this text for the importance of feedback in composing. This book offers extensive advice for those interested in participating in writing groups, with the goal that writers learn how to give and take constructive feedback, and more importantly, learn how to take agency over their own writing. Elbow extends Abercrombie's idea of teachers learning to take listening roles by applying that role to writers. He advises writers to "be quiet and listen" (101), to "try to understand HOW [people] tell [feedback] to you (102)," and not to "reject what readers tell you" (102). Finally, he urges writers to not be "tyrannized" by reader's comments (104), and that while readers can experience a writer's text in a variety of ways, the writer is ultimately the one who makes the decisions (106). This is a further example of peer feedback as a means to gain ownership over one's writing.

Abercrombie's work establishes the theoretical framework for current trends in collaborative pedagogy in composition studies; Elbow offers a practical application of that theory. The work of Kenneth A. Bruffee brings collaboration into an institutional context, and more importantly, into writing, as he discusses the importance of collaboration for instructors and students with regards to institutional politics.

Bruffee's extensive scholarship on collaborative learning extends the work of scholars like Abercrombie and Elbow. As early as 1972, Bruffee echoes Abercrombie's hypothesis that collaboration aids students' abilities to develop as critical thinkers. In "The Way Out," Bruffee argues that classroom learning, rooted in the traditional notion of individual student-teacher hierarchal relationships, has "become 'irrelevant'" (462). Instead he suggests that instructors capitalize on the collaborative work happening outside the classroom in avenues such as student activism and bring it into the composition classroom ("Collaborative Learning Practical" 635). The social connections students are learning outside the classroom, Bruffee argues, can be effectively applied within the classroom, especially because "writing of all kinds is internalized social talk made public and social again" ("Collaborative Learning and the 'Conversation'" 641). If writing is the private made public, then according to Bruffee, it is logical to capitalize on the relationship between writing and social acts in the composition classroom.

Bruffee's text *Collaborative Learning: Higher Education, Interdependence, and the Authority of Knowledge*, originally published in 1993, invites the reader to reimagine the university classroom as a collaborative one where students become "interdependent" and "knowledge builders" (xiii). In the Preface to the second edition, Bruffee argues:

With collaborative learning, [students] learn to construct knowledge as it is constructed in the knowledge communities they hope to join after attending colleges and universities...they learn to depend on one another rather than depending exclusively on the authority of experts and teachers. Most important, in collaborative learning students learn the craft of interdependence. (xiii)

Bruffee's argument through this text is for the importance of student interdependence. As Bruffee points out in the above passage, collaborative learning allows students to build knowledge in similar ways to how they will continue to build knowledge when they enter into the fields of their choice, both within and beyond the academy.

The theories of collaborative learning – that it invites interdependence between students, that it improves students' critical thinking skills, and that it grants students agency over their own writing – are vital to the framework of this study. Collaborative learning is a key element of the teaching practices discussed in this study; the implementation of collaborative learning by the instructors, largely through peer workshops, impacted the students' perceptions and practices of revision.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

In order to address the research questions for this study, I rely on both qualitative and quantitative data. The research questions for this dissertation are as follows:

- How do instructors' teaching practices influence students' revising strategies? And, how do they change from the beginning of the quarter to the end?
- How do students and instructors perceive peer feedback as a part of revision?
- How do students and instructors perceive instructor feedback, at any stage in composing, as a part of revision?

The data for this study is framed within a feminist approach to research. Looking at the qualitative data through a feminist lens allows me to surface instructor and student voices, which have been largely ignored in revision research.

Qualitative Research as a Means to Listen to Teacher and Student Voices

Qualitative research designs match well with composition research because empirical researchers in composition studies investigate how individuals (especially students) write, how that writing develops, and how research findings apply to pedagogy. This dissertation relies on a triangulation of data based on a variety of qualitative data from materials collected. It also draws on quantitative data drawn from materials collected. The research investigates how instructors teach revision to first-year composition students, and the impact of those teaching practices on the students' perceptions of revision. It also investigates how the students' revision strategies develop over the progress of one term, and the perceptions of the teachers of their students'

development. Finally, it considers the implications of the findings of this study on composition pedagogy.

In their book, *Composition Research: Empirical Designs*, Janice M. Lauer and J. William Asher argue that qualitative researchers in composition “tr[y] to discover variables that seem important for understanding the nature of writing, its contexts, its development, and its successful pedagogy” (23). Qualitative research also allows the researcher to look at participants in natural contexts. This dissertation studies students and instructors in actual classroom environments. The materials are derived from class work, and the data used in this study reflects the work done by students and instructors in their classrooms. Using actual class environments helps deepen our understanding of how real teachers’ practices influence students’ revising strategies over time.

For this dissertation, I have chosen to use a combination of quantitative and qualitative research. Specifically, this dissertation uses case studies and quantitative data derived from surveys and sampling. According to Lauer and Asher, a case study is an example of qualitative descriptive research, which “closely stud[ies] individuals, small groups, or whole environments” in order to “help the researcher to identify new variables and questions for further research” (23). Hayes et. al. write that descriptive studies “are designed to answer more open-ended, exploratory questions” (17). A case study is especially well-suited to the type of qualitative research I desired to conduct. Thomas Newkirk points out that a case study can be a place to make invisible voices visible (“Narrative Roots” 144). Given my desire to apply a feminist lens to qualitative research

on revision by surfacing largely ignored teacher and student voices⁴, a case study approach allows me to achieve this goal.

This dissertation also matches well with the intentions of qualitative research. According to Joseph A. Maxwell in *Qualitative Research Design*, there are five categories of research purposes for qualitative studies. These purposes help a researcher determine if qualitative research is the right approach for a study. The purposes behind this dissertation correspond with all five categories, and demonstrate the importance of conducting this study as qualitative research.

The first category Maxwell discusses is “understanding the *meaning*, for the participants in the study, of the events, situations, and actions they are involved with and of the accounts that they give of their lives and experiences” (Maxwell 17). In this dissertation, I am interested in not only understanding how students revise, but in discovering the reasons behind students’ revision strategies, and how those strategies relate to what the students experienced in their composition classes. I am also interested in understanding how the instructors interpret the data, and why.

According to Maxwell, not only are qualitative researchers interested in understanding how participants discuss meaning, but they are also interested in “understanding the particular *context* within which the participants act, and the influence that this context has on their actions” (17). The context of the writing classroom, and how the instructor’s teaching practices impact students’ revising strategies, is the core of this dissertation. Understanding how each classroom functions, and how the students respond

⁴ The following section on laying a feminist lens over qualitative research explains this in greater detail.

to the teaching practices and curriculum of their classroom, is vital to answering my research questions.

In addition to focusing on the meaning and context for participants, qualitative researchers are also interested in “understanding the *process* by which events and actions take place” (19). An important aspect of this dissertation is to gain a deeper understanding of student writing and revising practices. As such, I believed it was not enough to analyze the changes that took place in the student essays, or in the introductory and concluding essays. Maxwell adds that an advantage of qualitative research is that it can get at the “processes that led to [the outcomes of the study], processes that experimental and survey research are often poor at identifying” (20). The student and instructor interviews in the study provide an opportunity to understand “the *process* by which” writing and revising take place in the composition classroom (20). The data collected from surveys and an analysis of essays serve an important purpose as well. The quantitative data from the surveys, combined with the student voices derived from the short-answer questions on the survey, help give a fuller portrait of each class. The student essays add to this portrait by showing the extent to which the students perform the revising practices they claim to employ in the surveys and student interviews.

Finally, according to Maxwell, qualitative researchers must be prepared to “identify *unanticipated* phenomena and influences” (20). Because each instructor approaches teaching first-year composition differently, and because each student responds to her first-year writing classroom differently, this dissertation is designed to discover new variables that might be significant in understanding how teaching practices

impact student attitudes toward revising. It is also important to construct possible relationships between these variables. Maxwell explains that “qualitative researchers... tend to ask *how* x plays a role in causing y, what the process is that connects x and y” (2). The research questions guiding this dissertation are intended to help me to explore possible relationships by asking how instructors’ teaching practices play a role in enabling students’ revising attitudes to change (or not change) over time.

In addition to qualitative case studies, this dissertation utilizes quantitative data derived from surveys and sampling. Lauer and Asher state that “*quantitative descriptive* research goes beyond case studies and ethnographies to isolate systematically the most important variables identified by these studies, to define them further, to *quantify* them at least roughly, if not with some accuracy, and to interrelate them” (82). Although Lauer and Asher state that case studies and ethnographies uncover the variables, while quantitative research “quantifies” these variables by assigning value to them, in the case of this dissertation, the quantitative research came first in the form of surveys and random sampling of student essays. This is because the study, following the progression of quantitative to qualitative research, moved from a broader to more in-depth focus; it began by assessing each of the six classes that participated in the study. I then progressed to interviewing select students and instructors based on the results of the quantitative data. Finally, based on the variety of data from three separate classes, I narrowed my focus to those three classes. While the qualitative data allowed me to focus on particular trends in the instructors’ teaching practices, as well as the interview students’ perceptions

of peer and instructor feedback, the quantitative data I obtained from these classes helped to demonstrate the opinions of the classes as a whole.

The use of multiple sources of data, including interviews, surveys, and analysis of essay drafts enables me to strengthen my research by allowing for the triangulation of data. Lauer and Asher define triangulation as a “multiplicity of observations” that believes in “knowledge as a social construction, a collaborative search, interpretation, and reinterpretation of complex acts in context” (40). Lauer and Asher state that researchers triangulate data by “obtaining many perspectives:” they might use “multiple observers,” collect multiple writing samples, conduct interviews with multiple students and instructors, and take a variety of notes (42). Triangulation of data strengthens the validity of one’s research when the varied observations help to surface consistencies and inconsistencies in the study’s findings. For this dissertation, the qualitative data – such as the open-ended questions in the student and instructor surveys and the student and instructor interviews – will help provide a more in-depth understanding of the findings from the quantitative data. The quantitative data – such as the multiple choice questions from the student and instructor surveys and the coding for revision changes in the student essays – will help reaffirm discoveries made through the qualitative data.

As stated earlier, a case study can be a form of research that allows space for previously silenced voices to be heard. This type of study also can match well with some of the concepts in feminist theory. The next section demonstrates how this dissertation applies a feminist lens to qualitative research in order to surface these silenced voices. In the case of this dissertation, those voices belong to students and instructors.

Bringing a Feminist Lens to Qualitative Research

By framing the qualitative data within feminist standpoint theory, this dissertation aims to open a new trajectory for revision scholarship through the privileging of student and instructor voices. Composition studies has utilized feminist theory in research most often to surface the voices of women rhetors who have been left out of the traditional rhetorical canon. Cheryl Glenn's *Rhetorica Retold*, Andrea Lunsford's *Reclaiming Rhetorica*, and Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald's *Available Means* are examples of texts that seek to privilege female voices that have been previously ignored by the canon. Susan Jarratt extends this line of research in *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Refigured* by connecting the absence of women rhetors to the absence of the Sophists in classical rhetoric. In the preface to *Rereading the Sophists*, Jarratt uses the metaphorical cover image of a woman holding a box to show the importance of first, learning how to (re)read a text, and second, to show the idea of a woman conducting feminist research that unearths previously ignored aspects of, in this case, classical rhetoric.

Although this dissertation is focused on pedagogical research, and not historical research, it can still draw from feminist standpoint theory with regards to surfacing marginalized voices. In Sandra Harding's introduction to *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader*, Harding argues that the ideologies behind feminist theory, such as standpoint, can be applied to fields beyond women's studies. According to Harding, standpoint theory allows us to interrogate the power relations at work with regards to knowledge: who has the knowledge, who is denied the knowledge, and why. It also allows us to surface the implications of granting power to those who have historically been denied the

ability to be knowledge-makers. All three instructors that participated in this study are from historically marginalized groups in the field of composition; two instructors are adjuncts, and one is a graduate student. Also, in general, instructors have been a silent group in revision research. By privileging the standpoints, or perspectives, of instructors and students, this dissertation works from a feminist theoretical framework that identifies a new trajectory of revision research.

Feminist standpoint theory also argues for knowledge generated from “particular, historically specific, social locations” (Harding 4). This dissertation applies standpoint theory by studying first-year writing classes and how students write within their classroom context. Pedagogical empirical research in composition studies does not often study students within a classroom context; the literature provides many examples where students are instead expected to perform in artificial environments, such as in Janet Emig’s monograph *The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders*, or where the data is analyzed apart from the classroom, such as John Clifford’s “Composing in Stages: The Effects of a Collaborative Pedagogy.” In contrast, my research asks students and instructors to comment on the data generated from their classrooms, and those comments are presented as part of the case studies.

In most revision literature, knowledge and power are linked through the voice of the researcher-teacher, who controls the knowledge and the power of the research. Teachers have often conducted research in the field, assuming the voice of researcher-teacher – the teacher’s voice thus takes on an added role that may limit the researcher voice’s ability to maintain distance from the data. Although Ruth Ray argues that the

researcher-teacher subject-position can be empowering for teachers and induce change from within the classroom (173), the researcher-teacher is a subject-position riddled with complications. Because the researcher and the teacher are the same person, there is little room for the teacher to reflect on the teaching strategies happening in the classroom and little room for the students' voices. The researcher *must* be the primary voice and the primary disseminator of knowledge and power in order for the research to be taken seriously. Separating the researcher's and teacher's voices in this study allows for different issues to be at stake for both the teacher and myself (the researcher), instead of conflating the issues through the dual subject-position of researcher and teacher.⁵ It also allows me to juxtapose the voices of the students and those of the instructors. Juxtaposing these voices will provide a more faceted look into the impact of teacher practices on students' perceptions of revision.

Instead of assuming a strong authoritative role in this study, I have instead invited students and instructors to reflect on the work they did during the class term, thus giving the subjects of this study, whose voices are often marginalized in research, a significant amount of agency in the analysis of the data. The knowledge and the power in this study are therefore distributed among the students, the instructors, and myself (the researcher). Marjorie DeVault and Glenda Gross argue that "the social contexts of people's lives [are] historically situated and constituted through people's activities, and the research process itself [is] an integral aspect of the construction of knowledge about society" (176). In this

⁵ A more in-depth discussion of the researcher-teacher voice versus the teacher voice will be discussed later in this section's discussion of utilizing a feminist lens in qualitative research.

dissertation, I understand that the students' revising practices are situated within their writing histories; in many cases, their previous writing experiences are directly related to how and why they revise. By balancing my researcher voice, the students' voices, and the instructors' voices, I hope to gain a deeper understanding of how the composition classroom affects students' knowledge and practices relate to revision.

Using concepts from feminist standpoint theory for this dissertation will allow me to surface and juxtapose a variety of voices. By distancing myself from the position of instructor, I am able to surface the voices of the case study instructors. Placing them alongside the student voices creates a fuller, previously unexamined angle into revision scholarship.

I come to this study as a writing teacher who advocates for a sharing of knowledge and power among students and their instructor. In my own writing classes, I aim to teach students to value revision through a combination of lectures and workshops with varying sizes of peer groups. It is my hope that my students learn to value revision as a part of their composing process. However, before I embarked upon this study, I was struck by the lack of revision my students were willing to make, even when their peers (and myself) gave students helpful, constructive feedback. As a writer who composes many drafts of every text I write, it was perplexing to me that students would not be enthusiastic about the opportunity to build and develop their essay drafts, despite the combination of feedback they received. In my own writing, revision is an essential part of my composing process; it enables me to see and re-see my writing and understand how I can better convey my ideas to an audience. For me, this is what is at stake in writing, and

in teaching writing: writing, and especially writing rhetorically, is the process of learning, and relearning, how to effectively express oneself through words for an audience. One of the best ways to relearn this process is through collaboration. I highly value the feedback I receive from my peers, as they are the ones that I typically write for.

As a composition instructor, I hope to inspire my students to also relearn writing as a collaborative, recursive process; however, I have struggled for years to meet my own goals. I believe that students need to see revision as an essential component of their writing, and I believe that the concept of writing-as-revising, combined with writing-as-collaboration, has the potential to change students' viewpoints toward both writing and the topics they write about. Together, these concepts can potentially empower students to write with rhetorical vigor, and learn to re-see their work from a more critical, contextual standpoint. In order to enact these goals, I have tried peer review sheets, individual and group conferences, and workshops on revision. Some strategies (workshops) have been more successful than others (peer review sheets). Some students are also more successful than others at getting what I believe is revision's importance: learning how to communicate one's ideas effectively to an audience.

This study arose out of my observations of my own students' revising practices, my students' reflections on their revising practices, and my conversations with colleagues about students' revising practices. My own experiences as an instructor did shape how I approached interviews with the students and instructors. With the students, I was most interested in finding out how they perceive and practice revision, and the impact their instructor's teaching strategies had on these revising practices. With the instructors, I

wanted to share the data from the surveys with them, because the instructors understand their own classes and could contribute to the data analysis. This dissertation offers me an opportunity to examine how other instructors teach revision, and the extent to which they – and their students – believe these strategies are “successful.”

However, I entered this study with my own values attached to the idea of revision; these values were reflected more in the teaching of some participants than others. The value I ascribe to revision helped to shape my understanding of how the teachers who participated in this study understand and teach revision, as well as how the students in these classes perceived and practiced revision. The value I attach to revision that I brought to the student and instructor interviews, and that I brought to my analysis of each class’ data, did cause me to consider each class from a particular perspective.

Although my valuing revision as a means to help students communicate their ideas effectively and with purpose may have conflicted with the instructors’ beliefs about revision, I do believe that I approached each instructor’s class from an open and interested point of view. I was anxious to learn how each instructor taught revision, and how the students interpreted each instructor’s revision pedagogy. The more I investigated each class through the different types of data and materials I obtained, the more I learned about how and why students revise.

The structure of this dissertation is organized around the research questions. The questions explore how instructors’ teaching practices influence students’ revising strategies, and how students’ practices of revision change from the beginning of the

quarter to the end. The questions also explore the how students and instructors perceive peer feedback and instructor feedback in relation to effective revision.

Chapter 2 is a review of the literature on revision. It discusses several main areas of revision research and pedagogy. This chapter focuses on the text-based taxonomies created to describe revision and the scholarship on the origins of students' difficulties with revision. It then addresses process-based models and some of the literature on revision pedagogy. Out of this literature, I identify two main gaps in revision research: absence of students' and instructors' voices. My study attempts to contribute to the field by addressing these gaps.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology of this study. It includes information on the participants, the setting for the research, the data collected from the student and instructor participants, and how the data was analyzed.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 each present a case study as an in-depth look at the three classes that participated in the research. In each chapter, I present and juxtapose student and instructor voices and aim to offer an introductory look at the impact instructors' teaching practices had on student perceptions of and strategies for revision. Chapter 7 is a discussion of my analysis of the data from these three case studies. In this chapter, I use my analysis of the data to address the research questions. The final chapter explores the implications of this study for both the teaching of and further research in the field of revision.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As discussed in Chapter One, revision has long been considered a vital component of composition instruction. This chapter examines trends in revision research and pedagogy. In this chapter, I will examine literature by scholars whose goals are to teach students “more effective” methods of revision. These methods may be based in text-based taxonomies or process models, but ultimately, most researchers explore how to help students revise for content changes, not just for surface changes. Revising for content is what most researchers and teachers would consider enacting “good” revising practices, and will be referred to as such throughout the chapter.

In this chapter I will explore four main areas of revision research and pedagogy. The first area focuses on text-based taxonomies used to describe revision at various levels. The next area focuses on the research that attempts to discover and address the origins of students’ difficulties with revision. The third area discusses process-based models that attempt to explore why students have these difficulties. They also provide a model to help teachers first, better understand students’ revising strategies and second, address those strategies in class. Finally, I explore the assumptions that arise out of the scholarship on revision pedagogy. These assumptions are:

- That revision always leads to “better” writing
- That peer feedback is a necessary vehicle for students enacting “better” revising practices
- That instructor feedback is a necessary vehicle for students enacting “better” revising practices

Exploring Text-Based Taxonomies of Revision

This section explores the revision taxonomies derived from largely text-based analysis, where the researcher relies on written text in order to draw conclusions about how writers revise. Although Nancy Sommers argues that there is a lack of a conceptual framework in revision, taxonomies have almost always been part of revision research. This section looks at taxonomies that are derived solely from texts, as well as taxonomies that utilize both texts and writers' voices.

One of the most well-known revision taxonomies is Wallace Hildick's revision taxonomy in *Word for Word*. His taxonomy, which focuses on revision as a largely surface practice, was influential for decades after the publication of *Word for Word* in 1965. Many scholars use some element of Hildick's taxonomy in creating their own revision taxonomies. Hildick bases his revision taxonomy on how "great" literary writers revise, as opposed to the revision work of students. *Word for Word* examines the revision practices of nine major authors, "the best authors of their kind" (28), in order to stimulate student conversation regarding these texts. Hildick organizes his revision taxonomy around three elements: substitution, deletion, and insertion. He argues that changes within these three categories can be further subdivided into six categories:

- tidying up changes, or fixing grammar (13)
- roughening up changes, or fixing the tone of a sentence or of a character (14)

- power changes, which strive “to achieve greater accuracy of expression, or greater clarity of expression...or to achieve greater force of argument” (15)
- alterations, in which larger changes are made that impact the overall meaning (20)
- ideological changes, where the author makes alterations based on his/her own ideology (22)
- “rag-bag” changes, which “deny firmer classification.” (23)

While one could argue that power, structural, and ideological changes are examples of content revision, Hildick casts them in such a way as to deny the concept of content revision. As he analyzes a variety of literary texts, it appears that for Hildick, the only way a structural alteration can be made is through substitution, deletion, or insertion on a surface level.

Hildick examines each author’s work in depth from a surface level in order to further demonstrate his taxonomy. For example, he analyzes George Eliot’s handwriting, which he calls “small and neat” (28), as equally as he analyzes the revisions she makes. In looking at Eliot’s deletions, Hildick comments that “sometimes the line she used was so as to completely obliterate the matter underneath; sometimes it was a gentle, ruminative and possibly doubtful ticking-off, letter by letter” (28). Even when describing D. H. Lawrence’s changes to *The White Peacock*, Hildick argues that the “recast[s]” made are those by an “inspired, experienced, and technically accomplished writer” (59). Although Hildick refrains from drawing conclusions about the texts themselves, his

analysis of details such as the handwriting and line width suggests that his perception of revision is surface-based. Hildick's indicators of revision in these authors' works align with his three major categories; substitutions, deletions, and insertions are all duly noted in his analysis of the manuscripts. In each case, these categories are portrayed as revision on a surface level: grammatical, lexical, and stylistic.

Lester Faigley and Stephen Witte use Hildick as a model taxonomy in their article "Analyzing Revision." Faigley and Witte adapt Hildick's revision framework to analyze writers with a variety of skill levels, including students, thus moving away from relying solely on literary sources to create their extended revision taxonomy. Like Hildick's, their taxonomy is text-based. However, by using Hildick as a model taxonomy applied to living writers, they attempt to capture "the complexity of revision" that had previously eluded scholars (Faigley 400).

Faigley and Witte's taxonomy is more complex than Hildick's but still contains some of his elements. In "Analyzing Revision," Faigley and Witte create a schema for revision based on two major categories: Surface Changes, and Meaning (or Content) Changes. Each major category is also broken down into subcategories:

- Surface Changes
 - Formal Changes
 - Spelling, Tense, Number, Modality, Abbreviation, Punctuation, Format
 - Meaning-Preserving Changes

- Additions, Deletions, Substitutions, Permutations, Distributions, Consolidations
- Meaning, or Content, Changes
 - Microstructure Changes
 - Additions, Deletions, Substitutions, Permutations, Distributions, Consolidations
 - Macrostructure Changes
 - Additions, Deletions, Substitutions, Permutations, Distributions, Consolidations. (403)

Faigley and Witte apply this taxonomy to essay drafts written by “experienced” adult writers such as journalists, “advanced” student writers recruited from an upper-level writing class, and “novice” student writers recruited from a writing laboratory class designed for students with “deficient” writing skills (406). Faigley and Witte find that the inexperienced students made the most Surface Changes, while the advanced students and experienced adult writers made more Meaning Changes (408). By looking at the differences in how writers of varied levels revise, Faigley and Witte’s revision schema extends Hildick’s literary-based taxonomy. Their taxonomy attempts to capture the complexity of revision, and the distinctions between surface and content revision.

Overall, the text-based schemas discussed in this section do reveal important aspects of revision practices. Faigley and Witte, especially, conclude that inexperienced writers focus more on surface changes than content changes. However, these taxonomies only address the types of changes writers may make in their revision; they do not address

the origins of writers', in particular students', difficulties with revision. The next section addresses this issue.

Exploring the Origins of Students' Difficulties with Revision

While some scholars attempt to categorize the types of changes writers make in revision, some of the literature focuses on discovering and addressing the origins of students' difficulties with revision. This literature presents evidence often based on students' writing and/or students' voices in order to determine where students have difficulty with their revising strategies.

Two early and influential scholars whose work attempts to discover the origins of students' difficulties with revision are Janet Emig, with her monograph *The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders*, and Sharon Pianko in her article "A Description of the Composing Processes of College Freshman Writers." Both Emig's and Pianko's studies are important to the field of revision because they each attempt to identify students' composing processes and connect these processes to how writing is being taught. Emig studies twelfth graders, while Pianko studies first-year college writing students.

In *The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders*, Emig uses case studies in order to obtain an in-depth portrait for how high school students compose. Emig points out in her introduction that at the time of her study, there was little research to offer a "coherent characterization" of composing processes in writers (1). Based on written texts and think-aloud protocols with eight students, Emig creates case studies that characterize students' composing processes and distinguish between "extensive writing," or the conveying of a

message, as largely school-sponsored, and “reflexive writing,” or the writer’s conveyance of personal thoughts or expressions, as self-sponsored (3).

Out of these case studies, Emig develops an outline that maps the students’ composing processes. One process Emig includes is “Reformulation,” which is a task focused on “correcting, revising, rewriting” (35). Emig describes reformulation similarly to Hildick; she lists “addition,” “deletion,” “reordering or substitution,” and “embedding” as reformulating practices students might engage in (35). Emig’s definition of reformulation as largely lexical and sentential relates to her case studies, which focus on above-average students who are composing for Emig, as oppose to for a class or for themselves. A more in-depth look at reformulation occurs in Emig’s analysis of Lynn, the profiled student among Emig’s case studies.

In her analysis of Lynn, Emig is careful to say that she did not influence Lynn to revise, but that “because of her attitude toward revising – Lynn does not really reformulate any of the three pieces she writes” (67). Emig suggests that Lynn’s decision not to revise comes from her school experiences; although Lynn knows how to revise, in school, revision is perceived as a punishment (68). Because Lynn understands revision as a way to fix mistakes, it has a negative connotation for her. Based on her analysis of Lynn and the seven other students, Emig suggests that teachers, in particular high school English teachers, “underconceptualize and oversimplify the process of composing” (98). According to Emig, students’ difficulties with revision may result from this “oversimplification” of composing. It causes students to value revision less, because it is equated with correcting errors, not with learning to express one’s ideas clearly and with

purpose. This leads to students having little commitment to revision, as it is perceived only as fixing errors and as punishment.

Sharon Pianko draws similar conclusions to Emig in her article “A Description of the Composing Processes of College Freshman Writers.” Unlike Emig, though, Pianko focuses on college writers in order to gain insight into their difficulties with writing and revising. Pianko studies 17 students who, all enrolled in a community college, completed five writing episodes for Pianko in which they had to write a 400-word essay with no time limit (6). Like the compositions Emig’s students wrote, these assignments were not based in the context of a “real” writing class because the students wrote for Pianko’s study. Pianko asked students to write on general topics, such as “Describe a single incident which involves not more than three characters taken from an experience observed,” or “Write on anything you want in any way you want” (6). The students were observed by Pianko and video-taped during their sessions at least once, and then interviewed about their “attitudes and feelings” during each writing episode. Based on her analysis of these writing episodes, in which she analyzes both the students’ writing and their attitudes and comments toward the composing process, Pianko draws several conclusions about students’ difficulties with revision.

First, Pianko notes that based on the short length of the students’ prewriting process, students may not “have the complete story in mind” when they begin to write (9). Next, Pianko finds that although the students had the entire afternoon to write their essays, they spent an average of 38.85 minutes composing essays that average 361 words (9). The students comment that “they had said what they wanted to say in the best way

they could for the moment (though they might not be very happy with it), and if they had chosen to spend more time with it, it would have been to rewrite the version they had just written for the sake of neatness” (9). Pianko concludes that this reveals a “lack of commitment to writing,” especially to school-sponsored writing (9-10). It is important to point out that Pianko finds that students did a great deal of pausing when they wrote. She concludes that students pause in order to decide what to write next, and that to a lesser extent, they rescan their writing with the purpose of “reorient[ing] themselves” to what they had just written (10). Therefore, although the average time spent writing was almost 39 minutes, the students may have spent significantly less time actually writing.

Overall, Pianko’s findings suggest that students’ difficulties with revision may be based on the limitations of in-class writing, which encourages students to write to simply complete the assignment, not to do the best they can on a paper. Therefore, Pianko advocates for instructors to allow students to write at home, and to help students understand writing as a process of communicating their ideas to others. As long as students understand writing as simply completing an assigned task, Pianko argues, they will have difficulty composing strong essays.

Another important scholar who attempts to discern the origins of students’ difficulties with revision is Nancy Sommers. In her 1980 article “Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers,” Sommers relies on the novice/expert comparison that other many researchers use in revision literature⁶ in order to draw conclusions about both how students define revision and how they revise. Based on

⁶ See, for example, Faigley and Witte, “Analyzing Revision,” or Flower and Hayes et. al., “Detection, Diagnosis, and Revision.”

analysis of her comparison of the novice and experts' definitions of revision, Sommers concludes that one origin of students' problems with revision is that student writers do not revise to discover meaning in their writing. Some examples that Sommers includes of student revising strategies that demonstrate this are:

Reviewing: "Reviewing means just using better words and eliminating words that are not needed. I go over and change words around."

Marking Out: "I don't use the word rewriting because I only write one draft and the changes that I make are made on top of the draft. The changes that I make are usually just marking out words and putting different ones in." (381)

These two examples demonstrate what Sommers defines as a focus on vocabulary in students' revising strategies (381). This "narrow and predictable" method of revising leads to "passiv[ity]" regarding students' writing practices, keeps them tied to rules and textbooks, and does not encourage recursiveness in writing (383).

Many of Sommers' findings are in congruence with the findings of Faigley and Witte. Like Faigley and Witte conclude, Sommers also argues that students revise largely to make lexical, not "semantic" changes to their writing (382). Because students do not revise for conceptual changes, they "constantly struggle to bring their essays into congruence with a predefined meaning" (386). According to Sommers and to the work of Faigley and Witte, students try to force their writing into a "box," or the thesis they start with. Instead of using revision as a non-linear process, students revise linearly to fit their

ideas to this original intention, which may not or may not be the argument their essay needs to be successful.

By comparison, Sommers finds that the “experienced” writers in the study revise as “part of the process of *discovering meaning*” (385). Where the inexperienced student writers suppress or ignore problems in their writing (such as choosing not to address alternative or opposing viewpoints), the experienced writers “recognize and resolve the dissonance they sense in their writing” (385). In the definitions of experienced writers, Sommers notes that ideas are “in flux” and “developed and modified” (386). The examples Sommers presents demonstrate this difference. One experienced writer likens her process to the 1977 New York City power failure:

I feel like Con Edison cutting off certain states to keep the generators going. In the first and second drafts, I try to cut off as much as I can of my editing generator, and in a third draft, I try to cut off some of my idea generators, so I can make sure that I will actually finish the essay. (386)

Although Sommers acknowledges that some experienced writers may also describe their revising process in a somewhat linear format, like the one above, she carefully points out that, unlike student writers, the experienced writers have “the same [global] objectives and sub-processes...present in each cycle, but in different proportions” (387). In other words, experienced writers always have their argument in mind, even when they are revising for organization or grammar. Experienced writers see “writing as discovery” – students do not (387).

Both Sommers and Faigley and Witte compare inexperienced and experienced writers to either generate taxonomies for revision or to uncover the difficulties students have in enacting revision. Joseph Harris' article "Revision as a Critical Practice" focuses solely on students' voices and he attempts to discover why students have difficulty revising. Harris imagines a composition course centered on literary study where revision "looks very closely at how ideas get shaped in and refracted by language" (582). Harris calls these critical moves "*discursive agency*" (583), and he argues that one reason why students have difficulty revising is because students cannot embrace this agency fully. Harris' essay is an exploration of the extent to which students can take a particular stance toward "a dominant ideology" (583) and communicate that stance effectively through writing.

Harris defines discursive agency as rooted in a students' understanding of the relationship between the knowledge and power of the institution, as well as their understanding of their own knowledge and power. Harris argues that "in teaching students to write as critics we need to ask them to change not only how they think but how they work – to take on, that is, a new sort of intellectual *practice*" (577). Harris believes that students' difficulties with revision lay not only in how they think about revision, but also in how they work on developing their ideas through revision. Harris analyzes early student drafts to discover what students *can* do, such as write an introduction, and what they *cannot* do, such as understand the function of that introduction (584). In other words, students' power extends only as far as knowing the basic form of the essay. They do not understand how the parts work together, nor do they

have the discursive agency to take rhetorically strong written stances in relation to the ideas they encounter and want to discuss in writing.

In order to help students rhetorically understand, shape, and control the ideas that go into their writing, Harris argues that revision needs to be taught as a “critical practice;” that is, as a practice that situates students more thoroughly within the context of their reading, writing, and thinking. By using a sample essay from Esther, a student, Harris shows how Esther learns to “assert her stance as a reader,” develop her own “line of thinking” (585), and write more critically thoughtful prose by asking questions that do not have plot-based answers. However, Harris points out that although Esther made progress, her essay did not follow through on the “promises” her revised introduction offered; she “stumbled” but still was learning “a new sort of practice as a writer” (586). Harris notes that through working with Esther, he “drew [her] attention to [the] problem [of contradiction in her first draft]...in the hope...that she would begin to think through the tensions she was experiencing as a reader” (585). Harris suggests that it is up to the teacher to explicitly point to the problems in student writing to help students think more critically about their ideas.

Esther is an example of a student who makes what Harris calls “a small step forward, but real” (586); Creg is a student who shows that he is able to restart his essay in order to find something to say that he has a stake in. In a reflective essay Creg wrote about his composing process for an essay on the novel and film versions of *The Lord of the Flies*, Creg recalls going back to both versions and eventually “[finding] differences in the boys’ humanity” that could be a good focus for a paper (586). Creg enacts Harris’

concept of discursive agency by “show[ing] an authority over the texts he is dealing with,” and by taking a strong stance toward the differences between the novel and the film (587). In the cases of both Creg and Esther, Harris points out that students need to learn to assume agency in their writing by having authority over the texts they use. These students are success stories; however, Harris points out that the students are still not able to fully inhabit their roles as discursive writers. He acknowledges that Esther and Creg are students who “carve out space[s]” for themselves as critics, but “there is more work [the students] could continue to do as reader[s]” (587). Even Creg, who Harris admires (586), has not fully achieved Harris’ concept of discursive agency.

Like the researchers discussed in this section, David L. Wallace and John R. Hayes, in the experimental study “Redefining Revision for Freshmen,” attempt to discover the origins of students’ difficulties with revision by analyzing student texts; their texts are generated from experimental and control groups of students. Wallace and Hayes identify several possibilities for the origins of students’ difficulties with revision, such as inability to detect textual problems and inability to negotiate different revision skills. Their main focus is on what they call “inappropriate task definition,” or a student’s inability to recognize what “he or she is supposed to do when facing a task such as revision” (55). Although Wallace and Hayes acknowledge that students are able to revise locally, their research sets out to address the idea that students have difficulty revising on a global level (56). Wallace and Hayes conduct a study where they ask an experimental and a control group of students to revise a text “about the operation of a water treatment plant so that it could be used as a handout for high school students” (57). Wallace and

Hayes point out that the instructions given to the students ask specifically that the text be “clear, organized, easy to read, and free of errors” (57). The students were also instructed to make additions, deletions, changes, etc. Both the experimental and the control groups had thirty minutes to complete the exercise.

In the control group, the students receive no further instruction. However, in the experimental group, students are given an eight-minute lesson on how to revise globally, based on showing the students the differences in how inexperienced and experienced writers revise. Meanwhile, the control group of students is simply asked to follow the instructions given above. Wallace and Hayes use three types of analysis to compare the overall quality of the texts for both groups: analysis for global revision, analysis for the quality of the students’ texts, and analysis for errors (60). Wallace and Hayes determine that the overall quality of the revisions increased for the experimental group. They also conclude that this finding is in direct correlation to the number of global revisions the students made (60). Wallace and Hayes conclude that if students are taught how to revise globally, they can do it. However, while the researchers do admit that their research findings are limited due to the fact that the students revised another writer’s text, and not their own, they argue that given the amount of global revision students were able to achieve with such a short time of instruction, global revision instruction is ultimately valuable and should be repeated often.

Process-Based Models of Revision

As discussed in the first section of this chapter, most of the taxonomies established by revision scholars are largely text-based. Similarly, in the second section, when researchers discuss the origins of student difficulties with revision, they do not spend much time exploring why the students have these difficulties. As such, they do not explore the processes by which writers arrive at their texts or at their often-limited processes that inform students' revisions. This section examines the various process models that scholars have derived based on researching how writers produce texts. In this section, I will discuss two types of process models: linear-based and recursive-based. Linear-based process models argue that revision is an important step in a step-by-step process of writing. Recursive models contradict the linear-based models by arguing that there is no separation between writing and revising. While both advocate for the importance of revision, they do so from different standpoints.

Linear Models

The models discussed in this section are determined by examining student texts and revision as a linear process. Linear-based schemas focus on revision as part of a step-by-step process in writing, something that a writer does *after* one step, but *before* another. These schemas draw heavily from Hildick's taxonomy of revising largely for surface, not content, changes. The conclusions drawn by the researchers in this section focus on teaching revision as part of a linear model of writing. This type of schema is mostly rejected today in favor of cognitive-based or recursive-based models, which will be

discussed in the following subsections; however, it is important to examine the existence of this type of framework, in order to understand how some instructors, particularly ones in my own study, may teach revision.

In their book *Inside Out: Strategies for Teaching Writing*, Dan Kirby, Dawn Kirby, and Tom Liner craft a linear model for revision. They argue that revision is a “growth process,” and set up four steps for what they call the writing “process” (128). However, that process not only reminds one of Hildick’s taxonomy, but also advocates for revision as a step-by-step process. The first step is in-process revision, where students insert, substitute, and delete as they write. The second step is re-visioning, where students reread their work for the same purposes. Third, the students edit by asking each other what they should insert, substitute, and delete. Finally, students proofread, or “clean up the paper” (133-135). The focus on the terms “insert,” “substitute,” and “delete” is reminiscent of Hildick’s taxonomy, which draws from similar concepts. Although Kirby, Kirby, and Liner define revision as “growth,” their emphasis on correctness at the end of the process suggests that this linear approach privileges grammatical revising over content revising.

Students’ abilities to enact revision through a linear process can often result in students not being able to produce what instructors term “quality work.” In “Components of the Composing Process,” Sharon Crowley describes the linear, and ultimately unsuccessful, process she asks her students to undertake as they write. Crowley asks students to keep a diary, and answer questions that address the following steps:

1. Preparation: When did you do research in relation to writing? Before?
During? Did you use the research to get the idea for your own writing, or did you go to it for verification after your idea was established?
2. Incubation: When did the “writing idea” become conscious? Before, during, or after another writing project? While reading? In conversation? Did the idea emerge full-blown, or did you have to drag it out of your unconscious by a process of read-write-mull or some variation of that series?
3. Writing: Did you write by hand, or use a typewriter? Do you need special instruments or conditions to work well? What approach-avoidance devices did you use to put off writing? (For example, did you delay in getting started by telling yourself that you needed to do more research?)
 - a. How did the work grow? Did you begin with a thesis? Or did you simply begin writing, hoping to find a thesis? Did you draft the whole work once, or complete it by sections?
4. Revision: How many drafts did the work go through? What kinds of changes – grammatical, logical, formal, stylistic – occurred between each draft? (166)

Like Kirby, Kirby, and Liner, Crowley also sets up a linear process for writing by which she measures her students’ ability to produce “good” writing. Crowley suggests that first, students must “prepare” to write and allow the idea to “incubate.” Once they have a “writing idea,” they must write, and in certain conditions, and in a certain order – thesis first or last, drafting all at once or in pieces. Then, once they write a draft, they can begin

to revise, and make particular types of changes such as “grammatical, logical, formal, [and] stylistic.”

Although Crowley argues that the writing process is “recursive” (167), the questions she sets up for her students deny the same recursiveness she believes is imperative to writing. Crowley states that the “whole process is not linear” (168); at the same time, however, she presents a highly structured process that suggests linearity. Crowley’s findings for her classroom experiment are not hopeful in that she discovers that students put off writing until the night before or that students only make surface changes to create a “clean copy” (167). Although Crowley criticizes her students’ limited and linear engagement with writing and revision for producing linear texts, the framework listed above appears to encourage this linearity.

Some linear models of revision ask students to revise their writing through a step-by-step process that mirrors the overall linear writing processes described above. George J. Thompson’s article “Nine Ways to Achieve a Disinterested Perspective” creates such a linear revising process through his discussion of a model students can use to revise their work. He identifies the issue of reading one’s work in an “unbiased” manner as a site of struggle for students (200). He uses a disembodied student quote as a narrative hook; the unknown student laments that he or she “cannot see [the essay] disinterestedly” (200). Thompson uses this lament as a basis for a model designed to help students step back from their writing and revise more effectively.

In order to help students achieve that “disinterested perspective,” Thompson sets up a series of nine steps that students should enact in order after finishing an essay draft.

These steps are meant to be fulfilled in order to present a “sequence” that allows students to see revision as a “series of possible steps...in one place” (201). Thompson’s steps are as follows:

1. When a draft is finished, reread it silently to get a feel for “its rhythm and its movement.” (201)
2. Read the draft backwards, in order to make “identification of grammar and spelling errors easier.” (201)
3. Reread every other line of the draft in order to note “word clusters and images” that might otherwise be missed. (201)
4. Reread the draft for the thesis.
5. Examine each paragraph individually, in order to “spot the central assumption or image.” (201)
6. On a separate sheet of paper, list the main ideas for each paragraph, then try to “synthesize this list into a single sentence” (201). The writer should then compare this sentence to the thesis identified in Step 4 for evaluative purposes.
7. Examine paragraphs in order to identify “specific or concrete evidence that supports” the paragraph’s main idea, as noted in Step 5. (202)
8. Reread the essay for transitions.
9. Reread the essay for the follow-through of the essay’s “thread” (thesis) and “design” (organization of ideas following thesis). (202)

Thompson's nine steps are meant to be done in a linear form, in order to help the writer revise for clarity. Thompson believes that his heuristic "has power" (199) in its ability to "provide the reviser with numerous literal and imaginative insights that are the reward of rigorous and careful revision" (202). However useful these steps may be, they still direct the writer to revise in a step-by-step, linear manner.

The idea of revision as a linear process is troubling to many scholars such as Sondra Perl, Nancy Sommers, Donald Murray, Linda Flower, and John R. Hayes. While Crowley's case study with her students shows that her students utilize a linear process, her own model does little to convince them that revising may occur recursively. Instead of providing a linear model for revision, the scholars in the next section argue that writing is in itself a recursive process that includes revision.

Recursive Models

This section discusses recursive process models that challenge the idea of revision as a linear, step-by-step process. Alongside the linear models of revision, many scholars present an alternative model to thinking about the revising process: that revision is recursive, and is very much part of the entire writing process. Many of these recursive models began to emerge out of the expressivist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and challenged the notion that writing and revising are linear processes that can easily be defined through organized steps. In their exploration of writing and revising practices, the scholars discussed in this section argue that there is no separation between writing and revising. Researchers such as Nancy Sommers and Sondra Perl argue instead for a

process model that promotes the “ideal” model of composing as a recursive process instead of linear (“Need for Theory” 210; “Understanding Composing” 364). These scholars argue that a recursive-based process model allows for more engagement from the writer in the composing process.

Donald Murray’s 1978 article “Teach the Motivating Force of Revision” focuses on the importance of writing for discovery. He defines revision as “the process of seeing what you’ve said to discover what you say” (56). Because Murray defines revision as a discovery process, he argues that this process is “continual” (56) and that “the role of discovery is crucial to effective writing” (57). Murray’s article advocates strongly for the importance of seeing revising as an integral and constant part of writing. He extends this claim to the composition classroom, stating that teacher feedback – and teacher writing – are important in encouraging students to write in order to discover. Without teachers writing themselves, Murray argues, they cannot share in the students’ experiences: “the teacher who is experiencing important and surprising discoveries through language is likely to share and support each student’s individual exploration of the world” (59). Murray wants students and teachers to experience writing together, so that they can support each other as they revise (discover) their topics and goals for writing.

Nancy Sommers extends Murray’s idea of writing for discovery in “The Need for Theory in Composition Research.” Like Murray, Sommers also believes that writing cannot be simply defined as a linear process. Instead, Sommers argues that “it is not that a writer merely conceives of an idea, lets it incubate, and then produces it, but rather that ideas are being defined and redefined, selected and rejected, evaluated and organized”

(47). Sommers locates the difficulty of understanding revision as recursive in the field's lack of a common framework. Sommers believes that a focus on methodology, not theory, has resulted in "the idea that the composing process can be understood as a series of discrete temporal stages" (46) where revision is "the stage at the end of the process" (48), typically as editing, in a linear-based model. Sommers argues that these models are problematic because they focus too much on teaching revision as a discrete, methodical process, and not enough on teaching revision as a recursive, ongoing process. In order to generate a more concrete, recursive model, Sommers defines revision instead as "a process that occurs throughout the writing of a work" (49). She rejects both the text-based taxonomies and the linear-based models that tend to dominate revision literature in exchange for a more recursive one that has no set "steps."

Sondra Perl also constructs a model based on the idea that writing is recursive. In "Understanding Composing," Perl builds on Sommers' definition of revision as "a process that occurs throughout the writing of a work" by trying to locate exactly where and how writers compose recursively. Perl bases her argument on her "own observations of the composing processes of many types of writers including college students, graduate students, and English teachers" (364). One example she uses is the commentary of Anne, an English teacher who took a course in research and basic writing at New York University that was team-taught by Perl and Gordon Pradl. Anne's comments about her own composing process as "disjointed" to the point where she "almost never move[s] from writing one sentence to the next" (365) cause Perl to question Anne's process of

composing. Perl asks: “What tells Anne she is ready to write? What is that feeling of ‘momentum’ like for her?” (365).

Based on the questions derived from her observations of the composing processes of others, Perl creates a framework that focuses on revision’s recursive qualities by identifying three main types of recursive writing: rereading, “going back” to main points, and most importantly, what she calls “felt sense,” or a move that “occurs inside the writer” and is “physically felt” (365). Perl argues that writers use their “felt sense” of a topic to help determine the course of their writing and revising. According to Perl, when writers pay attention to their felt sense, “this process allows us to say or write what we’ve never said before, to create something new and fresh” (366). While experienced writers do this automatically, she claims, inexperienced writers may not; however, Perl does believe that they can be taught this (365). This belief that writing is a complex cognitive process, that it is something that can be identified and surfaced by examining writers’ composing processes, is a concept that is developed in revision research as the 1980s progress.

The work of Linda Flower and John R. Hayes centers on the recursive model of revision that focuses on writing as a cognitive process. Flower and Hayes are interested in writing and “meaning-making.” By using think-aloud protocols, Flower and Hayes explore the cognitive processes behind revision.

One cognitive process Flower and Hayes identify is how a writer discovers a topic. Although not directly related to “revision,” many revision scholars, such as Donald Murray, would argue that part of revision is writing to discover – as one writes and

revises, one “discovers” how to write about a topic. In “The Cognition of Discovery: Defining a Rhetorical Problem,” Flower and Hayes investigate how “people present the rhetorical problem” when they write (23). According to Flower and Hayes, the rhetorical problem involves figuring out how to create an idea that rhetorically addresses some purpose: an assignment, an audience, etc. (26). Flower and Hayes find that in order to address the rhetorical problem, writers need to “re-examine the situation” in numerous ways; some of these ways are more successful than others (26). For novice writers, ideas are generated and developed by rereading the assignment, their own work, etc. On the other hand, Flower and Hayes discover that expert writers “used their re-examination of the situation to add to their image of the audience or assignment” (26). In other words, weaker writers look to the assignment to assess the rhetorical situation; expert writers look to their audience to develop a more effective rhetorical situation.

Flower and Hayes et. al. extend the idea of meaning-making specifically to revision in their article “Detection, Diagnosis, and the Strategies of Revision.” This article, written along with Linda Carey, Karen Schriver, and James Stratman, also uses think-aloud protocols in order to discover “some of the key intellectual actions which underlie the process of revision and which most affect its practice” (17). Flower and Hayes argue that although revision literature provides images of how expert and beginner writers revise (and revise differently), the literature does not provide a framework for how those revisions occur, or why they might occur differently. Based on their think-aloud protocols, Flower and Hayes develop a cognitive framework for revision that “argues that there is a direct connection between the focus and meaning one constructs

from reading a text and the topical structure and coherence one constructs in revision”

(31). According to Flower and Hayes, how writers understand their text, and the context surrounding the writing of the text, has a direct impact on how writers revise their texts.

Flower and Hayes map out this connection through a complex framework.

This framework is based on a model Flower and Hayes presented in their 1981 article “A Cognitive Theory Process of Writing.” The 1981 model, shown in Figure 1, presents a complex, recursive framework for writing in which the writer considers prior knowledge, the current writing task, and her own writing processes in order to produce a piece of writing.

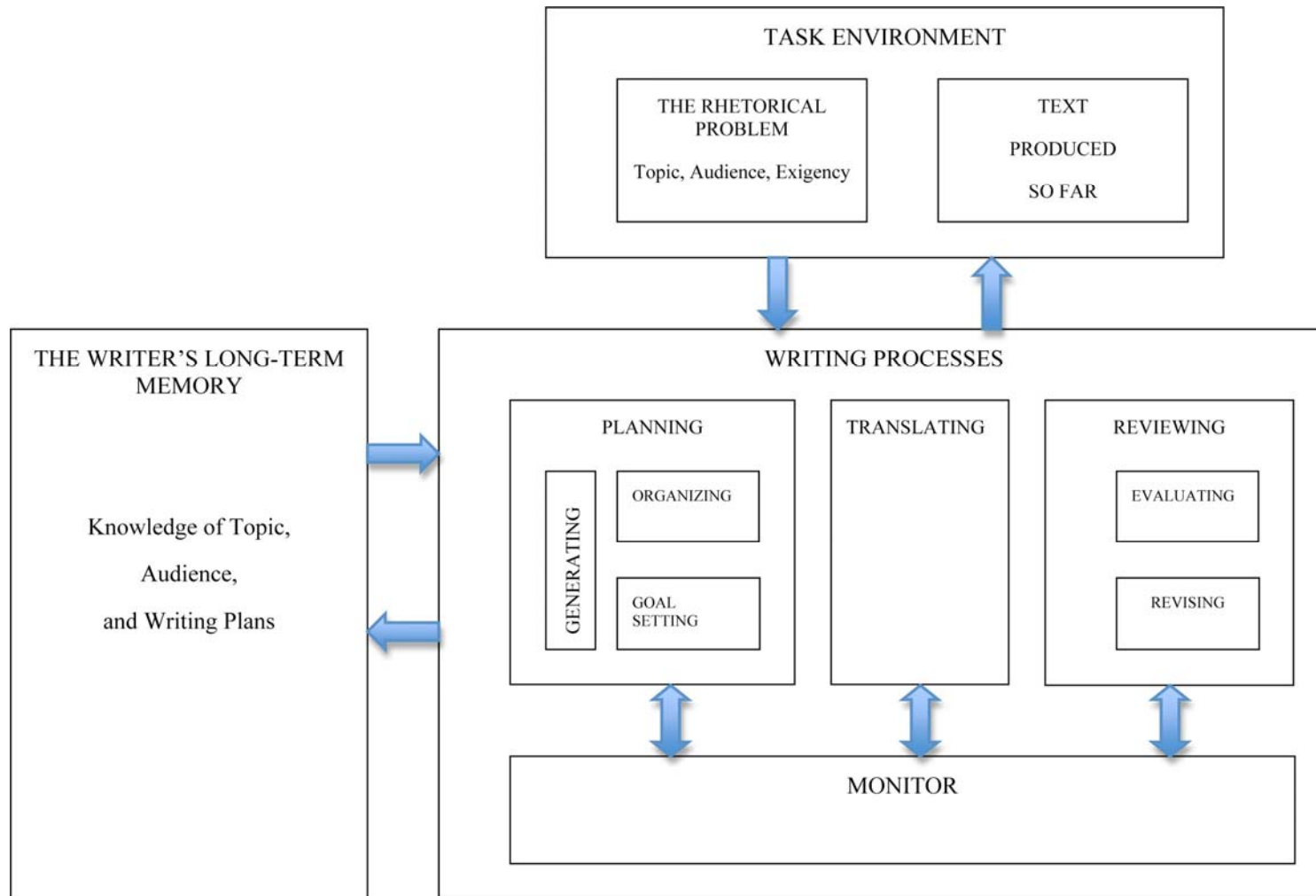


Figure 1. Adapted from Flower and Hayes, “A Cognitive Process Theory of Composing” (CCC 1981). **“A Model of Cognitive Processes in Composing.”**

Flower and Hayes et. al. adapt this model, which focused on “reviewing” as a key process in revision, for their 1986 article, which presents a new model that depicts how writers use knowledge in the writing and revising process. This model is shown in Figure 2.

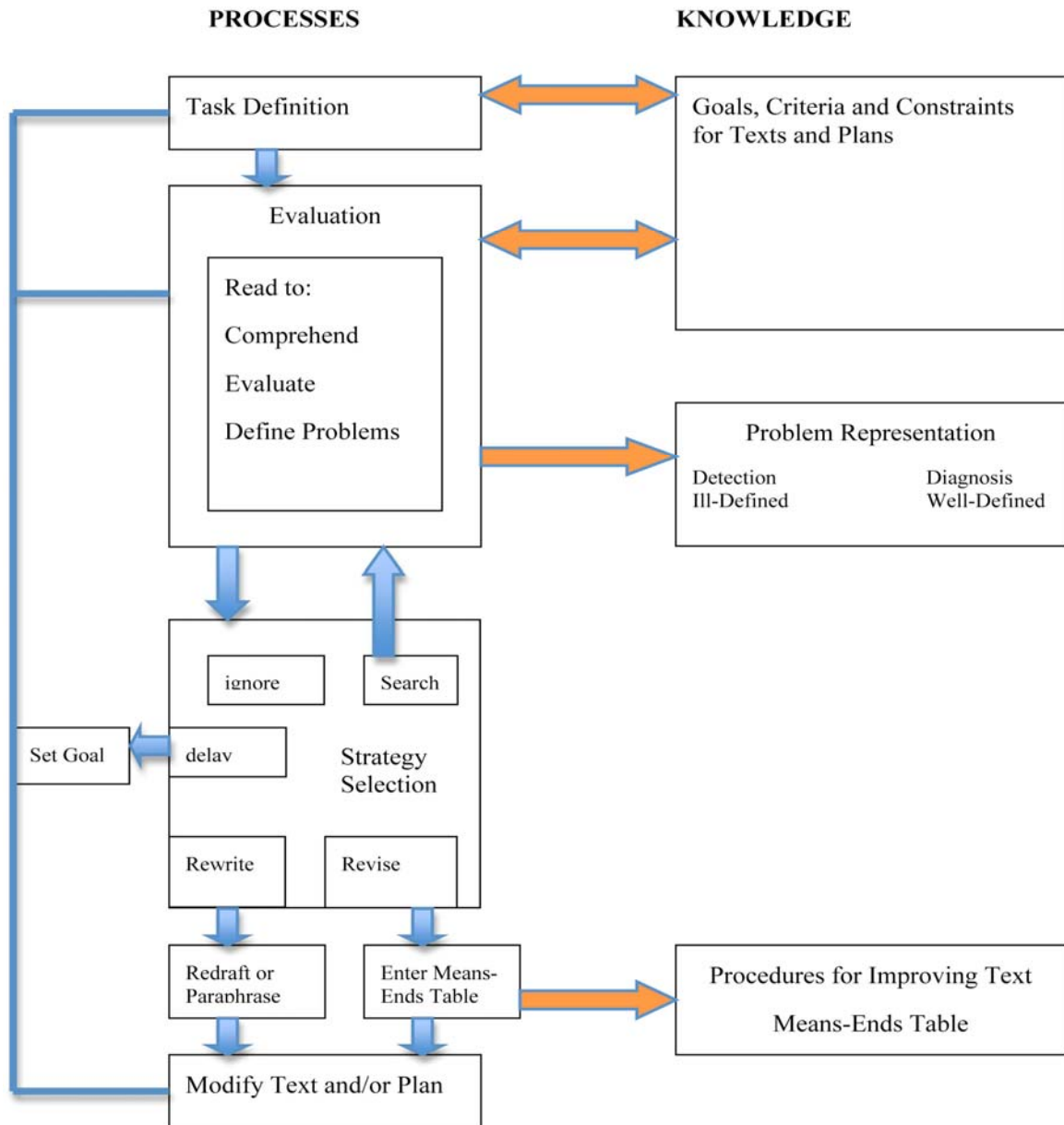


Figure 2. Adapted from Flower and Hayes, et. al., “Detection, Diagnosis, and the Strategies of Revision” (CCC 1986). **“Cognitive Processes in Revision.”**

In Figure 2, Flower and Hayes create a model that reflects the complex relationship that exists between knowledge and processes. Flower and Hayes describe the model of this structure with relation to revision as follows:

1. The Processes (represented on the left) result in the creation of, or call for the use of, Knowledge (represented on the right). See the [orange] arrows.
2. Information of a different sort flows between processes (as indicated by the [blue] arrows). In practical terms, a flow of information from one Process to another entails a change in the writer's attention as control of the writer's cognition passes from one subprocess of revision to another.
3. The flow of information between Knowledge and Processes and between different Processes in this system is highly reciprocal. The cognitive process of revision as a whole which is hypothesized here has a great deal of *potential* for feedback among the subprocesses. (24)

The model that Flower and Hayes present above shows that revision is an interaction of knowledge and processes; when writers evaluate, or revise, a text, they “are comparing the text *as they read it* to that set of intentions and criteria *which they represent to themselves*” (29). This interaction between knowledge and processes is constantly accessed and re-accessed as a writer begins to understand what she has written and how she can more effectively convey the message of her writing.

The recognition that revision is a cognitive process that can be mapped out is a significant finding in the study of revision. It enables researchers to think of revision as rhetorical, that writers revise (or don't revise) according to their understanding of writing,

of the assignment, of the context, and of their own knowledge they bring to the assignment. Also of significance is Flower and Hayes et. al.'s finding that students may detect problems in their writing but these problems are ill-defined for the students; thus, students cannot see how to revise effectively.

Flower and Hayes et. al. offer an example in their article that demonstrates students' inability to properly detect and diagnose problems within a text. In this example, fourteen subjects (students, professional writers, and teachers) are asked to rewrite a letter on women's reluctance to participate in university sports from the coach's perspective into a handout on the same topic for college female freshmen. The researchers note that the task required both "high- and low-level revision: that is, although the information in the letter was appropriate, the task implicitly called for changes in voice, genre, format, rhetorical stance, perceived audience, and style" (38). The researchers also "planted a set of stylistic and rule-governed errors in the text, including errors in spelling, punctuation, sentence style, and diction" (38). The goal for this study was to determine the following: "how would writers choose to represent this task to themselves, what problems would they detect, what problems would they diagnose, and how would they fix the problems they found" (38)? In order to generate answers to these questions, the researchers analyzed the change the writers made to the texts sentence by sentence, and analyzed think-aloud protocols and "cued recalls (i.e. retrospective responses to the question, 'what did you do here?')" on all changes (38).

Flower and Hayes et. al. note that the results were "surprising" in that during revision, both the expert and novice writers were only able to detect 58% of the "planted

problems” (38-39), which included rule-governed errors. However, the researchers note that they believe that the experts may have stopped revising for local concerns in favor of revising for more global problems in the text. Flower and Hayes et. al. present no evidence that students had a similar “precedence rule” (38). On the sentence level, the researchers found that experts detected 66% of problems, but the novice writers detected 42% (39). Flower and Hayes et. al. note that while the experts found only 58% of problems in revision, they were able to fix 91% of the total planted problems. The researchers account for this discrepancy by noting that the experts did not actively “detect” every error; instead, many of their corrections focused on more than one problem at a time. Not only did the novices remove 64% of the planted problems, Flower and Hayes et. al. also observe that the novices “often retained [multi-error units] in their revised text” (39). The findings here suggest that detecting “common or obvious” (39) surface errors within a text may be more complicated than reading for grammar; if students do not have the right detection skills to constructively evaluate a piece of text, they may not be able to revise it effectively.

Flower and Hayes’ cognitive research of the 1980s was used as the basis for many articles that offered analyses of students’ revising processes. In “Teaching Revision: A Model of the Drafting Process,” Roland K. Huff uses Flower and Hayes’ conclusions that “immature writers tend to rehearse at the word and sentence level” (800) and offers a recursive model that will teach them “how to construct a text in response to the evolving definition of an increasingly rich and specifically designed rhetorical problem” that may be presented to them by an essay assignment (800). Huff believes that one reason

students have difficulty revising for particular rhetorical contexts is that they need “a model of the drafting process” shown to them by teachers (800). Huff’s model has three “stages:”

1. Zero-drafting: “the discovery and initial realization of the topic”
2. Problem-solving drafting: “identification and resolution of major conceptual and organizational problems”
3. Final drafting: “the attempt to arrive at the best possible solution of a rhetorical problem.” (802)

Although Huff’s model has three linear steps, he aims to help students understand what expert writers can conceptualize: which strategy (or strategies) need to be applied at particular points in writing, and how much (or how little) they need to rely on these strategies as they compose. According to Huff, his model helps students plan more effectively and “to engage in the drafting of a text as a recursive process in which the linear order of the words back upon itself to generate a nonlinear structure of ideas” (802). Drawing from Flower and Hayes’ cognitive theory of revision and the relationship between knowledge and process, Huff’s model asks the writer to conceptualize the topic, and organize the text according to how the writer is able to understand the topic.

By the 1990s, revision research encompasses the cognitive in its evolving models of revision. Donald Murray best expresses this merging of a cognitive process model for composing with the earlier expressivist concept of revision as recursive in his book *The Craft of Revision*. Murray rethinks the concept of revision itself; he moves revision beyond simply defining it as a recursive process and focuses on how revision can affect a

writer's thinking and worldview. He defines revision as the act of writing. In the first chapter of *The Craft of Revision*, Murray debunks the notion of revision as a linear process; he writes, "revision is not the end of the writing process but the beginning" (1). Murray extends the idea of writing as recursive by arguing that writing and revising are inextricably linked. Instead of looking at revising as something we do *after* we write, Murray, like the other scholars in this section, believes revision *is* writing. Murray argues:

As writers we are saved from the stupidities of our first drafts by revision, the process of using language to see the subject again and again until we – and eventually the reader – see it more clearly. But revision becomes far more than correcting error for the working writer. Revision – re-seeing – is how the writer sees the world and understands its meaning. (4)

In this passage Murray more clearly defines revision for his readers. While in the earlier article discussed in this chapter ("Teach the Motivating Force of Revision"), Murray focuses on writing and revising as a means to discover one's ideas on a topic, his concept of revision here has evolved to more explicitly address larger writerly changes. In the above passage, the phrase "how the writer sees the world" implies that revision is not simply something that is done on paper, but instead involves the writer's commitment to an evolving mindset. Murray's concept of revision now asks that the writer make choices that will not only help her discover new things about her topic, but will also potentially change the way she views the topic. Murray's concept of revision incorporates cognitive theory more clearly. He looks at revision as "the process of using language to see the

subject again and again” (*Craft* 4). However, he adds that revision’s goal is for the writer “and eventually the reader” to see the message of the text more clearly (4).

In the 1990s, some scholars merged the cognitive model of revision with social constructivist theory to focus more on the relationship between revision and collaborative learning. Stuart Greene’s article “Toward a Dialectical Theory of Composing” offers a potential model for revision that builds on the “social construction of knowledge” (Greene 149). Greene points out the connection between individual cognition and social communication (150), arguing that “individual consciousness is affected by social structures” (151). Greene creates what he calls a “cognitive social epistemic” model for composing, one that focuses on “how individuals reflect, form judgments, make choices, and construct meaning within culturally organized practices” (152). This heuristic can be useful in thinking about revision, because when collaborative and social pedagogies are applied to revision, writers revise alongside each other, in conversation with one another, and in the culture of the writing classroom. There they must learn to critically assess the context their audience brings to their writing, and how to make sense of it with regards to their own goals in composing.

While Greene does not directly discuss a cognitive social epistemic model for revision, his theory can easily be applied to examine revision. Cognitive social, or dialectical, revision, would include:

1. Critical reflection, particularly upon the conceptual frameworks and methods that motivate [students’] work in composition
2. Fine-grained observations of the processes that interest [students]

3. How [students'] theories reflect the social contexts [they] study. (adapted from Greene 153)

In teaching revision, instructors may ask that students demonstrate “critical reflection” in revising and pay particular attention to “conceptual frameworks and methods” that they study in class (such as rhetorical analysis). Next, they may ask that students read their own work, and the work of their classmates, and give “fine-grained observations” of points in the writing that interest them in some way. Finally, instructors may ask students to consider the implications of their theories in a “social context.” Greene creates a potential model in which we can see how students might revise collaboratively, and how instructors can use this collaboration to encourage deeper engagement with revision.

Clearly, the models discussed in this section can inform revision pedagogy. As Sommers points out in her article, revision frameworks are necessary if researchers wish to discuss revision from a common ground. The following section outlines the wide variety of literature on teaching practices related to revision.

Revision Pedagogy Literature

Text-based taxonomies and process-based models are enacted pedagogically in the writing classroom. There is a significant amount of literature that incorporates various revision models as part of writing pedagogy. Often in the literature on teaching practices and revision, scholars will assume students' revising practices are problematic, and offer alternate models for revision through pedagogical practices. These scholars present linear or recursive models for revision based on what the instructors (usually also the scholars)

observe about their students. The research reveals a myriad of pedagogical suggestions within their articles intend to help instructors better teach revision.

Extending from the literature on revision models and revision pedagogy, several assumptions about revision arise that are commonplaces in current composition theory. This section discusses three main assumptions about revision. The first assumption is that revision always leads to better written texts. The second is the assumption that peer feedback is a necessary vehicle for students to enact good revising practices and compose better written texts. The third assumption is that instructor feedback is a necessary vehicle for students to enact good revising practices and compose better written texts. While the literature on these three assumptions is quite extensive, this literature review will focus on several examples for each in order to provide a general overview of the research that relates to these assumptions.

Assumption that Revision Leads to Better Written Texts

One commonplace in current composition theory is the idea that revision always leads to “better” writing, and thus, revision is a necessary and valuable part of writing. This section examines the literature related to revision’s value to the writing process and the written product. The value of revision is discussed in the literature in diverse and sometimes contradictory ways.

Although focusing on revision is a commonplace in current composition pedagogy and theory, early scholars who focused on revision needed to advocate for revision’s importance within composition and its necessity to improving student writing.

As the literature on revision developed and the field of composition studies grew, revision's value came under question. By the 1980s, the debate was mostly resolved and revision emerged as a theoretical and cognitive aspect of writing that is integral to how writers write and to how instructors teach writing. This subsection examines the literature that helps us understand how revision was challenged as vital to producing good student writing and how it became a commonplace in composition theory.

There is a substantial amount of literature on revision that advocates for teaching revision to students. As early as 1950, George S. Wykoff suggests in "Suggestions for the Reading of Themes" that "emphasis must be constantly placed on students' reading, rereading, and revising of themes before they are turned in" (212). In 1952, J. H. McKee suggests that students should double-space their essays, so they have room to write revisions; he argued this would serve as a space and paper-saver (114). Lorraine K. Livingston also advocates for revision's value in 1956 by arguing that students should write "*fewer different themes*," and spend more time revising the themes they do write (170). In 1967, Howard A. VanDyk insists that any student can see the value of revision as it relates to the quality of her work: so long as they use his "structured, systematic approach" (736). Researchers in the field of revision are quick to advocate revision's power to help students improve their writing. As shown in the previous section, these researchers, like those listed above and those discussed later in this section, also promote their own teaching methods to show that, as the title of VanDyk's article suggests, when one teaches revision to students, "it works" (736).

Despite these scholars' positive views of revision, its value came under fire as the 1960s progressed into the 1970s, when researchers begin to question revision's importance in the writing classroom. During this time, scholars challenge revision on its primary tenet: that it improves the quality of writing. Because the researchers see students enacting revision as "editing," or revising for local changes, and not as "process," or revising for global changes, they question its inclusion in a writing curriculum. As early as 1962, R. Baird Shuman argues that while revision is necessary, students have a limited understanding of the term; they can "revise" simply by proofreading (14). As such, instructors need to carefully "diagnose" students' writing problems and define revision for them accordingly in order for students to produce "good writing" through revision (15).

In an extension of Shuman's claim, Sharon Crowley and Barbara Hansen doubt revision's value because they do not see students doing pre-writing or developing their ideas from draft to draft; they argue that students have a low commitment to writing and to revising to improve their work (Crowley 168). As Sharon Pianko found in "A Description of the Composing Processes of College Freshman Writers," students often do not approach writing with a well-developed plan in place. Crowley adds that students "don't see freewriting as a useful tool in the invention process" (167). Instead of students perceiving the writing process as recursive, Crowley finds that writing for students is either "automatic...or generated by the imposition of an organizational pattern" (167). First drafts also often look like the final drafts, with the same thesis statement and argument; Crowley finds that most students in her class use the "second, and final, draft

[as] ordinarily a neat re-copying of the first, with mechanical corrections” (167). Hansen extends Crowley’s argument to timed student writing. She points out that when students produce timed writing, even when allowed to revise, they do not use revision as a “process,” only as “fixing” (958).

Nancy Sommers and Betty Bamberg disagree with Crowley’s and Hansen’s assessments; they assert that scholars like Crowley and Hansen are looking at revision as a linear process. Sommers and Bamberg argue for revision as a recursive process, as opposed to a linear, editing-based writing strategy. Both Sommers and Bamberg remind readers that teaching students what revision should *do* is just as important as teaching revision at all. In other words, in order for students to enact successful revising strategies, teachers should center their revising pedagogy on global issues, such as focus, development, and analysis, as well as on writing as an act of discovery, as opposed to writing as an act of correctness.

The idea that revision’s value lies in what it *does* for students’ writing processes and the composing of student texts progressed throughout the 1970s. George Elliott’s 1969 article “Teaching Writing,” working within the expressivist movement of the 1960s, argues that “to teach writing is to help to rewrite” (131). Like Sommers and Bamberg, Elliott sees no difference between teaching writing and teaching revision. In this article, he considers the extent to which instructors and peers can legitimately provide constructive feedback for revision. Although Elliott believes that seeing “writing as organic” and “spontaneous” are helpful metaphors for writers, they leave little room for revising on the part of the student as they focus only on planting the “seed,” not the

seed's cultivation (131). These metaphors can help a writer get started, but not progress in the cultivation and development of an idea in essay form. Elliott instead prefers the metaphor of a puzzle "which can be assembled in more than one way, but in one way best" (131). In other words, it is important that the student learn to see the different ways her text can be manipulated and changed so that it expresses her idea most effectively.

The debate over revision's value diminishes over time as more scholars begin to examine its place in teaching writing and its ability to improve students' written texts. Although Crowley and Hansen might argue that "rewriting is a waste of time" (Hansen 956), Sommers' work ultimately refutes that claim in her advocacy for the importance of teaching revision as a recursive activity, and the need for more theoretical frameworks for revision. By the 1980s, researchers such as Lulu C.H. Sun and Jeffrey Carroll are working from the assumption that revision leads to "good writing" and building their research from this assumption. Today, the assumption that revision leads to better writing is a commonplace in composition pedagogy; as discussed in Chapter 1, nearly all of the readers and rhetorics for first-year writing include some discussion of revision, whether it be a few pages (e.g., *A Brief Guide to Writing from Readings*, by Stephen Wilhoit) or an entire text (e.g., *Rewriting*, by Joseph Harris).

*Assumption that Peer Feedback is a Vehicle to Enact Good Revising Practices and Better
Written Texts*

Like the assumption that revising leads to better writing, the idea that peer feedback is a necessary vehicle to students practicing good revision is a commonplace in

composition pedagogy and theory. This section examines the literature that focuses on that assumption through its analysis of peer feedback. Within the literature that assumes peer feedback is a vehicle to producing good revising practices, the literature that I review falls into the following categories:

- the impact of peer feedback for student revising practices
- pedagogical suggestions for integrating peer review more efficiently into students' revising practices
- the relation of peer feedback to collaborative writing.

By looking at these different categories, we can see how the assumption that peer feedback is a vital part of good revising practices developed, and how researchers have examined how peer feedback is, or can be, beneficial to student revising strategies.

As stated earlier in Chapter 1, as the 1970s and 1980s progressed, an abundance of literature emerged on the value of peer review groups in the writing classroom. This reinforcement of the positive impact of peer feedback on student writing resulted in the assumption that peer feedback is vital to enhancing students' abilities to utilize good revising practices and produce better written texts. For example, in "Collaboration is Not Collaboration: Writing Center Tutorials vs. Peer-Response Groups," Muriel Harris argued that peer collaboration helps students craft "evaluative responses or suggestions for revision while sharpening their own critical reading skills" (375). To help strengthen her claim, she cites a number of researchers who have also found peer response beneficial to student revising practices:

There have been reports that peer evaluation is as effective as teacher

evaluation (Beaven); that peer response results in a better sense of audience (Glassner; Kantor); that there are measurably better gains in writing proficiency when students work in response groups (Clifford; Karegianes et al.); and that, although students tend to make little use of comments in their revisions in the early stages, they do learn over time how to interact and how to be good critics (Ziv). (377)

In the above passage, Harris cites several scholars whose research helps to reinforce the assumption that peer feedback is important to students' revising practices.

Both Nina D. Ziv's text, *Peer Groups in the Composition Classroom: A Case Study*, and Benjamin M. Glassner's text, *Discovering Audience/Inventing Purpose: A Case Study of Revision in a Cooperative Writing Workshop*, rely on case studies to surface students' revising practices. Ziv's research reveals that the students are "not only able to pinpoint the problems [in a peer's text]; they were also able to offer solutions to them" (5). Glassner uses a case study of one student's development in a writing workshop in order to show how the "information [that student] had gained from the group discussion" granted the student "the freedom to use this knowledge to invent his own topic" (7). In both instances, the case studies demonstrate the importance of peer feedback in students' composing processes.

Some of the existing literature that connects peer feedback and student revising practices offers advice to writers on how to best solicit feedback that will impact the writers' abilities to successfully revise. For example, in *Writing without Teachers*, Peter Elbow offers a detailed description of how to set up a "teacherless writing class" (76) that

is beneficial for writers' writing and revising processes. Elbow suggests various exercises, such as "pointing," and "showing," to help readers give substantive feedback.⁷ Elbow asks that readers be as specific as possible in their feedback; he argues that readers must remember that they are discussing "what happened in [*them*] when [*they*] read the words *this time*" (85, emphasis Elbow's). For Elbow, the reader's perspective must be successfully conveyed to best help a writer revise a text.

Elbow provides further advice to both readers and writers to help maximize the writer's experience in peer review. He asks that readers give "specific reaction[s] to specific parts" (94), and that writers should understand that every reaction a reader may have is valid because it stems from that particular reader's experience (94). Elbow requests that writers be quiet and listen to the responses from their readers, to accept reader's responses, and look not only at what readers say, but how they say it (101-102). Most importantly, Elbow asks that writers "look to [readers] to find out about what your words make happen in real consciousness" (104). Elbow believes peer feedback can help writers understand how their writing impacts the worldview of others, that writers are responsible for listening to the voices of their peers, and that writers should understand how their writing affects their readers based on the readers' life experiences that they bring to the reading of the text.

⁷ These exercises include "Pointing," or indicating the words and phrases that stand out to the reader as important or necessary to understanding the text; "Summarizing," or briefly outlining the text, then summarizing in one sentence, one word from the text, and one word not in the text; "Telling," which is the reader's feedback given in narrative form; and "Showing," or using metaphors to help express a reader's abstract thoughts about the text (85-90).

Elbow does believe that if a writer is looking for something specific she should ask the readers about it; however, he does not advocate for being “leading” or too teacherly (105). Karen Spear, on the other hand, believes that student writers need to be more involved in the peer feedback process if they want their readers to perceive the feedback as necessary and potentially helpful. In her text *Sharing Writing: Peer Response Groups in English Classrooms*, Spear offers advice to help students best solicit feedback that will be helpful to them as writers. Spear’s text helps to further reaffirm the commonplace in composition studies that peer feedback offers benefits to students’ revising practices and students’ written text. Spear argues that peer feedback must meet four criteria in order to be effective:

- the writer must ask for it
- the feedback must focus on what the writer is capable of changing
- the feedback must be reinforcing
- the feedback must be empathetic. (141)

According to Spear, it is vital that student writers make specific requests of their peer reviewers. In order to elicit more specific responses, student writers must invite their readers to give feedback by actively seeking it. Spear argues that if students believe giving feedback means giving criticism, they are less likely to do so. On the other hand, when student writers invite their peers to give feedback, Spear believes that the student readers “are more likely to give honest and thoughtful responses” (142). Unlike Elbow, who asks writers to be passive and listen, Spear advocates for a more active writer, one who solicits the feedback she needs.

Despite the assumption that peer response is beneficial for students as they write and revise, several researchers also notice the seeming inability of students to give effective feedback. The next category of research on peer feedback reinforces the importance of peer feedback by offering classroom strategies to improve peer feedback instruction.

While this literature reinforces the above assumption, it assumes that students not only do not know how to conduct peer review, but that they also do not like to participate in peer review. In “Peer Response: Teaching Specific Revision Suggestions,” Gloria Neubert and Sally J. McNelis accept the assumption that students cannot give effective feedback by noting that the comments students receive are often “vague” and “rarely translate into effective revision” (52). They further affirm students’ dislike for peer feedback, writing that “students, too, complained about the writing responses, saying that their peers rarely offered substantial help with their writing” (52). These assumptions, coupled with a desire to help students embrace peer review and give constructive feedback, lead Neubert and McNelis to offer a specific strategy for helping student with peer review, which they call “PQP – Praise-Question-Polish.” They argue that their strategy helps students find something positive to praise first, ask questions based on points they did not understand, and then make “specific suggestions for improvement” (52). Neubert and McNelis believe that this strategy “helps students focus on the task at hand as well as maintain a positive attitude toward the critique process” (52). The student writers read their pieces aloud, and the reviewers give feedback using the Praise-Question-Polish model.

Neubert and McNelis' example is one method researchers suggest for improving approaches to teaching peer review; numerous scholars suggest other methods as well. For example, in Mara Holt's "The Value of Peer Written Criticism," she claims: "neither teacher nor student is taking peer criticism seriously as a writing exercise" (384). In order to help teachers and students approach peer feedback more critically, Holt creates a peer review model by combining exercises from Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff's *Sharing and Responding* with peer review assignments from Kenneth Bruffee's *A Short Course in Writing* (384). Holt chooses *Sharing and Responding* because of its dual focus on the writer as an individual and as part of "group interaction" (384). Holt theorizes that students could respond to each other through written or oral feedback to prompts such as "Sayback" or "Movies of the Reader's Mind"⁸ (385). Through Elbow and Belanoff's exercises, Holt states that students "gain a sense of play and inventiveness about their writing, and student responders learn that they have useful and creative things to say about their peers' work" (386). In other words, peer feedback gains constructive meaning for the students. Holt combines these exercises with assignments from Kenneth Bruffee's *A Short Course in Writing* that require students to write a series of descriptive outlines that are increasingly evaluative and in-depth in nature (386). By using student examples from a sample class, Holt argues that when combined, Elbow and Belanoff's exercises can provide an analytical, creative lens for peer feedback, while Bruffee's assignments help to make the peer feedback both critical and constructive.

⁸ "Sayback" can be defined as a peer feedback method in which the reader "says back" to the writer in her own words what she hears in the author's writing. "Movies of the Reader's Mind" is a method where the reader describes what happens inside her head as she reads the author's text (Elbow "Sharing" 8).

As composition studies relies more on technology, peer feedback has also made the transition to an online space. For example, in Debbie Perry's and Mike Smithmier's article "Peer Editing with Technology: Using the Computer to Create Substantive Feedback," they argue that teaching students electronic techniques for peer feedback in high school better prepares students for integration of writing and technology on the college level (23). Perry and Smithmier create a model using Microsoft Word 2000's Track Changes option⁹ to help students peer review each other's work. The students comment on each other's drafts in the classroom, and print out drafts with the comments and changes highlighted. Perry and Smithmier believe this technique has two benefits: first, the instructors can keep track of the comments students make on each other papers; and second, students can keep track of their drafts and types of comments they receive to help them better identify areas of strength and weakness (24). Integrating technology into the peer review process can also enable students to comment on each other's work from home, thus allowing time in the classroom to focus more on revising strategies. This transition to an online space for peer feedback moves peer review into a new realm for students. This reaffirms the idea that peer feedback is important to students' development as writers, and that students need to be taught to give constructive feedback no matter the medium.

In addition to providing teaching strategies for implementing peer review, scholars also stress the important role of audience in creating effective peer review practices. Some scholars argue that teaching students to both write for and read as a

⁹ For Word 2007 for a PC, this feature has been changed to be part of the Reviewing Toolbar. For Word 2008 for a Mac, this feature is part of the Tools option.

particular audience is an important part of the development as writers, readers, and thinkers. For example, Peter Smagorinsky, in his article “The Aware Audience: Role-Playing Peer-Response Groups,” advocates for role-playing in peer review groups, in order to “help students develop a sense of the particular characteristics of certain audiences” (35). Peer feedback typically seeks to help students meet the requirements of an assignment, meaning that it still operates within a single-person audience (the instructor). Smagorinsky asks high school students to extend beyond the teacher-as-audience and imagine that they are a college admissions committee evaluating the application essays of their peers. The students “examine a set of documents [provided by the guidance department] in small groups to identify” the characteristics that different types of colleges may look for in an application essay (36). When the students submit their essays for review, the students use the characteristics they have identified from the materials in order to determine which students would be accepted into an honors program, which students would be accepted, which students would be wait-listed, and which students would be rejected. Students could then use the feedback they receive from these sessions to revise and resubmit their essays for further consideration (37). Smagorinsky argues that role-playing can aid in students’ abilities to write for audiences beyond the instructor, and help them re-see their writing from their audience’s perspective (38).

In Thomas Newkirk’s article “Direction and Misdirection in Peer Response,” he also examines the idea of peers-as-audience by seeking to complicate assumptions about

instructor and peer feedback. Through this study, Newkirk hopes to address three research questions:

1. Do instructors in Freshman English give four selected papers evaluations that differ significantly from evaluations given by students in Freshman English?
2. Are instructors in Freshman English able to predict the differences between their evaluations and the students' evaluations?
3. What are the reasons for the different evaluations? (301)

In order to answer these questions, Newkirk selects ten Freshman English instructors and ten students currently enrolled in Freshman English.¹⁰ The participants met with Newkirk individually, during which time they read and reviewed four student papers. Newkirk then interviewed them about their evaluations. The participants were asked to rate the essays individually on a scale of one to ten, and as a group from a scale of one to four.

Based on the findings from his data, Newkirk hypothesizes that students and instructors differ significantly in their evaluations of two of the four student essays they were asked to read. He notes that while instructors are able to correctly identify some of the differences in the rankings, they are unable to predict how different their evaluations would be from the students.

Newkirk claims that there are several main reasons for these findings. The first is that the identity of the writer matches most closely with the student's identity. Because the writers are discussing experiences that the students in the study may relate to, the

¹⁰ These ten students were selected from a group of twenty student volunteers whose work had been rated by their instructors based on their abilities, and Newkirk states that he chose "three students rated in the top third, four rated in the middle third, and three rated in the bottom third" in order to ensure a variety of writing abilities (302).

student evaluators are better able to identify with the writers. When this is the case, the students' "willingness to identify with the author is a powerful determiner of student response" (304), as is a student's appreciation of a topic (308). However, Newkirk points out that this kind of identification is absent from the teacher comments (305). Newkirk also observes that where instructors find concepts "simple" because they expect more explanation in a student's piece of writing, the students find these same concepts "complex" because they "are more willing to do some of this elaboration *as readers*" (306, original emphasis). Students also appreciated "originality" in a different way than the instructors; whereas the instructors felt that using a baseball team metaphor to discuss friendship was limiting, the students believed it broadened how they might define friendship themselves (307).

Based on these findings, Newkirk suggests that teachers need to carefully consider the extent to which they encourage students to "write for their peers," especially if instructors hold an authoritative stance and see themselves as the main audience for student writers (309). Newkirk argues that students "need more practice applying the criteria they are learning," and that teachers need to take a more active role in peer review to help students effectively utilize the evaluative criteria they are expected to learn (310).

Smagorisky's and Newkirk's findings suggest that students benefit from approaching writing as a collaborative act. In Smagorinsky's research, he finds that students can benefit from role-playing in order to more effectively evaluate each other's written texts. Similarly, Newkirk finds that students are willing to "write for their peers" but that instructors need to consider how students assess each other's writing and how

they can teach students to use the instructor's criteria when reviewing peers' essays (Newkirk 309). The idea that writing should involve collaboration is a much-researched aspect of composition studies; among its leading scholars are Elbow, Bruffee, and Trimbur. This section will not try to cover all aspects of this research, but rather focus on several representative articles that demonstrate the field's assessment of peer feedback and collaborative learning.

Noreen M. Webb explores the assumptions held about collaborative work in "Student Interaction and Learning in Small Groups." Although Webb does not focus specifically on the composition classroom, her conclusions are easily applicable to it. By examining a series of studies that focus on group interaction, Webb examines the relationship between small group interaction and achievement. Webb finds that in order for students to have a positive experience in group interaction, all participants need to be actively involved, and willing to both give and receive help (427). For example, Webb cites five examples of mathematics group work where the students "who gave explanations of how to complete the task showed higher achievement than students who did not actively engage in group interaction, even when the ability level was held constant" (425). Webb notes that student participation in general, such as utterances, is not enough to determine the success of a group; students need to show that they are willing to help their peers and accept the help of their peers, in turn, in order to succeed. This affirms Karen Spear's argument in *Sharing Writing* that in order for peer feedback to be useful for student writers, all members of the group must be involved and willing to give and receive help.

Richard Gebhardt makes the direct connection between peer feedback and collaborative writing in his article “Teamwork and Feedback: Broadening the Base of Collaborative Writing.” As Gebhardt argues: “Feedback, in fact, can almost be considered *the* base of collaborative writing because it allows all the other principles to work” (69). Gebhardt uses the theoretical underpinnings of collaborative writing (audience, transference, and peer influence) to deconstruct the notion that a writer must write alone to be successful. Gebhardt claims that students must learn to see they are *not* alone as writers, and that the emotional, supportive aspect of collaborative writing can help students become better, more confident writers. As such, Gebhardt argues for integrating collaborative work into the early stages of drafting, such as “finding a promising topic, generating details on the topic, and locating the intended purpose for a paper” (73). Gebhardt believes that if students work together on crafting their essays, they can find the emotional support they lack when working on a paper alone, and this will help improve their writing.

One way a teacher can begin to implement successful collaborative work in the composition classroom is through the teacher’s ability to fulfill a variety of roles. Harvey S. Wiener’s article “Collaborative Learning in the Classroom” offers some models for these roles. He argues that the teacher must be willing to be a “task setter” and “classroom manager” who creates “quality” tasks for the students to work on together and attempt to reach a consensus (54). As the task setter, instructors should hold students responsible for the work they do collaboratively by asking students to write down their discussions and then to evaluate that work (55). He also argues that instructors should

model the type of conversations they hope students will have in their groups, that instructors should carefully craft collaborative tasks so that students have specific guidelines and a strong idea of what they should produce as a group (56), and that instructors need to monitor group activity by circulating among the groups and joining in the various conversations. Finally, Wiener points out that teachers need to synthesize the information from the small groups into a class conversation that teases out conflicts and ask students to reflect on the collaborative process by considering its usefulness to their classroom work, such as essay revising.

Much of the research on collaborative learning in the composition classroom is based on case studies and instructor's own teaching experiences; however, John Clifford's "Composing in Stages: the Effects of a Collaborative Pedagogy" conducts an experiment with college freshmen to connect collaborative learning with improvement in student written texts. Clifford creates a pedagogical model that combines process and collaboration that he calls "collaborative composing" and hypothesizes that "an instructional method that divides the composing process into discrete stages *in a collaborative environment* will help college freshmen improve their writing performance more than a traditional method" (40, emphasis mine). In order to determine the extent to which collaborative composing impacts students' ability to produce good written texts, Clifford creates control (traditional lecture) and experimental (collaborative composing) groups of students for his study. Both classes had similar course objectives (43).

The same instructors taught both the control and experimental classes; the instructors were each randomly assigned two classes, then "flipped a coin to determine

which class would receive the collaborative composing approach” (41). Instructors of the control (traditional) sequence created classwork based on the review of grammar, assigned readings, lectures by the instructor (called “direct instruction”), and instructor analyses of student work (43-44). Instructors relied on the course readings and dittos to lecture on “the patterns, strategies, and conventions of traditional rhetoric, including the four forms of discourse, paragraph structure, organizational schema, and stylistic emphasis on clarity, coherence, and specificity” (44). In the control group, students had little, if any, interaction with each other; the instructors did use student work, but as a means to point out errors to the students (44). On the other hand, instructors of the experimental (collaborative composing) sequence based classwork on brainstorming of ideas, freewriting, small group interaction, summary and presentation of ideas to the class, the creation of a zero draft, and small group response to the zero draft (42-43). Assignments in the treatment classroom ranged from brainstorming, to freewriting, to small group interaction and response (42). Whereas instructors dominated course instruction in the control groups, the students in the experimental group worked together either as a class or in small groups on each aspect of the composing process.

Clifford collected writing samples from the beginning and the end of the semester, as well as the results from *Cooperative English Tests Form 1A and 1B*, a placement exam for students entering college. Students wrote on two topics, one at the beginning and the other at the end of the semester: “a game from the childhood” and “a friend from their past,” which Clifford says are “matched topics” that were developed based on the “primary form of discourse in the syllabus” (41). Clifford collected a total of

184 writing samples from the students that were scored both holistically against criteria developed by “three previously trained specialist” and grammatically (Clifford 41).

Clifford finds statistically significant differences between the post-test scores of the treatment group students and the control group students. For example, Clifford finds that the experiment class increased its average score on the post-test from 4.32 to 5.18, while the control class increased its average score from 4.51 to 5.15. Although both classes improved their scores, the treatment class had an overall higher increase, by .43 (46). Clifford presented his data in a series of tables that indicate students in the treatment classroom had “greater gains” in their “writing performance” than students in the direction instruction class (50). He attributed this to “the effectiveness of collaborative composing” (50). Clifford concludes that students whose composing process is divided into steps that involve collaborating with peers showed more improvement in their written texts than students who received that Clifford calls “direct instruction,” or instruction and feedback from the teacher only. Thus, Clifford’s study confirms the value of process-based, collaborative activities in the writing class. The replicability of Clifford’s experimental study also helps to affirm that collaborative learning can, indeed, improve students’ revising practices and written texts.

As Clifford’s study reveals, the available research does suggest that there is a strong connection between students in collaborative learning environments enacting both good revising practices and written texts. More generally, the research connecting peer feedback and collaborative writing also stresses the idea that collaboration can help students become successful writers and revisers. For example, in Benjamin Glassner’s

case study *Discovering Audience/Inventing Purpose: A Case Study of Revision in a Cooperative Writing Workshop* (also discussed earlier in this chapter), students consider their peers to be their audience, and spend time in small groups discussing and developing essay ideas and essay drafts. Glassner finds that “students’ processes in the workshop setting seem to better reflect those of mature writers than those of students in traditional classrooms which teach the conventions of a discourse and subsequently assign topics” (2). Mara Holt reaffirms the benefits of combining collaborative writing and peer feedback: “In part through the peer-review process the student in a collaborative classroom finds her identity as a writer not just in imitating models, but in the way we who publish in the disciplines do – by negotiating with peers” (392). Collaborative learning and peer feedback can help students to not only develop their writing skills, but can also help them locate their writerly identity as a member of a first-year writing course, and potentially beyond to other courses they may take in their college career.

The research on collaborative writing considers how and why students are more successful writers when they collaborate. The research on revision pedagogy also largely reinforces the assumption that composition studies holds about the value of peer feedback as a vehicle to improving students’ written texts. However, as Newkirk’s article points out, instructors need to be more aware of how their feedback can impact their students’ revising practices. The last section of this chapter examines the revision literature that relies on the assumption that instructor feedback is a necessary vehicle to students enacting good revising practices.

*Assumption that Instructor Feedback is a Vehicle to Enact Good Revising Practices and
Better Written Texts*

The literature in this section examines suggested methods for giving more effective teacher feedback, and considers the implications of the type of feedback teachers give. While the literature on teaching practices is told largely from the researcher-teacher subject-position, the literature on instructor feedback includes texts written by both researchers and researcher-teachers. The variety of voices that make up this literature allows for a more objective analysis of instructor feedback, and offers a more analytical perspective on the value of instructor feedback. In some cases, scholars provide teachers with pedagogical strategies; in other cases, the instructor comments are the focus of the research.

Some of the literature that assumes teacher feedback is a valuable resource for student revision practices focuses on how instructors can improve their responses to student writing. These researchers point out how instructors can either encourage or discourage their students with regards to revising. They show where instructors criticize instead of praise, or where they comment on the grammar, as opposed to the content, of a paper. Nina D. Ziv and Donald Daiker, in “The Effect of Teacher Comments on the Writing of Four College Freshmen” and “Learning to Praise” respectively, examine the comments teachers write on students’ papers, and assess the comments in term of focus (content vs. surface) and attitude (positive vs. negative).

Ziv’s research works from the idea that teachers comment on the final product of a student’s written text “and consider these comments to be evaluations of their students’

work” (362). In this model of commenting on essays, Ziv argues that teachers act as judges and assume that, through their comments, “students will learn what ‘good writing’ is” (362). Ziv points out that oftentimes, even though students may read comments, they may not have the opportunity to act on them by writing subsequent drafts (362). Ziv’s research aims to determine the effects of “teacher comments on successive drafts of student compositions” in order to determine what types of responses are the most effective, and thus “begin to develop a model of teacher intervention” (363). Ziv utilizes the case study method, and four students enrolled in her Expository Writing classes – two male and two female – are her participants. She asks the participants to engage in think-aloud protocols in which they react to the comments on the second drafts of their essays, and then take the papers home to revise. Ziv asks the participants to repeat this exercise for all six essay assignments; for the first assignment, Ziv remains in the room to prompt students to make comments, and for the other five, students conduct the think-aloud protocols at home.

Ziv then analyzes the data: the comments she made on the students’ papers, the students’ reactions to the comments, and the students’ revisions of their final drafts. Based on her analysis, Ziv creates a taxonomy of teacher comments “by inductively sorting [her] own comments into various categories” (368). Ziv uses this schema to exemplify the types of comments teachers might make on student essays. Ziv’s taxonomy breaks down teacher comments into two categories, explicit and implicit; each has a macro and micro level:

- Explicit and Implicit Comments on a macro level:

- Are conceptual and indicate a suggestion regarding the paper's overall concept
- Are structural and indicate overall structural suggestions, such as the connection between concept and organization
- Explicit and Implicit Comments on a micro level:
 - Are sentential
 - Are lexical. (368-369)

Ziv also breaks down the student responses into several categories:

- Perceives teacher intention
- Does not perceive teacher intention
- Explains own intention
- Suggests course of action. (370)

Finally, Ziv creates a taxonomy for the types of changes students made to their essays based on the teacher comments and the students' reactions to those comments. Like teacher comments, Ziv also bases the changes students make to their essays on a macro and micro level:

- Student changes to essays on a macro level:
 - Are conceptual, where students integrate or revise the global content of the paper
 - Are structural, where students make changes to the overall organization and content of the paper based on adding/deleting large sections

- Student changes to essays on a micro level:
 - Are sentential
 - Are lexical. (370-371)

Based on her analysis of these taxonomies, Ziv finds that the participants, who she categorizes as “inexperienced revisers, responded favorably to the explicit cues in which [she] gave them specific suggestions about how they could strengthen or reorganize the ideas” of their papers (372). Explicit cues helped her students make “major conceptual revisions” (373). Implicit cues were also helpful on the level of global revision but on not the local level. Ziv discovers that the participants “frequently did not recognize” problems in their writing on a sentential or lexical level when asked questions such as, “Can you rephrase this?” (373). Ultimately, Ziv finds that if instructors want to make comments that are helpful to inexperienced revisers (which freshman composition students often are), instructors need to offer suggestions for revision more explicitly and directly, and build toward implicit comments as the students develop as writers and become more experienced with revision.

Donald Daiker applies Ziv’s taxonomy to his analysis of teacher comments in his essay “Learning to Praise.” Daiker uses this framework to show how instructors currently comment on student papers. He offers suggestions as to how instructors can respond in a manner that is more conducive to positive student progress in revision, by not “marking every writing error” and by using “praise and positive reinforcement” in comments (104). Daiker studies the comments of twenty-four instructors on one student essay, and discovers that the instructors found more errors than they did elements of the paper to

praise, especially on the sentential and lexical level. While Daiker argues that “college composition teachers find error more attractive than excellence” (103), Ziv theorizes that students read teacher comments as evaluative, and not as the comments of an interested reader.

Both Ziv and Daiker suggest that teachers need a model to help them make comments that will result in students elaborating on their ideas and revising beyond surface changes. They each use their research findings to make suggestions for improving teacher comments. Both argue that teachers need to change the type of comments they make on students’ papers: Daiker argues for more praise, while Ziv advocates for more explicit cues to help students understand and enact their teachers’ suggestions for revising. In both cases, the researchers did find that teacher comments impact student writers; however, while Daiker sees the negative comments as impacting students’ self-esteem in writing, making them less likely to want to write, Ziv finds that students listen less to the questions and implicit cues teachers offer and more to the corrections. Both researchers remind us of the tremendous impact teacher feedback has on students’ abilities to revise; theoretically, more praise and more explicit cues could help students want to improve their papers through revision.

Like Ziv and Daiker, Robert Connors and Andrea Lunsford examine teacher comments on papers; in their article “Teachers’ Rhetorical Comments on Student Papers,” they use textual analysis to uncover the types of comments teachers make. Connors and Lunsford look at the percentage of comments that focus on content changes, and the rhetoric of those content-based comments (206). Connors and Lunsford found

that out of 3000 papers examined by “26 experienced writing teachers and eager readers” (206), including themselves, 77% of those papers had content and/or rhetorical comments (207). They also found that teachers struggle to make wholly positive comments (210), and that teachers tend to address both rhetorical and grammatical elements (211).

Connors and Lunsford offer a more hopeful picture of teacher comments than Daiker or Ziv. They argue that “teachers are genuinely involved in trying to help their students with rhetorical issues in the writing” and that “more comments were made on the traditional rhetorical issues of supporting details/examples and general organization than were made on smaller-scale issues” (218). Connors and Lunsford find that teachers make rhetorical comments despite that fact that other issues, such as workload, might impede the process. Notwithstanding the potential benefits of the type of comments Connors and Lunsford find, the researchers do worry that instructors may not see their comments as valuable. Like Ziv, Connors and Lunsford also claim that teachers may “perceive that their comments *don’t count*,” teachers may believe that students either “ignore them,” or that institutional forms of grading require teachers to put a grade on a paper, which may mitigate more open communication between teachers and students (219).

The literature on instructor feedback surfaces the impact instructor comments can have on students’ attitudes toward writing and revising. Because students are less interested in teacher’s responses as genuine readers, and more in their responses as critics and graders, students are more apt to utilize direct comments. Ziv argues that teachers can take advantage of this by making their cues more explicit; for example, an instructor might be better served to simply state “needs transition” before briefly explaining a

transition's function in an essay. Daiker adds to this point by arguing that these comments need to be couched in positive feedback; in order for students to internalize and utilize teacher comments, instructors need to show students what they are doing well, and give specific comments as to how they can improve.

Conclusion: Complicating Assumptions about Revision

Despite the emergence of revision as a viable, researchable, aspect of the writing process, in a speech given at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in 1987, later published as "Between the Drafts" in 1992 (*CCC*), Nancy Sommers believes that, despite the "celebrity" status of revision, its "pedagogies and research methods [rest] on some shaky, unquestioned assumptions" (26). Sommers identifies her own early assumptions that she now sees as problematic in the field: first, that revision always equals improvement, and second, that revision always leads to clarity (26). She believes these two assumptions must be questioned in order to provide a more complete, multifaceted picture of revision.

In "Between the Drafts," Sommers attempts to explore the two assumptions she has found in revision literature by making the argument for the importance of "listening." She argues that writers, even when they revise, take on an "impersonal voice" that is more based in scholarly research instead of "listening" to their own voices (27). This voice can be in danger of being "inherited," or can rely too heavily on sources other than the writer's own voice, as opposed discovering and trusting one's own voice (27). Sommers warns against becoming too engrossed in theorizing, too engrossed in the

research, or too engrossed in the assumptions we hold about revision. As she argues, it is “between the drafts” where writing happens, where researchers need to listen to their own voices, as well as those of their participants. By asking students and instructors to reflect on what happens “between the drafts,” part of my goal in this dissertation is to heed Sommers’ warning to not “disguise myself behind the authority of ‘the researcher;’” I instead hope to trust “my own authority” and the authority of my participants (27).

In reviewing the scholarship on revision, two main gaps can be identified. The first important factor that has been largely left out of revision scholarship, save for the work of Nancy Sommers, is the student. Researchers and scholars debate *how* students revise, but not *what* students *think* about revising; if we recast this within the framework of Sommers’ argument in “Between the Drafts,” researchers spend too much time theorizing, and not enough time listening. Scholars investigating revision, more often than not, focus on the changes that students make on papers and analyze the quality of those changes as surface, content, and writerly changes as they occur on micro and macro levels. These scholars approach revision reductively by focusing only on students’ written texts. Although Sommers first made the argument for “listening” in 1992, in 2006 she still laments the fact that her own research, and the research of others, has for years largely ignored student voices. In “Across the Drafts,” Sommers writes: “I feel the absence of any ‘real’ students who, through voice, expertise, and years of being responded to, could offer their teachers valuable lessons” (248). Sommers’ recognition of this continued omission is relevant because it shows her belief that students, too, should

have a voice when it comes to determining how they perceive and practice revision and how they respond to instructors' teaching practices when it comes to revision.

A second important factor in revision scholarship that has been largely ignored is the instructor. While Sommers argues for the importance of listening to students, it is also vital to listen to instructor voices. Most research on revision is conducted from the subject-position of researcher-teacher, where the researcher is also the teacher of the studied students. There is little research that adds instructors' independent voices to the picture of how revision is taught, and more importantly, addresses the impact of the instructor and classroom practices on student revising strategies. In this dissertation, I allow instructors to reflect on their revision goals and teaching practices, and the extent to which these goals were enacted in their teaching.

This dissertation aims to fill both these gaps and complicate the assumptions made regarding revision's value and the value of peer and instructor feedback in enacting successful revision. First, it seeks to answer Sommers' lament in "Across the Drafts" by giving the "real" students a voice in this study. Based on what Sommers calls students' "expertise, and years of being responded to," I too believe that students "could offer their teachers valuable lessons." I wish to allow students to reflect on their own revising experiences in their composition courses by asking them to consider how teaching practices such as peer review, instructor feedback, and classroom activities influence their perceptions about the value of revision. Second, by giving instructors access to my research on their classes, instructors can also reflect on that data. This inclusion privileges the instructor's voice for the first time. I have compiled and juxtaposed these

voices to surface a new trajectory in revision research: the extent to which classroom practices influences students' revising methods.

In this chapter I have reviewed the extensive literature on revision taxonomies, the origins of student difficulties with revision, process models, and revision pedagogy. I identified the underlying assumptions in revision pedagogy, and the desire to craft models that will lead to more effective strategies for teaching revision. One of my goals is to complicate the assumptions underlying revision pedagogy by privileging student and teacher voices, thus granting them the power to speak to these assumptions themselves.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

The Study

This study is based on the analysis of case studies of three freshman composition classes at a midsize Midwestern university. I conducted the case studies in order to explore the extent to which teachers' revision pedagogies impact students' revising practices and production of written texts. Specifically, the case studies explore the following questions:

- How do instructors' teaching practices influence students' revising strategies? And, how do these strategies change from the beginning of the quarter to the end?
- How do students and instructors perceive peer feedback as a part of revision?
- How do students and instructors perceive instructor feedback, at any stage in composing, as a part of revision?

Participants and Setting

Although this dissertation is primarily constructed as a series of case studies, it is still important to provide "adequate detail about the specific research techniques" I employed, and how I proceeded with the research (Maxwell 91). These strategies enable this study to be replicated, and are provided in the following sections, as well in the appendices.

Approximately 100 students enrolled in freshman composition at a midsize Midwestern university, during the fall quarter of 2008, participated in this study. The university is a public university with approximately 17,500 undergraduate students and 3,800 graduate students enrolled at the time of the study (*College Portrait*). First-year students take this particular first-year composition course in order to fulfill their first-year composition requirement.¹¹ In each section of this first-year writing course, students must demonstrate the rhetorical competencies established by the English Department in order to pass.¹² The freshman composition course has a class size of 20 students; the class sizes of these six classes approximately matched that number.

In order to obtain willing participants in this study, I emailed first-year composition instructors with a brief description of the study, as well as a description of the data I would be collecting from both students and instructors, and asked if they would be willing to participate. This particular first-year writing course is one that first-year Teaching Associates (graduate students who also teach) in the English department are required to teach at the university. I did not want to ask first-year graduate students to participate, so I limited my requests to advanced graduate students and faculty.

Instructors who agreed to participate became part of the study; there were five instructors

¹¹ The freshman composition classes in this study also comprised only of native speakers of English. Because the university offers an alternative composition class for non-native speakers it is rare to have non-native English speakers in sections of this first-year composition class.

¹² Please see Appendix A for a complete list of these rhetorical competencies.

for six classes.¹³ The instructors were either graduate students or adjunct faculty. They ranged in age from approximately 30-60 years, and had between approximately two and ten years of previous experience teaching writing. In this dissertation, I present case studies from three of the six classes. The three classes featured as case studies were selected based on the analysis of the student surveys: one class had the lowest number of students who believed their definition of revision changed during the first-year writing class; one class had the highest number of students who believed their definition of revision changed, and one class fell in between the two.

All interviews with students and faculty, except for one,¹⁴ were conducted in study rooms at the university library. Students were chosen for the interviews based on recommendations from their instructors. I asked each instructor for a list of at least five students that might be good candidates for an interview, and then contacted the students directly. The students could choose whether or not they wanted to participate; also, although the faculty supplied me with students' names, they did not know which students I contacted, nor did they know which students agreed to be interviewed. One instructor, Liza, requested that I visit her class to recruit volunteers. She offered the students bonus points for signing up, but she and I decided that the students did not have to agree to the interview in order to receive the points. This also helped to insure the students' anonymity.

¹³ One participant requested that I study both her classes, which used an identical syllabus.

¹⁴ Susan could not be interviewed on campus due to scheduling conflicts, so I interviewed her at her home.

Data Collection

This section introduces the type of materials collected for this dissertation. I collected materials from both students and instructors (see table 3.1).

Table 3.1

Materials Collected from Students and Instructors

Data Collected from Students	Data Collected from Instructors
Survey distributed at the beginning of the quarter (Weeks 1 and 2)	Survey distributed at the end of the quarter
Survey distributed at the end of the quarter (Weeks 9 and 10)	Interviews with all three instructors, conducted during the following quarter
First drafts of all major essays	Follow-up emails based on further analysis of data
Final drafts of all major essays	Syllabi from each instructor
Interviews with six volunteer students – three from Liza’s class, two from Susan’s class, one from Ray’s class – conducted during Weeks 9 and 10 of the quarter	Additional class materials, such as peer review sheets

From the students, I collected surveys, first and final drafts of student essays, and taped interviews. I distributed one survey to the students at the beginning of the term, during either Week 1 or Week 2, and one survey at the end of the term, during either Week 9 or Week 10.¹⁵ The surveys were a combination of single-answer multiple-choice questions, multiple-answer multiple-choice questions, and short-answer questions. The surveys attempted to understand students’ definitions of revision, the extent to which those definitions changed, as well as their revising practices. These practices could include activities the students did in class (such as peer review), services students utilized

¹⁵ Please see Appendix B for the surveys I distributed to students at the beginning of the quarter and end of the quarter.

outside class (such as the Student Writing Center), and their own revising practices (such as the number of drafts they wrote, as well as what they focused on when they revised a draft).¹⁶ The introductory survey was 15 questions. The concluding survey had 18 questions.¹⁷

For each survey and essay draft, I asked for the students' participation.¹⁸ I reminded the students who I was and about my project; I also explained the purpose of the project. At each visit, I went over how to fill out the identification forms with the students in order to insure anonymity. I also reminded students that they could choose not to participate in the study. Surveys were distributed to students during classtime, without the instructor present. I also collected essay drafts during class periods. In all cases, I was invited by the instructor to visit the class. I distributed instructor surveys at the end of the quarter at the same time as I distributed the student surveys. Instructors had the option of giving me the survey directly, or putting it in my box in the English department.

The student survey consisted of questions that invited students to consider their revising strategies and the influence of the instructor's teaching practices on those

¹⁶ As students can now revise as they write more freely due to word processing, the idea of a draft has become more nebulous. However, because instructors typically refer to drafts as completion of some version of a text that students bring to class for revising purposes, I imagined that students would answer this question based on the "completion" of a full draft, as opposed to revising as they write.

¹⁷ For both the introductory and concluding survey, the students had the option to fill out the survey and give permission for me to use it as data. They could also elect to not fill out the survey, or to fill out the survey and not give permission for me to use it as data. In compliance with the Institutional Review Board, students under the age of 18 were not permitted to fill out the survey or participate in the study.

¹⁸ Please see Appendix D for the speech I gave to the students when I visited their class for the first time.

strategies. While the surveys distributed at the beginning and end of the quarter contained largely the same questions, I did utilize questions that took into consideration the students' specific situations as writers at the beginning and end of their freshman composition experience. For example, because students were new to their freshman composition courses at the beginning of the quarter, I asked students to consider:

- Previous experiences in English classes as potential influences on their definition of revision
- Previous in-class activities that the students found beneficial

On the survey I distributed at the end of the quarter, when students had more experience with college writing, I asked students to consider:

- Their definition of revision and if it had changed over the quarter
- Specific in-class activities that might have helped students with their revising practices
- Specific outside class activities that might have helped students with their revising practices

In the case studies and the analysis chapters of this study, I will refer to the students' survey short answers by their instructor's first initial and the subject number generated by the students to protect their anonymity. The subject number generator was adapted from a generator used by the university's psychology department; it asks students to add the last four digits of their social security number, their birthday, and the number of letters in their mother's first name. This created a subject number specific to each

student that would also protect the students' identities. For example, L3164 refers to the student from Liza's class whose subject number is 3164.¹⁹

In addition to the survey, I collected drafts of the major papers from all the students. Students gave me copies of the first and final drafts they wrote for each paper; I received three first drafts and three final drafts from each student. I used the essay drafts as a way to generate conversation in the interviews about students' revising practices. The essay drafts helped create a fuller portrait of how the students in each class revise. Because some students were not present at the time I collected certain drafts, those students were dropped from the study. In the three classes used for this dissertation, 52 students submitted all materials.

Finally, I asked students to volunteer to participate in interviews.²⁰ As discussed earlier, in order to recruit students for the interview, I either asked the instructors to recommend students, or I visited the classes and asked for volunteers. The students who agreed to be interviewed display a wide range of writing abilities and attitudes toward the writing process; five female students and one male student agreed to participate. The interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes, and were conducted in either Week 9 or Week 10 of the quarter. All the students chose their own pseudonyms for this study. It is important to note that, because the students self-selected into the study, they are not a representative sample of the student population for these three classes. In addition, the

¹⁹ Please see Appendix E for the subject number calculation form students attached to each survey and essay draft they submitted for the study.

²⁰ Please see Appendix F for the student and instructor interview permission forms.

participation of only one male student is also limiting, as male students may have offered different insights into the instructor's teaching practices.

The interviews with the students were somewhat structured in order to insure that I covered the same subjects with each student participant. I went into each interview with a list of questions and topics to cover, such as the students' drafts and their writing process for each paper they wrote for their composition class.²¹ However, I used a congenial manner to put the students at ease at the beginning of each interview. The students were almost all first-quarter freshman (Claus was the only sophomore I interviewed), so I asked about their major, their classwork and final exams. I also asked about previous writing experiences, as well as for a brief assessment of the composition course the student was enrolled in. I used some of this data in my analysis. Later in the interviews, I focused more on process-based questions, which asked the students to consider the connection between the way class was conducted and their own writing and revising practices. During the interviews, students were given the opportunity to reflect on the choices they made in revising their essays, their responses to the survey, and the impact their English course had on their writing and revising practices. I transcribed these interviews for use in data analysis. By including students' voices, I hoped that the interviews would broaden and deepen our understanding of how students decide what they value in their writing and revising.

In addition to student materials, I also collected materials from the instructors. From the instructors, I collected surveys, classroom materials such as syllabi and peer

²¹ For a list of interview topics for both the students and instructors, please see Appendix G.

review forms, and taped interviews. The instructor survey is similar to the student survey distributed at the end of the quarter.²² By asking the instructors to complete a survey similar to that of the students, my intention was to determine the extent to which students and instructors share similar beliefs on revising practices by the end of the quarter. I also wanted to determine how students and instructors believe coursework influences students' definition of revision and revising practices.

In order to provide a more complete portrait of the three classes in this case study, I asked instructors to submit a copy of their course syllabus prior to our interview. Having the syllabus ahead of time allowed me to compare the students' survey responses to particular elements of the course, such as peer review or class activities. Depending on the student survey responses and the content of the student and instructor interviews, I also asked some instructors to submit additional materials, such as peer review forms, to help me better understand particular aspects of the course.

Finally, I asked the instructors to participate in interviews. All instructors volunteered to be interviewed. The instructor interviews lasted approximately 45-60 minutes and took place in winter quarter 2009, after I tabulated the survey results from the students in their classes. The instructor interviews were also somewhat structured in order to insure that I covered the same topics with each instructor. In the interview, I asked the instructors to give a sense of how classwork such as informal writing built into the formal writing assignments. The instructors and I reviewed the results from the student surveys and the instructors' own survey responses. We discussed connections the

²² Please see Appendix C for the complete instructor survey.

instructor perceived between classwork, the student responses, and students' revising practices. As discussed at the end of Chapter 2, very little of the literature on revision surfaces teacher voices in this way; instead, the researcher-teacher voice is the dominant voice. My goal is to place instructor voices alongside student voices in order to gain a deeper understanding of how teaching practices impact student attitudes toward writing and revising. Doing this allowed me to analyze the data in a wide variety of ways.

Data Analysis

The data collected for this study included the student and instructor surveys, the first and final drafts of students' essay, the student and instructor interviews, and instructor class materials, such as syllabi. I analyzed the data from these materials in the following ways.

Analysis of Student Surveys

The multiple-choice questions on the student surveys were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (SPSS). These multiple-choice questions asked students to either pick the best, single answer for each question, or allowed students to choose from a variety of possible answers.

For multiple-choice questions where students could only choose one answer, I used SPSS in order to generate means. Using the Paired-Samples T-Test from the Compare Means function in SPSS, I derived and compared means for the multiple-choice questions that were the same on the introductory and concluding surveys. The paired

samples gave me both the mean and the standard deviation from the mean. The questions with different means were discussed with the instructors during the interviews, and were used in analysis of the case studies. It is important to note that each class did not have the same results for each of the paired samples. In my interviews with the instructors, I sometimes discussed the presence, or the lack, of change for particular paired samples in order to generate reflections from each instructor. In general, the following multiple-choice questions featured the most considerably different findings (see table 3.2).²³

Table 3.2

Survey Questions that Yielded Considerably Different Responses, Multiple-Choice, Single Answer

Introductory Survey Question #	Concluding Survey Question #	Survey Question
4	3	How many drafts do you typically write per paper (including the one you turn in for a grade)?
3	4	On average, how much time do you spend revising a paper? (all drafts included)
9	10	How important are peer review comments as feedback for your revising process?
10	11	How important are teacher comments as feedback for your revising process?
13	15	When you submit a draft for a grade, how satisfied are you with your writing?
14	16	How helpful is the multiple-draft process in allowing you to produce your best work?
N/A	17	After this quarter, how likely are you to continue the drafting process in writing essays, even if it is not required?

²³ For the full results from the introductory and concluding surveys, please see Appendix H.

Some of the multiple-choice survey questions allowed students to choose more than one answer. In order to determine the frequency with which students selected particular answers for these questions, I used the Frequencies output from the Descriptive Statistics analysis option in SPSS to determine the number of times students chose each option. I chose the option in Frequencies formatting to compare the percentages of the variables to determine if there were considerable differences in the students' choices from the introductory to the concluding survey. I discussed both the questions (see table 3.3) and differences with the instructors in their interviews, and used them as part of my analysis of the case studies.

Table 3.3

Survey Questions that Yielded Considerably Different Responses, Multiple-Answer Question

Introductory Survey Question #	Concluding Survey Question #	Survey Question
7	8	What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a first to a second draft? If you typically don't revise your first draft, please note that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)
8	9	What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a second to a third draft? If you typically don't revise beyond one draft, please note that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)
12	13	Outside of the classroom, what services do you utilize in your revising process? (Please circle all that apply.)

The surveys also featured short answer questions, which were coded. Lauer and Asher define coding as “the setting up and labeling of categories” (26). I coded the short

answer questions by focusing on key words in order to derive patterns in the students' responses. Question 1 on both the introductory and concluding surveys (How would you define "revision?") was coded according to the definitions of global and local revision from John D. Ramage, John C. Bean, and June Johnson's *Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing Concise Edition* (2009). This text defines global and local revision as follows:

You revise *locally* whenever you make changes to a text that affect only the one or two sentences that you are currently working on. In contrast, you revise *globally* when a change in one part of your draft drives changes in other parts of the draft. Global revision focuses on the big-picture concerns of ideas, structure, purpose, audience, and genre. (275)²⁴

Using this definition, as well as the strategies for revision listed in *Allyn & Bacon*, I coded student definitions of revision based on their similarities to Ramage, Ramage, and Bean's definitions of global and local revision (see table 3.4).

²⁴ Please see Appendix K for more of Ramage, Bean, and Johnson's discussion of *global* vs. *local* revision.

Table 3.4

Example Keywords for Coding Student Definitions of Revision as “Global” or “Local.”

<i>Allyn & Bacon Definition</i>	Term Definition	Example Definition	Key words used from definition
Global: “big-picture concerns of ideas, structure, purpose, audience, and genre” (275).	Global Definition of Revision	“Removing unwanted information, changing the way you explain something, adding a part your forgot about. Adding detail/ subtracting detail. Using a more effective way to explain something in the paper.”	“changing,” “explain,” “adding/subtracting,” “more effective”
Local: “mak[ing] changes to a text that affect only the one or two sentence that you are currently working on” (275)	Local Definition of Revision	“Going back through a written document to correct errors and rewrite bad sentences.”	“correct,” “errors,” “bad sentences”

The other short answer questions were similarly coded by identifying and categorizing key terms appropriate for the question. For questions 11 on the beginning survey, and 12 and 14 on the concluding survey, I created categories based on the students’ answers; for instance, students’ responses that alluded to peer feedback in some way were categorized together, as were responses that referenced specific in-class activities (such as MLA workshops or outlining assignments). The short answer questions coded from the introductory survey are:

- (1) How would you define “revision?”

- (11) What classwork have you found beneficial to your revising process and why?

The short answer questions coded from the concluding survey are:²⁵

- (1) How would you define “revision?”
- (12) What classwork have you found to be beneficial to your revising process and why?
- (14) Are there certain services that you have utilized more or less this quarter than previously in your writing and revising process? If so, please explain.

My purpose for coding the short answer questions was to get a more complete picture of the students’ revision definitions and processes. These short answer questions also provide me with student voices and helped flesh out the responses to the multiple-choice questions. I also used these short answer questions to help generate discussion in both the student and instructor interviews.

Analysis of Student Essay Drafts

The students’ case study essays were also coded according to the strategies for global and local revision in the *Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing*. For each student interviewee, I coded the changes between the first and second draft of each paper for global and local changes (see table 3.5).

²⁵ For the full short-answer survey results, please see Appendix I.

Table 3.5

Examples of Actions Coded in Defining Changes in Student Essay Drafts as “Global” or “Local.”

Global/Local Strategy	<i>Allyn & Bacon Strategy</i>	Action	Example
Global	“Throw out the whole draft and start again” (276).	Beginning a new essay	Student completely changes essay so that it is unrecognizable from the first draft
Global	“Cross out large chunks and rewrite from scratch” (276).	Extensive content changes	Student takes out significant parts of the essay and replaces them with others
Global	“Cut and paste; move parts around; (then write new transitions, mapping statements, and topic sentences” (276).	Extensive moving and rewriting of text for content	Student moves conclusion up to earlier part of essay, writes new transition for section, and writes new conclusion
Global	“Make insertions; add new material” (276)	Add material for content purposes	Student adds analysis after the use of a quote
Global	“Delete material... [that] is no longer needed or irrelevant” (277)	Deleting material for content purposes	Student deletes material that changes the meaning of the essay
Local	“Add/revise topic sentences of paragraphs; insert transitions” (276)	Add material for clarity purposes	Student adds transitions between ideas
Local	“Recast sentences” (277)	Change sentences for clarity purposes	Student rewrites sentence by rewriting unclear text
Local	“Edit sentences to correct mistakes” (277)	Change sentences for clarity purposes	Student rewrites sentence by fixing commas

I used these changes to generate discussion about each student interviewee’s revising strategies in composing formal essays for their freshman composition classes.

In order to further illustrate the changes in the students' papers in general, I took a 20% random sample of student papers. This totals 14 students. In order to keep the selection of papers consistent for analysis, I selected six sets of essays from each class, totaling 18 sets of essays. The two drafts for each of the three essays equals six papers per student, for a total of 108 papers. These papers, like the student interviewee papers, were coded for global or local changes between the first and second drafts. I then added the total number of global changes, as well as the total number of local changes, for the essays I analyzed for each class.²⁶ An additional rater then coded them in order to achieve interrater reliability. Interrater reliability was achieved at 90%, which is higher than Nunnally's suggested reliability of 70% for "prediction[s] of group behavior" (Lauer 139). I utilize these findings in my analysis of the case studies (Chapter 7). Coding the essay drafts enables me to further determine the extent to which students' claims about their revising practices were reflected in their essay drafts. In other words, the essay drafts enabled me to discover if students actually engaged in the practices both espoused by their instructors, and described in the students' responses on the survey and during the interviews.

Analysis of Student Interviews

I also analyzed student interviews with the above goal in mind. I transcribed the student interviews, and then read them for patterns relating to the research questions. If students mentioned specific teaching practices, I noted those and looked for similarities

²⁶ For the analysis of the number of local and global changes for each class, please see Appendix L.

among the other students interviewed from the class, in the short answer responses from the students' class surveys, and the instructor surveys and interviews. Or, if a student spoke at length about peer feedback, and listed peer feedback as important on her survey, I could establish the validity of the data. In some cases, students contradicted themselves; I made note of those discrepancies as well. I chose to create case studies of classes rather than individuals because this strategy allowed me to juxtapose the student and instructor voices, and provided a multifaceted way to address this study's research questions.

Analysis of Instructor Materials

The instructors' materials were analyzed similarly to the students. For the instructors, the main source of material was the interview. The student data, the instructor surveys, and the course syllabus served to generate conversations in the instructor interviews. For each instructor interview, I transcribed the interview, then read it for research question-related patterns against the student data from that instructor's class to identify similarities and differences. These similarities and differences further enabled me to identify ways that instructor teaching practices impacted student revising attitudes and practices.

The next three chapters represent case studies of three different first-year writing courses classes. For each class, I used the above materials and data analysis to determine the extent to which teacher practices impact students' revising attitudes. Some of the data results will be discussed in the case study chapters. For each case study, I focused on all three research questions through the surfacing of students' and instructors' voices.

This helped me ascertain the extent to which instructors' teaching practices influenced students' revising strategies. This also allowed me to juxtapose the instructors' and students' beliefs on peer and instructor feedback in relation to revision, and to surface pedagogical trends related to revision across the case studies.

CHAPTER 4: “START WITH THE BASICS.” SUSAN’S CLASS

*“If your peers don’t like it, then,
what’s the teacher going to think?”*
-- Claus

Introduction

This chapter will outline Susan’s motivations in teaching, specifically in teaching revision, and will examine in-depth two aspects of her teaching practices: peer critiques and in-class work. In examining these aspects of her teaching, I will compare Susan’s goals for the course with student survey data and two student interviews (Gabriella and Claus).

Susan described her class as one that “start[s] with the basics and then work[s] up to some of the other things that are more central to the cohesiveness of the essay.” Susan had seven main goals for the class:

1. Get students to focus on grammar essentials like avoiding comma splices and fragments when writing at the college level.
2. Teach students how to write thesis statements.
3. Provide instruction regarding MLA usage.
4. Emphasize the importance of well-organized essays.
5. Instruct students on integrating quotes and finding reliable sources.
6. Teach students to read-- then think critically.
7. Try to get students to become more comfortable writing by utilizing daily informal writing assignments whether reader response journals, short essays, or dialog journals.

In order to achieve these seven goals, the students wrote three formal essays, as well as shorter informal pieces, and completed a variety of exercises. These assignments were based on the assigned readings, taken from *The Resourceful Reader* (6th ed. 2004) by Suzanne Strobeck Webb and Lou Ann Thompson, and *The Writer's Harbrace Handbook Brief Edition* (3rd ed. 2008) by Cheryl Glenn and Loretta Gray. These were the only two required texts; unlike the other two case studies, students in this class did not use a rhetoric text. On the syllabus, Susan wrote that “each paper will arise from our reading, informal writing, and group work.” In order to demonstrate how classroom activities acted as a bridge to formal essay writing, Susan explained the first essay assignment in detail during our interview:

I usually have them do an interview essay first, which is a preliminary essay. It's not one of the formal essays. Our first formal essay is a comparison and contrast essay. And so we actually do a short, 3-page preliminary essay where they're interviewing each other as a way to prepare for having to compare and contrast people that they actually know. So that's where the first two or three weeks are focused around that. And I also try to tie in the readings that we're doing.

As Susan explains above, each of the three essays was generated by work the students did in class. The essays were also specific genres: compare/contrast, persuasive (also the research essay), and autobiography. In order to help her students make the transition from the basics of writing to becoming more sophisticated writers, Susan utilized assignments that asked the students to work toward particular goals, such as a strong thesis statement.

Although Susan did not mention revision as part of her seven goals, she believed that revision was integrated as a component of all seven course goals. She defined revision as:

The process of revisiting a draft to add, take away, edit, and come closer to a finished product.

Susan's definition touches on the idea of process, but ultimately ends with "a finished product" that, combined with her course goals, suggests a grammatically and structurally correct piece of writing. This also matches with her course goals, which emphasize correctness grammatically, stylistically, and structurally. Susan's definition of revision seems to be more product-driven than process-driven.

Despite her emphasis on product in our interview, Susan also emphasized that she values revision as part of the writing process; she believed that peer review is important in students' revisions of their writing. She enacted this by including two peer reviews, which she called "peer critiques," per essay, for a total of five throughout the quarter. Due to time constraints, the final essay had one peer critique session.

This chapter will explore the impact Susan's teaching practices (and therefore, pedagogies) had on students' attitudes toward revising and writing. We will look at a combination of student interviews (and the essays these students wrote) and student survey data, and compare these to see if the students' attitudes evolved over the term, and if, where, how, and why they changed.

Instructor, Class, and Student Profiles

At the time of this study, Susan was an advanced graduate student in English focusing on literature. She also taught literature classes as an adjunct for a nearby college, and had been teaching for about ten years. Because of her literary background, Susan said that the composition class was “the hardest to teach,” and that she didn’t “consider [herself] a rhetorician at all.” This discomfort may have led to Susan having conflicting definitions in her teaching practices: she felt uncomfortable teaching from a rhetorical standpoint, but still wanted her students to appreciate revision as part of their writing process. In order to help her students learn to appreciate revision, Susan started with a refresher in grammar and sentence structure, and built toward discussing higher-order concerns of writing, such as developing an argument and support, organization, and writing strong thesis statements.

Although there is not a grading policy posted on Susan’s syllabus, Susan, as well as her student Claus, both discussed grading in their interviews. Susan explained that she focused more on particular elements of an essay for different papers she assigned. For example, on the comparison and contrast essay, Susan explained that she “ask[ed that students] have a balanced discussion with the two individuals that they are comparing and contrasting.” Claus gave a little more insight into Susan’s grading; during our interview, he pulled his compare and contrast essay and discussed Susan’s rubric with me. The rubric had criteria for elements of an essay such as introduction, thesis, and organization, and more tailored criteria, such as “impact,” which Claus described as the section of the essay where students had to discuss the impact of their relationships with

the individuals they wrote about. The grades for each part of the rubric were then tabulated to determine the students' final grades for each paper. There is not evidence on the syllabus, nor from my interviews with Susan or her students, that the students were allowed to revise papers.

Susan's class was a freshman composition course that was made of up freshmen and sophomore students. Unlike the other two case studies, this class was not a learning community. The class was fairly split in terms of the number of male and female students. From Susan's class I interviewed two students: Gabriella and Claus. Gabriella was a first-quarter freshman female student, while Claus was a sophomore male student. Claus was an engineering major, and said that the last time he wrote a paper was his junior year of high school; he didn't consider his junior year paper to be "that good." With regards to writing, Claus said that he was "really good at getting the content out." For editing his work, Claus relied "on the Spellcheck feature," and he acknowledged that he needed to "work more on grammar and organization." For Claus, his biggest concern was that his papers "flow well," and that they were "coherent and understandable."

The second student I interviewed from Susan's class was Gabriella. Gabriella came to Susan's class with a great deal of writing experience. In high school, Gabriella wrote a research paper every year and said that her last English class in high school focused on "poetry and stuff [she didn't] know about." As a result, she felt that Susan's class was not "a challenge." Gabriella explained that because of her previous experiences, she had not "learned anything new, besides little stuff about writing papers...But even that was kind of just review." Gabriella felt that she was doing "well" in the class; she

also told me that she had written articles for the local newspaper and planned to go into journalism.

Peer Critiques and Revising Practices

In Susan's class, peer review was called "peer critique" by both Susan and her students. It was addressed on the syllabus as part of the rhetorical competencies that students must demonstrate in order to pass the course; there was no special section on the syllabus stating Susan's perspective on her expectations for the peer critiques. The rhetorical competency related to peer critique is called "Respond to and Assess Student Writing Rhetorically," and includes the following:

- Understand writing as recursive
- Understand writing as collaborative/social
- Develop ideas in relation to others' ideas
- Use the language of rhetorical analysis to critique ideas
- Identify peers' writing contexts
- Identify correct documentation
- Identify suitability of peers' grammar and punctuation (Rhetorical Competencies)

In order to fulfill these competencies, Susan asked her students to participate in two peer critiques for each paper. Susan's peer review assignments were very specific. On the days of peer review, students brought two copies of their essays to class to be read by their classmates. Susan gave all the students a sheet to fill out, and said that one of the

goals of peer review was for the students to learn what she was “looking for specifically [for each essay].” One new technique Susan used with this class was implementing two peer critiques per essay as opposed to one. She described her reason behind this change:

I felt like I wasn’t always sure that from the first peer critique, they were getting enough information from their peers. And so by doing it with two peers twice, I felt like was it more effective for them because they were getting much more feedback.

Clearly, Susan’s reason for increasing the number of peer reviews related directly to her concerns about students’ writing and revising practices.

These critiques consisted of one question for the writer, and six questions for the reader. The students had to fill out critiques for two peers. For the purposes of this study, Susan provided me with the peer critique for the third formal essay the students wrote, an autobiography. The peer critique question for the writer was:

- Are there any things in particular you would like your respondent to comment on?

The peer critique directions for the reader were:

- Examine the introductory paragraph. Does it provide adequate background? Are there at least 5 sentences leading up to the thesis statement?
- Identify the thesis statement. Is it centered on the specific experience? If not, what suggestions could you offer?

- Comment on the organization of the essay. Is there a clear progression of time? Are there problems with shifting tenses? How could the writer make the order of events more clear?
- Is there a clear section that reflects on what the writer has learned from the experience? There should be a significant section that looks back on the event and discusses what was learned, how the writer changed, how people around the writer were affected, etc.
- Check the grammar of the essay. There should be NO COMMA SPLICES or SENTENCE FRAGMENTS.
- Is there enough detail that effectively recreates the experience?

Comment on places in the essay that could use more development.²⁷

For each essay, the students answered questions that were geared specifically to the requirements of the assignment. In this case, the students were asked to evaluate the organizational, argumentative, and grammatical aspects of the essay as they related to the students' ability to convey their personal experiences.

Although Susan emphasized correctness in her course goals and on the peer critique sheets (the capital letters for the question relating to grammar demonstrate this), she did advocate heavily for the importance of revision in the writing class. For Susan, the most important aspect in teaching revision was to show students its value; by asking the students to do two sessions of peer critique per essay, she hoped they would get sufficient feedback to be able to revise effectively and understand that revising can be

²⁷ For the complete peer critique sheet, please see Appendix M.

beneficial to one's work. When I asked Susan to elaborate on her definition of revision as "the process of revisiting a draft to add, take away, edit, and come closer to a finished product," Susan said the following:

The main thing is trying to teach the students that the first draft is not the final draft, because I think that so many students just think, I've written the paper, it's done, I'm finished... So the first step is trying to get them to realize that no, that's not it. There's more work to be done. And so maybe talking [with students] about things like, the value of going away from an assignment and then coming back to it later to revisit it and see with greater clarity the things that you might have missed. To get a better sense of [whether] your ideas are cohesive or not. Even the grammar or proofreading things that you might miss at the beginning, you might catch at the end... I think just trying to emphasize to students the value in the revising process. So many of them just don't think revisions are needed for their papers.

I quote Susan's discussion of revision at length because it reveals a great deal about how Susan perceived revision for her students. In this comment, Susan focused her concerns on the ideas of cogency and recursiveness; she did not bring up the surface-based practices of grammar and usage until the end of her comment. She wanted students to revisit their work and reflect on their writing process to "see with greater clarity" the things they "might have missed." These "things" include flow, organization, focus of ideas, and finally, grammar and usage. Susan believed that revision was vital to helping

students produce their best work. However, it may be that her emphasis on correctness, especially at the beginning of the quarter, moved students away from seeing revision as a recursive way to revisit the global aspects of their essays, and toward seeing it largely as proofreading, in order to make their papers match her requirements.

Because Susan understood that some students might have been resistant to the idea of revision, peer critique became a place where they could begin to understand some of the points Susan made in the above statement. Through multiple peer critiques, the students could “get a better sense of [whether their] ideas are cohesive or not,” or see how to add, take away, or edit their work. In this section, I will examine the extent to which the students in Susan’s class believed peer critique contributed to their revising processes. This will be shown in by looking at the interviews with Susan’s students, Claus and Gabriella, as well as comments from the other students in the class taken from their surveys.

The following sections will look more closely at how peer critiques function in Susan’s class with regards to student revising practices. First I will go more in-depth into how Susan uses the peer critiques as a vital part of essay grading. Next, we will look at the extent to which students were skeptical of peer critique’s value, as well as the extent to which they valued (or learned to value) peer critique as necessary to their revising practices. Finally, I will compare Susan’s perspective on the importance of peer critique with the perspective of her students.

Structure and Use of Peer Critiques

As discussed in the previous section, when students came to Susan's class on peer critique days, they brought two copies of a draft of their paper (whatever stage they were at) for their classmates to review. Susan counted these days as attendance and participation; because there were five class periods devoted to peer review, students who missed those days were told that their final grades on the essay might be affected. Also, according to Susan, if students missed peer review days, it impacted their participation grade. When a peer critique session started in Susan's class, students exchanged papers, and made comments based on the sheets Susan handed out in class. According to Susan, each peer critique session was "tailored towards specific formal writing assignments that they're working on." The requirements for these assignments were shown through the questions on the peer critique sheets, as was the case with the sample peer critique questions from the previous section. Susan described these elements in more detail for the first essay, a compare and contrast between two people each student was close to:

There's definitely a section that looks at thesis statements for all three assignments. I'm [also] looking at structurally the organization. With the comparison and contrast, I'm asking if they have a balanced discussion with the two individuals that they are comparing and contrasting. With the argumentative essay, I'm looking at specific things like, do they have the refutation of the opposition? Is there an attention-getter at the beginning of the essay? So it's through those key things that I'll be looking for when I do the actual evaluation.

In the above comment, through her use of “I,” Susan directly connected the students’ peer critique sheets to the things Susan herself would be looking for. Instead of saying “the students look to see if the writer has a balanced discussion,” she said, “I’m asking if they have a balanced discussion.” For the peer critiques, Susan’s students had to identify and comment on the elements of the essay that Susan herself would be grading by answering a series of what were largely yes and no questions. This possibly increased the students’ efforts to match what the Susan was looking for. While this practice could be advantageous in that Susan’s evaluation process was more transparent to the students, it also encouraged the students to only look for points that they believed Susan would grade.

The students developed the knowledge base to comment on their peers’ writing according to Susan’s criteria through the class activities they did. Susan used the readings as the basis for peer critique and to help students bridge the gap between class discussion, peer critique, and their own writing. In a follow-up email, she said:

We used the readings frequently as a way to emphasize the kinds of things they needed to have in their essays. The essays served as examples for descriptive writing, empirical writing, argumentative writing, personal narrative, etc... There is a constant connection between readings, in-class exercises or practice essays and the formal papers.

According to Susan, students were supposed to use class experiences, as well as the peer critique sheets, to help them comment effectively on their peers’ essays.

The peer critique sheets were an important part of Susan’s grading process; as she

graded each student's essay, she checked the peer critiques to see if the student received feedback on areas of concern prior to the final draft. In our interview, Susan elaborated on the peer critique sheets, and how she used them when she graded:

I actually use the peer critiques when I do their final grade on the final draft. Because I want to look back and, for instance, if there is a student that doesn't have a thesis, I look back and see what their peers said. And sure enough, if it says "missing a thesis" or "can't find a thesis," I'm definitely going to take off for that. And it tells me if they're actually fulfilling those outcomes accurately.

As Susan indicated above, the peer critique sheets should function as significant resources for the students. Not only were they the most important way students would receive useful feedback for their writing, but they were also important to Susan's grading process. Susan expected students to pay attention to their reviewers' comments, and to do their best to address any issues that their reviewers noticed. Therefore, even during peer critique, there was a heavy emphasis on correctness; using the peer critique sheets, critiquers had to adopt Susan's voice in order to successfully complete the assignment and give appropriate feedback to their peers. In other words, they needed to get peer critique "right" by commenting on the areas Susan would expect them to comment on, while the writer had to correctly address the points their reviewers commented on. In Susan's class, not only did peer critique have to be done correctly because of Susan's grading process, but also it was the only feedback students got on their essays prior to submitting them for grades. Susan rarely commented on drafts before students submitted

them for a grade; the students were expected to mimic Susan's authoritative voice in peer critique.

Although Susan used the peer critique sheets to help her grade student essays, she did not look at essay drafts before students turned them in unless students asked for help. She therefore had little prior experience with the students' topics. The main ways students might get feedback from Susan were through for thesis statements submitted in journals or if students requested that she read their drafts.

This lack of feedback from the instructor seemed to have translated into lack of preparation, as well as revision between peer critique days, on the part of some students. Gabriella commented that because there was no requirement for the length of the drafts, students could bring in whatever they wanted for peer review.²⁸ She also stated Susan did not collect drafts and comment on them, but "that when [students] don't really know what's wrong or right, they ask her sometimes, and then she'll tell [them]." However, Gabriella did not have a problem with this system because she did not believe instructors should "have to grade 30 papers four times."

Overall, Susan's peer critique was structured around the goals for that particular essay. Students were expected to read their peers' essays with those goals in mind, and comment on the papers in a manner that would help their peers better achieve those goals. How students filled out peer critique sheets, and how their peers utilized these sheets, was also extremely important. Because Susan did not read drafts ahead of time, students needed to rely on these critiques perhaps more than students in other classes. Susan used

²⁸ For the peer critique of her research essay, Gabriella brought in a draft that was one page, instead of bringing a full draft for review.

the peer critique sheets to help her grade, and as evidence if she needed to discuss a paper with a student who may not agree with the grade a paper received. As the next section reveals, the students' opinion towards peer critique seemed to improve as the quarter progressed.

Student Skepticism and Peer Critique's "Value"

The students in Susan's class were largely skeptical as to the value of peer critiques at the beginning of the quarter. A total of 19 students completed the beginning and end of the quarter surveys. When responding to Question 10 on the beginning of the quarter survey, "How important is peer feedback to the revising process?", the students' answers generated a mean value of 3.65. This is between 3, "Neutral," and 4, "Somewhat Important." Comments on the surveys students submitted at the beginning of the quarter in response to Question 11: "What classwork have you found beneficial to your revising process prior to this class?" also expressed ambivalence. Some students found peer critique helpful to the revising process:

S7298: "Peer revision allows students at the same level to revise your paper."

Some students referenced their own work as beneficial:

S1941: "Usually the first draft because that's the draft I usually revise or have revised."

S10377: "Writing outlines and rough drafts, because they help transition your paper from your head to your pen."

Other students directly referenced the teacher as the most beneficial to their revising practices:

S10230: “Only teacher revision. Students don’t take it seriously.”

S3959: “In class time to review, and have teacher review.”

S7405: “After class or towards the end when [the teacher is] available to ask questions. After class are normally office hours for a teacher.”

S7298: “Teacher conferences [are beneficial], because they know what to correct in order to produce an A paper.”

At the beginning of the quarter, the students in Susan’s class expressed a variety of opinions regarding what practices they found valuable to their revising practices. While four students specifically referenced teacher feedback, and two students referred to the writing they did themselves, only one student (S7298) specifically referenced peer critique. However, this student stated that teacher feedback was beneficial as well.

In our interview, Gabriella expressed the ambivalence of the class toward peer critique in more detail:

Some people are just going to be nice and tell you specific little grammar rules, while some people just don’t know. So they can’t give you an educated answer on some of the things you have. But some people will, so I guess it just depends... some people are not going to be as literate as you, so you can’t use their suggestions, because they’re stupid.

As Gabriella’s comment reveals, the uncertainty of not knowing who students will be “stuck with” during peer critique can make students uncertain about how their peers can

critique the other students' papers, especially in a class that values finished products and correct usage. Will a student's peers be able to read her work effectively? Gabriella pointed out that this was dependent on each student's knowledge. A peer's reading and writing experiences may make her a better or a worse reader. As demonstrated with the student survey responses and with Gabriella's comments, the quality of feedback students received in the past may have made them skeptical about the quality of the feedback in Susan's class.

But no matter what the student's writing experiences are, she/he may still not be willing to provide quality feedback to others. During our interview, Gabriella said that she couldn't tell a classmate not to use the word "awesomeness" in his paper. When I asked her why, she said:

I didn't want to be mean, so I just told him it was an all right paper.

There's a lot of papers where...some of them are good, but ... I just felt like "awesomeness" was...I don't know. He said "my brothers have equal awesomeness." And I was just like, well...I don't really know what to tell you about your paper.

In this case, Gabriella, who considered the class easy, was unwilling to give constructive feedback to a peer because she "didn't want to be mean." To herself, she acknowledged the student could not use the word in an essay, but to her classmate and even to some extent, to me, she was unable to express this point effectively.

The ambivalence Gabriella exhibited in the above passage, both in the uncertain structure of her response and the words she used, demonstrates two points. First,

Gabriella may have been afraid to be critical; Gabriella told the student it was “an all right” paper, despite what she thought. Given that the students were required to fill out peer critiques sheets that were then checked for accuracy by Susan, perhaps students were still unsure about how to offer critiques that were in line with how Susan would read their essay. But it also suggests that the students may have been unsure as to what type of feedback they were supposed to give when they filled out a peer review sheet. The structure of the peer critiques, combined with the emphasis on being able to successfully predict Susan’s comments on a paper, may have contributed to the students’ confusion on how to give feedback.

Benefits of Peer Review: Susan’s Perspective vs. the Student Perspective

Students had mixed opinions as to the benefits of peer critique in this course. In this class, because of peer critique’s emphasis on meeting Susan’s requirements, it may have been a little more difficult for the students to articulate how they saw their peer critiques benefitting their revising processes. This is because students’ opinions had to correlate closely to Susan’s potential feedback on a paper. At the beginning of the quarter, as evidenced by the survey responses, students saw peer critique as both beneficial and potentially useless (at times, Gabriella expressed both points). On the other hand, Susan saw peer review not only as beneficial, but also as necessary to the writing process. One way Susan demonstrated this was by integrating the peer critiques into her grading procedure; as she said, the students should “know that [she would] be looking at those when [she did] the final evaluations.” In her evaluation of the success of the peer

critiques, Susan admitted that “there are a few occasions where someone isn’t putting forth as much effort in providing that feedback,” but that “most of the time...[the students] are trying to give good, instructive advice.” The mixed results from the student surveys and interviews showed that while students were skeptical about peer review, they did recognize it had value.

On the end of the quarter surveys, students wrote that the peer critiques were beneficial to their revising processes. In response to Question 12 on the end of the quarter survey, “What classwork have you found to be beneficial to your revising process?” 9 out of 19 students specifically referenced peer critique. Here are several of those responses:

S8839: “My peer critiques were my best help because I was able to get a real person’s opinion.”

S1680: “Peer critiques. They give me a different perspective of looking at my paper.”

S7405: “The peer critiques because everyone has a different style and insight and knows what to look at better than me revising my own paper.”

S9585: “Peer edits. Sometimes peers come up with clever ideas for my paper.”

S10377: “The peer critiques were very beneficial; they picked up on a lot of grammar mistakes.”

S1941: “The revising in class and getting classmates’ feedback because I believe getting feedback from my classmates is the best way to revise.”

The above responses describe several points about the benefits of peer critique that will be explored in this section. The first benefit is attention to audience; this is especially evidenced by S8839's and S1941's responses. The second is that sometimes the students do act as sufficient stand-ins for Susan in giving effective feedback; this is demonstrated by S7405's and S10377's responses. The interviews with Claus and Gabriella help surface these benefits further.

One way the students believed that peer critique was beneficial to their revising practices was through attention to audience. Both students I interviewed, Gabriella and Claus, made significant revisions with audience in mind. While Gabriella was more hesitant to admit that peer critique helped her revise her work, Claus felt that peer critique was incredibly helpful. This was especially true for the research essay; as an engineering major, Claus chose to write on the construction of the Egyptian pyramids. Having an audience read his essays ahead of time showed him where he needed to be more specific with his evidence, and where he needed to control the amount of jargon he used when writing.

For Claus' second essay, a persuasive research paper on the construction of the Egyptian pyramids, Claus originally had three points he wanted to explore: the mathematic aspect, the religious aspect, and the astronomical aspect. He admitted that his inclination when writing the essay was to present scientific evidence because that is the type of evidence he was used to discussing. However, during his peer critique, Claus found that the students who reviewed his essay did not like the amount of equations he used in his paper, and he had to rethink how to present his argument:

When I did a peer critique, one of the girls complained to me that it was too technical, if you will. And I didn't want that to distract from the actual point of the essay. So that's why I tried to condense it a lot, and make it more cohesive... You don't want to read [formulas and statistics].

Claus' experience with peer critique on this essay showed him that he needed to consider a different academic audience when he wrote for his English class as opposed to his engineering class. As he described above, because his essay was so technical, his reviewers had a difficult time understanding his argument.

This peer critique helped Claus revise his essay and make it more focused. Claus decided that in order to more effectively convey his ideas, he needed to cut out the math and work more on making his argument balanced between the religious and the astronomical aspects of his essay. He realized that a mathematical approach would require him to include many equations that a non-mathematics audience would find difficult to follow. In our interview, Claus reflected on the process of changing this essay for his audience:

The technical points take away from the actual essay, so I wanted to put a lot of that into words that the reader could understand... Because this is an English class, not many people are going to know what the gold number is... And then, the stuff I wrote about pi, nobody's really going to care about that, so [I changed that too].

Claus' first statement in this comment reveals both his attention to his audience and to the organization of the essay. He recognized that the "technical points take away from the

actual essay.” But Claus also realized that “because this is an English class, not many people are going to know what the gold number is.” Before peer critique, he thought an explanation would help his reader understand his argument more; however, his peer critiquers found the explanations more confusing. Claus decided to adjust the math discussion by putting certain elements into words (as opposed to formulas), and by cutting other elements (such as the gold number and pi).

As shown in the above example, Claus had a specific goal in peer critique: to figure out how his audience would respond to his paper. His inexperience in the English classroom made peer critique a valuable asset for him as a writer. In fact, Claus seemed to get the type of feedback that Susan hoped all her students would receive, especially “revisiting [the essay] and see[ing] with great clarity things [the students] might have missed.” In Claus’ case, peer critique enabled him to go back to his essay and re-see it from a different perspective. He realized that he was not writing for the correct audience and needed to reassess how to express his point to a more general reader.

On the other hand, as Gabriella discussed in the previous section, she entered peer critique sessions much more skeptical of their benefits. Throughout our interview, Gabriella reiterated that peer critique was like Russian Roulette – she never knew what kind of feedback she would get. Therefore, she treated the critiques dubiously. As we went through her essays, however, Gabriella began to express that perhaps peer critiques were more beneficial than she might have initially realized. This was especially with regards to the second benefit for the critiques: her peers could give her substantive

feedback that would help her revise effectively to meet the requirements of the assignments.

For Gabriella's first essay, one that compared her best friend and her boyfriend, Gabriella made revisions that were a direct result of the advice she received from peer critique. In comparing the drafts of this essay, I noticed that Gabriella made many changes in the area of content revision, and I pointed these sections out to her.

M: You added a lot in terms of adding things at the end of the paragraphs, and the beginning of the paragraphs.

G: That's probably because people told me I needed more transitions.

Here Gabriella demonstrates that she did listen to peer critiques; in this case, when I pointed out that she was adding to the beginning and end of her paragraphs, she admitted that it was because her reviewers told her she "needed more transitions." However, because she said "people told [her]" that she needed to revise, it is unclear whether she changed the transitions because she valued peer feedback, or whether she did so because she simply felt the revision would better her grade.

Gabriella demonstrated that she saw the benefit of peer critique with regards to fulfilling the assignment more clearly at a later point in our discussion of the compare and contrast paper. In the first draft of her essay, she focused a paragraph on a description of her boyfriend's part in a wedding party. Gabriella originally ended the paragraph with this sentence: "While Steve has long-standing relationships with family and friends, Laura constantly seeks new friends and faces." In her new draft, she added extensively to this paragraph. Gabriella focused more on what Steve taught her about friendship, and

she used the wedding scene as an example. She moved the above sentence down to become the first sentence of the subsequent paragraph. When I asked Gabriella about this shift, she said:

That was also probably because people told me to do that in these peer critiques. So I guess peer critiques are doing what I thought [they should]: [for this assignment], you need to show what the people mean to you separately too, so that's probably me trying to do that, and [and also work on] transitioning [between paragraphs].

Although Gabriella previously stated that she was suspicious of peer feedback, she did understand how to separate the “good” comments from the “bad.” In this case, she illustrated that she could benefit from peer critiques, and she acknowledged that the “peer critiques are doing what I thought.” In other words, the peer critiques helped her convey her ideas more effectively and fulfill the requirements of the specific assignment. As a result, Gabriella was able to make her essay more (what she called) “flowy” by adding some commentary and analysis along with the examples she used.

Originally the students in Susan’s class were somewhat skeptical of peer critique; however, they learned that their peers were able to provide them with some substantive feedback. By listening to their peers and thinking carefully about their suggestions, the students were able to find the benefits of peer critique.

However, some students still saw the only benefit of peer feedback as a better grade. In fact, when I asked Claus why he revised, he stated it was “definitely” to get a better grade. While Gabriella did not explicitly say that she revised for the grade, she

commented that the points each essay was worth were “what matters.” Gabriella believed that she was doing generally well in the class with the revising work she already did; however, Claus believed strongly in revising for the better grade. As he and I discussed his experience with peer critique, I commented that he did seem to be paying more attention to audience. Claus responded:

I mean, you [have to] make yourself happy, but when it comes down to a grade, you’re not the one grading it, so in that sense, I [have to] look at what the common person thinks. That’s why I took out all the technicalities, because if [other students] don’t like it, then how is Susan going to like it?... Definitely I did it for the grade.

While Claus’ comments about revising for the grade and for a more general audience would be natural for any student writer, we must consider the context of peer critiques in the class. Here Claus reiterated the idea that the students in Susan’s class believed that their responses during peer critiques acted as stand-ins for Susan’s feedback. If his peers didn’t like his work, he believed that Susan might like it even less. When I tried to follow up with him, and ask about his growth as a writer, he responded: “I guess...Hm.” Upon further questioning, he admitted: “it just comes back to helping me to understand my audience better.” Claus’ continued focus on revising for an audience (i.e. Susan), and seeming ambivalence about revision for personal growth as a writer suggests that Claus may have revised only for the grade, and not for both the grade and his own growth as a writer.

Although the student surveys and the interviews with Claus and Gabriella demonstrated that the students' perspectives on peer review were changing, on the surveys, students said that the importance of peer review to the revising process did not change from the beginning to the end of the quarter. And while 47% of the students did write that peer review was helpful on the optional question that asked them to list activities that were beneficial to the revising process, they did not attach any more importance to the activity when answering the multiple-choice question on peer review's importance. In response to Question 10, "How important are peer review comments as feedback for your revising process?" at the beginning of the quarter, the average number was 3.65 (between Neutral and Somewhat Important). At the end of the quarter, the mean for the responses to the same question was 3.76 (still between Neutral and Somewhat Important). So while the students might have recognized the benefits of peer review, this does not mean that they saw it as any more or less important in their revising process.

The survey findings, combined with Gabriella's and Claus' interviews, suggest that Susan's students did find peer review beneficial in completing Susan's requirements. Although they expressed skepticism at the beginning of the quarter, the survey responses, along with Gabriella's and Claus' reflections on their revising processes, show that the students seemed to learn to appreciate each other as stand-ins for the teacher.

In-Class Work, Topic Development, and Revision

In order to help students achieve the seven goals Susan established as the learning outcomes for her course, Susan employed a variety of exercises and assignments. Most of these assignments focused on correctness through practice in order to help the students edit their work for correctness. Susan began her course with a grammar review, which consisted of lecture and practice worksheets. She also asked students to practice their thesis statements through journaling and gave feedback to help students generate thesis statements they could use in their formal essays. Finally, she had several extensive workshops on MLA.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the first formal essay for Susan's class began with a short writing based on an assignment where the students interviewed each other. It then progressed to a compare and contrast paper, where students compared and contrasted two people they knew. Susan commented that these two assignments connected in the sense that "they're interviewing each other as a way to prepare for having to compare and contrast people that they actually know." Students could use the interview exercise as a way to help them develop and structure a topic for their first essay.

The homework, readings, and in-class assignments bridged the assignments and provided the students with materials or strategies they could use as they wrote and revised their formal essays. The readings matched the assignments; for example, while students worked on the persuasive essay, they read persuasive essays from their textbook that also incorporated research. Susan describes the short assignments more in-depth:

We do a lot of short writing, informal pieces to prepare for [the formal essay], where I'm asking them specific questions about things that are personal and they have a chance to do some shorter pieces related to that, again in preparation for that final essay...They're doing brainstorming whether they know it or not along the way.

Susan also employed short writings that allowed the students to brainstorm and practice specific elements of their formal papers. The exercises Susan asked the students to complete, such as dialogue journals and informal writings, were designed to help the students develop topics for their papers.

As Susan indicated earlier, she did not see herself as a rhetorician; for this reason, she said that she is “more comfortable starting with the basics” – in this case, grammar exercises – and working her way up to the content-driven elements of writing, such as thesis statements and use of evidence. Correct usage, whether defined as grammar, word choice, or MLA citations, was clearly an important component of the class. In our interview Susan expanded on her goals for the grammar exercises:

I do exercises that talk about sentence fragments, comma splices, pronoun errors, because a lot of times those are the main proofreading errors that I see. So that gives them a refresher course right at the beginning.

A student's first experience in Susan's class was working on grammar; this established the course's emphasis on correctness. Susan explained that students found these exercises helpful, and maintained that they had value. She gave an example of a student who had a grammar exam in another class who found this exercise especially helpful.

Some of Susan's students also agreed that these exercises were helpful. In response to Q12 on the survey handed out at the end of the quarter, "What classwork did you find beneficial to your revising practices?" two students mentioned the grammar exercises:

S1021: "Worksheets on comma splices because I love to put commas where they are not needed."

S7298: "Grammar exercises because the more you do, the less mistakes you'll make."

In her interview, Gabriella also elaborated on why she liked the exercises:

[The class] reestablished rules about writing that I haven't heard a lot about in the past because I guess it was expected. And things have changed since high school...a lot of the people in the class said that you're supposed to have a cover letter and everything, and I had never heard that. But then our teacher [said we] don't have to have a cover letter for every paper. So I guess rules about writing and grammar and stuff [were useful].

In the above comment Gabriella addressed several points. First, she stated that the rules Susan taught her class were ones that instructors might assume students know and therefore not teach. This suggests that the grammar exercises were useful for students because they deconstructed assumptions about students' writing held by former instructors. Next, Gabriella pointed out that the exercises let the students know certain

rules for the course, such as not needing a cover page for essays.²⁹ These points show that Susan's strategy of conducting a grammar review may have been beneficial, especially with regards to writing for college. This clearly matches Susan's first course goal: "Get students to focus on grammar essentials like avoiding comma splices and fragments when writing at the college level," which also relates to writing with a product in mind.

Susan's goals for the course continued to be articulated through other exercises that the students completed. Susan also listed "thesis statements" as part of her goals for the students: "Teach students how to write thesis statements. They practice writing theses and review sample theses." With each thesis statement exercise, Susan provided feedback for the students and allowed them to further develop and revise their theses for their formal papers. Susan elaborated on the two main ways students in her class work on thesis statements: writing practice statements and critiquing sample statements:

Thesis statements [are] another exercise that we definitely work on. [For] the first two assignments they do a practice thesis that they turn in to me, and I give them feedback that I can return to them, and let them know where their strengths are, if they're missing something...By the time the final paper is turned in, they have a sense for what's expected of them, which I think is helpful...I do a sample exercise, for instance, where students have made up thesis statements for papers, and go over strengths and weaknesses. But when they still have to sit down and write their own, some of them are still not getting it.

²⁹ It is interesting to note that Gabriella does not discern between proper grammar and MLA style usage; she refers to grammatical rules and style rules as if they are the same.

In Susan's class, both thesis exercises had similar goals: for students to discover "their strengths" and to realize what "they're missing" in their thesis statement. The students worked on their own theses by writing practice ones in their journals; Susan read through them and commented on them. Her feedback helped students "have a sense for what's expected of them" on the formal papers so that they could revise accordingly and better meet Susan's requirements for the essay.

Susan combined the students' practice theses with samples. By bringing these two exercises together, Susan allowed the class to both critique other thesis statements (giving them practice before they did peer critique) and to work on their own thesis statements, using feedback from Susan, before they developed those theses into an essay. Because Susan commented on the practice statements, students could learn how to revise their theses, and thus work on the focus of their topic. However, the thesis exercises may also demonstrate the students' lack of rhetorical agency. In other words, the thesis exercises did not allow room for students to develop their theses over time, and within the context of their purpose and audience; they wrote their practice theses for Susan, who commented on them and "approved" them. This may have encouraged students to not change their thesis statements beyond Susan's approval in the prewriting stages.

The MLA workshops that Susan conducted were an important element of the course. Susan stated that the third course goal was to "provide instruction regarding MLA usage" through "countless citation exercises." Susan admitted that the students might have felt as though it was just "another MLA exercise," but that even though it may have

felt like “busywork” she believed “[it was] definitely worth it” to have students frequently practice MLA citations.

In the way that the short writings contributed to the more formal work the students do, Susan built upon each MLA workshop in a progressive fashion and used them to contribute to the students’ development of topics and revision of their writing. Susan described the MLA sessions that the students did:

We start out by just looking at traditional print sources. And I have them bring in an article or a book based on whatever their research topic is. We do an in-class exercise where they’re having to integrate quotes. Using a lead-in, citing it correctly. And we do probably between 4 and 5 of these before the paper is due. So they have a lot of practice with it.

The students in Susan’s class were learning how to use the library (by looking at print sources and bringing in a physical source) and how to apply the MLA exercises directly to their own essays. Susan also taught them how to integrate quotes by showing them how to write “a lead-in” and how to cite “it correctly.” As a result, according to Susan:

By the time they’re having to sit down and write their own paper, they know how to use the ellipses, they know the extended quote format, they understand the difference between a quote and a paraphrase, they know that paraphrased information is also cited. So even though I sometimes get grumbles – “I’m tired of the MLA” – in the end I think it really helps them out. They’re not so reliant on that handbook, and they can figure it out on

their own, how to cite things. So we do actually spend a lot of in-class time on MLA.

Susan's description of the MLA work, although rooted in attention to correctness, showed the variety of activities the students engaged in as they composed and revised their essays. Despite Susan's observation that students might see MLA practice as "busywork," she remained committed to extensive work in this area.

However, when it came time for the students to apply what they had learned in their MLA citation work by inserting citations into their papers, regardless of Susan's efforts, Claus had problems with the citations. Claus' discussion of his use of citations in his persuasive essay reveals that although he may have known how to cite, he still needed help with *what* to cite and how to integrate it. In other words, he had difficulty coming up with textual evidence that would specifically enhance his argument and improve his credibility as a writer. When I asked Claus what he might have worked on with the essay, given more time, Claus replied:

I noticed while doing it a lot of the citations came from a certain part of the book; I don't know if that's good or bad. Hopefully it's not terrible. I would definitely look into those more, and work on that. Getting from different sources, and not just being one-sided, that type of thing.

Instead of citing as he went along, Claus said that he "wanted to get the writing out of the way, and worry about the citations later." However, when it came time to insert citations into his essay, Claus had difficulty figuring out what citations he pulled from which sources. As a result, he was missing a number of citations from his final draft. Claus said

that worrying about the citations “‘later’ turned into the day that was due, so [he] had to kind of scramble with putting in the citations.” As a result, Claus did not realize where he was pulling textual evidence from; in the above passage, he noted that most of his evidence came from a few pages in one book. Because of this experience, Claus resolved to work more on his citations, and find a variety of sources that he could include.

Because Susan seemed to focus so much on correctness during the in-class activities, the students may have had difficulty recognizing how these activities related to their revising process. Although Susan acknowledged that the class activities acted as a way for students to develop and revise topics, Gabriella and Claus seemed less convinced. Gabriella only mentioned the grammar workshops, and Claus mentioned using citations as an afterthought; both were more concerned with fulfilling the course requirements.

Of course, it is difficult to gauge the perceptions of an entire class based on two students. However, the survey responses from the end of the quarter do indicate that some of the students did find the in-class activities beneficial to their revising process. In response to Question 12 on the end of the quarter survey, “What classwork have you found to be beneficial to your revising process?”, five out of nineteen students specifically mentioned in-class activities:

S2733: “Review of MLA.”

S7378: “Pretty much all the teacher has taught.”

S4612: “Working on thesis statements.”

S1021: “Worksheets on comma splices because I love to put commas

where they are not needed.”

S7298: “Grammar exercises because the more you do, the less mistakes you’ll make.”

Although five students did reference the in-class activities as beneficial to their revising processes, nine students also specifically pointed out peer critique. This suggests that the students did find peer critique more beneficial to their revising processes than in-class activities.

The survey evidence does reveal changes with regard to Susan’s second course goal: helping the students write thesis statements. Students increased how much they focus on thesis statements, a journaling activity, when they wrote a second draft. These answers were in response to Questions 8 and Question 9 on the surveys distributed at the beginning and end of the quarter, respectively: “What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a first to a second draft? If you don’t revise, please mark that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)” The number of students who said they focus on thesis from the first to second draft of an essay rose from 11.8% on the survey distributed at the beginning of the quarter to 47.1% on the survey distributed at the end of the quarter. This is a considerable and seemingly positive increase; however, given the context of the class, we must look at these increased numbers in a more complex way. The students were most likely paying more attention to their thesis statements because they practiced theses so much in class and in their journals. However, because Susan required students to submit their theses for feedback and approval, the students would naturally have spent more time perfecting their thesis statements from the beginning of the quarter to the end.

However, the focus is still on getting the thesis “right” and not changing it once it is approved, and not on students developing their theses to more effectively reflect their arguments as they compose and revise. Susan’s teaching method essentially “locked in” students’ thesis statements before they had a chance to discover and develop their arguments. It pre-empted this kind of prewriting.

Conclusion

Based on the data presented in this case study – the survey responses, interviews with Susan, Gabriella, and Claus, and analysis of student essay drafts – I suggest that the two aspects of Susan’s teaching practices examined here – peer workshops and in-class exercises – seem to demonstrate a conflicting identity in Susan’s teaching pedagogy. Although Susan values revision and peer critique, she appears to value surface revision over content-based or writerly revision. This is demonstrated in the way that Susan began the class with grammar exercises, which set up the class for a focus on grammatical correctness and proper word usage. The peer critique sheets asked that the students be able to successfully predict how Susan will grade the essay, as they included questions that were directly related to how Susan would grade their essays. Thus, although the peer critique sheets made Susan’s grading process more transparent, students got little instruction on how to be good readers of each other’s writing and be successful predictors of Susan’s thoughts. Therefore, although the students largely felt that peer critique was helpful, there seemed to remain a sense of ambivalence about feedback students received from their peers. Susan also had minimal input in the revising process. She gave input on

students' thesis statements, but this feedback seemed to only point students toward an approved thesis that they would then feel compelled to stick with for the writing process because it was "right."

The data presented here further suggests to me that Susan's use of professional model essays and structured and possibly reductive peer critique worksheets, coupled with her hope that students would learn to "value" revision through peer critiques, perhaps illustrates the conflict in her teaching pedagogy further. The syllabus did not reveal specific readings that related to writing for rhetorical purposes; therefore, the students had difficulty moving beyond writing and revising to meet the course requirements, to writing and revising to discover more about their topics, which content-based or writerly revision would allow.

Because so much of the class is rooted in revising for correctness, during the peer critiques, the data suggests to me that the students seemed to attempt to mirror how Susan would grade their essays according to the essay requirements. Claus especially emphasized this when he connected peer critique directly to how Susan would read his essays, and suggested that if his peers did not like an aspect of his paper, then Susan would offer a stronger critique. Although Gabriella admitted to its value in our interview, she seemed to find little use for peer critique, choosing instead to focus on her own abilities as a writer to help her progress. This was especially demonstrated when Gabriella submitted one page for her research essay peer critique, choosing to wait until she had all her sources to compose her essay instead of writing enough to get substantive feedback from her peers.

While the students did say in their survey responses that exercises such as grammar and MLA were helpful in revising, I would argue that these exercises were helpful only insofar as they reinforced the idea that students needed to produce correct, polished drafts designed for one audience: the teacher. The exercises that students participated in during the class, from model essays to peer critique sheets to MLA workshops, all prepare students to take on the voice of the teacher in their own critiques of their peers' work. In Susan's class, students may have been more concerned with embodying Susan's voice during peer critiques, and may have been more concerned with getting things "right" according to Susan's teaching focus, than they were with their growth as writers, readers, and thinkers.

CHAPTER 5: REVISION AND “CREATING KNOWLEDGE” IN A “COMMUNAL”
CLASSROOM: LIZA’S CLASS

“Maybe I just knew what questions to ask.”
- Elizabeth

Introduction

This chapter will outline Liza’s teaching goals, and will examine in-depth two aspects of her teaching practices: peer workshops and class activities. In examining these aspects of her teaching, we will compare Liza’s goals for the course with student survey data and student interviews (Mariah, Kendra, and Elizabeth). The teaching strategies that Liza employs can enhance students’ perceptions of revision equally well. The first part of Liza’s course description reads as follows:

[First-Year Writing] focuses on how we write, read, and think and also includes rhetorical study of language and writing. You gain practice in composing and revising your own essays of various kinds. You engage in informal writing, formal writing, peer critique, revision processes, active readings and group work as means to becoming a successful writer and thinker both in and outside the university. This course assumes, at the outset, that students who have been accepted to college can already write. Thus this is not a course that teaches you *how* to write, but attempts to meet you where you are as a writer right now, and has the potential to teach you how to write more competently, more successfully, and more confidently in college.

I quote Liza's course description at length here because she addresses the two aspects of her teaching listed above. In this description, Liza specifically mentions peer critique, group work, informal writing, and revision as elements of the course that will help students "write more competently, more successfully, and more confidently in college."

Students in Liza's class rely on four sources for the basis of their essays, informal writing, and group work. Students read three texts in Liza's class: John C. Bean, Virginia A. Chappell, and Alice M. Gillam's *Reading Rhetorically*, brief 2nd edition; Gary Goshgarian's *Exploring Language*, 11th edition; Zakes Mda's *Cion*; and additional readings that Liza posts to Blackboard. Liza notes that each paper the students write "will arise from [their] in-class readings, informal writing, and group work/activities." Informal writing counts for 20% of the students' grades, while formal papers and peer workshops total 50%. The remaining 30% of the students' grades is derived from their research essay annotated bibliography, a presentation, and writing assessments. Students were graded on formal writing based on a rubric where revision was 20% of the grade. After receiving a grade on their "final" essay with Liza's comments, students were allowed to revise their papers for a higher grade.

Liza described how the daily class assignments build into each other:

For each assignment, we read two essays that were in the style of the essay that I would like students' writing to be in. And then we watched a movie that was somehow connected that they could also use as an argument. For example, we watched *Chocolat*, which is definitely about how food affects people. So it was like giving them examples. And then we would do

freewritings every day about those. And we did a lot of in-class activity to generate different topics.

By allowing the students to generate their ideas from a series of examples provided either by Liza or by the students themselves, the students moved toward creating their own knowledge on a subject. Liza described her freshman composition course as one that focused more on “creating knowledge” rather than “disseminating knowledge.” She used the texts, homework, and classroom activities to help her students develop strong ideas and continuity of focus in their essays; she said, “you can’t really write a thesis until you have a good, focused essay with central ideas that are strong.” Most of Liza’s classroom activities centered on helping students to develop strong, focused ideas that convey their points effectively. The formal essay assignments in her class move from a personal narrative where students relied on their own experiences as evidence, to creating an argument using outside sources as support, to writing a thesis-driven research essay that utilized many sources.

Liza’s definition of revision is closely associated with her theory that a classroom is a place for “creating knowledge.” She defined revision as:

The process of taking texts through various forms in an attempt to find the most effective way of presenting the information you’re trying to get across.

Liza admitted that she kept her definition “very deliberately vague” because, whether it be in her students’ writing or her own work, her goal in thinking about revising was based heavily in reflection. Liza elaborated:

What I'm trying to do with my definition of revision is think about the rhetorical and persuasion generally and ask, "why are you writing this essay? What's your goal?" Then, we work on moving the text towards that goal, however it happens...It's not necessarily about making a better paper, but about making something that will do what the author wants it to do.

In this description of her definition of revision, Liza focused on the responsibility of the writer to create a particular body of knowledge and to consider the best way to convey that knowledge to an audience. She was less concerned with a "better" paper and more concerned that the students generate essays that express their ideas and goals in writing.

One way Liza worked to help her students develop as writers and revisers was through the progression of the formal writings. The three essays in Liza's class progressed from a personal narrative, to a personal narrative with secondary sources, to a research paper. In the first personal narrative, Liza asked the students to focus on "using [their] life as proof." In the second essay, Liza introduced MLA along with the idea of "integrating outside sources, and supporting [one's] argument with somebody else's argument as proof." Before the third essay, the students conducted a research project on *Cion*, the novel they would use as the basis of their research essay. While Liza admitted that the students didn't need to have an "original argument," she said that "it was practice for compiling and figuring out how to research and how to document that research properly." The practice from the second essay and the presentation led students to their research essay, which combined original argument and substantial research.

In order to further help her students achieve these goals, Liza employed a combination of student-centered and presentational pedagogies in her peer workshops and in-class activities. With the presentation-based assignments, Liza's concerns were focused on conveying information to the students and making sure they understood not only the basic tenets of writing an essay, such as writing paragraphs, organization, and using MLA documentation, but also the tenets of critical thinking that would help the students work toward better expressing their ideas as writers. This adhered to her desire to give students the ability to write more "competently" and "confidently" in college.

Liza was also concerned with the concept of revising on a larger scale: she asked that the students do significant revisions of their writing. Revision was required for each formal essay and was part of the students' essay grade. Liza explained the revision policy in her syllabus:

Before turning in papers for a grade, you will revise each essay following peer writing workshops... **When you turn your paper in for a grade, you will include all of the drafts and prewriting that preceded the paper;** this way, I can see your whole process of thinking from reading through formal writing.

In addition to the peer workshops, Liza also asked to see the students' revising process by collecting all drafts and peer letters. Her emphasis on revision and critical thinking encouraged students to move away from simple summaries of others' ideas, and toward utilizing other texts to support their ideas.

By comparing Liza's teaching practices with her own comments, the comments of three students I interviewed and their papers, and the class' survey results, we will begin to understand how the students' attitude toward writing and revising changed from the beginning to the end of the quarter.

Instructor, Class, and Student Profiles

Liza was an adjunct faculty member. She received her Master's Degree from the university where she taught this first-year writing class the previous spring. Much of her teaching philosophy was derived from her work as a Teaching Associate at the university; however, Liza adapted much of the material into her own learning outcomes for a class. According to Liza's interview, she had two main goals for the class; to "create knowledge," as stated above, and "to give students a toolbox, and show them how to use the tools." These guiding principles influenced the pedagogies Liza employed in her class.

During the quarter that I collected data, Liza taught a Learning Community; this is a group of students who are placed together because of their major and take some courses together during their first quarter at school. Her class was part of a Nutrition Learning Community, meaning that the students in this class were all studying nutrition in some way. The class was also majority female – 17 women and three men. As for the class' course goals, Liza observed that the students' learning outcomes may have been different from her own. While Liza wanted the students to develop critical, independent ways of

thinking, like Freire's "problem-posing mode" of education, the students wanted to remain safely within Freire's "banking mode" of education. She said:

[This class] generally was better at navigating the system of a classroom, at navigating through general teacher expectations. They did exactly what was required: they were taking in the information, spitting it back out, and were really great at that. So I think that for them what was more challenging was realizing that they couldn't do that in my class. Because I'm not going to give you anything to just spit at me; it's all about putting something together and getting new ideas. I think for that class, that was the big transition; the transition between going through this predetermined set of motions and knowing it's going to get you a grade, and actually trying to do something more with your own ideas.

Liza understood that the students in this class, while savvy classroom negotiators, were initially resistant to critical reflection and taking risks in their writing. Liza made an important interpretation of her own course goals with regards to this particular class. While she said above that her theme is "creating" knowledge, she noticed this class wanted her to "disseminate" the knowledge to them. Her resistance to that ideology caused the students to make a choice: go for the grade, or go for their own ideas, which was actually the path to the grade. The surveys and interviews reveal the extent to which the students in this class chose the latter and revised the way they thought about writing and the revising process.

From Liza's class I interviewed three students: Elizabeth, Kendra, and Mariah. All three were first-quarter freshmen at the time of the study, and all three were female. Elizabeth was a student that historically struggled with writing: she said that in high school, she "had a lot of teachers that didn't really like [her] writing, so [she] never got good grades in English." She described her high school experience as not having a lot of freedom to write; she remembered "a lot of story summaries" and an experience where the essay seemed to have a lot of freedom, but "then when you got down to it, there were all these guidelines...there wasn't much freedom." Elizabeth felt that Liza's class provided her with a lot of freedom to write her own ideas, and that she felt more confident, because Liza, unlike her previous English teachers, liked her writing.

Kendra described herself as a student that "like[d] English and writing." On her survey, Kendra commented that she had been revising papers since grade school. But she reflected in our interview that she and her classmates "were supposed to write our rough draft [and] turn it in, but [that we] never really got feedback from so many other people." Kendra also reflected that she may have been more proactive than other students, saying that she "talk[ed] to a lot of people about [her] paper instead of just reading [her] teacher's comments on the bottom and then turning in [her] final draft." With regard to her class with Liza, Kendra said that she was enjoying her English class because of the level of involvement with her peers, and because she had learned "a substantial amount, especially about MLA format and citing."

The third student I interviewed, Mariah, was a self-described "honors or AP" high school English student. She commented that the level of ability in her composition class

was difficult to discern, as others may be repeating the class, but that this uncertainty made the class “interesting.” Mariah said that historically, she had not “gotten much help” from peer review sessions and that she never had to write a lot of drafts for an essay. She described an experience from her sophomore year of high school, where she said that “everyday we’d take the same paper but we’d revise a different aspect of it: grammar, or organization, sentence structure.” She described this experience as “the most extensive look at a paper [she had] ever done.” In Liza’s class, Mariah appreciated the amount of brainstorming they did as a class, and could see how all the work they did was for their benefit; however, she did not feel as though there was a tremendous amount of structure to the course because there were not clearly defined units.

Revising and Peer Workshops

While students initially viewed peer review with skepticism, they eventually discovered the value peer review could have for their revising processes. One way the students in Liza’s class understood revision was through the revision grade they received for each essay. In fact, Liza focused 20% of the students’ final essay grades on revision. She emphasized that this was not about the quality of the revision: she said, “whether it was good revisions or bad revisions, [what was important was] just the idea that you [had] to change something.” In order to help students make significant changes to their essays, Liza conferenced with her students through peer review groups that met outside of class at a local coffee shop. Liza’s goal for these peer workshops was to make them entirely student-run. In the early workshops Liza modeled the behavior she would like

her students to enact in workshop, which she described as “a communal experience [in which] I try to make a group of equals sitting down together and talking about each other’s work that they care about.” The students therefore got two types of feedback: Liza’s teacher feedback and the students’ peer feedback, both during group the workshops. The multiple types of feedback, presented in a social atmosphere, were intended to increase a student’s idea of who could give “valuable” feedback, and also further students’ understanding of the power they had over their work.

Like many of the scholars who research peer feedback, Liza believed peer feedback is an essential part of the revising process and the classroom experience. She considered the peer reviews to be important enough to be included in detail on the syllabus. Liza’s syllabus described the peer workshops as such:

We will have three peer workshops during the course of the class. These will include reading the final stages of your papers and working out the “kinks.” You are expected to read all of your group’s work before the beginning of the workshop, write a one-page response to it, show up to the workshop on time, and thoughtfully participate in the process. **If you fail to show up, prepare, or fully participate in the peer review, your final paper grade will be lowered by two full letters.**

The requirements for the peer workshops were accented by the bold instructions at the end that emphasized the workshops’ importance for the students’ grades. If students did not fully participate in the workshops, their grades would be lowered. Liza wanted to

ensure that students bring their best work to the workshops as writers and reviewers, and used grades to initially encourage the students to participate.

Although Liza insisted that students come to the workshops fully prepared or their essay grade would suffer, her goals in the workshops focused less on grades and more on the higher-order concerns of writing. Liza's goal in the group workshops was to get students to move away from solely commenting on grammar on their peers' papers, and to help them move toward commenting on higher-order concerns, such as focus and ideas, and be able to give this criticism in a constructive, thoughtful manner. Liza utilized peer workshops that met outside of class to help students achieve this goal.

For each peer workshop, Liza created virtual groups for the students through Blackboard, the university's online course management system. The students submitted their papers to these groups through a tool in Blackboard called "File Exchange;" each member of the group was then required to print out each group member's essay. The students followed a bulleted list that Liza handed out in class that indicated what they should be looking for, such as:

- favorite paragraph(s) (and why)
- paragraph(s) that need more work (and why, and how to work on them)
- where readers think the thesis is
- what elements of the essay might be revised to look like other aspects of the paper.

The students used this list to comment on the paper itself, and wrote a letter to the writer that included this information. All group members were required to complete this before

they met for their workshop. The students then took their notes and letters to a one-hour group session that met in a coffee shop. At the session, Liza and her students, according to Liza's student Kendra, "go over each other's essays and say what we found in that essay that they can change, [and] what we like." The letter and notes were later turned into Liza with the final draft of the essay, so that Liza could evaluate the quality of the students' feedback, and the extent to which the students utilized the feedback they received. In the following sections, I will discuss the students' initial skepticism toward peer review and will speculate about how and why they appear to learn to value the feedback they receive.

Peer Review: Students' Skepticisms

Like students in other classes, Liza's students were skeptical about the value of peer review at the beginning of the quarter. Mariah, the former AP student, was especially concerned about the type of feedback she would be receiving in the workshops. When I asked her whose feedback she favored the most, her response conveyed her skepticism towards her peers:

Usually I would say the instructor first, then myself, then other peers. A lot of times I don't really get much out of peer revisions. A lot of it is I feel a few nitpicky things, like grammar and stuff and spelling obviously, but in terms of really trying to help me correct my paper, I haven't really gotten much help from the sessions. And that's not to say that's just this year. It's been all through school, you know. It was very quick – you got

ten minutes to look over the paper and that's it. And so I didn't really feel like peers did a thorough job of trying to help.

Kendra, a student with positive English class experiences, seconded this opinion:

Normally I don't pay as much attention to the input that I get from the three other people in my peer review group as I do to Liza's input.

Because she knows the most, I guess. And a lot of times, when I go through other people's papers, and I find a lot of the same mistakes...[the other students'] input isn't as credible as hers.

Mariah and Kendra echoed the sentiments of other students interviewed in this study, as well as some of the written responses on surveys collected from students: peer review can be an inconsistent way of getting help in writing.

On the beginning of the quarter surveys, students had mixed opinions of how beneficial peer review was to their revising process. Here are the survey responses from some students for Question 11 of the survey distributed at the beginning of the quarter, which asked students to discuss classwork they found beneficial prior to taking Liza's class. Some students found peer review beneficial; others preferred to revise by themselves.

L3164: "When I write long papers that we have to turn in for a big grade, I love when people revise my paper to make it better."

L7728: "In high school we used to have copies for everyone in the class and we would edit papers as a class."

Here are the voices of some students that seem to prefer revising without the help of their peers:

L3147: “[It’s beneficial for me to write] first drafts in class, then...revise on the computer.”

L7527: “I like to revise by myself.”

These voices are examples of the voices of the students in Liza’s class. Some found peer review beneficial; some focused on revising by themselves.

Liza also acknowledged that student skepticism is a potential issue in peer review. She made an argument as to why students may fear “really trying to help” each other (an argument echoed earlier in my case study of Susan’s class):

When you give students someone else’s paper, they’ll mark grammar stuff, and that’s all they will mark unless you really make them do something else. Because [grammar correction is] intuitive [to students]. [Peer reviewers] don’t want to address ideas because that’s questioning [the writer].

Liza’s point about students not wanting to “question” the work of their peers hits on an important concept in peer review; how do we get students to learn to “question” without the fear of offending the writer? In her interview, Mariah admitted that she was open to “constructive criticism;” why, then, was it difficult for her to get the help she needed? In response to students’ concerns regarding peer review, and to help forward her own goals of increasing critical thinking among her students, Liza used the group workshops to teach a shift in thinking about peer review; instead of focusing on grammar, she modeled

ways for students to focus specifically on ideas and support by crafting comments that reference those elements of student papers. In so doing, her hope was that the students will follow suit.

The “Value” of Instructor and Peer Feedback

Another issue that Liza touched on in her interview was the “value” students place on teacher and peer feedback. As Mariah indicated in her comments, she valued her teacher’s feedback the most, then her own, then that of her peers. And Kendra commented that the teacher “knows the most.” Both Mariah and Kendra suggested that the teacher’s comments are the most “valuable” because the teacher is in a position of authority and “knows more” about writing than the other students in the class. Liza recognized a disjunction between students like Mariah and Kendra and students that might be more likely to value the comments of their peers equally to Liza’s own comments. She offered a reason for why this is the case:

The students [who are] more adept in the English classroom are much more receptive to things I say about their papers than anybody else... Those who are not as adept at the English classroom a lot of times are more intimidated by me or anything I say, but they are really receptive to what other students say, especially because they’ve been really good about showing empathy in situations where they’re reading each other’s work, or working in groups. And so they’re like, hey, this person actually cares about me a little bit and is giving me help.

While students like Mariah, who had always succeeded in English classes, clearly fall into the first category, Liza's goal in the group workshop was to help all students find "value" in not only her own comments, but more importantly, in the comments of their peers. Some students, like Elizabeth, who did not have a positive writing experience in high school, learned to do this by knowing "what questions to ask" of their peers. Others, like Mariah, who had positive high school writing experiences, not only may have learned to pay attention to an audience beyond the instructor, but may also have learned the importance of empathy in the writing classroom. Liza was involved in getting her students to care about their classmates' work and to arrive at a place where they could receive quality feedback in group workshops from empathetic, but critically savvy, peers.

For the first peer workshop, Liza modeled how she wanted the students to respond to each other's papers, by pointing to specific moments in the text, asking "how" and "why" questions, and getting the students to brainstorm as a group as to how they might best help their peers. The process by which students read and responded to each other's work created a more organized, more focused atmosphere. By asking students to read the paper ahead of time, comment on the paper itself, and write a letter to the author, Liza ensured that her students would come to a peer workshop not only having read the essay, but also having thought about it, and thus, they were more prepared to discuss it.

Benefits of Peer Workshop

According to the students, peer workshopping had two main benefits: increased discussion among the group participants themselves and students' increased awareness of

their own writing and revising abilities. The students discussed these ideas in their survey responses to Question 12 on the survey distributed at the end of the quarter, which asked students to discuss classwork they found valuable:

L3616: “Peer revision meetings. The preparation for the meeting made me a more critical reader and peer reviewer which allowed me to take a more critical view on my own writing.”

L7728: “Peer review groups because I got feedback from more than one person.”

L3164: “When we have peer review groups because three other people revise your work and tell you their opinions.”

L6458: “What was beneficial was the peer editing group. Those help.”

L713: “Classwork that I have found to be beneficial to my revising process is group work, because it allows me to see how others revise.”

L4376: “Peer reviewing, because it helps me look for mistakes in my paper.”

The students in these examples showed that they understood the importance of peer workshops to their revising process. In the above comments, they either appreciated the group atmosphere for the feedback they got or because they were able to look at their own writing from a more critical perspective.

The interviewed students elaborated on these two benefits introduced by the survey responses. For Mariah, the discussion atmosphere of the peer workshops was especially helpful. She pointed out that “the fact that we sit there and have to talk about it

and create conversation about our papers, I think is more helpful than just, here, I revised your paper.” Through the workshops, Liza was able to create small discourse communities, where the students were able to build a base of knowledge from which they could draw in order to effectively discuss each other’s essays. By being in the same workshop groups for the entire ten-week term, the students were able to focus their comments to specific elements of their peers’ writing. This helped the students further develop as writers, as the comments they received were more specifically geared toward their individual writing and revising strategies. More importantly, Liza worked to help the students have completely student-run workshops. Liza explained:

I gave a lot of input the first [session] by helping them find questions to ask each other. I really put a lot of myself into that. Then with the second one...I stayed out of it unless major issues came up. I might ask them things like, could you guys take a look at this section, and tell me what you think? And the last workshop I didn’t even go to.

This strategy seems to have yielded positive results, as Liza discusses above. In our interview, Kendra recalled some specific advice she received on her second essay, a session where the students provided the bulk of the feedback and Liza provided only minimal feedback. Kendra’s essay, “The Typical Teenage Girl,” focused on how the media influences young women physically and emotionally. Kendra’s goal in this essay was to “talk about how girls are featured in the media a lot and usually only seem to be portrayed as the ideal woman; every teenage girl strives to be that.” Kendra used examples from the media, as well as from an essay she had read in class. When Kendra

brought her essay to her group workshop, Kendra explained the responses from her peers and Liza:

[They] told me that my paper was a lot stronger at the beginning and that they really liked my introduction, but then as it went on, there was more that I could work on towards the end. So I focused more on the end of the paper and didn't really change the beginning much besides grammatical errors and stuff.

The changes Kendra made in her essay demonstrate her shift in focus: she spent more time organizing the essay and added analysis to her use of support. For example, Kendra added that she “talked about the *Thank You for Smoking* movie;” her mention of this film on the bottom of page three in the first draft became a full paragraph on page two of the final draft, and in the final draft, she focused on how the media may “tempt society, and then it is up to society to either follow the temptation or go their own way.” This re-organizing of her paper was something that Kendra spent a lot of time on; she said that she “felt like if [she] moved the different paragraphs to different parts that it would help organize the paper and make it flow better.” However, Kendra did not come to this realization simply on her own, or simply from Liza’s feedback; she appeared to have learned to appreciate and respond to the feedback of her peers.

Both Kendra and Mariah appear to appreciate the discussion aspect of the peer workshop. Kendra finds this part of the workshop the most helpful:

When I hear it multiple times, and it's something that more than one person catches, I realize that clearly I need to change that. And [people]

have told me that they like this part, but they really don't like this part. So, when more than one person tells me that, that's normally when I pay attention to it.

Clearly, Kendra's comment suggests that she learned to appreciate the benefits of peer feedback. In this case, even though she said that she only listened "when more than one person" had the same comment, this is still significant. Kendra revised her perspective of peer review; she moved from not appreciating her peers' feedback at all, to learning how to appreciate that feedback in a way that is valuable to her.

More importantly, it appears that the students learned that revision does improve one's writing. Elizabeth spoke at length about her changing attitude toward revision; even though it was required that the students revise, ultimately Elizabeth expressed happiness with the changes she has made. For her second paper, on the role of a young woman, Elizabeth admitted that, "It's one of the best papers I've written." She reflected on why this might be:

I definitely felt like I got more feedback with this one. Or maybe I just knew what questions to ask. Because with the first one, I got an A on it, but I got some points taken off because I didn't revise enough. So [with the second essay] I asked a lot of questions on how I could revise to make it better. I think I just wanted to make sure I got a good grade on it, so I asked a lot more questions.

Elizabeth's progression with this essay revealed much not only about her experience with peer review, but also her own abilities as a writer. Unhappy with her first essay grade

because she did not revise enough, Elizabeth resolved to do better on the second essay by asking more questions, and eliciting more response from her peers and her instructor. When asked to compare her experience revising her first and second essays, Elizabeth said that with the second essay, she “wasn’t very happy” with the rough draft, and, as indicated above, was therefore not only more motivated in terms of her grade, but also for personal reasons. Elizabeth’s experience with the first essay motivated her to make significant changes on her second essay; as a result, she received a grade of 100%.

But Elizabeth also changed as a reviser as well. When I interviewed Elizabeth, I asked about her current (end-of-the-term) opinion about her own writing. She described her experiences in class with regards to peer review as such:

On the first paper, I relied a lot on what other people said about what they wanted me to write and stuff, but...on the second paper, I sat down before the peer review group, and I read my paper and edited it, like I would if it wasn’t mine. So I changed in that aspect where I’m going to revise my own papers first. And then that way, I understand what people are saying more, I think, when they tell me what I need to fix. So I think that helps. I think I did a better job of editing...I think I’m getting better at it.

Elizabeth’s reflection at the end of the quarter demonstrates something that Liza (and other instructors like Ray) hoped her students will learn: to revise their papers by themselves. Elizabeth admitted that at the beginning of the quarter she focused more on what others said about her work than what she thought about it. But by the end of the quarter, Elizabeth acknowledged the importance of obtaining distance from her own work

so that she could have some expectation of the feedback she will receive, and “understand what people are saying” about her work better.

Like Elizabeth and Kendra, Mariah also acknowledged the importance of peer feedback. She paid closer attention to her audience, especially with her second essay, “My Role as a Young Christian Woman.” With this essay, Mariah expressed to me a fear of being “preachy;” this fear was realized when two of her groupmates discussed this point in her paper. In her comments about this workshop, Mariah mentioned that the criticism came more in terms of questions, and fitting her paper with the requirements of the assignment:

[For this essay], the reader’s thoughts are that, I was placing myself above others, because I have to be this moral person. While I’m no different from any other person – I have my needs and struggles – I didn’t express those struggles necessarily in the first draft. And so that’s what they asked me: where have I faced challenges? Through advertising, and that’s what they told me that’s what I need to incorporate in my final draft.

Mariah’s comments here are important because they show a shift in how she perceived the comments from her peers. Because they reflected a concern of hers – the fact that the essay might come across as “preachy” – Mariah may have valued these comments more than she may have valued others. Mariah already sensed that she didn’t “talk about advertising enough” in the first draft of the essay discussed above, and as a result, appreciated the feedback she received.

Mariah also made an interesting observation regarding the benefits of being a *reader* in peer review, not just a *writer*. For Mariah, one of the real advantages to peer review was learning from others' mistakes:

Another advantage of reading other people's papers is [that] you can see what they do well and what they don't do well... Two of the papers that I read weren't even the proper length... But also, they only had, maybe, two quotations in there. And... maybe they supported their points really well, but only that specific point. The evidence wasn't generally related to their paper and their experiences. So because a big part of [the essay] prompt was to relate to you and your role, I wanted to make sure that I did that.

Mariah picked up on Liza's emphasis on balancing ideas and support based on what she interpreted as "wrong" with her peers' essays. Although Mariah recognized that her first draft had some issues with content, she learned more about what she needed to do to meet the requirements of the essay by learning from her peers' mistakes. As a result, she commented that she made her next draft "entirely new," and focused on "making sure that there was more balance."

Whereas Elizabeth needed to learn to rely on herself and have confidence in herself as a writer, Mariah needed to learn to listen to others. After revising her second essay, Mariah reflected on the importance of her peers in helping her completely rewrite her paper:

I really took into account the opinions I got and tried to change my paper in terms of that. While sometimes I don't always think opinions are useful,

you should try to consider them. And in terms of the preachy standpoint, I hopefully achieved making it more realistic in terms of what my life is really like, not theoretically but realistically.

Although earlier in the same interview, Mariah emphasized that she pays attention to her peers last, in this case, she recognized the importance of peer feedback in helping her achieve a better draft. Mariah decided to include more personal examples to help portray the reality of her life as a Christian woman, and to help her move away from the “preachiness” that she and her peers felt permeated her first draft. Mariah also commented on the increased simplicity of her word choice; she admitted that she likes big words, but also that “if I just use simple language...it [flows] a lot nicer.” Overall, Mariah appeared to gain a new perspective on peer feedback; she learned the value of drafting and peer responses in terms of helping her re-see her work.

The students in Liza’s class rose to the challenges a peer workshop provided for them. They not only gained a new respect for the comments given to them by their groupmates, but they also learned how to use the experience of peer review as a means to re-see their own work, themselves. This, above all, was Liza’s goal: to have the students recognize and revise their own “mistakes,” themselves. Liza said this about her goals for the peer workshops:

I think that as the quarter goes on, they start looking for the same things that people find themselves. So they know, oh I make these “mistakes” when I write. So they start looking for those. And one “mistake” everybody [makes is not realizing that] the best introductions are the

conclusions. So they started saying, oh no, I already did that. I already moved my conclusion.

Being able to see and revise problems without the aid of the peer reviewers suggests that Liza's students were becoming more sophisticated thinkers about their work. In this case, the social atmosphere in which Liza conducted peer review encouraged the students to think of themselves as writers, within a community of other writers. They no longer saw the teacher as the only voice of authority in writing: their peers, and they, themselves, had equal "authority" to comment on and to revise their work. They also saw that this equal authority did not damage their chances of getting a better grade; instead, it may in fact have increased it.

As stated earlier, the data from the student surveys support the claims asserted by the students interviewed and Liza. We have already seen the descriptions of the benefits of peer review from the surveys. In the surveys conducted at the beginning and end of the quarter, I asked students how much importance they attribute to both student and teacher feedback. The students could choose from a scale of 1 (Very Unimportant) to 5 (Very Important). At the beginning of the quarter, the mean for the importance of peer feedback was 3.88 – somewhere between a 3 (Neutral) and a 4 (Somewhat Important). At the end of the quarter, the mean for the importance of peer feedback increased to 4.58. This is between a 4 (Somewhat Important) and a 5 (Very Important), and showed an overall increase of .7 from the beginning to the end of the quarter. When combined, the student responses, interviews, and survey data indicated that the students in Liza's class found the peer workshops beneficial.

In-Class Activities

Throughout the quarter, Liza employed a variety of in-class activities to help her students understand the connections between developing a topic, writing about that topic, and revising to better express their ideas. These activities were intended to teach students to make all of the three revision changes that Donald Murray discusses in *The Craft of Revision*: surface changes, content changes, and most importantly, writerly (or worldview) changes. In our interview, Liza discussed the connection between the in-class activities she asked students to do and their development as writers making writerly changes. She summarized the connection as understanding that “writing is purposeful and is directed” toward an audience, and explained her point in greater detail:

I think that [in] having [the students complete] the class activities, they start to realize how it all fits together to become a paper. They start realizing that they are doing prewriting, and [that] it’s not just that I’m randomly making them do work because I’m evil and I’m a teacher...I do prewriting for discussions [and] informal writing prompts at the beginning of class...to get people’s brains warmed up. Because I do that so regularly, I suggest they do that with their own writing when they write for a paper. They just look at me like I’m crazy. But by the end, maybe they think, hey, this might work.

In this discussion of her in-class activities, Liza identified the connection between in-class work and revision. She clearly saw the in-class writings and discussions acting as a bridge to the students’ formal writings. As she explained, her goal was to help students

practice prewriting techniques that might help them compose their formal essays. In her class, the students learned to revise not only their writing about topics (content revision), but their way of thinking about those topics as well (writerly revision).

This section gives an overview of the in-class activities Liza conducted in her class and how they relate to composing and revising topics; it looks at the activities, Liza's perspective on the activities, as well as the perspectives of her students. The next three sections look at specific activities that both Liza and her students referenced in their interview as having been beneficial for topic development and revision: the student presentations, the "outlining project," and homework responses.

In-Class Activities and Student Revising Practices

In our interview, Liza gave examples of how she might help the students practice both prewriting and revising techniques in class. These examples encouraged topic development as well as revising the students' ideas about writing. Thus, they encouraged students to make writerly changes to their thinking and writing about topics. The following is one example Liza described at length:

L: We did a lot of in-class activity to generate different topics. For example, [for one activity we sat] in a big circle, and [the students had] to write about a story that affected [their lives]. A short paragraph or a couple of paragraphs long. And then the whole class would get up and move a few seats over, and everybody would read it and [write a response to the question], What's your favorite thing about this? [Then they would] move

around: what's the one thing you would want to know more about? [And again they would] get up and move around: draw a picture that would represent this. What would your father say? What would your mother say? And it goes on. So everybody gets a chance to read other people's ideas, as well as get a little bit of feedback on their story, and what works and what doesn't work with it.

M [researcher]: So it's like practicing for the major essays.

L: Right. And a lot of them used the one that we did in class [in their essay]. We do several activities [like] that. And then we also integrate some basic writing stuff: how to write a paragraph, how to structure an essay, how to think critically about your own writing, how to think critically about other people's writing.

I chose to quote this moment in Liza's interview in full because it reveals several points about her teaching strategies. First, Liza worked very hard to help the students not only generate topics, but to get feedback on those topics as early as possible. For some of the in-class activities, Liza not only asked the students to write, but also to comment on each other's writing. This way, the students left class not only knowing what to write about, but also how they needed to revise what they wrote, and what they thought they might write next.

The above passage also shows Liza's commitment to the students' development as writers from a structural perspective. Intertwined with the in-class freewriting

activities are activities designed to help students think about how to structure their writing more effectively. Liza showed them how to “write a paragraph, how to structure an essay, how to think critically about [their] own writing” and “other people’s writing.” The above exercise that she cited is an example that does all four things. The students learned what a paragraph of their essay might look like, as well as how the essay might be structured. They also learned to revise their work by thinking critically about their own and their peers’ writing.

The students I interviewed helped further illuminate the importance of these exercises to students’ revising practices. Mariah in particular found the in-class activities helpful, and described why:

I think what’s really helped in this class particularly is that when we’re writing papers, sometimes I just pick a general subject and I don’t really think it through as much and get to the deeper questions, which could really help you formulate a more specific thesis. And we really tried to do that in this class through different exercises and discussions.

Kendra seconded Mariah’s point about in-class activities being beneficial for her composing and revising process:

Everything that we end up writing about links back to different things that we did our readings on and wrote responses to. Like, when I wrote my second essay...I chose to do the role of a teenage girl because I thought that we talked about it the most in class.

Both Mariah's and Kendra's comments here about the value of short responses are significant with regards to Liza's learning outcome for the students to "create knowledge." First, Mariah pointed out that the class helped her "get to the deeper questions" about topics she was interested in. The in-class activities, specifically, helped her make writerly changes about a topic so that she could "formulate a more specific thesis." Kendra, on the other hand, noticed the connections between the in-class activities and the essays, and between the essays themselves. She realized that she could use the in-class activities to help her generate topics for her formal papers.

Student Presentations and Topic Development

In class, Liza also asked the students to do presentations on the novel *Cion*. Liza asked the students to conduct research on a particular cultural aspect of the novel and present the information to the class. Liza hoped that the students would "create an argument [for the research essay] about *Cion* and use the research they had done about a cultural aspect." The students had to work together to complete the research, and then present that research to the class. Mariah observed that the presentations were not only informative, but also helpful in crafting arguments for the essay. She said the following about the connection between the presentations and the research essay:

For the paper that we're writing right now about *Cion*, we had to do group presentations. And so that I think some people picked the topic that they did their presentation on. I'm picking a subtopic, because my thesis is somewhat focused on that. Other people picked a totally different topic.

So it's interesting to see how information is presented will spark a different interest.

For the research essay, Mariah observed that the presentations did inspire research topics for the students. She chose a subtopic of her group's presentation, and other people may have chosen a topic that another group presented on, because it interested them more. Kendra did a similar thing: she narrowed the focus of her assignment, and chose to look at inequalities between men and women in the part of the novel dealing with the 19th century, and relate that to 19th gender inequalities that she researched. These presentations were another example of the students learning to develop their topics and generate ideas to write about.

The "Outlining Project" and Student Revising Strategies

On both the student surveys and in the interviews, several students referenced one specific lecture/lesson in their surveys as beneficial: the "outlining project." For this lesson, Liza instructed the students on how to "outline [their papers] as [they are] right now" in order to help the students make both content and writerly changes to their essays. Once the students outlined their essays, Liza instructed them to cut up their outlines and look at the order of their papers, and the "connections" that they might see.³⁰

Liza asked the students to do the "outlining project" for the research essay on *Cion*. Kendra gave a detailed description of the exercise in her interview, as well as an assessment of the project:

³⁰ Liza also conducted a similar workshop on rearranging paragraphs; the students were again asked to cut up their papers and put them back together.

One thing Liza had us do was to make an outline and find in *Cion* where our topic showed up. So we had to make an outline of that, and then literally cut into strips of paper all of our different ideas and sources and everything that we wanted to incorporate and then put them into order. This [is supposed to] help with the organization. I tried doing that, but it didn't really help me that much, because clearly, my paper's not organized at all. I think that it was probably because it was a research paper, which is a lot different from [the first two essays]. And because I had so many things to say.

In Kendra's assessment of the project, she admitted that the project didn't help her organize her paper better. She also reasoned that because she "had so many things to say," she had difficulty figuring out what order her ideas should go in. Although the assignment wasn't successful for Kendra on an immediate level (she wasn't able to rearrange her ideas successfully), it did help her understand where her weaknesses were with the research paper. In our interview, she was able to articulate to me that the difference of the requirements between the first two papers and the research assignments may have caused her to struggle slightly. And, she was also able to recognize that her ideas were still too scattered for her to organize and reorganize them. So although Kendra struggled with the outlining assignment, she was still able to benefit from it, as it showed her what she needed to focus on as she revised her paper.

Homework Responses for Topic Development and Topic Revision

The homework responses the students did also contributed to the students' ability to make content and writerly changes to their work. In place of reading quizzes, the students were required to write one-page responses to each reading they did. Like the in-class activities, these responses could serve as a way for the students to generate topics. In a follow-up interview, Liza describes the assignment:

My only requirements for most of these responses were that the students not summarize, and [that they] back up anything they said about the piece with some sort of textual reference or specific example. This "proved" they did the reading, allowed them to think about the reading before class, and let me know which parts of the reading they thought were interesting so I could spend some time focusing on those sections specifically.

In this exercise, Liza required her students to move beyond summary and begin to offer some insight into why these texts were interesting/significant for them. According to her students, as long as they met the requirements of the assignment, they were free to write about anything that interested them. In other words, they could search for their own meaning within the texts they read for class. This allowed them the freedom to generate their own topics for essays, and for the students to "create knowledge," as opposed to Liza "disseminating" the knowledge.

Each of the students I interviewed explained in more depth how these one-page responses influenced their writing and revising throughout the quarter. For example,

Elizabeth discussed why this exercise aided her in becoming a better writer and reviser. Although the students only had one chance with each homework assignment, they were able to revise their thinking to match the requirements of the assignment. In high school, Elizabeth said that she wrote “a lot of story summaries.” In Liza’s class, she learned to move away from summary, and toward thinking critically about what she reads:

My first couple responses were basically summaries of what I read. And [Liza] told me that I needed to relate what I read to me, or talk about what interested me...I started thinking about that more, and I just went with it. I would relate things in the weirdest ways...it helped [that Liza] told me that it was good so, as long as I can relate it somehow, and make sure that there is a connection there, then it’s okay. And I think that’s helped me be more [free] with what I write.

Elizabeth’s responses began as summaries, and she admitted in the interview that they were similar to the ones she had written in high school. However, because Liza required that students back up their ideas with textual evidence, Elizabeth’s first attempts at writing the responses were less successful, because she was focusing on summarizing the text and not writing about what she thought. Elizabeth said that Liza encouraged her to relate the readings to her own life, or to topics that interested her. The end result was that Elizabeth became “more free” with her writing. Over the course of the quarter, Elizabeth revised what she thought the one-page responses were supposed to look like; as a result, she believed that her responses not only improved, but her overall writings improved as well. As Elizabeth said, instead of summarizing the text, “I start off with what story I

want to tell, and then I relate what I read to that story. So it makes it flow better; it makes it more interesting, I think.” These responses gave Elizabeth more to work with when she began to write her essays: because she had already thought in-depth about the readings, she could apply them more easily to her papers. Elizabeth’s writerly changes allowed her to re-see the assignment in a way that was beneficial to her composing process.

Kendra’s comments about the responses are more complicated. While on one hand, she saw how the responses are valuable in helping her generate topics for her formal writings, on the other hand, she felt they may not have been effective in preparing her to compose those formal writings. When I asked Kendra if the responses were helpful, she replied:

Kind of. Because the one-page responses were very informal, it was our own stories that we were telling and it was more like just talking as I was writing my one-page response. But then, when I was writing my actual essay, I felt like I had to be a lot more formal and made a more conscious effort to formally write my essays.

Kendra remarked that the responses were informal, and as a result, she felt as though there was a disjunction between the levels of “formality” for the responses and the assigned essays. As a result, Kendra may have had some difficulty transitioning to more formal work.

The in-class and homework writings Liza assigned her students gave them the opportunity to express their own ideas about readings, to think critically about the readings, and to try out ideas for possible essay topics. The students in Liza’s class

mostly found these assignments beneficial to the writing and revising process. Liza's mixing of teacher and group feedback with lectures on various aspects of writing enabled the students to develop their writing and revising skills. As Elizabeth noted, the emphasis on opinion and critical thinking led her to rethink what a short response to a text might mean; this in turn enabled her, and possibly the other students in the class, to generate more viable essay topics based on the in-class activities.

Generally, the students in Liza's class found these in-class activities very helpful: on the survey, 53% of the students listed in-class activities as beneficial to their revising practices. Here are some examples of comments from the student surveys. In response to Q12 on the survey distributed at the end of the quarter, the students discussed Liza's variety of in-class activities as beneficial to their revising strategies. The comments are out of 19 students.

L4653: "I found that in class we go over how a paper should be set up as well as grammatical stuff to look out for."

L2334: "Outlines in class [are beneficial], because they give me set time to get my ideas out."

L8410: "The in-class writing assignments and note taking [were helpful].

L10220: "Prewriting in class and discussing topics."

L5630: "In-class writing assignments."

L9653: "Freewriting and open discussion."

L2581: "I guess all the essays and everything that we wrote."

L9021: "Short papers."

L7968: “Activities.”

Although some of these responses are short, the students touch on each aspect of the class activities discussed in this section. This was an optional question on the survey; the fact that these students chose to identify specific in-class activities as beneficial to their revising processes further demonstrates Liza’s success in applying classroom activities to her students’ development as revision writers.

Conclusion

Based on this presentation of case study materials, the data suggests to me that the three aspects of Liza’s teaching practices examined here – peer workshop, writing presentations, and in-class and homework writing – demonstrate a combination of collaborative and presentational pedagogies. The transition Liza’s students were mostly able to make demonstrates that they are revising their writing and analytical skills throughout the quarter. While early on, the students seemed to embrace the ideas of summarizing texts, working alone, and the-teacher-as-authority, by the end of the quarter, they revised how they see writing. They were a community that shared ideas and valued the opinions of everyone in class, not just Liza’s opinions as the instructor. Overall, I argue that Liza’s teaching practices appeared to effectively influence students in terms of her teaching goals. Although Liza guided the students through the peer workshops and class activities, the students enacted Liza’s learning outcomes by using these teaching practices to produce their own knowledge. They learned to utilize the tools Liza gave them to think – and rethink – their writing and revising strategies.

CHAPTER 6: REVISION AND STUDENT EMPOWERMENT: RAY'S CLASS

*"I get to choose what I want to
be done with my paper." - Stella*

Introduction

This chapter will examine the relationship between Ray's teaching practices and the changes his students claim to have made in regards to their definition of revision. It will focus primarily on Ray's peer review strategies and secondarily on the different ways that Ray enacted peer review in the classroom environment. Ray brought revision explicitly into classroom, and required revision to be a major aspect of the students' thinking and writing processes.

On his survey, Ray defined revision as a metaphor:

It's rebuilding the house, taking out what doesn't belong, adding what's needed, making connections. Sometimes it involves the entire structure, sometimes just a room or two.

The metaphor of a revision as "rebuilding the house" suggests the extent to which revision was a part of Ray's classroom practices, especially during peer workshops. This definition of revision helps explain how Ray taught revision to his students, and how his students learned to integrate revision into their writing process. Unlike Susan's definition, Ray's definition of revision was one that was implemented more in the classroom, primarily through the variety of peer workshops Ray employed.

Ray described his freshman composition course as one that was very much geared toward the students he worked with each quarter. In this case, Ray taught a learning community of Fine Arts students, and therefore focused two of the essays around that

topic. He used three books for the course: *On Writing: A Process Reader* (2004) by Wendy Bishop, *Cion* (2007) by Zakes Mda, and *Writing from Readings* (4th ed. 2004) by Stephen W. Wilhoit. For this freshman composition course, students wrote five formal essays, and also engaged in informal writing, which Ray's syllabus stated includes "in-class essays, freewriting, prewriting, response papers, or journal writing." The first and fifth formal essays were assessment essays required by the English department that quarter. The second essay required the students to answer the question, "Why do we need art?" The third essay was a rhetorical analysis of an essay the students read for class, while the fourth paper was a research essay investigating an issue in the fine arts. Ray's student Stella added in her interview that students had the opportunity to revise the second and third essays, but not the fourth. When I asked Ray how assignments build into each other, he gave a general overview for each essay in the course:

They would read a story, write a summary of it, then get more into response, then rhetorical analysis. But the writing assignments then led to their essays. Their essay assignments would be to write a summary/response, and a rhetorical analysis of one of the stories.

While these are the basic assignments for each class Ray teaches, because Ray geared his class to meet the needs of his students each time, he explained that he needs to be somewhat flexible about the structure of the course. Ray described this flexibility as "hitting a moving target" because "it's not always set in stone what you're going to be doing with every class." As a result, Ray found that he "look[ed] at their papers" more closely. In order to help alleviate some of the planning that comes with a flexible class

schedule, Ray has collected a variety of exercises that he can use with the students, depending on what he felt the class needed to work on. Over the years, Ray has built a folder full of assignments, and with each class' first writing assignment, he "keep[s] a list of things that will come up and use[s] the folder."

This chapter will explore the impact Ray's teaching practices had on students' attitudes toward revising and writing. We will look at a combination of student survey data and student essay drafts, my interview with Ray, along with his course syllabus, as well as my interview with his student, Stella. In so doing, I will compare these to see if the students' attitudes evolved over the term, and if, where, how, and why they changed.

Instructor, Class, and Student Profiles

At the time of this study, Ray was an adjunct faculty member with about ten years of experience teaching writing. Once a high school science teacher, Ray was currently teaching writing on the college level. He was also a creative writer, specializing in fiction; the focus on revision in his class suggested that much of his teaching practice was an extension of his work as a writer.

Ray's class, like Liza's, was a Learning Community. Ray's students were part of a Fine Arts learning community, meaning that the students in Ray's class were all fine arts majors, including theater, dance, art, and music. Like Susan's class, this class was fairly divided between male and female students. Ray described the course as one where the assignments build on each other: the students moved from writing summaries of texts, to responses to texts, to rhetorical analyses of texts. These assignments served as the

bridge to more formal writing. As stated above, Ray also tried to gear his writing class to individual groups of students, instead of following the same syllabus each quarter. In fact, his syllabus contained writing assignments, but not the day-to-day activities of the class.

In his interview, Ray explained why he made this decision:

When they turned in their first summary, which was the second day of class, I would read them [to] see what were most serious issues that I thought needed attention. And I would start with that. Developing ideas, organization...I was [also] surprised at how many of them had run-on sentences, so I would try to call that to their attention. That was a lot of it, although I think in my own schedule of the ten weeks that I have for myself, on the syllabus, I [had certain points] that I would want to hit at a certain time. [Those points] would be very flexible and changed depending on what I felt their needs were.

Here Ray raised an important point relating to this statement of course goals. Although he had his own points that he wanted to make sure to “hit at a certain time,” he also took students’ abilities into consideration when planning day-to-day activities. Here he specifically mentioned “developing ideas, organization,” and grammar. This shows that Ray tried to cover both higher- and lower-order writing concerns for students. Like Liza, he tried to meet the needs of the students where they were as writers at the time of his class.

From Ray’s class I interviewed one student, Stella. She was the only one from Ray’s class who agreed to be interviewed. Stella was a first-quarter freshman who was a

theater major. Although Stella said she took AP English in high school, she did not necessarily feel prepared for college. In addition, while she wrote a research paper her junior year, she stated that her senior AP English class was mostly “in-class essays” to get the class “ready for the AP test, where you had to write three [in-class essays].” She also said that she historically had difficulty with thesis statements and conclusions. She observed that she was taught “in high school that a thesis statement did not have to be one sentence,” whereas Ray “wants them to be one sentence long,” and she said that “ecompass[ing] the whole thesis” into one sentence proved difficult.

Stella also discussed the issues that arise for her as a writer that were a direct result of prepping for the AP exam. She commented that practicing timed writing caused her to write weaker conclusions:

Especially with timed writing, by the end you’re like, I only have five minutes to go, so I was never really good at conclusions. And so, I usually write them really fast, and just repeat what I say at the beginning.

In her freshmen composition course with Ray, Stella felt she had significant experiences that contributed to her abilities as a writer. Whereas before she was encouraged to write fast, repetitive conclusions, Ray instead asked her to “put a new idea into the final paragraph” to help Stella address the importance of her paper. Overall, Stella said that this class helped her because she was a “big procrastinator,” and the structure of the course “force[d] [her] to do more revision,” which she found especially helpful in crafting her final drafts.

Revision and Class Workshops

Revision was built into many aspects of Ray's course. Ray tried to make use of classtime to help students develop their revising practices. In order to do this, he asked for volunteers to workshop their papers and tried to create a non-threatening environment. He also modeled constructive feedback for the students and hoped to empower his students to make constructive criticisms of both their own and their peers' work. These aspects of Ray's teaching practices reinforced the importance of peer review to the revision process.

There were also several areas on the syllabus where Ray referred to the importance of revising and peer review. Under the course requirements, Ray discussed how revision would be integrated into each of the five formal essays students were required to complete:

Each essay will be prepared in MLA style. Each paper will develop from our readings, informal writings and group work. **Before turning in for a grade, each essay will have been revised.** When you turn your paper in for a grade, you will include all of the informal writing, exercises and drafts that preceded the paper. Failure to complete all five essays will result in failure for the class.

Even in the syllabus, Ray made it clear that students were required to revise each essay, and that essays had to be submitted with all writings that helped with the crafting of the final draft. If students did not revise and submit the revised work, they could potentially fail the course.

Peer review, which Ray called “peer editing,” was also mentioned specifically in the syllabus. In the syllabus description of peer editing, Ray briefly detailed his expectations for the students in peer editing sessions:

You will have the opportunity to help your classmates with their essays.

You will be graded on your effort and quality of work. Keep in mind that the better your rough draft, the more help you can get from your peer editors.

In this description, Ray tried to clarify that students had a stake in the peer editing process. Not only would they be graded “on effort” in peer editing, but the quality of the work they submitted for peer editing was also directly related to the type of feedback they received. If students submitted more complete drafts, they could get more help from their peers.

Ray’s approach to peer review was unique among the instructors I interviewed. As his students worked on an essay, they spent several class periods in a row workshopping and reviewing each other’s work. This class met five days a week; each day of a peer editing week, the students addressed a different aspect of their papers, such as introductions and conclusions, the use of evidence, organization, and punctuation and word choice. The attention to all these elements effectively demonstrated Ray’s idea of revision as “rebuilding a house” at work: Ray asked his students to work on their papers one element, or “one room” at a time. In our interview, Ray described the peer review process in more detail:

Everyone puts their paper on Blackboard, and then I always ask for

volunteers. I think that so far I've always gotten some that would be willing. And I try to make it very non-threatening. I'll praise them for having it formatted correctly...and then we'll say all right, let's take a look at the introduction, and does it capture our attention? Does it set out what it intends to do? And so on. And then, we'll do that with another paper, and a third paper. By this time, half the period is over, and I'll turn them loose on each other's papers [to look at] just what we covered that day. If it's introductions, I tell them, do not look beyond the introductions, focus on if it's doing these things [we talked about as a group]. The next day, we may look at the first paragraph, to see if an idea is sufficiently developed...and then after doing several papers, I'll say, get with a group and look at that.

I quote Ray's description of the peer editing workshops in full because it discusses several of the elements that are vital to the workshops. First is the idea that he "ask[ed] for volunteers" from the students, so that the students whose work was reviewed were willing to do so. He also tried to make the environment "non-threatening" by offering a mix of praise and criticism for the student whose paper is being workshopped. Next, he modeled how to examine specific aspects of an essay by asking questions instead of making comments. Finally, he asked the students to work on each other's papers only within the context that they learned that day. So on a day where students workshopped introductions, even if a student had a four-page paper, her peers could only look at the introduction.

What happened after the class editing session was also important. In an email follow-up, Ray clarified what he meant when he said that after a workshop session, he would “turn them loose on each other’s papers.” For the first essay the students workshopped, instead of creating defined groups, the students read as many essays as they could without commenting. Ray said that he did this so that students could get an “idea of what others are doing and perhaps get an idea of their own essay’s strengths and weaknesses.” Ray also stated that at the beginning of the quarter, students “may talk to one another afterward but they do not write on each other’s essay.”

As the quarter progressed, Ray said that the small groups “become better defined.” For example, as students wrote the second essay, a summary/response paper in which the students had to discuss one of the five essays they read in class, students writing on the same essay worked together in groups. The goal here would be to increase students’ confidence that they could give quality feedback; each student in the group would be an “expert” on the essay being analyzed. This confidence could have added to student empowerment in peer editing sessions. Finally, for the research essay, Ray created groups of three or four students. He said:

I do my best to make the groups appear to be random, but I do what I can to put a student who needs some help in a group with at least one strong writer. These groupings usually change from day to day during the review process but the size stays about the same, three or four students.

By the time students reached the research essay, Ray was creating groups for the students, expecting students to act on the confidence they gained through the class and

small group workshops up to that point in the quarter. That the students changed groups every day could further empower them as writers, and increase their notion of audience: they got feedback from many different sources, and learned to assert authority over their writing and decide which advice to accept, and which advice to throw out. Ray also gave the students an incentive to learn to give useful peer feedback by letting the students know that effective peer feedback could elicit bonus participation points for students.

In a follow-up email, Ray described the process by which students could earn bonus participation points for useful peer feedback:

[When handing in an essay students] write a summary of whom their peer reviewers were and to what degree they were helpful. If they don't think any peer reviewer was helpful then they don't write anything here at all. No one is punished if they don't get good marks for peer editing, but those who are helpful reviewers do get extra points for class participation and I let that be known. (I don't mention names in front of the class but I often write a note on the essays when returned.)...Peer reviewers also initial their comments at the end of the rough draft essay. Not everyone has an opportunity to be a great reviewer on every essay. Some essays are very good and should be left alone. It's difficult to look like a great reviewer when you get an essay like that. But, because the groups change from day to day for the last essay, everyone has a chance to help someone. Those who appear to have made helpful comments on the rough draft pick up

participation points. Students are made aware of this and the potential impact it can have on their final grade.

I quote Ray's description of the peer feedback grading process at length because he raises several points that are important to the students' revising process. First, Ray asked students to reflect on the peer review process. This may encourage students to consider their peer feedback more carefully and critically, so that they can discuss which was the most helpful and why. Next, peer reviewers also have a voice by being able to initial their comments. Although not directly stated, Ray seems to hint at the idea that being a good reviewer means knowing when to give comments and knowing when "some essays are very good and should be left alone." Finally, Ray notes that the students know that giving "helpful comments" could result in extra participation points, which may have motivated students to become good readers.

In the following sections, we will look more deeply at the peer review process in Ray's class. The elements mentioned above – volunteering in a non-threatening environment, modeling, and student empowerment – will be explored in order to look more closely at Ray's peer review practices.

Student Skepticism and Peer Class Workshops

Like the students in the other case study classes, the students in Ray's class were also somewhat skeptical about the quality of feedback they might receive in peer review. At the beginning of the quarter, the students averaged just under a 4 ("Somewhat Important") when answering the survey question of how useful peer feedback was with

regards to the revising process. Stella, the student I interviewed from Ray's class, was skeptical about peer review upon entering Ray's class. Stella admitted that she was "very bad at telling people how to fix things on their papers." As a result, she did not like peer revising where students were told to "pick a partner," because not only was she unsure of her own reviewing abilities, but she was also unsure of the abilities of others:

It's kind of mean but...you don't know how good of a writer these two people you get are, and they could tell you something that actually isn't what the teacher would want you to do.

Like students in the previous case studies presented, Stella also expressed the idea that other students may not be good readers of papers. Her main concern was pleasing the teacher, and in this case, she worried that in small peer review groups, other students' advice could lead her away from what the teacher wanted.

As the instructor, Ray did not disagree with Stella's concerns. He also admitted that students probably come to the peer editing workshops skeptical, especially because of experiences they had in high school. However, his approach to combating students' skepticism of peer editing seemed to invite students to take multiple perspectives. He asked the students *not* to dismiss ideas, or simply dislike peer review because of their lack of faith in their classmates. Ray elaborated:

I think one of the hard things about peer editing...is that some people give bad advice! And you have to sit there and listen to it and separate that from the good advice, and your feelings about having to do something that to you sounds stupid, although it may turn out to be a good suggestion. So

I think that's sometimes frustrating. I try to address that in class. I do let them know, you're going to get different advice, and some of it is not always good.

Ray's idea here of surfacing the concept of "bad advice" for students related directly to his students' peer editing workshops. Because students did class workshops, small group workshops, and individual workshops, he understood that students may have entered peer editing sessions with skepticism. Instead of ignoring these skepticisms, Ray chose to surface them in his class and addressed these ideas with his students.

By surfacing skepticism with peer editing for his students, Ray attempted to move students beyond simply going through the motions of peer review. Instead of the typical grumbles about the quality of the feedback, Ray encouraged his students to listen to *all* feedback, and to think about the choices they had in making revisions to their writing:

I tell them to be open minded: don't judge the advice just because the person isn't what you would consider to be a good writer, or because they have a personality conflict. You have to listen to the advice. When one person is saying something, really, consider it. Maybe even rewrite the paragraph or the page to try and take that advice and see how it works. But also, don't just take advice. What's the reason behind it? Does that reason make sense? Because...if I say, cut this sentence, there's got to be a reason I'm saying "cut it." If you don't see why, you better ask. If it makes the paragraph stronger, then okay. If it's a confusing sentence, redundant,

try rewriting it. And if they have no idea why someone suggested something, don't do it.

I quote this statement from Ray about peer feedback in full because Ray demonstrates how he invited students to think critically about the type of feedback they received. Ray seemed to connect his idea of listening to all feedback with the students' abilities to make choices about their writing. Instead of rejecting comments from peers who students might consider "weaker" writers, he asked that students consider all comments in order to see how those comments might work. Ray stated that students needed to not take advice blindly; instead, they needed to carefully consider the "why," or purpose, of a comment. By asking students to carefully consider why their peers give them advice, Ray may have advanced students' abilities to think critically about their own work. He also seemed to empower his students to take control of their own writing by asking them to try out, and either accept or reject, peer comments. In this way, students could perhaps overcome their skepticism about peer review, and learn to take control of both their own writing and whether to accept or reject the comments about their writing.

This approach seems to have helped alleviate student skepticism toward peer review. At the end of the quarter, students averaged a 4.36 (between "Somewhat" [4] and "Very Important" [5]) to the question of how useful peer review is in the revising process; this number was up from 3.93 (between "Neutral" [3] and "Somewhat Important" [4], albeit closer to "Somewhat Important"). And in response to Question 12 on the survey distributed at the end of the quarter: "What classwork have you found

beneficial to your revising process prior to this class?”, 13 out of 17 students mentioned peer editing. Here are a few of the students’ responses:

R1172: “Looking at my paper on the projector [Blackboard] is beneficial. I can see the problems with my paper.”

R9120: “I really enjoyed going over each other’s papers on the overhead [Blackboard]. It showed me others’ mistakes and how to correct them. It also encourages me to work harder on my own piece.”

R9850: “Having other people read my essay so we can compare ideas [is beneficial]. I am fairly skeptical of other students reading my work; however, their comments can be helpful. I’d rather have a closer friend (with better writing skills) edit my paper.”

R9672: “Peer editing, by far. It gives other voices to my paper and lets others see what I fail to notice is wrong.”

R1813: “Any time we’ve looked at a paper as a class and revised it, I felt like it helped. Seeing other papers being revised gives me better ideas about my own paper.”

R6811: “Having the entire class/teacher give positive and negative feedback [is helpful].”

These student voices show that the students did find the peer editing workshops beneficial to their revising process. However, R9850 still holds onto his/her skepticism, showing ambivalence in the response. As R9850 states, he/she would “rather have a closer friend (with better writing skills) edit my paper,” as opposed to the students in

class, even though students can give “helpful” feedback. This shows that while the students overwhelmingly find peer editing, both teacher-led and student-led, helpful and useful, some skepticism still exists.

Stella was one of the students who, like R9850, somewhat overcame her skepticism about peer editing. Stella’s enthusiasm about peer editing only extends to the class workshops. As she stated:

The way that my teacher does it, you have to hand in your first draft, and then have your peers – the other students in the class – look at it and tell you what they think, and this way it really forces me to do more revision, and it’s actually helped me a lot in the final draft.

The empowerment that Stella felt in the class workshops led by Ray, and the way that it “force[d] her to do more revision” in a positive way, helped her overcome her skepticism. It’s important to recognize, though, that Stella’s enthusiasm only goes so far as the class workshop; in small groups, she hadn’t yet learned to trust her peers’ feedback.

Volunteers and Peer Editing

One way that Ray helped students overcome their skepticism was to ask for volunteers in an attempt to create a safe place for students to both share their work and comment on the work of their peers. In order to ask for these volunteers, Ray created what he called a “non-threatening” environment for the students, so that they felt comfortable volunteering for class workshops. In the class workshop, all of Ray’s students were allowed to express their ideas, where their “purposes find value and use” in

the realm of the class workshop. The students whose essays were workshops were invited to consider the ideas of all their peers, and choose the advice that seemed to work best for their intentions in writing the essay. And as both Stella and her classmates expressed above, they did find it beneficial to listen to multiple perspectives about their work.

Praise was a vital part of these workshops; in our interview, Ray pointed out that he tried to always praise the students who volunteered to have their papers workshopped for some aspect of their essay, whether it was the formatting, the strength of the introduction, or something else. This praise did seem to have a positive benefit for the students. For example, when the class reviewed the introduction to Stella's second essay (a summary and rhetorical analysis paper on Richard Wright's "The Library Card"), the praise she received was beneficial to her confidence going into writing the essay. Stella recalled:

This [essay] is another one that I got put up on the projector, and I was told that it was amazing, and that I didn't need to change it, so, I was like, I'm good!

I included an exclamation point here in the transcript to indicate Stella's excitement when she discussed the summary she had written for this essay's introduction. Knowing that she had a strong summary gave Stella the confidence to go forward to heavily revise the rest of the paper. This was especially helpful because she did not feel comfortable with the skills she needed to employ in this particular assignment. Stella admitted in the interview that she didn't know how to write a rhetorical analysis:

I feel like I didn't really know much about rhetorical analysis, so I was

just sort of writing down what I felt ethos and pathos were. And at the time, I was like, do I have to use logos?

Even though she had a strong summary to begin the paper, Stella discussed in depth the difficulties she encountered in writing the paper with regards to applying the rhetorical strategies of ethos, pathos, and logos. The high praise her summary received helped her be more motivated with the rest of the essay; for example, when she didn't know if she needed to use logos, she asked her instructor. She also listened to the comments from her peer reviewers. As a result, she did some heavy revising before submitting a final draft to Ray. Stella commented on the process of revising this paper:

As you can see, my final draft is much longer than my first draft. So once it was explained more what ethos and pathos and logos were, I was able to incorporate it more and use more examples from the essay.

The confidence Stella gained from the praise her summary garnered allowed her to focus more on the elements of the essay she was less sure about – in this case, the rhetorical analysis. Stella moved paragraphs and ideas around, wrote a new conclusion, and moved her old conclusion into the body of the essay.

The benefits of creating a non-threatening environment for a workshop may seem obvious, but in a writing classroom, the importance of creating this environment is even more crucial. When the class praised Stella's summary, she gained confidence in her writing and was able to move beyond her uncertainties regarding the paper. In this case, the class workshop benefited both her writing, and her concept of herself as a writer.

Modeling and Effective Peer Feedback

In the previous section I discussed Ray's ability to create a non-threatening environment where students feel safe volunteering to have their essays workshopped by the entire class. Ray's use of praise is an example of the modeling he did in these workshops in order to teach the students how to ask questions of their peers' and their own writing.

When Ray conducted class peer editing workshops, he had several goals that he modeled to students on how to give useful and constructive feedback. Ray's most important goal was to get students to critique their peers' papers, but to make those critiques constructive. He wanted students to think about the big picture of an essay, to help them look at the higher-order concerns of a paper, such as focus and use of evidence, as opposed to lower-order concerns, such as word choice. Ray gave a description of his modeling process in our interview:

Initially it seems that the students will almost always say, it looks good. Or if they find anything, it will be, shouldn't there be a comma after that word, or before that conjunction?...[I want them to say] well, let's take a look at the whole paragraph. Maybe there is a need for a comma there, but this whole paragraph can get talked about. You may want to rewrite the whole thing, so let's worry about that first. [I want] to sort of shift their thinking towards the big issues. You know, like the paragraph form.

In the above passage, Ray touched on several important aspects of peer editing. First, he pointed out that students are usually reluctant to give any kind of substantive

feedback; they would simply say, “it looks good.” Or, if students did make a comment, it would be more grammar-based than content-based or rhetorically situated. These are the types of comments that the students in Susan’s class also struggled to make: for example, Gabriella was unable to make a comment about word usage to her classmate because she, like Ray’s students, didn’t have the knowledge base from which to craft those constructive comments. Ray’s goal in modeling was to try to give his students that knowledge base so that they could discuss “the big issues” in their peers’ writing.

Stella’s discussion of the feedback she received on her essays seemed to exemplify the impact Ray’s modeling of peer editing could have on the students’ ability to effectively respond to papers. As Stella discussed her first two essays in our interview, she intimated the increasing importance of peer feedback on her revising process. With Stella’s first essay, a response to the prompt, “Why do people need art?”, she related how the class workshop helped with her thesis statement. Most of the revision work for that essay she did without relying on small group peer feedback, even though, as Ray described earlier, small group feedback was also an important aspect of the class workshop. In the interview, Stella described the changes to her essay as ones facilitated by personal realizations:

I realized that the two paragraphs for each section was sort of childish, in a way, so I tried to incorporate at least some of it into one big paragraph.

The one I really changed a lot was the music part, which was the second part. I realized that I didn’t really know the differences between some of the things that I said. Like, I was sort of just making stuff up for jazz

because I know very little, actually. And then I started to look more up, and I decided that I needed to make jazz and hippie music go together.

In Stella's description of how she revised her first essay, she did not focus on the feedback she received from peers in her small group. Instead, she critiqued her paper on her own; for Stella, revising the first draft was almost entirely a personal experience. However, Stella's coursework had a lot to do with her revisions; she commented that the concrete examples she used, such as *The Crucible* and the work of Alvin Ailey, were inspired by her own knowledge, or by other classes she was taking at the time. However, once Stella began to research her examples, she found more relevant information, and discovered ways that the examples she used fit into her argument. As Stella described in the above passage, her knowledge on jazz was limited, even though it was a musical genre she wanted to integrate into her paper. As she did research, she realized the origins of jazz and hippie music were similar, and that she "needed to make jazz and hippie music go together." It is important to note that Stella did this revision on her own; the only mention she made of peer editing was the class workshop, which she said helped her with the "opening paragraph" and the "thesis statement."

As the quarter progressed, Ray's modeling of peer review and the students' integration of Ray's modeling into their feedback on their peers' writing became more apparent in Stella's reflection of her revising practices. Skeptical Stella preferred the class workshops to the small review groups; however, with her second essay, her small review group gave her some valuable advice. While she was told that her summary was well-written, Stella was having difficulty with the rest of the essay. She still drew on her

own experiences and research, but for the second essay, her revision was inspired by the small group workshop she participated in:

We pretty much looked at the summary when it was up on the screen, but then we went into our little groups and we looked at it. And I was really told that I needed more examples, more analysis of what I was talking about. And then I decided...I just needed to fill the paragraphs, really. When I think about adding more examples, I need to make them longer. That's really how I think about it...And then...the essay was about how [the narrator] wanted to read, but he couldn't because he lived in the South during the 1930s. And so I sort of incorporated my summary, almost, into some of these paragraphs, and used a little history with the Jim Crow laws.

For Stella's summary and rhetorical response essay, she was not sure how to proceed after the summary. However, in her small group workshop, where all the students were writing on Wright's essay, Stella received some good advice. Her first draft of this essay was less than two pages; as a result, her peers suggested that she use "more examples" and provide "more analysis." These suggestions inspired Stella to again heavily revise her paper. She moved her conclusion up into the section of the essay analyzing Wright's use of pathos, and included some researched history on Jim Crow laws to give her analysis some historical context. Here, though, instead of coming up with this changes on her own, Stella acknowledged the more focused feedback of her peers; by this point in the term, it is possible that Ray's modeling of peer editing was

influencing the students more in their small groups, and students were learning how to ask more effective questions and give stronger feedback.

Ray's use of modeling in peer workshops influenced the students in several ways. First, it allowed students to observe an "expert" giving feedback, and it showed them how to model that "expert." One final way that Ray used modeling in his class was by showing them his own revision practices. By showing them how he revised, Ray hoped that students would see "the way the process works." Ray described this in more detail:

Once in awhile I'll bring in something I've been writing that I've marked up, to show them that I'll scratch out an entire page. Then I'll pass it around – a white page that has a red line through it, sentences are crossed out, so that they can see that revision is not just putting in punctuation, and that I have to revise too. And I'll tell them that this is the 8th or 9th draft, whatever it happens to be. And [it] usually surprises them that I revise something that many times.

This aspect of modeling seems to have also helped students shift their definition of revision. In response to Question 12 on the survey distributed at the end of the quarter, "What classwork have you found beneficial to your revising practices?", one student referenced Ray's modeling of revision specifically:

R4536: Seeing the prof[essor] revise helps. He has showed me that sometimes you have to delete large sections of a work and rewrite them."

As this student described, seeing Ray model revision for the students by bringing in revisions of his own writing helped the students understand that revision is, as Ray said, “not just putting in punctuation.”

Based on these modeling processes, the students also learned a variety of methods for offering feedback. They learned to praise, they learned to look beyond grammar at the whole paragraph, and they learned to give specific feedback that can truly help their peers. As Stella’s example illustrates, by following Ray’s model, the students seemed to be improving not only as writers, but as readers of each other’s writing.

Empowering Students in the Revising Process

Because students were asked to volunteer and learn how to give and receive both positive and constructive feedback through Ray’s modeling, this seemed to increase students’ confidence in their writing, as well as increase their control over their own writing. In order to grant students more control over their revising process, Ray asked that students take more responsibility in thinking about the type of feedback they gave their peers, as well as how they revised their own work.

Because Ray’s peer feedback process was based in class and small group workshops, as well as in paired peer readings, students had a variety of opportunities to build their confidence in peer editing. As discussed earlier in the chapter, useful peer feedback could also garner a student bonus participation points in Ray’s class. Asking the students to reflect on their own revising process, as well as the usefulness of the peer feedback they received, required students to look more closely at how and why they

revised their work. Perhaps this is why Stella was able to articulate so clearly the changes she made to her papers; for each of the essays, she had to complete a reflection asking her to consider this. She was also able to describe the type of feedback she received – for example, she received feedback on thesis statements and on her analysis of examples.

In a follow-up email with Ray, he also discussed how he integrated these reflections into the course curriculum. Helpful peer feedback could translate into class participation points. Even though Ray did not draw attention to the students who were strong reviewers in front of the class, he did acknowledge them in writing. Knowing that effective feedback could mean participation points might further motivate the students to take control over the type of feedback they give and receive. Instead of simply saying, “it looks good” (to quote Ray), students would want to give that strong specific feedback in order to earn those points; this might improve peer feedback all around.

To determine what type of feedback students were giving and receiving, Ray asked them to submit several pieces of writing. As he discussed, students wrote a reflective piece detailing their own revising processes and the impact peer feedback had on that process. However, Ray also asked them to take responsibility for the feedback they gave by asking students to sign the drafts they reviewed. Students were required not only to submit all their rough drafts read by reviewers, but the reviewers also signed and initialed those drafts. This suggests that the students were required to take responsibility for the comments they give to others. Ray reviewed these comments, and gave participation points accordingly. Because these drafts were submitted along with reflective essays, Ray could see who gave effective peer review, and who did not.

Although Ray could determine the level of feedback students gave each other, it is also important to acknowledge that he did not believe this to be indicative of the students' abilities as reviewers. Instead, he looked for *how* students give feedback; as he said previously, in some cases, good essays needed to "be left alone." As a result, it was hard for every student to always "look like a great reviewer." However, for Ray, the choice to *not* give feedback could be just as important as the choice to give feedback. Students had to learn what quality feedback is and how to give it. By asking students to take greater responsibility for and ownership over their peer feedback, and by attaching points to effective feedback, students would be encouraged to learn from Ray's modeling how to give the best feedback they can.

Six of the students who commented on their surveys that the peer workshops were helpful also focused on the benefits of peer workshop as an exchange of ideas. In response to Question 12 on the survey distribute at the end of the quarter, "What classwork have you found beneficial to your revising process prior to this class?" students provided the following answers, which exemplify the responses of all six students:

R9105: "When we trade papers and revise each other's by talking and giving each other ideas."

R9120: "I really enjoyed going over each other's papers on the overhead. It showed me others' mistakes and how to correct them. It also encourages me to work harder on my own piece."

R9672: "Peer editing, by far. It gives other voices to my paper and lets

others see what I fail to notice is wrong.”

R4493: “Putting our paper on the overhead and having them torn apart by each other.”

For each of these students, peer workshop seemed to be helpful because they recognized an aspect of collaboration. These students described an exchange of ideas where they learned to identify “others’ mistakes and how to correct them.” R9672 observed that peer editing gave “other voices to my paper;” this suggests that this student embraced the collaborative aspect of peer workshop and allowed “other voices” to give different perspectives to his/her writing. R9105 and R4493 also emphasized this idea, while R9120 suggested that the collaboration in the peer feedback sessions led to his/her own improvement as a writer.

Ray’s syllabus emphasized this idea of collaboration as well. His syllabus discussed the bridge between writers and reviewers, and indicated how each could benefit the other:

Keep in mind that the better your rough drafts, the more help you can get from your peer editors... This class represents a large investment on your part, so get the most out of it.

In this excerpt from the syllabus, Ray argued for equal responsibility between writer and reviewer. If the writer did not work hard to produce strong rough drafts, the reviewer would not be able to give advice. In other words, the more the writer produced for review, the better the feedback could potentially be from the reviewers. This concept

asked that students take responsibility for their writing from both sides, as a reviewer and as a writer.

Empowerment through One's Own Revising Process

Just as the students in Ray's class were encouraged to take ownership for their peer feedback, they were also encouraged to take ownership over their own writing. Ray enacted this through the combination of the class, small group, and paired workshops. By asking students to evaluate different types of feedback, Ray advocated that students take control of their writing and decide what worked best for their vision of their project. He said:

I really want them to get to the point where they're making these judgments on their own, what works, and they see the reason for it. That's the big thing.

This is one of Ray's most important goals for his class. Instead of students following his advice, or the advice of their peers, in order to improve their paper for a grade, Ray wanted his students to learn to make "judgments" about their writing "on their own;" a skill that could potentially benefit them beyond this class. Ray wanted his students to listen to the advice they received, interrogate it, and decide if it is advice that they want to follow. Through this process, Ray hoped to empower the students to take control over their own writing.

For example, Stella was definitely a student who regained ownership over her writing. An AP student trained to write timed writings for a test, Stella blossomed as a

writer in Ray's class. She was finally able to take control over her work through revision. One reason Stella appreciated the class workshop was that she felt it gave her a larger sea of comments from which to pull the most solid, helpful advice for revising. Stella elaborated:

It's easier to get the whole room and say, I think you should do this, and then somebody else will say no, I don't think that's right, you could do this instead, and then I get to choose what I want to be done with my paper.

In Stella's case, she was originally skeptical of the feedback she might receive in peer review; by the rhetorical analysis paper, this skepticism began to fade, thanks in part to Ray's modeling of constructive peer feedback. Stella's use of the phrase "I get to choose what I want to be done with my paper" was indicative of Ray's teaching philosophy; Ray wanted students to feel as though they were the ones in control, that they were the ones making the choices about their work.

Some of the student survey responses also suggested that the students felt they had more control over their writing:

R1813: "Any time we've looked at a paper as a class and revised it, I felt like it helped. Seeing other papers being revised gives me better ideas about my own paper."

R9120 also made a similar statement, as shown previously in this chapter:

R9120: "I really enjoyed going over each other's papers on the overhead. It showed me others' mistakes and how to correct them. It also encourages

me to work harder on my own piece.”

That the students had “better ideas” about their work, and were “encourage[d]...to work harder” on that work, suggests that they, like Stella, had more control over their revising choices, and that they had authority in choosing what to revise.

Another way Ray empowered students was through his grading process. Instead of reserving evaluation of the students’ work for himself, Ray asked students to take part in the evaluation process. He described his grading process in our interview:

When I hand back their papers, they look at all my comments – I type up a page of comments to go with [their papers] – but nowhere is there a grade. I have those on separate little 3x5 cards. And I tell them to write an evaluation of what they did. They do that before they turn it in, and then [again] after they get their paper back with my comments. Did we agree? Do they understand? What are they going to do to improve? And then finally, they have to put a grade on their paper. And if we match, they go up to the next level, so an 85 to an 88, or an 82 to an 85, whatever their grade may be. So it’s not a letter grade, but I think they have to get to the point where they’re always evaluating their own writing. And being critical. And that’s part of the process.

Ray’s requirement that students always “evaluat[e] their own writing” enabled his students to become more critical thinkers about their own writing, and perhaps related to the students’ ability to choose or reject peer comments in revising their work.

Stella was particularly excited by this exercise. In our interview, she demonstrated that she clearly saw the connection between having some agency over her grade, and her revising practices:

I can look at my paper and see if it's good, or if it's not. Because even in class, before we get our grades back on certain papers, he makes us guess what we think we got on the grade. And if we guess right, we go up a level; instead of getting an A-, you'll get an A. And for all the papers we've had to guess, I've guessed right, and so I was like, yes! And so I feel like with the revisions, definitely I've been able to sort of step back and look at my paper not from my point of view writing it, but as somebody else, almost.

Stella's enthusiasm for being able to successfully guess her grade seems to have translated to her ability to revise. She makes a clear connection between her ability to guess right on her papers and her development as a critical writer and thinker. Because Ray required Stella to evaluate her own writing and guess her grade, Stella was able to apply that evaluative work to her own revising practices.

Ray emphasized student authority because of his concerns for the students after they left his class. He wanted them to have control over their work, so that they could progress successfully to other classes where they would need to write papers. Ray stated:

Once the quarter is finished and they're elsewhere, I'll always be willing to help [them] as long as I'm here, they can come to my office, but [they're] not dependent on me. [I tell them,] You ought to be the judge of

your writing so that in another class that you're in, when you have to write an essay, you can look at it and go, I need to do this, this isn't working.

We've got to give them those skills for future writing.

These goals to promote student authority were vital for students to understand in order to have a positive outcome in Ray's course. Ray hoped students would leave the class feeling empowered by their abilities; he did not want them "dependent" on the instructor, but to instead have the power to make these choices about their writing during his class, so that they could continue to do so in future classes. Ray, like Liza, believed that first-year writing courses give students the tools they need to succeed in their coursework to come.

Conclusion

Based on the presentation of the case study materials, I argue that the three aspects of Ray's peer workshops examined in this chapter – volunteering in a non-threatening environment, modeling, and student empowerment – demonstrate Ray's strong commitment to his students' success as a community of revisers. On his syllabus, and several times throughout the interview and follow-up emails, Ray emphasized the importance of the idea that students are "their own best teacher." This dedication to the belief that students can teach themselves to become better writers and revisers comes through in Stella's interview and the data from the student surveys.

Along with this, the survey data suggested to me that students spent over an hour longer revising their work by the end of the quarter, and were writing almost a full draft

more. However, their satisfaction with their writing dropped from the beginning to the end of the quarter; the students began at a mean of 3.9 (closer to Somewhat Satisfied as opposed to Neutral), but ended at 3.57 (between Somewhat Satisfied and Neutral). Ray believed this was a positive sign that the students were recognizing the revision work they need to do:

I've got a quote: "Overconfidence in writing is like overconfidence with motorcycles and chainsaws." It's dangerous! We become blind...And so when you're not quite as sure, you're looking at, or you're looking for things to change, I think there's a greater chance you're going to try and improve. Well, I think that's good. Maybe they're seeing a paragraph or a sentence or the whole essay isn't quite doing what they want it to. At least, to the degree they want it to.

This statement captures many of the aspects of Ray's teaching discussed in this chapter. Ray wanted students to move beyond looking at correct usage as the only choice for revision, and believed that the mean drop for this question could indicate this shift is in fact happening. He also wanted students to be "less blind" to their writing and take more control over what, why, and how they write. The survey numbers indicated that they are doing all these things.

I suggest that Ray's class exemplifies collaborative learning in that the students were working together on many different levels to learn to re-see their writing. While early on, students seemed to be skeptical of peer feedback, by the end of the quarter, they

acknowledged its importance to their revising process (71%, or 14 out of 18, of students listed it on the optional question regarding beneficial class activities).

Because revision was built so heavily into the course curriculum, students began to change their definitions. At the beginning of the quarter, Stella defined revision as “going over a paper and...or changing the way it was written.” At the end of quarter, she said revising was “looking over your draft and making changes to its content.” When I asked her what she thought had changed, she said:

I thought it was more about grammatical changes instead of...I could even change my whole paper in a revision, so...yeah, that's what I thought at the time.

Stella admitted that at the beginning of the quarter, she thought revision was “more about grammatical changes.” But by the end, she acknowledged (and demonstrated with her revisions to the second essay) that she could “even change [her] whole paper in a revision.”

Other students in Ray’s class that changed their definition of revision also recognized the shift of their definition from focusing on local to global elements of their papers. In response to Question 2 on the survey distributed at the end of the quarter, “Do you believe that your definition of revision has changed? If so, why?,” 77% of the students said their definition did in fact change. Here are a few examples of responses:

R5648: “Yes, I spend more time doing revisions. Before I would only work on mostly grammar and word choice when I revised, now I work on more.”

R9120: “I use[d] to write a ‘first draft’ and revise it by checking grammar and spelling. Now I know it’s a longer process and I know how to accomplish it.”

R1813: “When I used to think of revision, I used to only think of the small things to fix such as spelling, grammar, and mechanics. Now I think about revising the paper as a whole.”

R6811: “I’ve become so used to revising my paper and not just making mechanical changes, but really taking things apart and reading them.”

R4536: “At the beginning of the course, I thought to revise meant fixing spelling/grammar.”

R4493: “YES. I had no idea what revision was; I had always just fixed spelling errors.”

All six of these students further exemplify Stella’s statement that revision is more than grammar, and Ray’s hope that the students understood as revision more than “just a fix.” Each student showed a move from seeing revision as fixing grammar, to seeing revising as Ray hoped they would: like building a house. This data also suggested to me that the students were able to make choices about their writing, to learn how to accept and reject comments in order to improve the effectiveness of their ability to communicate their ideas in writing. Stella and her classmates could now see that sometimes, a few things in a room needed to be rearranged, and other times, the entire house needed rebuilding.

CHAPTER 7: ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDIES

The previous three chapters presented case studies of three first-year writing classes. This chapter offers some analysis of the findings from the case studies by examining the student and instructor interviews, the student essay drafts, and the data from the students' beginning and end of the quarter surveys. It seeks to answer the following research questions:

- How do instructors' teaching practices influence students' revising strategies? And, how do they change from the beginning of the quarter to the end?
- How do students and instructors perceive peer feedback as an essential part of revision?
- How do students and instructors perceive instructor feedback, at any stage in composing, as an essential part of revision?

The first section compares the instructors' teaching practices to the students' perceptions of their own revising practices. In this section, I argue teaching practices do influence students' perceptions and practices of revision; however, this influence may not be exactly what the instructor desired or anticipated.

The next section will focus on teachers' and students' opinions regarding peer review as an essential part of revision. As with the previous section, I compare students' and instructors' discussions of this subject from their interviews, as well as the responses from student and instructor surveys, in order to investigate this subject. In this section, I argue that while the instructors all viewed peer feedback as essential, the way peer

feedback was integrated into the course curriculum by the instructors directly impacted how the students valued peer feedback.

The final section will investigate how students and instructors perceive instructor feedback as an essential part of revision. In this final section of the chapter, I compare students' and instructors' discussions of this subject from their interviews, as well as the responses from student and instructor surveys, in order to investigate this subject. I argue that instructors need to be more aware of the extent to which students value instructor opinion, even when instructors want to emphasize the idea of a democratic classroom.

Teaching Practices and Student Perceptions of Revision

This section juxtaposes instructors' teaching practices with the students' perceptions of revision. By doing this, we can determine the extent to which the instructors' teaching practices influenced students' perceptions of revision. The data suggests to me that the students' perceptions of revision seemed to be directly dependent on how the instructors taught revision. In both Liza's class and Ray's class, by the end of the quarter, the students seemed to embrace Liza's and Ray's teaching practices with regards to their own revising strategies. Susan's students seemed to have more difficulty enacting Susan's teaching practices with regards to revision; however, the students did seem to embrace her other, current-traditional, learning outcomes.

Susan's Class

Based on an analysis of the materials presented in Susan's case study, I argue that she taught writing to her students as a linear progression that began with correctness. However, at the same time, Susan valued revision and peer critique, and wanted her students to do the same. Also as the case study demonstrates, Susan's students mostly saw peer critique and revision as beneficial only insofar as these practices increased their abilities to receive a good grade. While Susan valued peer critique and revision, she also emphasized correctness in writing. This seemed to confuse the students, so they fell back on editing for correctness. The learning outcomes and the questions on her peer critique sheets are good examples of teaching practices that emphasized correctness and revision as a narrow, linear process.

Building from the data collected, Susan's class seemed to adhere to what Robert Connors describes as current-traditional pedagogy's emphasis on "product-orientation" with "good grammar and correct usage" ("Current-Traditional" 210). Susan's teaching practices were closely tied to her learning outcomes. These outcomes appeared to move between current-traditional pedagogy, which emphasizes a linear approach to writing with a focus on correctness, and process theory, which emphasizes writing as recursive. Susan's learning outcomes were as follows:

1. Get students to focus on grammar essentials like avoiding comma splices and fragments when writing at the college level.
2. Teach students how to write thesis statements.
3. Provide instruction regarding MLA usage.

4. Emphasize the importance of well-organized essays.
5. Instruct students on integrating quotes and finding reliable sources.
6. Teach students to read-- then think critically.
7. Try to get students to become more comfortable writing by utilizing daily informal writing assignments whether reader response journals, short essays, dialog journals.

The first three outcomes on Susan's list were directly tied to correctness. In order to enact these goals, Susan employed current-traditional practices in her classroom, such as grammar, MLA, and thesis lectures, practice worksheets, and "freewriting." However, I would argue that the freewriting Susan assigned was not freewriting as Peter Elbow might define it. Rather these response journals functioned as assignments with particular outcomes already in mind, such as producing thesis statements. In other words, the students did not write themselves into ideas; they already knew the goal of the assignment.

Robert Connors associates current-traditional pedagogy with "the classrooms staffed by thousands of dedicated writing teachers who never became 'composition specialists'" ("Current-Traditional" 208). Maxine Hairston agrees with Robert Connors' connection between current-traditional pedagogy and composition instructors who specialize in literature. As a graduate student in literature with about ten years experience teaching writing, Susan seemed to fit Connors' depiction of current-traditional instructors. Susan's background as a literary scholar, where the focus is "on the written product" (Hairston 78) may have caused her to remain tied to the idea of product, despite

her belief that process and revision are vital components of the composition classroom. She admitted in our interview that she is “not a rhetorician,” but Susan was clearly a “dedicated writing teacher” who wanted her students to become better writers. She employed goal largely by employing current-traditional-themed exercises, like grammar workshops and heavy emphasis on proper MLA usage. While Susan wanted her students to become critical readers and thinkers, her learning outcomes did not include students becoming critical or rhetorical writers.

Despite her emphasis on product in her teaching practices, Susan also emphasized in our interview that she values revision and peer critique as part of the writing process. She stated:

I think that so many students just think, I’ve written the paper, it’s done, I’m finished...And so that’s the first step in trying to get them [to realize] that no, that’s not it. There’s more work to be done. And so maybe talking about things like, the value of going away from an assignment and then coming back to it later to revisit it and see with greater clarity the things that you might have missed. To get a better sense of [whether] your ideas are cohesive or not. Even the grammar or proofreading things that you might miss at the beginning, you might catch at the end.

In the above passage, Susan did appear to value revision for its ability to help writers communicate ideas more effectively. Like Liza and Ray, Susan emphasized the importance of clarity and cohesion of ideas, and the idea that writing takes “work.” However, unlike in the students Liza’s and Ray’s classes, most of Susan’s students did

not change their perceptions of revision to match more closely with those of the instructor, and although students felt peer critique was helpful in revision, they ascribed equal value to it at the beginning and end of the quarter. The survey question, “How beneficial are peer comments to your revising process?” was measured on a scale from 1 – Very Unimportant, to 5 – Very Important. As stated in the case study, the students averaged 3.65 at the beginning of the quarter, and 3.76 at the end of the quarter. This is between 3 – Neutral and 4 – Somewhat Important.

According to the findings from the survey distributed to students at the end of the quarter, out of all the classes studied, Susan’s class had the lowest percentage of students saying their definition of revision changed. Approximately 17% of the students said they changed their definition, while 77% of the students stated that they did not change their definition of revision. For the students’ final definitions of revision at the end of the quarter, 13 of 18 students used the language of correctness in their definitions, such as “correction,” “fixing,” “editing,” or “proofreading.” Here are some sample definitions:

S1680: “Correction of a previous document.”

S2733: “Re-editing and tweaking a written piece of work.”

S1941: “Revision is taking an original draft of a paper and making corrections on it for the final draft.”

S7298: “A critique to improve a piece of work.”

S4612: “Correcting errors in a paper, and making changes to make a paper better.”

The student survey responses from the same students listed above explain in more detail why the students stated that their definitions of revision did not change:

S1680: “No, what I’ve done to revise hasn’t changed.”

S2733: “No, mainly because my process has remained the same. My high school always emphasized the importance of revision.”

S1941: “No, because my definition of revision has always been the same.”

S7298: “No, because I had revised papers in the past.”

S4612: “No, because I still think it means the same thing.”

These responses seem to show that Susan’s class did not change the way the students think about revision, despite Susan’s belief that revision should be recursive and include revisiting one’s writing, looking for “things you might have missed” and examining whether “your ideas are cohesive.” The students still largely perceived revision as editing and correcting their work in order to, as S4612 says, “Make a paper better.” The students also believed that, in this class, they learned neither a different way to revise nor a different perception of revision. According to some students, the way they revised in high school (or even before) was the way Susan taught revision in her class.

That the students did not see revision as content-based, as opposed to surface-based, is further affirmed by the changes Susan’s students make in their papers; in the sample papers I analyzed, students made a total of 311 changes on the local level, and only 90 changes on the global level. While the local changes were not considerable in comparison to the totals from Liza’s class and Ray’s class (311 and 304, respectively), the number of global changes Susan’s students made in their essays was less than the

total number of global changes made by Liza's and Ray's students (212 and 138, respectively).³¹ This suggests that although Susan's students were making the same amount of local revisions as other students, they were not making the same number of global revisions, which further reaffirms the idea that the students were writing for correctness, not writing to learn.

I did not share the responses with Susan because of student confidentiality; however, I did share the other data with her. Susan offered a reason for the findings and voiced some concern in our interview:

I do wonder if [for] those that didn't change their definitions, how much of that is [related to the fact that] what we did in class was sort of the same as what their perception of what should be done, [and] if I need to do something a little different to give them more than what they're already used to doing when they do their own revisions.

In the above quote, Susan acknowledged that how she taught writing might be similar to students' previous experiences; this suggests to me that not only were the students unable to see writing from a variety of perspectives, but they also might not have grown as writers.

Susan's ideas about students' perception of revision tied directly to what students may have previously experienced and to current-traditional notions of writing. In "The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the Teaching of Writing," Maxine Hairston argues that high school writing is taught in a traditional method that features

³¹ For the full results of the analysis of the students' drafts, please see Appendix K.

“the trial-and-error method of producing a text and having it criticized” (82). She extends her argument, saying “teachers who concentrate their efforts on teaching style, organization and correctness are not likely to recognize that their students need work in invention” (80). In Susan’s case, although she valued the idea of revision as recursive, the fact that she began the class with lessons on “style, organization and correctness” may have undermined her later efforts to help students become reflective thinkers about their own writing.

As discussed by Hairston and other scholars, high school writing has often been taught within the tenets of current-traditional pedagogy and from an arhetorical standpoint. I would argue that in the case of Susan’s class, students did not perceive revision as much more than style and correctness; they submitted their papers, and were critiqued by Susan. Students were expected to write for the teacher, and oftentimes, as indicated by Gabriella, Claus, and some survey responses, peer critique simply meant editing another student’s work for surface changes that matched what was required on the peer critique sheet (and thus, what Susan would be looking for when she graded their papers). Although Susan valued revision, her emphasis on current-traditional practices, combined with the lack of value the students in her class attributed to peer critique, may have swayed her students toward correctness, and away from developing agency over their own writing. This may have resulted in a classroom where students wrote only to please Susan and get a good grade and not to consider their audience or context beyond Susan as the instructor. It may have also resulted in the students’ seeming inability to make critically informed choices about their writing in order to effectively communicate

their ideas. Peer critique thus became yet another way for students to reinscribe their belief that revision meant editing for correctness and to get a good grade. Therefore, they viewed their peers as beneficial only insofar as they were able to successfully edit one's work and predict Susan's essay requirements.

Although the students may not have attributed more value to peer critique, Susan clearly did: she increased the number of peer critiques her students completed for each essay from one to two. In our interview, Susan explained why she made the decision to include so much peer critique:

I felt like I wasn't always sure that from the first peer critique, they were getting enough information from their peers. And so doing it with two peers twice, I felt like was more effective for them because they were getting much more feedback.

Susan's statement here indicates that she valued the feedback peers give each other. In fact, she stated that she was worried students weren't "getting enough information from their peers," and that this prompted her to increase the number of peer critiques. The inclusion of so much peer critique suggests that Susan wanted to incorporate some elements of collaboration into her current-traditional classroom. However, because Susan's peer critiques were rooted in correctness and reductive models of composing, the students either failed to see the value in peer critique, or saw peer critique as valuable in narrow, teacher-oriented ways.

A close examination of some of the questions on Susan's peer critique sheet for the third essay, the autobiography, demonstrates the reductive approach that the sheets encourage students to follow.

1. Examine the introductory paragraph. Does it provide adequate background? Are there at least 5 sentences leading up to the thesis statement?
3. Comment on the organization of the essay. Is there a clear progression of time? Are there problems with shifting tenses? How could the writer make the order of events more clear?
4. Is there a clear section that reflects on what the writer has learned from the experience? There should be a significant section that looks back on the event and discusses what was learned, how the writer changed, how people around the writer were affected, etc.

In the above questions, Questions 1 and 4 contain only polar, or "yes" and "no" questions. While Question 4 has a great deal of description attached to it, students only need to identify the section that shows what the writer learned from the experience; the second sentence actually defines for students what this section would look like. Question 3 does feature an interrogative that opens up a peer's essay for deeper analysis by reviewers, but it is buried behind two polar questions. Thus, the students were most likely focused on filling out a form, not on collaborating to, as Karen Spear says in *Sharing Writing*, "explore and resolve ideas together" (57).

The peer critique sheets that the students filled out did not encourage students to value the comments of their peers as anything more than substitutes for Susan's authoritative voice. Karen Spear argues that in order for peer feedback to be successful, students need to learn to be "peer collaborators," not "teacher surrogate[s]" (54). I would argue that Susan's peer critique questions are not designed to help students see each other as peer collaborators; they are instead mostly a series of "yes" and "no," or polar, questions that function more as a checklist and yield a limited perspective on revision. While there are questions that ask students to make suggestions on specific elements of their peers' writing that could potentially enable students to see each other as collaborators, these more collaborative questions are buried behind the polar questions.

The students interviewed from Susan's class, Gabriella and Claus, both demonstrated the implications of a reductionist approach to peer review and understanding revision as recursive. Both students composed their essays, and discussed their composing processes, in ways that suggested they only valued peer critique as a proofreading session or as a stand-in for Susan's critique (as she only offered critique when asked). Gabriella's reflections on the process of writing her research essay exemplified the narrow viewpoint, based on Susan's current-traditional teaching practices, that she and the other students may have adopted toward revision.

Gabriella's reflection on her research essay on women in the military demonstrated Hairston's claim that current-traditional writers believe that "their most important task when they are preparing to write is finding a form into which to organize their content" (Hairston 78). Gabriella's composing process reflected the privileging of

form over content; the first draft that she brought to peer critique was only one page, whereas the draft she turned in was six pages. More importantly, the first page she submitted for peer critique was virtually identical to the first page of her final draft; this further suggests that Gabriella dismissed the overall value of the peer critiques, as she did not prepare for peer critique, nor did she make any significant changes after her peer critique.

Gabriella's description of her process in writing the essay also mirrored current-traditional pedagogy. Hairston says that in current-traditional classrooms, "competent writers know what they are going to say before they begin to write" (78); this is definitely true in Gabriella's case, as she is clearly a "competent writer" who also knew "what [she was] going to say." Because Gabriella's topic was so broad, she felt there were many paths she could take in the essay. However, as Gabriella told me about writing her research essay, she discussed the changes she was willing to make, and the ideas she did not want to include:

G: I changed [the focus of my essay] from women in the military just not being accepted with the same requirements [as men] to combat positions. And then I went to the recruiter, who said that there are a lot of positions that aren't even available to women. That changed [my thinking] a lot, so I didn't include that in my paper because that would contradict my whole point. So other than that, [the research] kind of made [writing the essay] more complicated, because I learned more about [my topic], and there was a lot more that went into it. I could write a thousand pages on it. But it was

stuff that would contradict my argument, so I couldn't include it.

M: I don't know how much that would have contradicted your point, but it might have taken you off on a different angle.

G: Yeah, it would go into something different, and I felt like it wouldn't have been proving my point so much as going off on something different. There's so many different aspects that go into [this topic], really.

I quote this moment from our interview at length because Gabriella revealed much about her composing process and its applicability to Susan's teaching practices. Gabriella did not exhibit the strategies of an experienced writer, who Donald Murray says "knows that learning is hidden in the mistakes, that we discover what we have to say and how we can say it from fast written prose" (*Write* 4). Instead, Gabriella exhibited strategies that might be embraced by inexperienced writers, who Nancy Sommers describes as revising "in a consistently narrow and predictable way" ("Revision" 383). In this case, Gabriella was willing to narrow her essay's focus to something more manageable, but was unwilling to include different aspects of the subject of women in combat positions that arose during her writing and research, aspects that could potentially change the direction her essay would take. She could not see "revision as an activity in which [she could] modify and develop her ideas" (Sommers "Revision" 382). Gabriella's decision to not address aspects of her topic that might contradict or extend her argument seems to show that Gabriella thought linearly as she wrote this essay. Because she

believed she knew ahead of time what her paper would be about, Gabriella was unwilling to change her point of view.

The idea that Gabriella did not wish to use her peers as sources of knowledge, and that the peer critique sheets did not encourage her to, is linked to Sommers' argument that students understand that revision requires "lexical changes but not semantic changes" ("Revision" 382). In other words, the students may not believe that they need to offer anything in their writing other than their original idea. The peer critique sheets in Susan's class helped encourage this through their checklist format; students may have thought that if they got the "correct" answers to the questions, they only needed to make surface changes to their essays. This fits the students' idea of how to write to an authoritarian audience that they believe privileges correction. Claus made clear this connection between correctness and audience in his discussion of his research essay. Here he expressed the importance of educating others, but not himself, on his topic:

The way I see it, I already believe this, I don't need anything to persuade me more, it definitely interests me, I go, oh wow, there's other people who think this, but I don't need the persuasion anymore. So, you know, [I] just work on other people getting it.

The peer critiques served as a good opportunity for Claus to persuade his audience. However, because of the nature of the peer critique questions, the sessions did not serve as an opportunity for Claus to re-see his main argument beyond how to convey it effectively for the reader (Susan). While this in itself is not problematic, the fact that

Claus did not see writing as an opportunity to learn about his topic, and convey that learning to an audience beyond his teacher, does suggest a narrow view of revision.

Although Claus did change his thesis from three points to two, this is not a result of him recognizing that he had too many points. Instead, it was a result of Claus' audience not understanding those points. In reflecting on this session, Claus says:

When I did a peer critique, one of the girls complained to me that it was too technical, if you will.

Claus' use of the word "complain" here suggests that he may have been displeased with the feedback, but he still made changes to address a more general audience, like Susan. Although Susan wanted her students to "see again with greater clarity," for Claus, this was not his own clarity but rather, the clarity of his peers. Like Gabriella, Claus also dismissed the concept of writing to learn, in which Murray states that "your writing will instruct you" (*Write* 1). Claus believed that he did not need to "write to discover what he has to say" (4); he already knew it. While students in Liza's and Ray's class wrote in order to learn about their essay topics, Claus stated that he "already believe[d]" his argument, and already had all the ingredients to create an essay. His goal was to figure out how to best present those ingredients to his audience. While this is not in itself problematic, Claus' lack of commitment to developing his ideas may be.

Although Susan heavily advocated revision's importance, the peer reviews sheets, along with the exercises Susan asked her students to do, are grounded in current-traditional teaching practices. Neither Susan nor her students mentioned the idea of using these exercises for critical thinking, a large component of Liza's and Ray's classes. For

example, students in Susan's class could write grammatically correct essays with proper MLA citations. However, as Claus showed in his comments about citations, the class seemed to rely less on how to utilize these texts rhetorically. Claus did not seem to recognize that using citations could be a way to help guide his reader; he thought they were only there to fulfill a requirement.

As discussed in Susan's case study chapter, Claus had difficulty with his citations with regards to *what* to cite and how to integrate cited sources rhetorically. Claus did recognize that he needed to work more on his citations, though; he said:

I noticed while doing it a lot of the citations came from a certain part of the book; I don't know if that's good or bad. Hopefully it's not terrible. I would definitely look into those more, and work on that. Getting from different sources, and not just being one-sided, that type of thing.

In the above example, Claus' focus on the citations was not to improve his writing, nor was it to develop as a critical thinker and reader about his topic. Instead, Claus believed that the citations were product-driven: for him, better citations equaled a better product. While this itself is not an issue, the idea that he saw his use of evidence as arhetorical could be potentially problematic. Even Claus' statement that he wanted to pull evidence from different parts of a text, or different texts, was an effort to produce a "good" product that follows a checklist of guidelines, rather than being rhetorically effective. His concern was getting the citations right and having a sufficient number from a variety of pages. He was less concerned with the quality of his sources and their ability to strengthen both his ethos as a writer and the construction of his argument. While the MLA citation

workshops improved students' ability to cite properly – with the exception of Claus – they reinforced the idea that secondary sources are part of the key to a “good” finished product and not part of a writer's rhetorical stance.

Although Susan stated that she wanted her students to “re-see” their papers, the students instead interpreted her goal for revising as to instead produce a polished product. Just as Sharon Crowley criticizes her students for not writing recursively when she provided them with a linear progression of writing to follow (“Components” 167), Susan's students were also presented with a linear progression of writing that began and ended with correctness. This product based in current-traditional pedagogy may or may not have meant that the students were rhetorically engaging with sources in their essays, or the articles they read in class. Because the students did not think about how their writing was rhetorically situated, they did not think about how they might have more agency over their writing and become critical writers and readers.

Liza's Class

As stated in the case study of Liza's class, Liza's main goal in teaching her first-year writing class was to help her students become “creators” of knowledge, and move away from Liza acting as the sole “disseminator” of knowledge. The data suggests to me that Liza's teaching practices, which include workshops, group work, and collaborative freewriting activities, strove to help her students achieve this transition. In our interview, Liza commented that the students in her class might have had a more difficult time with this transition, because they preferred to do “what was required,” and not create

something new with their own ideas. Liza demonstrated that she understood that her students' learning strategies more accurately fit Freire's concept of a "banking" form of education, where the students are treated as "receptacles," and where "education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor" (53). Liza's teaching practices attempted to bring her students closer toward what Freire calls "problem-posing education," where "the students – no longer docile listeners – are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher" (62). While Liza's students wanted to "maintain the *submersion* of consciousness," Liza hoped to change this to an "*emergence* of consciousness and *critical intervention* in reality" (62). In other words, she utilized teaching practices that moved her students toward critical, independent exploration, and interrogation of ideas.

Liza's teaching practices also impacted her students' perception of revision. In her attempts to help students develop a more critical lens, she also aimed to encourage students to take agency over their writing. The analysis of the data collected from Liza's class suggests that she was successful in her attempt to impact her students' perceptions of revision. The data from Liza's class includes sample essays drafts, student interviews, and responses from student surveys. This was combined with the data collected directly from Liza, including her interview, her survey, and her syllabus. For example, when added together, the sample essays from Liza's students show the highest number of global revisions, at 212. This is higher than Susan's class (90 global changes) and even Ray's class (138 global changes). The number of global revisions Liza's students made was considerable and directly tied to Liza's teaching of the composing process.

Liza described the composing process in her class as being directly connected to the students' increasing ability to be successful on their own, and related that to their ability to revise successfully. Liza stated that she wanted her students to realize:

All writing has a purpose and everything is purpose-driven...A lot of times with a first draft [students] just write something, and other people will point out, oh, you're doing this here, you should incorporate that into the whole essay. It's not me doing a very deliberate conscientious thing.

It's more about how everything is organized together. It moves toward the idea that writing is purposeful and is directed.

This idea that writing is "purposeful and directed" was a vital component of Liza's teaching practices. She aimed for her students to understand writing as a rhetorical, purposeful practice, and to see that revision is a key component to developing one's writing in these ways. Donald Murray adds in *The Craft of Revision*, "Fine writing makes the writer's vision of an idea, a place, a person, an event clear to the reader" and that "creativity and the quality comes in the development of a piece of writing" (166). Here Murray asserts Liza's goal in teaching revision: it helps a writer develop ideas and express those ideas with clarity to a reader.

Liza's goals in helping her students progress as critical writers and revisers were also important in her teaching practices. Liza employed a variety of exercises in her class that drew from a wide-variety of pedagogical strategies. These ranged from collaborative, such as peer workshops, to expressivist, such as freewriting, to current-traditional, such as lessons on MLA documentation. However, Liza blurred the lines between pedagogical

theories and always added a collaborative element to each exercise; for example, she asked students to collaborate on creating a Works Cited page in MLA style. As Abercrombie argues in *The Anatomy of Judgment*, students who collaborate become better critical thinkers, and in this case, more critically aware writers. Thus, Liza's blending of pedagogies gave her students the skills they needed to be successful on their own, as opposed to the "banking" model her students are used to, where students regurgitate the answers they believe teachers want.

The data from Liza's class suggests to me that Liza perceived her students' ideas about writing and revision at the beginning of the quarter similarly to Jennie Nelson's assessment of students and "the culture of school." Nelson says "as members of the culture of school, students learn the routines of school work, including lectures, seat work, tests, homework. They learn acceptable patterns of behavior, such as when and how to ask questions, and what kinds of responses are expected in class discussions" (412). However, learning to navigate this culture of school can also be detrimental for students, as students may "develop interpretive practices and approaches that may undermine the goals of disciplinary writing and learning" (412). In short, students who can negotiate the classroom well may do so at the expense of their abilities to develop as critical writers and thinkers.

Liza would agree with Nelson's assessment of students, particularly with regards to this class. Liza's description of her students was connected to Nelson's argument:

[This class] generally was better at navigating the system of a classroom, navigating through general teacher expectations. They did exactly what

was required, they were taking in the information, spitting it back out, and were really great at that. So I think that for them what in my class was more challenging was realizing that they couldn't do that in my class. Because I'm not going to give you anything to just spit at me; it's all about putting something together and getting new ideas. I think for that class that was the big transition; the transition between going through this predetermined set of notions and knowing it's going to get you a grade, and actually trying to do something more with your own ideas.

Liza understood that her class, while savvy classroom negotiators, was resistant to any attempts to provoke critical thought. Liza made an important interpretation of her own course goals with regards to this particular class. While she said that her theme was "creating" knowledge, she noticed this class wanted her to "disseminate" the knowledge to them. Her resistance to that ideology caused the students to have to choose between simply reiterating points from class and creating knowledge, which would yield a stronger grade for them.

Of the students I interviewed from Liza's class, Mariah seemed to most closely match the type of student Liza described above. Although Liza's class was structured around the essay assignments, Mariah didn't see this as a tight enough structure for the course. She also seemed to be used to writing essays and completing homework assignments with more directions and structure built into them. She said that the writings for this class were largely based in one-page responses, and these assignments were "all about your opinion, it's not really structured, and [she was] not used to not having that

structure, or like a unit.” On the other hand, Elizabeth and Kendra appreciated the openness of the classroom atmosphere and the freedom they were given to write.

Elizabeth seemed to have particularly flourished in Liza’s class. In high school, Elizabeth noted that she had to write “a lot of story summaries,” and that papers that seemed to have a lot of freedom in reality did not. In our interview, she compared her high school English experiences with her experience in Liza’s class:

My senior year of high school, there was one paper we wrote that sounded like we had a lot of freedom at first. But when you got into it, you had to follow all these guidelines. [It was supposed to be a sensory paper], so we had to use a lot of sensory words. So there wasn’t very much freedom, and I feel that now, we can basically write whatever we want.

Unlike Mariah, for Elizabeth, the lack of structure in the writing assignments was liberating.

Kendra focused on a different aspect of the class in her discussion of the structure of Liza’s teaching practices. Instead of the writing assignments, she commented on the structure of the class and the class activities:

I really like English and writing, so from that standpoint I really like the class because it’s a lot of involvement with your peers and your teacher. The way that Liza teaches the class, it’s a good way. She has gotten us to get to know each other, which helps a lot because we’re [mostly] all in the same learning community.

The interviewed students did not seem to fully represent the portrait painted of them by Liza in her description of the class as adept at navigating the English classroom. While Mariah still seemed to ascribe to the structured pace of a classroom where students write to the teacher, and the teacher gives criticism, all three students clearly flourished in Liza's class. And, while it is not entirely clear how the students felt about Liza's teaching practices at the beginning of the quarter, at the time of the interviews, they saw the value of Liza's pedagogy.

The practices Liza enacted closely match those outlined by John Clifford in "Composing in Stages: The Effects of Collaborative Pedagogy." Like Clifford's treatment class, Liza assigned her students a variety of activities, ranging from brainstorming and freewriting, to peer response in class, and small group interaction through the group workshops (Clifford 42-43). Liza also added a twist to Hillocks' theory of presentational pedagogy as well. Although Liza spent time presenting her own ideas of reading and student writing through modeling and lectures, she combined this with small group interaction and the peer workshops to create a balance (Hillocks 667). This was especially demonstrated in Liza's combined use of lecture and workshop for aspects of writing that might have more closely mirrored current-traditional practices, such as MLA documentation. Frazer and Heady argue that students are often unwilling or unable to learn proper documentation forms and usually submit "a hodgepodge of bibliography entries and footnotes" (24). Liza's goal was to help students learn proper documentation styles by combining these presentational and collaborative pedagogies through lecture and group work.

Liza's students reacted positively to the variety of pedagogical approaches she took in the classroom. For example, Elizabeth used the peer workshop sessions as a chance to learn how to gain ownership over her own writing. In "On Students' Right to Their Own Texts: A Model of Teacher Response," Lil Brannon and C. H. Knoblauch argue that students need an incentive to write and to improve their writing: "Denying students control of what they want to say must surely reduce incentive and also, presumably, the likelihood of improvement" (159). Because Liza allowed her students to control the peer workshops and, by extension, their own writing, the students had more incentive to write and revise.

Elizabeth's reflection on the process of writing her second essay is an excellent example of one of Liza's students maintaining ownership of her essay. In our interview, Elizabeth compared her experience of writing her first and second essays:

On the first paper, I relied a lot on what other people said about what they wanted me to write. But then, on the second paper, I sat down before the peer review group, and I read my paper and edited it, like I would if it wasn't mine. So I changed in that aspect where I'm going to revise my own papers first. And then that way, I understand what people are saying more, I think, when they tell me what I need to fix. So I think that helps. I think I did a better job of editing...I think I'm getting better at it.

Here Elizabeth demonstrated a sophisticated approach to receiving peer feedback. She was able to achieve what George Thompson calls a "disinterested perspective," but without his linear approach; Elizabeth was able to distance herself from her own work

and “see it critically, with a sustained sense of ‘otherness’” (Thompson 200). The power that Elizabeth exerted over her own writing by revising from an outside perspective also gave her insight into the type of feedback she received from others.

In the case of Liza’s class, these different pedagogical moves enabled the students to change the way they thought about their writing and revising practices. Students moved from summarizing a text to finding significance in it. They moved from not understanding MLA to being able to cite sources and use those sources rhetorically. And, using their peers’ knowledge, they moved from being doubtful about the benefits of peer review to being able to find a value in it that works for them.

However, Liza was also aware that this goal might privilege a certain population of the class:

I think a teacher’s job is to give students a toolbox, and show them how to use the tools, and move on...like a screwdriver, you definitely know how to use it, and a wrench, you definitely know how to use it...And that does skew things toward people who already come in more able to do everything that comes with an English classroom. Students who are more adept at the English classroom probably have an easier time with it.

Here Liza asserted the importance of giving students the skills they will need to be successful as writers, but she also understood that this type of pedagogy might privilege the students who already knew how to navigate the English classroom and understand the basic tenets of essay composition, such as thesis writing, organization, and controlled use of grammar. In “Academic Work,” Walter Doyle acknowledges that in education, it is

important to consider students' prior knowledge of academic disciplines (169). In the case of Liza's class, she noted that while her teaching practices were aimed at giving students power over their own "toolbox" of writing skills, this may have worked better for students who already had some aspect of the skill set already in place.

In her interview, Liza also commented about the benefits of the study for her own teaching practices. When I told Liza that her students I interviewed stressed the connections between revision, in-class work, and peer workshops, Liza replied:

I think because I knew you were doing this study, I don't think I did more revision than I normally do, but I stressed the connections more than I normally would. Which I'm doing now regularly. So I think that was really helpful.

As a result of the study, Liza stressed the connections between the work students were expected to complete in the class and their own growth as writers. Although this was a goal of Liza's all along, the study's emphasis on revision encouraged her to focus more on revision with her class. This clearly impacted her students.

Ray's Class

In this section, I argue that Ray's class is an example of how integrating revision into the course curriculum creates a society of peers and a discourse community centered on revising. In many ways, Ray's class created the ideal classroom for the implementation of revision in the first-year composition classroom. Ray's classroom practice aligned closely with what George Hillocks calls "environmental instruction,"

which focuses on how teachers practice the teaching of writing within the classroom environment. According to Hillocks, instructors “select and organize materials and activities which can engage students in the processes which are important to prewriting, writing, and editing” (“Responses” 393). Based on the needs of the students, Ray created class activities designed to help students become more engaged in the composing process. The most important of these activities were the class and small group workshops. Like Liza, Ray also believed in the importance of students having agency over their own writing. He attempted to employ this process through a variety of teaching practices; most significantly, the way Ray’s workshops allowed for freedom of conversation and feedback enabled students to develop that sense of agency.

Examining Ray’s teaching practices during the peer workshops in conjunction with student survey responses and one student interview (Stella) reveals how Ray created a collaborative atmosphere for writing in his classroom that made his students more receptive to the ways that revising their work could be beneficial to their growth as writers. This seemed to be especially true because Ray’s class appeared to be structured around writing as a collaborative, social act. In response to this more collaborative atmosphere, Ray’s students showed the largest change in their perspective on revision: 77% of students who submitted pre- and post-surveys claimed that their definition of revision changed. This number is considerably higher than Liza’s class, where 47% of students claimed their definition of revision changed, as well as Susan’s class, where only 17% of students said their definition changed. Ray’s class built a community of revisers that enabled the majority of students to re-see their own definitions of revision. Because

of this environment, the students seemed to work from a social standpoint, and be able to re-revise their own intellectual practices as writers, thinkers, and even as students.

Ray's syllabus is the one place where he emphasized the importance of peer feedback with regards to developing a collaborative learning environment that includes revision. Ray reminded the students on the syllabus to put work into the drafts they brought for peer editing: "You will be graded on your effort and quality of work. Keep in mind that the better your rough draft, the more help you can get from your peer editors³²." On the syllabus Ray made it clear that students could get better feedback if they submitted more complete drafts for the workshops. He also told students that the "effort and quality" of work counted when giving feedback. From the first day of class, peer editing's importance in connection to students' growth as writers was clear. This helped students begin to understand why peer editing was important to their growth as writers: the more they worked on their drafts and the more effective feedback they gave to other students, the better their grades would be, and the better the feedback they would receive on their own essay drafts. While this might have begun as grade-oriented, as we saw with Stella and the other students, because the students knew what was expected of them, they were better able to produce effective feedback for others and eventually for themselves.

The move Ray's students made from assuming a critical standpoint with others' writing to doing so with their own writing was also directly related to the writing process Ray asked students to undertake for each assignment. Ray's approach to peer workshops

³² As discussed in Ray's case study, Ray and his students called peer review sessions "peer editing."

was in line with what Bruce McComiskey calls “social-process rhetorical inquiry,” which McComiskey defines as a cyclical writing process that takes into consideration “cultural production, contextual distribution, and critical consumption” (20). In Ray’s class, students produced writing in an environment where they learned to understand writing as socially constructed, where they understood “language and culture as socially constructive forces (production) conditioned by contexts (distribution) and negotiated by critical subjectivities (consumption)” (20). The students learned that their essays were socially produced texts generated from the feedback they got from Ray and their peers. This feedback was generated by the context for each student’s individual topic, and critically assessed with that context in mind by the student’s peers. As Stella demonstrated in her interview, this process allowed students to gain agency over their writing, to learn to listen to multiple opinions about their writing, and to choose which advice best worked with their own goals in writing.

As discussed in the case study chapter on Ray’s class, Stella was a student who appreciated the class workshop because of her skepticism regarding small-group peer review. When I asked her about the difference between the small group and class workshops, she stated:

It’s kind of mean but...you don’t know how good of a writer these two people you get are [in small group workshop], and they could tell you something that actually isn’t what the teacher would want you to do. And it’s easier to get the whole room and say, I think you should do this, and then somebody else will say no, I don’t think that’s right, you could do

this instead, and then I get to choose what I want to be done with my paper.

Stella's appreciation of the class workshop came from two things: assertion of her own agency as a writer and Ray's modeling.

Because Stella was able to make choices about her writing, she was able to assert a particular stance towards her ideas that was developed through her consideration and integration of advice from the class as a whole. As a result, as she did with her analysis of the importance of art and her rhetorical analysis of the Richard Wright essay³³, Stella was able to take a rhetorical stance towards the ideas and texts discussed in the class. This is what Joseph Harris calls "discursive agency" ("Revision" 583): Stella's power as a writer came from the "stances [she] took towards, the uses [she] made of, other texts in [her] writings" (583), and from the "line of thinking" she developed in her texts "that belong[ed]...to her" (585). In short, Stella developed the ability to assert her claims with authority.

Although Stella was skeptical of the small-group element of the peer workshops, others found both the whole-class and small-group workshops beneficial. The students in the class attested to the impact the whole-class workshops and small-group workshops had on their own ability to take agency over their writing. In response to Question 12 on the survey distributed at the end of the quarter, "What classwork have you found to be beneficial to your revising process?", several students seemed to directly relate the class workshops to having more power over their writing:

³³ Stella reflects on the composing process of these essays in Ray's case study.

R9120: “I really enjoyed going over each other’s papers on the overhead. It showed me other’s mistakes and how to correct them. It also encourages me to work harder on my own piece.”

R1813: “Any time we’ve looked at a paper as a class and revised it, I felt like it helped. Seeing other papers being revised gives me better ideas about my own paper.”

R1172: “Looking at my paper on the projector is beneficial. I can see the problems with my paper.”

Students also asserted that revision gave them more power over their writing. In response to Question 2 on the survey distributed at the end of the quarter, “Do you believe that your definition of revision has changed? Why or why not?”, students gave the following responses:

R9105: “Yes, I think revision is very important to developing a well written paper. I learned that revision is one of the key ways in catching your mistakes.”

R6811: “[My definition has] probably [changed], because I’ve become so used to revising my paper and not just making mechanical changes, but really taking things apart and reading them.”

R1813: “I believe [my definition of revision did change] a bit. When I used to think of revision, I used to only think of the small things to fix such as spelling, grammar, and mechanics. Now I think about revising the paper as a whole.”

The voices of these five students, along with Stella's interview, seemed to indicate that the students saw a connection between revision, peer feedback, and agency. Because Ray structured the peer workshops around certain parts of an essay each day, students became accustomed to, as R6811 says, "taking things apart and reading them." The students practiced deconstructing and analyzing texts during each peer workshop, both as a class and in small groups; these practices seem to have translated across to students' abilities to effectively critique their own writing.

In his interview, Ray also acknowledged that this transfer of reading others' work critically to reading one's own work critically is important in his class. Ray stated: "I really want them to get to the point where they're making these judgments on their own, what works, and they see the reason for it. That's the big thing." Ray's comment here again placed students' revising in a rhetorical context. Like Harris in "Revision as a Critical Practice," Ray hoped his students "carve out [spaces] for [themselves] as [critics]" that rely on "a style of assertion, of close and aggressive reading" in order to "set [their] own agenda[s] as writer[s]" (587). My analysis of Stella's essay drafts, and subsequent discussion of those drafts with her, does demonstrate that she developed as a critical reader of her own work who learned to "set [her] own agenda as a writer." For example, for her first essay in defense of art, Stella recognized that she needed to create a more sophisticated argument and organization for her essay. She stated in our interview that she "realized that the two paragraphs for each section was childish" and organized her paragraphs more around ideas, and less around single topics. As a result of her revising practices with this essay, she said that she "felt really good about this [essay]. It

was just something new, and [she] could see how it got better.” Stella’s reflection on the process of composing her first essay shows her, even early in the quarter, developing into a writer who possesses agency.

In her text *Sharing Writing: Peer Response Groups in English Classes*, Karen Spear argues that students need to have a different understanding of composing in a group setting. She writes:

the group setting confronts students with a raw, unfinished work. Readers need to understand such writing as it is and to anticipate where it might be going before they can help the writer move it toward completion...In a very real sense, reading peer drafts is a collaborative process of construction – of *making* meaning in a text rather than *receiving* meaning from it. (29)

In Ray’s class, the students worked on that meaning-making during class and small group workshops. In the workshops, students looked at parts of their peers’ essays from a rhetorical standpoint. For example, when looking at introductions, Ray asked the students to assess the quality of the introduction in terms of intention; he exemplified this in our interview: “Does [the introduction] set [up] what it intends to do?” When the students did grammatical analysis, Ray also framed this rhetorically:

[The students are] always saying, “is there a rule that you have to have this?” [Or that, for example], you can’t use the personal pronoun in a research paper. [And I tell them,] Well, it depends. Is it effective? Is it needed? Are you sharing a personal experience that is important? Or, are

you saying “I think,” “I know,” and using words that are taking away from the strength of your sentence?

Throughout the composing process, Ray modeled how to give constructive feedback for his students. Karen Spear argues that “the teacher’s role in group response sessions also influences how students read and respond to each other’s work” (46). This is certainly true in Ray’s case; even with grammatical corrections, he aimed to move the students away from editing simply for correctness and toward editing for rhetorical effectiveness. Through Ray’s model, students learned to ask these questions of each other’s work first, and eventually, as the student responses show, they learned to ask these questions of their own writing. The modeling and emphasis on students’ growth as rhetorical writers seemed to help integrate revision and collaborative work more concretely into his curriculum.

Ray also indicated in his interview that he understood the importance that his students learned to attach to revision. He attributed this to the amount of work students put into their writing:

They do a lot of writing. And when they turn in their final draft, I want them to see the rough draft. I tell them, if this is the same as the rough draft, then you did not revise enough. But it seems to me that by the end, a lot of students are saying that they didn’t realize how much revision helps, and they now feel that that’s the secret for them. And some of them will even say, they wish they had more time to revise it again, which is a nice thought.

Ray's comments here show that he was aware of how his students learned to value revision and that he saw this value as a positive. For him, it's a "nice thought" that the students wanted to continue revising their work beyond the due date because it showed the investment students had in their own ideas and their willingness to transfer those ideas to writing.

Based on Stella's interview and the short survey responses, the data suggests to me that students understood that they were a community that shared ideas, and Ray made it clear that his opinion was not the only one that counts. Students learned to consider the ideas of their peers, as well as their own goals for the essays they write. With a grade on the line and evaluations of their work looming, students worked harder to give constructive feedback to each other. They also utilized what they learned in class to become agents of their own writing.

Peer Feedback as a Part of Revision: Instructors' and Students' Perspectives

As the case studies have demonstrated, all three instructors believed peer review to be a critical component of the revising process for their students. Liza required students to attend peer workshops to fulfill their essay requirements; Susan required students to complete two days' worth of peer review for each essay; Ray spent a total of three weeks (fifteen classes) workshopping student drafts. Each of these approaches to peer review did impact the value students ascribe to peer review; however, the extent to which the students valued peer feedback by the end of the quarter was dependent upon the type of peer review workshop the teachers asked students to participate in.

Although the instructors wanted their students to value peer feedback, originally, at the beginning of the quarter, all the interviewed students held skeptical views toward peer review. Mariah from Liza's class expressed this sentiment clearly:

I don't really get much out of peer revisions. A lot of it I feel like is a few nitpicky things, like grammar and stuff and spelling obviously, but in terms of really trying to help me correct my paper, I haven't really gotten much help from the sessions. ...it's been all through school, you know. It was very quick – you got 10 minutes to look over the paper and that's it. And so I didn't really feel like peers did a thorough job of trying to help.

Gabriella from Susan's class echoed Mariah's statement:

Some people, they're just going to be nice and tell you specific little grammar rules and some people just don't know. So they can't give you an educated answer on some of the things you have. But some people will, so I guess it just depends... some people are not going to be even as literate as you, so you can't even use their suggestions then, because they're stupid sometimes.

In fact, all six interviewed students reiterated Mariah's and Gabriella's skepticism toward peer review. Not one of them found as much value in peer review as the instructors expected them to. But by the end of the quarter, each student acknowledged that peer review could be a useful vehicle to enacting "good" revision; however, the extent to which the students embraced this ideal change depending on the class.

Both students and instructors confirmed the students' skepticism about peer review, a skepticism that exists across the teaching and practicing of revising strategies. For example, in "Peer Response: Teaching Specific Revision Suggestions," Neubert and McNelis refer to a national survey in which "teachers grieved over the use of peer response groups because they had difficulty getting students to respond effectively to one another's writing" (52). While Neubert and McNelis are referring to middle and high school uses of peer review, if we listen to students like Mariah and Gabriella, we can see that students' struggles with getting effective peer feedback continues into college. This is not to say that students receive no help at all from peer feedback; however, Mariah made a distinction between grammar, which she received help on, and "really trying to help me correct my paper," which she did not. In general, higher-order concerns like ideas, support, and organization seem to be more difficult for students to comment on, as opposed to lower-order concerns, such as grammar. Through modeling and the workshop style, Liza and Ray were mostly successful at helping their students make this transition (Mariah's comment suggests that she did not receive much help with global revision, save for her essay on her role as a young Christian woman); on the other hand, because Susan focused on style early in the quarter, her students were unable to make that transition.

In addition to the responses from the interviewed students, the student surveys reinforce the idea that students learned to value peer feedback from the beginning to the end of the quarter. Question 10 on the beginning and end of the quarter student surveys sought to find the students' perceptions of peer feedback: "How important are peer

comments as feedback for your revising process?” The students had five options for the answer: 1 – Very Unimportant; 2 – Somewhat Unimportant; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Somewhat Important; 5 – Very Important (see table 7.1).

Table 7.1

Results to Question 10 on beginning and end of the quarter survey: “How important are peer comments as feedback for your revising process?”

Instructor's Class	N Students	Mean	Std. Deviation
Liza – pre	19	3.88	1.22
Liza – post	19	4.59	.62
Susan – pre	18	3.65	1.27
Susan - post	18	3.76	.90
Ray – pre	16	3.93	.73
Ray – post	16	4.36	.745

The results from this table indicate that for both Liza's and Ray's classes, the difference in the means from the beginning to the end of the quarter is considerable. The mean for Liza's students increased by .71; in Ray's class, the mean increased by .43. On the other hand, the mean for Susan's class only increased .11. This low change in the mean indicates that Susan's class did not show a considerable difference in the value that students attribute to peer feedback. The standard deviation in Liza's class decreased from the beginning of the quarter to the end; in Ray's class, it remained almost the same. In Susan's class, the standard deviation also decreased; however, the mean for the students' answers rose only slightly, while the mean rose considerably in Liza's and Ray's classes.

These findings reinforce the idea that while Liza's and Ray's students learned to value peer feedback more by the end of the quarter, Susan's students did not.

While the students in Susan's class were able to provide feedback to their peers that echoed Susan's expectations, the interviews and the survey responses reveal that the students may have remained somewhat ambivalent regarding the value of peer review. As discussed in the case study of Susan's class and the first part of this chapter, the students were required to focus on the requirements listed on their peer critique sheets. They did comment on their peers' work, but only as answers to the questions provided on the peer critique sheets. They answered the peer critique sheets, trying to be Susan, and did not try to examine their peers' work as interested readers who are not the teacher. Gabriella's example of refusing to tell her classmate that the use of the word "awesomeness" conformed to the way she was taught to respond to peer review in Susan's class: anything outside the sheets was possibly off-limits for feedback. Because word choice was not part of the checklist, Gabriella may not have felt compelled to address it, no matter what her opinion.

Gabriella's choice to not offer substantive feedback to her peer is an interesting finding, especially because Gabriella was so ambivalent about the quality of feedback in peer critiques. On her survey, for the question on the benefits of peer feedback, Gabriella circled 1 – Very Unimportant. However, in our interview she admitted:

Actually, from doing these peer critiques, it probably has become more important, but some people aren't going to...like I just said, I'm not going to tell this kid not to put the word "awesomeness," so you're not going to

get [good feedback]...some people will do that [though].

Here, while Gabriella admitted peer critique can be beneficial, she also demonstrated her complicity in the perpetuation of continued poor feedback in Susan's class. Even though she did not like the student's use of the word "awesomeness," she chose not to express her ideas. Although Gabriella did say the peer critiques were beneficial, she articulated this in a narrow light: the peer critiques were helpful insofar as her peers were able to help her meet the essay requirements, which were dictated on the peer critique sheets. This further demonstrates Sommers' argument in "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers" that students tend to compose and revise with the original "box" of their argument. In the example described above, Gabriella probably did not think that her feedback would be useful to the students, because the peer critique checklist only included grammatical issues such as comma splices. While the survey responses do indicate that 9 out of 18 students in Susan's class found peer critique beneficial to the revising process, Gabriella's concerns raise doubts about the type of feedback that students received. In general, the students' comments about the peer critiques demonstrated that the students found peer critique valuable, which was Susan's goal; however, what remains unclear is the context (offering global or local feedback) within which they perceived it to be valuable.

Because collaboration was not as much a part of class activity in Susan's class, peer review days were separate from "normal" course curriculum. On the other hand, the frequency of workshop days in Liza's and Ray's classes helped the students become accustomed to the workshop atmosphere. Those students seemed to thrive in that

environment. The ambivalence from Gabriella also suggests that Susan's students may have been unsure as to what type of feedback they were supposed to give when they filled out a peer critique sheet. Should students have given specific comments about the writer's language? Or should they have stuck to the points outlined on the peer review sheet? Although students spent time discussing the points on the sheet in discussions about the course readings, the writing process itself did not seem to be articulated as clearly. The confusion students felt between fulfilling their duties on the worksheet and using their own abilities as readers, may have led students to be skeptical and uncertain about the peer critiques.

The data suggests to me that the peer critique sheets did seem to stifle student responses to essays. Without the peer critique sheet, would Gabriella have felt more comfortable telling her classmate not to use the word "awesomeness" in his paper? Or, with more integration of collaborative pedagogical practices, would she have learned how to ask this classmate questions about his work to get him to rethink his use of the word, as opposed to stating her opinion? Similarly, would Claus have been able to get more constructive feedback on his compare and contrast essay? Susan's class exemplifies the doubts students can have with peer critique and its impact on their revising practices, as well as the nonspecific comments that might emerge, despite the instructor's enthusiasm toward revision.

In some cases, it seems Gabriella's distrust of peer critique was warranted. In both Gabriella's and Claus' discussions of the research essay peer critique, they emphasized that peer critique was an important part of their writing process, and that they needed to

get constructive feedback. Gabriella's desire for feedback was content-based with regards to the organization of her essay: she needed to know what elements of the papers she should keep, and where they should go. However, the comments she received left her still skeptical of the benefits of peer review:

On [the research] paper, I really knew that I needed a lot of help because I didn't know if I should include all these different things, and I did, and then I asked them if I should. And some of them said yes, you should, and they told me things, and then some people were just like, good, yeah, here you go. They don't tell you anything.

Although Gabriella exerted some agency over her writing by acknowledging what she needed help with, she was unable to get substantive feedback from all her peers. This experience may have encouraged her continued skepticism of peer feedback's value.

However, while Gabriella said that some students gave her no feedback, as I have shown, she also gave poor feedback to her peers. Although she was a strong writer, Gabriella struggled to give constructive feedback. In his article "'Awesome, Dude!': Responding Helpfully to Peer Writing," Rick VanDeWeghe warns: "the presumed correlation between a student's ability to write and to critique is a dubious one" (95). As a researcher listening to Gabriella describe her many experiences with writing both argumentative and research essays, I expected her to at least give constructive feedback, even if she received it only intermittently. However, this was not the case; Gabriella expressed her concerns over her peer's use of the word "awesomeness" to me, but did not express those concerns to her peer. VanDeWeghe explains that "the ability to give

appropriate and helpful feedback to other writers is a learned set of strategies and skills that all developing writers must be *taught*" (95). When we apply this idea to Gabriella's situation, it is easier to understand why she had no difficulty producing solid work for the course, but had difficulty giving substantive feedback to her peers: she may not have known how.

Gabriella's criticism of peer critique also matches the problems scholar Diana George observes can arise from peer review in her article "Working with Peer Groups in the Composition Classroom." George writes that students might "have trouble reading peers' essays helpfully" and that a group may fail "to interact so as to give student writers productive advice" (322). George suggests that these problems arise because instructors are asking students to "engage in a specific kind of reading" that takes even writing instructors years to master (323). This type of critical advice may be difficult for students to both give and receive within the realm of grammatical and structural commentary. Even Gabriella, a strong writer who believed the class was "easy," could not successfully convey critical feedback to her peers because she did not know how to give unsolicited feedback.

Claus' experience with peer review was more positive than Gabriella's, but this is because Claus needed help with the structural and grammatical elements of his papers. These are elements that are included on the worksheets; as such, his reviewers may have been able to give him more substantive feedback. For his research paper on the construction of the Egyptian pyramids, Claus worried about making his essay readable for a more general audience. As Peter Smagorinsky argues in "The Aware Audience:

Role-Playing Peer Response Groups,” “students who assume the role of their audience gain similar benefits in understanding constraints and adjusting their writings accordingly” (35). In Claus’ case, his peer critique helped him analyze his audience, cut out jargon, and narrow his focus. Claus discussed how peer critique helped him revise his paper:

For my thesis statement, I know I [originally] had three points, I turned that into two in [the final draft] so I could kind of balance it out a little bit more. I didn’t want it to be just math. When I did a peer critique, one of the girls complained to me that it was too technical. And I didn’t want that to distract from the actual point of the essay. So that’s why I tried to condense it a lot, and make it...cohesive, or more cohesive, at least.

In this case, Claus was able to receive some feedback that helped him realize his essay was too technical for his classmates to read. Claus admitted that the peer critique was the main motivating factor in revising his essay. In his interview, Claus said that the changes he made were a result of “mainly the critique,” but that they also motivated him to rethink the structure of his essay for a more general audience. As Claus admitted in our interview, the peer critique and his subsequent revisions “help[ed him] to understand [his] audience better.”

Although Claus stated outright that peer review motivated him to make his own changes in his essays, Gabriella’s answers were more ambiguous. For her first paper, a comparison of her boyfriend and her best friend, Gabriella initially said that she made the

changes because her peers told her to. However, later in the interview, Gabriella seemed to admit that peer review did motivate her to make changes:

I guess peer critiques are doing what I thought [they should]: you need to show what the people mean to you separately too, so that's probably me trying to do that, and [working on] transitioning [between paragraphs].

When Gabriella says “that’s probably me trying to do that,” we can read this in two ways. First, that she was trying to do what she was told, and second, that she took initiative from the comments and extended her revision to other parts of the essay. However, especially with the research essay, she seemed to rely more on her own abilities as a writer than on the comments from her peers.

I would argue that one reason Susan’s students may have been more ambivalent about peer critique was that the peer critique sheets were more reductive than productive; the students only needed to fill out the worksheet in order to offer feedback in peer critique. Liza approached peer review differently. As an instructor working to “create knowledge,” Liza held to the idea that not only should students use each other as reviewers, but that students could develop into strong reviewers. As Nina Ziv’s research finds, Liza also believed students can become “good critics” of each other’s work (qtd. in Harris 378). According to Ronald Barron in “What I Wish I Had Known about Peer-Response Groups But Didn’t,” “effective response groups treat the papers they are examining as ‘works in progress’ and recognize that their goal is to serve as sympathetic readers suggesting methods for writers to use in improving their papers” (24). Barron adds that in the workshops, “a dialogue should be created between the writers and the

other members of the group which clarifies the intent of the writer's essay and sharpens its focus" (24). These tenets for effective peer workshops match Liza's goals to get students dialoging about their writing and trying to genuinely help each other in creating what she called a "communal experience," which was "a group of equals sitting down together and talking about each other's work." The emphasis on "equals" in Liza's description of her peer groups builds on Barron's concept of "sympathetic readers;" instead of trying to "correct" each other's work in a hierarchical way, Liza encouraged her students to offer constructive feedback in an egalitarian space.

By the end of the quarter, Liza's students appreciated the peer workshops and did see them as beneficial to their revising strategies. In *Writing Without Teachers*, Elbow stresses that it is important for writers to listen to each other and to take in all the comments before making any revision decisions. Kendra expressed this concept in her following comment:

When I hear it multiple times, and it's something that more than one person catches on to, I realize that clearly I need to change that. And they have told me that they like this part, but they really don't like this part. So, when more than one person tells me that, that's normally when I pay attention to it.

Kendra's comment here epitomizes why Elbow expresses the importance of the writer being quiet and listening. In Kendra's case, by listening to the comments, and recognizing their similarity, she realized what aspects of her paper were not communicating her ideas effectively, and what she needed to change.

Unlike the students in Liza's class, the students in Susan's class did not seem to be able to make the transition towards giving significant content-based feedback. Part of this may be related to the modeling that each instructor enacted in the classroom. While Liza and Ray modeled the types of questions students should ask in their peer review sessions (both as writers and readers), Susan based her peer critique instruction on modeling responses to essays from the course textbook. In "What Students Can Do to Take the Burden Off You," Francine Hardaway suggests that instructors could use "model essays from an anthology" to help students "arrive at some mutually acceptable standards for mechanical competence and good organization" (577). This is precisely what Susan did in her class. As she stated in a follow-up email, the anthology readings established standards for student writing:

We used the readings frequently as a way to emphasize the kinds of things they needed to have in their essays. The essays served as examples for descriptive writing, empirical writing, argumentative writing, personal narrative, etc.... There is a constant connection between readings, in-class exercises or practice essays and the formal papers.

Susan's use of the essays as models for the type of writing the students were expected to do stressed correctness over critical thinking, reading, and writing. However, this type of modeling might be problematic, as it asks students to analyze, and potentially emulate, very skilled writers. In "Teaching By Example," Craig B. Little argues that model *student* essays (not essays from the textbook) can help students see instructors' "*descriptions* of

good organization, argument, and style” by showing them “*examples* of well-composed essays to compare to his or her own” (402). Judith A. Scheffler adds in “Composition with Content: An Interdisciplinary Approach” that using student readings “as an alternative to an anthology of model essays illustrating rhetorical types provides a source of substantial ideas to stimulate thought and writing in composition class” (54). Using published model essays may set students up for a fall, so to speak, because they are not “writers” like the published authors they are studying. This may encourage them to focus on correctness in the finished written product because this is at least one skill they can rely on when responding to their peers’ drafts.

The data suggests that the students in Susan’s class struggled with peer critique; it seems as though in this case, modeling feedback using published essays did not give the students enough knowledge in terms of being able to give each other substantive feedback on their work. By contrast, Ray’s students received significant support in learning how to give substantive, constructive peer feedback. Through the workshops Ray conducted for each paper, the students constructed a base of knowledge on which they could build their peer feedback. In doing this, Ray created a discourse community focused on revision that produced a “non-threatening environment” (Sullivan 385) where egalitarianism did not “tend to minimize or exclude the participation of some as they establish the dominance of others” (Clark 61). Instead of feeling threatened by what better students, or the instructor, will say, students had an opportunity to take part in a community of revisers. In his article “Rescuing the Discourse of Community,” Gregory Clark writes that he remains “committed to the necessity of a broad concept of

community because [he believes] that anyone's ideas and purposes find value and use when conceived and refined in the context of cooperating collectivities" (62). Clark's concept of community helps to illuminate Ray's revision practices. The class workshops were "cooperating collectives" in that the students worked together to help each other revise their work. As such, the students were less likely to refuse help; they saw that the workshop were helpful to their writing and revising, and wanted to participate.

In the workshops, Ray employed Donald Daiker's idea that teachers need to praise their students' writing. In Daiker's study conducted at Miami University, he finds out that of the 378 comments teachers made on a sample essay, 89.4% of those comments found fault with the paper, while only 10.6% praised the work (103). Daiker argues that "an instructor should use praise and positive reinforcement as a major teaching strategy" (104); this is exactly what Ray did in his class workshops. Stella's responses during our interview demonstrated the confidence she gained from the praise Ray and her classmates gave her during workshop. When we discussed the summary/rhetorical analysis Stella wrote on Richard Wright's essay "The Library Card," Stella showed the benefits of praise: "This [essay] is another one that I got put up on the projector, and I was told that it was amazing, and that I didn't need to change it, so, I was like, I'm good!" Stella's excitement at having her summary praised motivated her to focus on the rhetorical analysis aspect of her paper, where she was struggling because she wasn't as confident regarding the requirements for the analysis. In our interview, Stella told me that she liked to think she is "really good at summaries." Having that feeling affirmed in class allowed her to move past that part of the essay and focus more on her rhetorical analysis.

In Ray's class, he used modeling during the class workshops to help students observe these various processes of writing, and to help give each other more effective feedback. Muriel Harris' "Modeling: A Process of Teaching" argues that "the power of modeling...is that it focuses the observer's attention on processes to be used in the act of writing; learning is accomplished by observation or feedback during practice rather than by trial and error" (77). In modeling effective peer feedback for his students, Ray showed them two things. First, he showed students how to praise a paper; second, he showed them how to offer constructive feedback for a paper; and third, he made his evaluation process more transparent.

In discussing the benefits of modeling for students, Muriel Harris notes that "when observers are uncertain about how to act, it is more likely that they will focus their attention on the model because the model provides needed information" (80). In Ray's class, his modeling of how to respond to student essays "provide[d] [that] needed information" that enabled students to give constructive feedback to their peers.

The idea of granting students control over their writing has been advocated for and demonstrated by composition theorists such as Lil Brannon and C. H. Knoblauch, who argue in "On Students' Right to Their Own Texts: A Model of Teacher Response" that "we lose more than we gain by preempting [students'] control and allowing our own Ideal Texts to dictate choices that properly belong to writers" (159). In hijacking student authority, Brannon and Knoblauch state that "we compromise both our ability to help students say effectively what they truly want to say and our ability to recognize legitimately diverse ways of saying it" (159). According to Brannon and Knoblauch, not

granting students authority over their own texts silences their individual voices and trains students to write in the form of the instructor's "Ideal Text," thus molding a group of voices that sound eerily alike – like the instructor's.

In her article "Student Writers and Their Sense of Authority over Texts," Carol Berkenkotter explores the way student maturity and personality impact students' ability to negotiate peer critique. One of her case study students, Pat, is so committed to his subject that he ignores peer feedback and makes his own revising decisions (Berkenkotter 316). Another student, Stan, refuses to take responsibility for considering the advice of others (315), while a third student, Joann, learns to choose the advice that is the most fruitful to her vision of the paper (318). In this study, Ray might have hoped that his students fell closer to Joann than Stan or Pat. By creating a non-threatening environment where students volunteer to have their papers workshopped and where Ray modeled effective peer critique, Ray aimed to empower his students and give them control over their revising process. As discussed in Ray's case study, Ray required students to reflect on the peer review process by evaluating the effectiveness of the comments they received, and involve them in their own revising work. He did not craft an "Ideal Text" (Brannon 159), but instead asked students to find their own Ideal Text through inquiry and deep reflection.

Instructor Feedback as a Part of Revision: Instructors' and Students' Perspectives

Some of the students I interviewed at the end of the term emphasized the importance of instructor feedback in helping them to revise effectively. When I asked the

students whose feedback they valued the most, they responded with a focus on the instructor:³⁴

Mariah, from Liza's class: Usually I would say [that I value comments from the] instructor first, then myself, then other peers.

Kendra, from Liza's class: Normally I don't pay as much attention to the input that I get from the three other people in my peer review group as I do to Liza's input. Because she knows the most, I guess. And a lot of times, when I go through other people's papers, and I find a lot of the same mistakes...their input isn't as credible as hers.

Elizabeth, from Liza's class: So, a lot of [my revisions to the second essay] have to do with what she told me, basically, not necessarily that I thought I needed to change it. But I wanted to improve in how she told me how to improve, basically.

Claus, from Susan's class: If your peers don't like it, then, what's the teacher going to think? You know, she's the one grading it, and she's got definitely a lot more experience.

On the other hand, the instructors seemed to want the students to depend upon each other much more for feedback.

Liza: I still [give feedback on] everybody's papers, even if I don't show up to peer workshop...But I think that it's really important, too, to have an honest ear to what the group says, because they are part of the audience

³⁴ Stella is not included here because she did not explicitly state in the interview that she values Ray's feedback as much as, or more than, her peers.

too. And so I really encourage my students to disagree with what I say in workshop, and they're willing to, which is a wonderful thing. "You know, Liza? That isn't what I got. This is what I got." It's really a communal experience and I try to make it a group of equals sitting down together and talking about each other's work that they care about.

Ray: I don't want to set myself up as the authority and they come to me, that's the way it's [always] done. I want them to become the authority and help each other have that authority. Unless we're going to be their English teachers they're going have for the next four years, it doesn't make sense why [we would be the authority]. For other subjects, they need to have that skill.

Susan: This quarter [I had]them do two peer critiques instead of just one. I felt like I wasn't always sure that from the first peer critique, they were getting enough information from their peers. And so doing it with two peers twice, I felt like was more effective for them because they were getting much more feedback. And I think they liked it... There are a few occasions where someone isn't putting forth as much effort in providing that feedback. But most of the time I think that they actually are trying to give good, instructive advice.

The comments from the students and instructors indicate that while the students privileged their instructors' feedback, the instructors wanted students to value instructor feedback less, and peer feedback more. The instructors wanted students to value their

peers' feedback more for various reasons: Liza wanted to create a democratic workshop, Ray wanted his students to take more responsibility for their learning, and Susan wanted to maximize the amount of information her students receive on their essays. However, the data from this study shows that the students still valued instructor feedback just as much – or more, in some cases – as feedback from their peers.

In addition to the responses from the interviewed students, the student surveys also reinforce the idea that students want instructor feedback as they revise their essays. This is represented by students' responses to Question 11 on the beginning and end of the quarter student surveys: "How important are teacher comments as feedback for your revising process?" The students had five options for the answer: 1 – Very Unimportant; 2 – Somewhat Unimportant; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Somewhat Important; 5 – Very Important; the surveys generated means and standard deviations for each class at the beginning and end of the quarter (see table 7.2).

Table 7.2

Results to Question 11 on beginning and end of the quarter survey: "How important are teacher comments as feedback for your revising process?"

Instructor's Class	N Students	Mean	Std. Deviation
Liza – pre	19	4.94	.24
Liza – post	19	5.00	.00
Susan – pre	18	4.65	.99
Susan – post	18	4.71	.98
Ray – pre	16	4.86	.36
Ray – post	16	4.86	.53

As can be seen from the above table, the means for the beginning and end of the quarter did not show much deviation; for example, in Ray's class where peer feedback was stressed more than instructor feedback, the mean score for instructor feedback at the beginning of the quarter was 4.85. At the end of the quarter, it was also 4.85. In both cases, the standard deviation was very low, indicating that the students had more similar answers than in Susan's class, where the standard deviation was almost one point. This shows that even though instructors like Ray and Liza worked hard to encourage their students to learn to value their peers' feedback, the students still valued the instructors' feedback just as much, and continued to do so from the beginning to the end of the quarter.

While the data presented in the previous section of this chapter indicates that students are learning to value peer feedback with regards to revision, the data presented above complicates these findings. Walter Doyle reminds us in "Academic Work" that composing is complex work for students (171); as such, students look for guidance from the "expert," or instructor, to help them maneuver the myriad of steps involved in composing. Although Susan seemed to want students to gain critical agency as writers from their peer critiques, ultimately they did not. Similarly, both Liza and Ray hoped students would learn to value peer feedback and take agency over their own writing; these two instructors were more successful in their goal of agency for students. In the passages from their interviews quoted earlier in this section, Liza emphasized the importance of fostering a "communal experience," while Ray advocated for the importance of student authority. Both of them were fairly successful in achieving these

goals. Liza, though, was still torn between the importance of her own feedback and the importance of peer feedback, while Ray managed to help his students obtain agency over their writing by inviting various levels of self-reflection.

In our interview, Liza expressed tension between the value she wanted students to ascribe to peer feedback and her position as the evaluator. Liza stressed that while she wanted to create a communal environment for workshops, she felt that her feedback was necessary to her students' composing process. In spite of her good intentions, Liza recognized that students needed her feedback on drafts because she held the power of "the grade:"

Because I am grading, I think it would be highly unfair of me to not put my own feedback in [as students write their essays], unless I was willing to throw away all my aesthetic judgment and look at their papers based only on what their peers said. And I'm not quite there yet, but I hope I will be.

Liza's concern was that she was the one "grading" the students' paper, and as a result, she felt compelled to also give feedback to the students. While this is certainly true for all teachers, Liza is the only instructor I interviewed who expressed this tension between her role as peer in the "democratic classroom" and her role as evaluator.

This conflict is one that has been explored extensively in composition studies. Richard C. Veit argues that grading "places composition instructors into two very different roles, the role of teacher and the role of evaluator" (432). Veit argues that not grading papers makes it a more pleasant experience, for both teacher and student; in his

own teaching, Veit states that he only evaluates the students' work at the end of the quarter, in a portfolio (433). Marylyn Calabrese adds that "grades do not help students respond to their own writing. Self-improvement begins with students becoming better readers of their own writing. Grades don't give needed information, but they do announce judgments which can tyrannize good writers and paralyze poor ones" (28). On the other hand, Sarah Warshauer Freedman maintains that "[Teachers] are professionals. It is crucial that we communicate our point of view clearly...to students" (89). In the preface to the collection *The Theory and Practice of Grading Writing: Problems and Possibilities*, the editor, Christopher Weaver, further addresses Liza's concerns: the idea that when advocating for "egalitarian, student-centered classrooms, the need to grade students – foregrounding whatever differences grades may imply to their multiple readers – may be something of an embarrassment" (xv). While scholars such as Peter Elbow may argue for the importance of assessment without grading, the reality of many classrooms, the three in this study included, is that grading is an inescapable part of the institutional process.

The students did listen to Liza and expressed the importance of her feedback. For the second essay, which was called "self vs. role" and focused on an analysis of a role the students see themselves fulfilling (such as daughter or student), the students recalled Liza's expectations for the paper, and tried to take them into consideration when they began brainstorming. Mariah's essay topic, the role of a young Christian woman, came about due to Liza's directions. In our interview, Mariah stated:

[Liza] just wanted us to capitalize on one role that we feel is really being

affected by advertising. And so for me, I didn't want to do something that everyone else is doing. Also, [Liza said in class that she] didn't want to read...the same paper for every girl, because we only have two boys in the class. So I decided to do religion.

While Mariah admitted that she wanted to write a unique essay, it is also clear that this desire was furthered by Liza's comment that she did not want to read the same paper from all the females in the class. This brought Mariah to her essay topic, which *was* unique: she was the only one in the class to write about religion. Mariah might have come to that topic on her own, but her mention of Liza's perspective on the assignment suggests that Liza's opinion did matter in Mariah's choosing of a topic.

Kendra was also a student who seemed to greatly value Liza's feedback at various stages in her composing process. In our interview, we spent some time discussing the feedback she received for her self vs. role paper. Kendra referenced Liza's feedback several times during our discussion:

Liza told me that she thought it would be best if I added a personal experience that related directly to me, and also...basically just the organization and that I should add a personal [experience].

As shown at the beginning of this section, Kendra later stated in the interview that she valued Liza's feedback above peer feedback "because she knows the most." When considered with the comment above, Kendra clearly appeared to value Liza's feedback more than feedback from her peers, even at the end of the quarter.

However, Kendra also talked about the importance of Liza's grading policy as a motivating factor in her revising practice. Kendra was the only student to specifically reference how the students were graded on their essays. As discussed in Liza's case study, Liza gave the students a grade on a draft to let students know what grade the essay would receive if it was submitted in that form. Students could then use that as a way to decide if they wanted to revise. Kendra in particular found this an important aspect to revision in the course. She described the impact the grading process had on her ability to successfully revise her second essay:

The first draft [of the self vs. role paper] wasn't as good. I took a lot more time to edit [this one] than I did my first essay, and I did well on both. But I got a 100% on this essay. Originally, when [Liza] reviews [your essay], she gives you the grade that, if you kept the paper the exact same way, you would most likely get. On this paper, she gave me a B, which I think motivated me more to edit it.

Although Kendra at first was "surprised" by her grade, she reflected that the motivation taught her something important about her writing abilities. She learned that she could, with some revision, become an effective writer. When comparing the experience revising the first and second essays, Kendra acknowledged that there was a difference in the two revising processes:

Looking back on it now, I realize that I should have been more confident in turning in my final draft [for the second essay] than I was, just because I had made so many more changes from the first essay. And I worked a lot

harder at developing it, which I didn't realize at the time, but going back and rereading it after I got my grade, and rereading the first one versus the second one, I think that I was less confident with my first essay, which made me less confident with my second, when I shouldn't have connected the two because I worked a lot harder [on the second essay].

Kendra made a significant revelation upon reflecting on the process of composing her second essay. Kendra realized that her hard work should have translated into increased confidence, suggesting that she became a confident writer. Kendra recognized that through revision, “definitely that [she could write].”

Kendra's experiences exemplify Sarah Warshauer Freedman's argument that instructors need to make grading more transparent for students. Freedman contends that “we need to let competent, highly motivated writers know that they should reach higher and then show them how to reach” (88). Liza's grading process let Kendra know that as it stood, her paper was a B paper. But the combination of Liza's feedback and the feedback from Kendra's peers helped her “reach higher” and achieve a grade of 100%. More importantly, Kendra gained a new level of confidence in her writing; even though she admitted that “every time that [she] write[s] a paper, [she thinks she is] not going to do good,” she knew that with some work, she could compose a strong essay. Kendra developed from an insecure writer to a writer who understood what she needed to do in order to communicate her ideas successfully.

While Ray wanted his students to gain confidence and agency over their writing, they did seem to value his directions and feedback when composing. In our interview,

Ray stated: “I want [the students] to make that decision [about their writing], to have that control.” However, if we listen to Stella, we can see that while Ray’s students did seem to have learned to make those choices, they did so with attention to Ray’s expectations for student writing.

Although Stella did not directly state that she valued Ray’s feedback over feedback from her peers, she did use his advice in composing her essays. In our interview, Stella mostly referred to Ray’s advice with regards to general writing tips. Although she took Ray’s advice in her writing, she demonstrated that she was able to utilize it independently and make decisions on how to best put her essays together. At one point in our interview, Stella discussed Ray’s feedback on the conclusion of her first essay on why art is important to society. Having been in AP English, Stella was accustomed to doing timed writing, and her conclusion was largely shaped by that experience:

Especially with timed writing, by the end you’re like, I only have five minutes to go, so I was never really good at conclusions. And so, I usually write them really fast, and just repeat what I say at the beginning. And my teacher [said I] should probably put a new idea into the final paragraph. So I reworded it, and pretty much changed the whole thing.

In our interview, I also noted that Stella’s first conclusion was a simply a restatement of her argument, but that her revised conclusion took a new direction. Stella agreed with this observation, and said that she could “see” how the revisions made her essay “better.” Although Ray recommended she use a new idea in the conclusion, Stella was able to see

why the recommendation made sense in terms of improving her writing. For example, in her rhetorical analysis essay, Stella recognized that her original conclusion was not a conclusion; she commented that “it [went] really well with pathos.” As a result, Stella “wrote another conclusion that didn’t restate what [she] had written in the beginning.” She was able to take Ray’s advice of making a new idea for the conclusion and extend it so that she understood how parts of her essay might function more effectively when organized different. In this case, she re-examined the conclusion, realized it worked better as an explanation of pathos, and composed a stronger essay overall.

In addition to the conclusion, Stella also mentioned Ray’s requirement for thesis statements. She discussed Ray’s practice for writing thesis statements in comparison to her previous experience:

I was taught in high school that a thesis statement did not have to be one sentence, that you could just keep going with them. But my teacher wants them to be one sentence long, so I’ve been trying to make sure that I encompass the whole thesis.

Once again, Ray made a recommendation, and Stella took it. However, it is important to couch these comments within the context of the class, and Ray’s desire to help his students write from a more rhetorical perspective and achieve agency over their writing. In our interview, I observed that Ray’s strategy of modeling feedback for the students seemed to help make his grading criteria more transparent. Ray stated:

One class told me that they liked [the class workshop] because they all knew what I wanted from their papers. And I don’t think of that when I

explain it, but I guess it comes across as I'm discussing the different aspects of it. But I really want them to get to the point where they're making these judgments on their own, what works, and they see the reason for it. That's the big thing.

In this statement, Ray connected grading transparency to student agency. While he admitted that his criteria came through in his modeling, he also argued for the importance of students being able to transition from listening to his advice, to making those judgments themselves.

As Kendra reflected on Liza's grading process, Stella also acknowledged the importance of Ray's grading process in her ability to have agency over her own writing. Ray's grading process asked the students to evaluate and grade their own writing; Ray gave the students feedback, but no grade. As discussed in Ray's case study, he described this method in our interview:

When I hand back their papers, they look at all my comments – I type up a page of comments to go with it – but nowhere is there a grade. I have those on separate little 3x5 cards. And I tell them to write an evaluation of what they did. They do that before they turn it in, and then after they get their paper back with my comments. Did we agree? Do they understand? What are they going to do to improve? And then finally, they have to put a grade on their paper. And if we match, they go up to the next level, so an 85 to an 88, or an 82 to an 85, whatever their grade may be. So it's not a letter grade, but I think they have to get to the point where they're always

evaluating their own writing. And being critical. And that's part of the process.

Ray's grading process stressed the importance of critical evaluation of one's own writing. In his essay "Grading in a Process-Based Writing Classroom," Christopher Weaver asks: "How could [students] succeed on their own if they didn't begin to learn to take control of the writing process themselves?" (143). Ray asked his students to write a reflection of their composing process for each essay by discussing what worked well and what they would have spent more time on (if they had that time). After students submitted their essays for a grade, Ray commented on the papers and turned them back to the students – without the grade. Ray asked the students to read over his comments, and give themselves a grade based on the comments they received. As discussed in the case study, if the students were within a certain number of points in their evaluation of their own work, they were rewarded with bonus points toward the grade Ray gave their essay. This process of grading helped students in Ray's class get a better sense for where they stood grade-wise, but also helped them identify their strengths and weaknesses as writers. And, if students were able to guess their grades correctly, Ray rewarded them by raising their grade a few points; this reward was a further motivator for the students to engage in critical analysis of their work. This grading practice invited students to be participants in the evaluation and grading of their own work; as Ray stated, "if I can just get them to see what it is that's not working and why, then [a student] has a chance of improving."

Stella also saw this process of self-evaluation as useful and important to her own progress as a writer. In our interview, Stella discussed Ray's evaluation and grading process directly in relation to her revising practices:

In class, before we get our grades back on certain papers, he makes us guess what we think we got on the grade. And if we guess right, we go up a certain level, like, instead of getting an A-, you'll get an A, or something like that. And for all the papers we've had to guess, I've guessed right, and so I was like, yes! And so I feel like with the revisions, definitely I've been able to sort of step back and look at my paper not from my point of view writing it, but as somebody else, almost.

Stella's comments match Ray's goals in evaluating and grading precisely. She made the connection that her ability to guess her own grades correctly led her to recognize that she has achieved distance from her writing. This shows that, at least for some of the students, their participation in reflecting on and in evaluating their own work offered them a chance to take ownership over their writing.

Unlike Claus from Susan's class, who revised for the grade, Stella showed a transition from writing for a grade to writing for herself. While Stella admitted that she revised to get the better grade, and to be able to evaluate her grade more effectively, she recognized that this process also brought her personal growth as a writer. When I asked her in our interview why she revised, she demonstrated this transition:

I definitely [revise] for the grade. But now that I really know how to revise, I can even see [that] I'm more happy with my papers when I hand

them in. So I do it for myself. Even with papers where I feel the teachers don't make you revise, I've started to just write things out, then put it down for a day, then come back to it.

Once again, Stella exemplified one of Ray's primary goals for the class: getting students to achieve that critical perspective and the ability to revise successfully on their own. In our interview, Ray stated: "With revision they can learn ownership and do what's necessary." Through that ownership, the students also learn independence. Ray continued:

I tell them that they are their own best teacher. And I think that's important. Once the quarter is finished and they're elsewhere now, I'll always be willing to help [students] as long as I'm here, they can come to my office, but [they should] not [be] dependent on me. [Students] ought to be the judge of [their] writing so that in another class that [they're] in, when [they] have to write an essay, [they] can look at it and go, I need to do this, this isn't working. We've got to give them those skills for future writing.

Through the combination of peer feedback, teacher modeling, and students' self-evaluation and grading, some students seemed to achieve a new agency over their writing.

While in both Liza's and Ray's classes, students gained agency over their writing, in Susan's class, the students did not learn to write for themselves, nor did they learn to write from a position of power. This may be related to the ownership Susan maintained

over the peer critiques, and to the fact that Susan's students did not have the opportunity to revise their work after submitting it for a grade. In our interview, Susan discussed how she used the peer critiques as a way to help students know what she was looking for as the evaluator of the students' writing. Susan expected that the peer critiques would serve as a guide for students in composing their essay in that students would be able to understand how she would evaluate their work:

With the argumentative essay, I'm looking at specific things like, do they have the refutation of the opposition? Is there an attention-getter at the beginning of the essay? It's those key things that I'll be looking for when I do the actual evaluation. So they do spend a lot of time during the peer critiques figuring out what I'm looking for specifically.

Susan's discussion of peer critique here is telling. First, Susan admitted that she asked students to "figure out" what she wants. This suggests that in her peer critiques, students adopted her voice as an authority, as opposed to offering their own feedback. While this may have made her grading more transparent, in actuality, Susan's authority over the peer critiques may have made it more difficult for students to give each other feedback on revising to meet each essay's requirements.

The emphasis on correctness from the beginning of the term tells students that correctness is imperative; this is emphasized by peer critique questions such as, "Check the grammar of the essay. There should be NO COMMA SPLICES or SENTENCE FRAGMENTS." In addition, the polar questions featured on the peer critique sheets counteracted the emphasis on more global concerns the peer critique sheets address in

favor of more local concerns, such as presence of introduction, and grammatical correctness. For example, a question on the peer critique sheet for the students' third essay, an autobiography, was worded this way: "Is there enough detail that effectively recreates the experience? Comment on places in the essay that could use more development." While this is a question that could potentially invite discussion, the polar structure of the question permitted students to simply write "Yes" or "No" and move on, without addressing the next direction to comment on the essay with regards to development. Although Susan asked students to consider more global concerns on the peer critique sheet, and evaluate the students on global concerns, the focus on correctness and the structure of the questions counteracted the students' ability to give feedback on a more global level.

In the quote from the previous page, Susan described herself as the "authority" who students must mimic as they try to understand "what [she's] looking for specifically." As discussed earlier in this chapter, her use of "I" further showed her authoritative connection to the peer critiques, and did not acknowledge the students' ability to give substantive feedback as readers separate from Susan. While there was a list of elements that the students had to identify as being present in the essay, there was no space for the students to offer evaluative comments as individual readers. Also, although the peer critiques outlined what Susan was looking for, her own feedback on student essay drafts was minimal. She gave approval on thesis statements, and looked at essay drafts when asked, but largely, the students acted for Susan on the peer critiques. When I asked Gabriella about the fact that Susan did not give feedback on drafts unless asked,

Gabriella acknowledged that she felt it was “important” to have feedback from Susan, but at the same time, she recognized that this would be a large task for Susan, and simply said, “I think it’s fine the way it is.” This suggests that while Gabriella thought Susan’s feedback was important, Gabriella also did not believe she had the power to suggest Susan give more feedback.

For successful students like Gabriella, Susan’s feedback may not be as necessary. However, for students like Claus, who struggled with writing, feedback from Susan on essay drafts might have been very beneficial, especially in terms of making her comments more transparent. For example, in our interview, Claus discussed Susan’s comments on the final draft of his first essay – students did not have the opportunity to revise their work – and expressed confusion over her feedback. In looking over the comments, he said: “The biggest thing [she described] was that the impact section is cursory. I don’t even know what ‘cursory’ means, to be honest with you.” Not only did Claus not understand Susan’s comments, but he also did not take the time to ask or find out what the comments may have meant. Claus’ disinterest in Susan’s comments makes sense; if the students could not revise their papers, why would Claus closely consider Susan’s comments? This suggests that although Claus wrote to Susan as an audience, he was unsure of her expectations and of her feedback. Because Susan did not comment on students’ first drafts (unless they asked), and because the peer critique sheets largely asked students to only respond in a polar fashion to their peers’ writing, the students were left to guess what Susan’s responses might be to their writing, even though they were expected to act as stand-ins for her during peer critique.

Although the instructors wanted students to value their own abilities, and the ability of their peers, as critical reviewers, the instructors had varying levels of understanding of their own importance to students. By setting herself up as the sole audience, but not commenting on drafts, Susan perhaps neglected to recognize her own importance in her students' composing processes. Liza expressed a tension between her desire to conduct an egalitarian classroom, and her role as evaluator; her workshops and her grading process did seem to help her students learn to value each other and to gain agency over their writing. Of the three, Ray was the most successful in getting students to move away from valuing his feedback. Through class and small group workshops, and an emphasis on students' ability to be self-evaluators, his students were the most likely to be able to see their work with a critical eye that would continue to benefit them beyond Ray's class.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered an analysis of the case studies based on the initial research questions. Out of this analysis of the case studies, the research questions can be discussed in the following ways.

In this chapter, I argued that teaching practices *do* influence students' perceptions and practices of revision. However, as shown through the analysis of the case studies, this influence may not be exactly what the instructor desired or anticipated. All three instructors in my study valued revision as a key element both in helping students to improve both particular assignments and in helping students grow as writers. While Liza

and Ray were successful in teaching their students to also value revision as a means to grow as writers, Susan was less successful. The reasons for the successes and failures seem to be largely tied to the extent to which the instructors created an environment for both collaboration and individual agency in composing.

In classroom environments like Liza's and Ray's, where the instructors devoted class time to model how to give effective feedback and encouraged students to value that feedback, students learned both to embrace their peers' ideas and to take agency over their own writing. Further, in this type of classroom environment, the students changed their perceptions of writing to become critical writers who reflect on their own processes and products, and can do so independently. They were also able to evaluate their work (and the work of the peers') effectively from a critical standpoint that evoked more global revision. On the other hand, in Susan's class, where students worked largely individually, and were only asked to collaborate in peer critiques, students were unable to both give effective feedback to their peers and to value the feedback they did receive.

In the composition classroom, writing workshops (in either small or large groups) can become collectives where students work together to help each other revise their work. The collective model, emulated by Liza and Ray, can help students to see collaboration's value to their own writing, and see the workshops as beneficial to their growth as reflective writers.

Next, I examined instructors' and students' perceptions of peer feedback with regards to revision. Based on my analysis of the case studies, I found that while all the instructors who participated in this study perceived peer feedback as an important part of

revising, the way peer feedback was integrated into the course curriculum by the instructors directly impacted how students valued peer feedback. Liza and Ray focused on global revision and rhetorical context in their modeling of peer feedback by asking students to consider audience and purpose in composing and conveying arguments; they were able to successfully teach their students to give global feedback and consider the rhetorical contexts they needed to address more effectively when they revised. Susan was again less successful in helping her students learn to value peer feedback because of her own emphasis on correctness and style. She was also less successful because the peer critiques themselves were largely rooted in correctness and asked polar questions that first required students to act as a stand-in for Susan, and second, did not invite deeper evaluation from the students as independent readers. Susan's students either failed to see the value in peer critique, or saw peer critique as valuable only insofar as it helped them more effectively produce texts according to Susan's requirements.

The type of peer feedback that students were able to give – global comments or local comments – also was dependent upon how the instructors conveyed the importance of feedback to students. Liza's and Ray's students were able to give their peers more effective feedback that focused on global elements such as critical analysis of an argument. Susan's students, no matter how "good" they were as writers, did not know how to give similar types of feedback to their peers. They did not know how to give feedback that moved beyond the "Yes" and "No" answers of Susan's peer critique.

Finally, I argued in this chapter that instructors need to be more aware of the extent to which students value instructor opinion, even when instructors want to

emphasize the idea of a democratic classroom. While an instructor like Susan used peer critiques as a model for instructor feedback, and expected students to successfully predict her comments, the students seemed to desire feedback from Susan herself. If the students are writing only for a grade, they are writing for one person: the instructor. As such, it seems important for the instructors to make grading processes more transparent by modeling and inviting deeper conversation about requirements in peer critique, and by giving more feedback to students during the drafting process of composing.

In addition, instructors like Ray and Liza aimed to promote the idea of the egalitarian classroom. Liza surfaced the tension between this desire and the reality of academic institutions, where grades are typically valued as institutional markers of success and failure. She mediated this tension by giving students an early grade that did not count. Ray strived to overcome this tension by inviting students to share in the grading process. Awareness of this tension, and allowing students to participate in the grading process can offer them a chance to take ownership over their writing.

Out of the analysis of the case studies, several themes emerge. The final chapter will discuss these themes in relation to the implications of this study for both teaching and research.

CHAPTER 8: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH

“And so with the revisions, definitely I’ve been able to sort of step back and look at my paper not from my own point of view writing it, but as somebody else, almost.”
-- Stella, from Ray’s class

As I conducted this study, my own perceptions of revision – regarding both how it should be taught and how it should be researched – have changed continuously. This chapter offers some reflection on the process of conducting this study, as well as a discussion of the study’s implications for students and teachers of writing, as well as for research in both the field of revision and composition in general.

Implications for Students and Teachers

With regards to the implications of this study for students and teachers, four important findings emerge. These findings stem from the juxtaposition of student and instructor voices in this study, as well as from the findings of the student surveys, first and final essay drafts, and interviews, and the instructors’ course materials and interviews. The juxtaposition shows what teachers expect from students, as well as what students value, with regards to revision. In these case studies, the voices of the students and instructors have resounded in both harmony and discord. Placing student and instructor voices side by side allows the instructors to see the extent to which they are successfully implementing their revision pedagogy in the classroom.

Out of this juxtaposition and analysis of data, the following findings arise:

- Teaching practices influence students' perspectives about revision and whether or not they value it.
- Teaching practices influence students' valuing of peer feedback
- Teaching practices can help students to see revision as a key element in helping them improve a particular assignment and, more importantly, in helping them become better writers.
- Teaching practices can aid students' development of personal agency over their own writing.

Teaching Practices Influence Students' Valuing of Revision

One important finding of this study is that instructors' teaching practices do influence the extent to which students value revision. In the case of Liza's and Ray's classes, comparing their perspectives on teaching revision with the value their students ascribed to revision by the end of the term allows us to see that through Liza's and Ray's teaching practices, students learned to value revision in the way Liza and Ray hoped they would – as a global reconsideration of their written texts. The teaching practices Liza and Ray implemented included the use of student texts to show students how to give effective feedback, and the consistent implementation of activities focusing on global, not local, issues in writing. In contrast, because Susan was less successful in implementing these types of teaching practices, her students were less likely to value revision for global issues, and more likely to value it as an editing process.

Both Liza and Ray were able to effectively model how to give feedback for students by utilizing student texts as the basis for the feedback. Through the workshops Liza and Ray implemented in the classroom setting, students learned how to analyze student texts from a critical standpoint. They learned to identify important elements of writing, such as the effective communication of an idea, but they also learned to look at papers within the context of being a part of a larger set of readers. This practice of workshopping peer papers led students to understand how they needed to revise their own work in order to address the larger goals for their essays, and they learned to value the opportunity to do so. For example, through Liza's modeling of certain key concepts, she found that students began picking up on these concepts as well and using them in their own revising. In our interview, Liza referred to one idea she reiterated to students: "the best introductions are the conclusions." This statement means that oftentimes, good introductions can come from the conclusions of previous drafts. Through her modeling of this concept, students learned to value their drafts as places to "mine" for ideas to improve their papers, and would often come to workshops having already reworked their introduction out of the conclusion from a previous draft.

Similarly, Ray modeled effective peer feedback by asking questions of student texts. He focused on particular aspects of the writing, such as the introduction, and asked the students questions about it: "Does [the introduction] capture our attention? Does it set out what it intends to do?" By repeating this process with several examples of students' introductions and other elements of their texts, Ray's students learned how to focus on

and analyze a particular aspect of a paper, and learned how valuable revision could be in helping that aspect of their papers to achieve its purpose.

Both Liza's and Ray's classes demonstrate that when instructors use student texts to model how to give effective feedback, students ascribe more value to revision. In contrast, in Susan's class, she used essays taken from the course textbook in order to model how to give effective feedback for students. In a follow-up email, Susan described how she used the textbook readings as models:

We used the readings frequently as a way to emphasize the kinds of things they needed to have in their essays. The essays served as examples for descriptive writing, empirical writing, argumentative writing, personal narrative, etc.... There is a constant connection between readings, in-class exercises or practice essays and the formal papers.

Ray and Liza used student texts to "emphasize the kinds of things [students] needed to have in their essays." On the other hand, Susan relied on an anthology of essays written by published authors. Examining essays taken from the course textbook seemed to be a useful way to help students understand how to give feedback to their peers. However, students seemed less able to connect their commentary on the textbook essays to their peers' essays. Gabriella's refusal to tell a peer not to use the word "awesomeness" in his paper during a peer critique is a good example of this lack of connection. Gabriella could not connect the modeling work they had done with the textbook essays to the type of feedback she was supposed to give her peers. It seems to be clear, then, that using published essays in a textbook as models for students' own text does not help them learn

how to apply elements of the “model” texts to their own writing. The analysis of student texts seems to help students learn to value revision more, and learn how to give effective feedback.

Another important teaching practice that helps students learn to value revision is continual focus on global, not local, issues in writing. Susan was an instructor who began her class by doing an extensive grammar review; this conveyed the message to students that they should place a high value on correctness, even in revision. On the other hand, Ray and Liza both integrated exercises that focused on global issues early in the course. Ray asked students to focus on global writing issues from the first workshops they did; Liza used both workshops and in-class activities, such as group freewriting, to help students learn to focus on global issues of topic and idea development. Unlike Susan’s students, Ray’s and Liza’s students learned early on to value development of ideas, as opposed to mechanical and grammatical correctness.

Teaching Practices Influence Students’ Valuing of Peer Feedback

Through these teaching practices, students in Ray’s and Liza’s classes were not only able to learn to value revision, but to also value peer feedback. Because Ray and Liza relied heavily on workshop models of teaching revision, and modeled how to give effective feedback by analyzing student texts, the students learned to value what their peers said about their writing, and to use that feedback in the revising process. On the other hand, because Susan expected her students to act as stand-ins for her during peer critiques, the students were much more ambivalent about the feedback they received;

they usually did not expect to receive help, although they were pleased when they got feedback that they deemed useful.

Ray's and Liza's students learned to value peer feedback within the structure of the workshops. Students I interviewed from both classes referred to the idea that if they heard particular pieces of advice from multiple parties, it meant that was an idea they should take into consideration. Stella, Ray's student, and Kendra, Elizabeth, and Mariah, who were Liza's students, all referenced the advantage of hearing similar feedback from multiple people. In the case of Ray's class, where there was a class workshop setting, class members were able to agree and disagree with each other during class discussions over how a student might correct his or her work. Stella appreciated this exchange of ideas, because she then got to choose from a wider pool with regards to utilizing the feedback she received. Liza's students had to read their peers' essays ahead of time and write a letter of evaluation to each person in their group. All three of Liza's students either used the words "they" or "the group" when referring to the type of feedback they received, or specifically mentioned that multiple group members suggested the same change. This caused them to consider these pieces of advice more seriously.

The students also valued feedback more when it reiterated concerns they already had about their writing. In Elizabeth's first essay on food, she told me she realized while writing the first draft that there was a paragraph she would have to "split up." This was affirmed when "everyone in [her] peer review group told [her] that [she] should fix it." Mariah also expressed a similar valuing of peer feedback; in her second essay on her role as a young Christian woman, she worried that her essay came across as "preachy" and did

not meet the requirements of the essay (to discuss how the chosen role is influenced by the media). Both of these concerns were affirmed by her workshop group, which gave her advice on how to be “less preachy,” and how to better connect her role with advertising.

In contrast, Gabriella from Susan’s class, a strong writer who said the class was “easy,” said that some of her peers weren’t “literate” enough to help or were “stupid,” and as a result, one never knew how valuable peer feedback would actually be. While Gabriella’s attitude toward peer feedback is certainly tied to her own success as a writer, Susan’s emphasis on local, not global, issues in writing did not offer Gabriella or her peers the opportunity to learn *how* to give feedback from a more global perspective.

All three instructors hoped that their students would learn to value peer feedback as being helpful for revision. In classes where the students participated in workshops and analyzed student texts, such as Liza’s and Ray’s, the students can learn to value peer feedback as beneficial to revision. However, in classes like Susan’s that value correctness in writing, and spend little time analyzing student texts, the students are more ambivalent regarding peer feedback’s value, simply because the students have not developed the vocabulary necessary to effectively convey how their peers might improve their writing.

Teaching Practices Help Students See Revision as a Key Element in Becoming Better Writers

An important finding of this study is that teaching practices can help students see revision as a key element not only in helping them improve a particular assignment, but most importantly, in helping them to grow as writers. In their interviews, Liza’s and

Ray's students would explain how revision helped them improve their writing, and how it changed the way they perceived themselves as writers. On the other hand, Susan's students did not discuss revision in such a transformational way. Because the students were unable to perceive revision as anything other than editing for correctness, they did not have the same transformational experiences with regards to revision as Liza's and Ray's students did.

Stella from Ray's class was a good example of a student who was able to explain how she had grown as a writer. Throughout our interview, Stella made reference to how she could "see how [her papers] got better" when she revised. And whereas Claus from Susan's class could only see revision as useful insofar as it improved his grade, Stella saw revision as much more valuable to her growth as a writer:

I definitely do [revise] for the grade. But now that I really know how to revise, I can even see [that] I'm more happy with my papers when I hand them in. So, I do [revise] for myself. Even with papers where I feel the teachers don't make you revise, I've started to ... just write things out, then put it down for a day, then come back to it.

Stella's comment here exemplifies how revision has helped her grow as a writer. While she admits that she revised for the grade, she also observes that she's happier with her writing, and that she's started to revise for classes where instructors don't require revision. This shows that Stella has developed an appreciation of revision beyond completing assignments for her first-year writing class, and now values it as a writer.

The idea that instructors' teaching practices can help students learn to value revision and grow as writers is a key finding for my study. The workshop-style

collaborative classroom that focuses on global issues in student writing encourages students to value their peers' feedback as they revise. In Susan's class, the students were unable to move beyond revision as fulfilling a requirement, or as a means to achieve a grade. The emphasis Liza and Ray placed on providing multiplicity of approaches and options of revising helped their students learn not only to value peer feedback, but also to discern which feedback which they wanted to incorporate.

Teaching Practices Aid Students' Development of Personal Agency in Writing

The students in Liza's and Ray's classes not only learned to value their peers' feedback, but they also developed personal agency as writers. Much of their development of agency stems from the instructors' perceptions of revision. In our interview, Liza related revision directly to student agency in writing:

Thinking about the ideas of rhetoric in general and persuasion and "why are you writing this essay? What's your goal?" and moving the text towards that goal, however it happens....It's not necessarily about making a better paper, but about making something that will do what the author wants it to do.

Similarly, Ray also made a connection between revision and agency:

I really want them to get to the point where they're making these judgments [about their writing] on their own, [where they see] what works, and they see the reason for it. That's the big thing.

Ray and Liza emphasize the importance of the writer/author with relation to the written text and want their students to take control over their writing. In both classes, students are able to successfully do this.

Stella from Ray's class, and Elizabeth from Liza's class, are two examples of students who demonstrate their development of personal agency. In our interviews, each student articulated her development of personal agency; they both achieved a critical distance from their writing that enabled them to revise their work more effectively, and with more purpose. Because Ray asked his students to evaluate and grade their own work, Stella transitioned into a writer who could achieve agency. She commented:

I feel like with the revisions, definitely I've been able to sort of step back and look at my paper not from my point of view writing it, but as somebody else, almost.

While Stella said "as somebody else, almost" in her assertion of writerly agency, Elizabeth was even more directed in her response:

On the first paper, I relied a lot on what other people said about what they wanted me to write...but then...on the second paper, I sat down before the peer review group, and I read my paper and edited it, like I would if it wasn't mine. So I changed in that aspect where I'm going to revise my own papers first. And then that way, I understand what people are saying more, I think, when they tell me what I need to fix. So I think that helps. I think I did a better job of editing...I think I'm getting better at it.

Elizabeth clearly states here that she is able to revise her essays as if they are not hers. And she describes the advantage of having this agency over her writing: she is able to better understand the type of feedback she receives on her papers and again, see her own writing with agency and from a more critical perspective. When revision is taught collaboratively and through a focus on global issues, students can develop agency over their writing.

Ultimately, this study shows that students are savvy interpreters of instructors' teaching practices. In his article "Academic Work," Walter Doyle points out that students "face the initial problem of understanding what task a teacher expects them to accomplish, and they are typically sensitive to task-related information" (181). Students thus look for "hints" that reveal to them what instructors expect. The findings of this study suggest that instructors need to be aware of how students read *all* their teaching practices as indicative of teachers' expectations. For example, Susan began her class with a focus on correctness and style; therefore her students predicted that she valued style and correctness most, and performed accordingly. This happened whether or not Susan attempted to get students to value revision as a global re-seeing of their work. In contrast, instructors like Liza integrate collaborative learning and global issues in writing and revising into many class activities, such as small-group workshops and collaborative freewritings. These types of activities may encourage students to value revision as re-seeing one's work, as contributing to their personal growth as writers, and as enabling them to develop agency over their writing. Instructors thus need to be aware of how all their teaching practices might influence students' perceptions of revision.

Implications for Research

This dissertation has implications for future research in the field of revision scholarship. Possible areas to explore include:

- Replicating this study in different classroom settings
- Creating different research designs
- The use of a feminist lens in composition research
- The value of instructors and students as co-researchers

Different Classroom Settings for Study

Centering my research on actual classrooms enabled me to surface how revision is currently being taught in particular composition courses, and how students perceive and practice revision within these courses. Replicating this study in different classroom settings, such as first-year writing classes at open-door colleges, introductory writing courses, or courses that include non-native speakers of English, would enable us to obtain a richer portrait of how revision is being taught in a variety of writing classes. This would give us an even deeper understanding of how students interpret different types of revision teaching practices, and provide the opportunity for discussion about how revision might be better taught in various institutions in order to help students understand revision as a key element in improving particular assignments and helping them grow as writers.

For example, although this dissertation focuses on composition classes for native speakers of English, it might also be useful to conduct this study in first-year college writing classes that include non-native English speakers. Examining how revision

teaching practices are currently implemented in non-native first-year writing classrooms would enable us to understand what aspects of this study would be beneficial to non-native speakers of English in a first-year writing classroom. However, a survey of literature on how revision in classrooms that include non-native speakers would need to be conducted, so as to understand how the literature perceives the teaching of revision for non-native speakers.

From there, a study similar to this dissertation could be conducted in order to gain an understanding of how writing and revision are taught in courses that include non-native speakers. Once we have a clearer portrait of how revision is taught, recommendations can be made to help instructors transition to a more workshop-based writing classroom. A workshop-based writing classroom could potentially help non-native speakers with all four aspects of learning a language: writing, reading, hearing, and speaking. In a workshop setting, non-native speakers of English would need to write in English, read their peers' work in English, listen to the advice of their peers in English, and offer their own advice in English. The multi-modal aspect of language learning that a workshop provides could potentially improve students' use of the English language.

Different Research Designs

Because this dissertation is a descriptive study, it is hypothesis-generating as opposed to hypothesis-testing. Therefore, different research designs could be implemented in order to better assess the findings of this study.

One possible research design would be a sampling survey. According to Lauer and Asher's *Composition Research: Empirical Designs*, a sampling survey "describes a large group, a *population*, of people, composition, English courses, teachers, or classrooms, in terms of a *sample*, a smaller part of that group" (54). This type of study allows the researcher to concentrate on a few variables, instead of analyzing how a large number of variables are at work in a social context (as with case studies and descriptive studies, such as this dissertation). A sampling survey of instructors of writing within a particular type of university, or from a random sample of four-year universities, would enable us to get a richer portrait for how revision is currently being taught in first-year writing classrooms. This type of survey could be implemented based on the instructor survey I designed for this dissertation. In addition to questions about teaching practices and revision, though, questions about location, type of institution, and instructors' academic rank could also be included.

Another research design that could be implemented is a quasi-experimental study, such as John Clifford's "Composing in Stages: The Effects of Collaborative Pedagogy." According to Lauer and Asher, quasi-experimental studies are useful "when researchers cannot randomize groups, for example, when classes must be kept intact" (179). While quasi-experimental studies do not randomize subjects, they still allow a researcher to establish a cause-and-effect relationship. A quasi-experimental study focused on revision could use more traditional classes, such as Susan's, and contrast them with a workshop-style pedagogy that is similar to Ray's or Liza's. As with Clifford's study, the same teacher would teach both the control and experimental classes. Pre-tests and post-tests

could include the survey as well as essays written at the beginning and the end of the quarter. Change in students' perceptions of revision based on the surveys, as well as on the type (global vs. local) and number of changes students make on their pre/post essays, could be tabulated. A quasi-experimental study based on the findings of this dissertation could potentially enable us to establish more concretely that pedagogies like Ray's and Liza's lead to an improvement in student writing.

Use of a Feminist Lens in Pedagogically-Based Research

As discussed in the Introduction to this dissertation, by viewing the data collected in this study through a feminist lens, I have been able to privilege specific voices that were often silenced or silent in revision scholarship: the voices of the students, and more importantly, the voices of instructors. Utilizing feminist standpoint theory allowed me to empower the students and instructors in this study and value their experiences. The findings of this study were directly dependent upon the students' and instructors' participation.

My research relies on what Carolyn Shrewsbury, in "What is Feminist Pedagogy?", calls "participatory process" and "shared power" (9) between myself and the students and instructors who participated in this study. In many ways, the students and instructors were my academic colleagues in this research. In particular, I recognize that I share a line of inquiry with the instructors, because I am a composition instructor as well as a composition scholar. The instructors and I were invested in a line of inquiry that answers questions about how teaching practices impact students' revising practices. All

instructors want to know if what they enact in the classroom transfers effectively to the students. The instructors in this study were able to see data that helped them better understand the effectiveness of their teaching practices. Liza in particular noted that she highlighted revision more in her class because of the study, and that because of the findings, she would continue to do so in subsequent classes. On the other hand, Susan saw that some of her teaching practices were not helping her students understand revision as a key element to helping both with particular assignments and with their writing in general. She even suggested in her interview that she might need to change her approach.

Researchers can also learn from the instructor participants in their studies. In the case of this dissertation, listening to the instructor voices guided me in my analysis of the case studies. The instructors were not only vital participants; they were also vital analysts. The study granted instructors the ability to talk back to the data, reflecting on which classroom ideologies or practices might have influenced students' perceptions about revision. While not often done in composition pedagogy research, this could be a valuable approach.

The students and I also shared a line of inquiry in this research that enabled the students to be part of a participatory process. Shrewsbury argues that a feminist classroom “builds on the experiences of the participants” where the participants “relat[e] [their] experiences to other or new evidence, [and are] thinking about [their] experiences in different ways” (8). The classroom experiences of the students in this study were vital to the study's success. They were both interested in, and offered insight on, my findings. For example, the students were able to learn whether they make mostly global or local

changes when they revise. They were also given the opportunity to reflect upon the choices they made when revising their essays, and to make connections between specific teaching practices (such as workshops) and those revising choices. At the same time, listening to the student voices also guided me in my analysis of the case studies. The students' analyses of their own writing, and the teaching practices in their first-year writing class, helped identify trends and point me to specific teaching practices that impacted their perceptions of revision.

This approach to studying composition pedagogy could be implemented in studies of other teaching practices. Many practices, such as asking students to write personal essays or keep blogs, are assessed by composition scholars; however, not many allow the instructors (from an outside perspective) or students to participate in the research. Researchers might benefit from asking instructors what their goals are in asking students to compose personal essays or keep blogs. They might also benefit from asking students about their perceptions of writing personal essays and keeping blogs, and then comparing the goals and practices of the instructors with the perceptions of the students. This dissertation demonstrates the value of empowering students and instructors in research; this value could be applied to many areas of composition pedagogy research.

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APPENDIX A: UNIVERSITY RHETORICAL COMPETENCIES FOR FIRST-YEAR WRITING

Students who successfully complete [first-year composition] should be able to practice each of the following activities competently:

Write rhetorically, which means that students should be able to:

- Write in various genres (both formal and informal, including summary microthemes, peer critique, focused freewriting, textual and rhetorical analyses, thesis-driven essays, source-based writing, dialogue journals, dialectical notebooks, etc.) while enacting appropriate rhetorical strategies that employ metacognitive processes such as summary, analysis, response, critique, and synthesis.
- Compose original arguments that evaluate, analyze, and synthesize primary and secondary texts (including visual texts) and their structural framework (thesis statement, evidence, and support) as well as their rhetorical purposes, audiences, and situations.
- Engage in multiple drafting and revision.
- Practice and control rhetorical stylistics such as effects of grammar, diction, mechanics, font, arrangement, etc.

Read rhetorically, which means that students should be able to:

- Evaluate, analyze, and synthesize primary and secondary texts (including visual texts) and their structural framework, rhetorical purposes, audiences, and situations.

- Identify, analyze, and employ the language of rhetorical analysis and argument while discussing texts. This language includes ethos, pathos, logos, audience, tone, voice, evidence, etc.
- Examine and evaluate in-text documentation.
- Identify and analyze various genres, their conventions, and how they respond to rhetorical situations.
- Identify and analyze rhetorical stylistics such as effects of grammar, diction, mechanics, font, arrangement, etc.

Research rhetorically, which means that students should be able to:

- Identify appropriate sources through databases (electronic and more traditional)
- Evaluate sources for quality and appropriateness
- Paraphrase and summarize material accurately
- Synthesize sources
- Integrate quotations, visuals, etc. appropriately and with correct style and citations
- Use attributive tags, in-text citations, documentation, and style sheets in appropriate ways
- Understand plagiarism and its consequences

Respond to and assess student writing rhetorically, which means that students should be able to:

- Understand writing as a recursive process that is also collaborative and socially constructed.
- Learn to develop their own ideas in relation to the ideas of others.

- Employ the languages of rhetorical analysis (ethos, pathos, logos, evidence, support, etc.) and of genres and metacognitive processes (summary, analysis, response, critique, and synthesis) to critique their own and others' ideas.
- Identify and understand their peers' rhetorical purposes, audiences, and situations and the relationship among these throughout the drafting and revision process.
- Identify correct documentation and sentence-level conventions throughout the drafting and revision process.

APPENDIX B: SURVEYS DISTRIBUTED TO STUDENTS AT THE BEGINNING
AND THE END OF THE QUARTER

[First-Year Writing] Beginning of the Quarter Survey – Revision

Please answer all questions as honestly and as fully as you can.

1. How would you define “revision?”

2. Please describe your previous experiences with revision:

3. On average, how much time do you spend revising a paper? (all drafts included)

0 hrs 1 hr 2 hrs 3 hrs 4+ hrs

4. How many drafts do you typically write (including the one you turn in for a grade)?

1 2 3 4+

5. What kind of prewriting do you do? (circle all that apply)

None Outlining Webbing/Mapping Freewriting/Notetaking

Thinking Aloud/to Self Other (please specify):

6. In general, how much time do you spend prewriting?

0-15 min 15-30 min 30-45 min 45min-1hr 1hr+

7. When you write a first draft, how would you describe your writing? What are your goals when you write a first draft?

8. What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a first → second draft? If you typically don't revise your first draft, please note that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)

Ideas	Thesis/Focus	Evidence	Analysis/Development
Organization	Grammar	I don't revise	Other (please specify):

9. What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a second → third draft? If you typically don't revise beyond one draft, please note that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)

Ideas	Thesis/Focus	Evidence	Analysis/Development
Organization	Grammar	I don't revise	Other (please specify):

10. How important are peer review comments as feedback for your revising process?

5 – Very Important	2 – Somewhat Unimportant
4 – Somewhat Important	1 – Very Unimportant
3 – Neutral	

11. How important are teacher comments as feedback for your revising process?

5 – Very Important	2 – Somewhat Unimportant
4 – Somewhat Important	1 – Very Unimportant
3 – Neutral	

12. What classwork have you found to be beneficial to your revising process and why?

13. Outside of the classroom, what services do you utilize in your revising process? (Please circle all that apply.)

My own ideas	Friends/Peers	Writing Center	Spellcheck
Family Member/Guardian	Other (please specify):		

14. When you submit a draft for a grade, how satisfied are you with your writing?

5 – Very Satisfied	2 – Somewhat Unsatisfied
4 – Somewhat Satisfied	1 – Very Unsatisfied
3 – Neutral	

15. How helpful is the multiple-draft process in allowing you to produce your best work?

5 – Very Helpful

4 – Somewhat Helpful

3 – Neutral

2 – Somewhat Unhelpful

1 – Very Unhelpful

0 – I don't write multiple drafts

16. Please circle your gender.

Male

Female

17. In order to use this survey for my research, I would appreciate you reading and marking the following statement. (All results will be kept anonymous.)

I agree to allow the researcher to use my answers to this questionnaire in future presentations.

Yes

No

[First-Year Writing] End of the Quarter Survey – Revision

Please answer all questions as honestly and as fully as you can.

1. How would you define “revision?”

2. Do you believe that your definition of revision has changed since the beginning of the quarter?
Why or why not?

3. How many drafts do you typically write per paper (include the one you turn in for a grade)?

1 2 3 4+

4. On average, how much time do you spend revising a paper? (from first to graded draft)

0 hrs 3 hrs 1 hr 4+ hrs 2 hrs

5. What kind of prewriting do you do? (circle all that apply)

None Outlining Webbing/Mapping
Freewriting/Notetaking Thinking Aloud/to Self Other (please specify):

6. In general, how much time do you spend prewriting?

0-15 min 15-30 min 30-45 min 45min-1hr 1hr+

7. When you submit a first draft, how would you describe your writing? What are your goals when you write a first draft?

8. What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a first → second draft? If you don't revise, please mark that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)

Ideas	Thesis/Focus	Evidence	Analysis/Development
Organization	Grammar	I don't revise	Other (please specify):

9. What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a second → third draft? If you don't revise beyond one draft, please mark that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)

Ideas	Thesis/Focus	Evidence	Analysis/Development
Organization	Grammar	I don't revise	Other (please specify):

10. How important are peer review comments as feedback for your revising process?

5 – Very Important	2 – Somewhat Unimportant
4 – Somewhat Important	1 – Very Unimportant
3 – Neutral	

11. How important are teacher comments as feedback for your revising process?

5 – Very Important	2 – Somewhat Unimportant
4 – Somewhat Important	1 – Very Unimportant
3 – Neutral	

12. What classwork have you found to be beneficial to your revising process and why?

13. Outside of the classroom, what services do you utilize in your revising process? (Please circle all that apply.)

My own ideas	Friends/Peers	Writing Center	Spellcheck
Family Member/Guardian	Other (please specify):		

14. Are there certain services that you have utilized more or less this quarter than previously in your writing and revising process? If so, please explain:

15. When you submit a draft for a grade, how satisfied are you with your writing?

5 – Very Satisfied
4 – Somewhat Satisfied
3 – Neutral

2 – Somewhat Unsatisfied
1 – Very Unsatisfied

16. How helpful is the multiple-draft process in allowing you to produce your best work?

5 – Very Helpful
4 – Somewhat Helpful
3 – Neutral

2 – Somewhat Unhelpful
1 – Very Unhelpful

17. After this quarter, how likely are you to continue the drafting process in writing essays, even if it is not required?

5 – Very Likely
4 – Somewhat Likely
3 – Neutral

2 – Somewhat Unlikely
1 – Very Unlikely

18. Please circle your gender.
Female

Male

19. In order to use this survey for my research, I would appreciate you reading the following statement and checking the appropriate box.(All results will be kept anonymous.)

I agree to allow the researcher to use my answers to this questionnaire in future presentations.

Yes ☐ No ☐

APPENDIX C: SURVEY DISTRIBUTED TO INSTRUCTORS AT THE END OF THE QUARTER

[First-Year Writing] End of the Quarter Instructor Survey – Revision

Please answer all questions as honestly and as fully as you can.

1. How would you define revision?

2. For this class, how many drafts do you require students to write **per paper** (including the one they turn in for a grade)?

1 2 3 4+

3. Are students allowed to resubmit a paper after receiving a grade?

Yes No

4. On average, how much class time (in hours) do you spend **per paper** covering the subject of revision? (from first to graded draft)

0-1hrs 1-2 hrs 2-3 hrs 3-4 hrs 4+ hrs

5. What kind of prewriting exercises do your students do? (circle all that apply)

None Outlining Webbing/Mapping Freewriting Other (please specify):

6. In general, how much class time (in hours) do you spend **per paper** prewriting?

0-1hrs 1-2 hrs 2-3 hrs 3-4 hrs 4+ hrs

7. What kind of in-class revision exercises do you and the students do?

Workshops Peer review Scaffolding Informal Writing

Other (specify):

8. Are there certain assignments where you spend more or less time covering revision than others? If so, which ones?

9. What are your goals when students submit a first draft? What do you ask students to achieve, and what do you look for?

10. What areas of student writing do you focus on when revising from a first → second draft? If students don't revise, please mark that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)

Ideas	Thesis/Focus	Evidence	Analysis/Development
Organization	Grammar	Students don't revise	Other (please specify):

11. What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a second → third draft? If students don't revise, please mark that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)

Ideas	Thesis/Focus	Evidence	Analysis/Development
Organization	Grammar	Students don't revise	Other (please specify):

12. How important do you believe peer review comments are as feedback for the revising process?

5 – Very Important	2 – Somewhat Unimportant
4 – Somewhat Important	1 – Very Unimportant
3 – Neutral	

13. How important do you believe teacher comments are as feedback for the revising process?

5 – Very Important	2 – Somewhat Unimportant
4 – Somewhat Important	1 – Very Unimportant
3 – Neutral	

14. Outside of the classroom, what services do you encourage students to utilize in the revising process? (Please circle all that apply.)

Their own ideas	Friends/Peers	Writing Center	Spellcheck
Family Member/Guardian	Other (please specify):		

15. How helpful do you believe the multiple-draft process is in allowing students to produce their best work?

5 – Very Helpful	2 – Somewhat Unhelpful
4 – Somewhat Helpful	1 – Very Unhelpful
3 – Neutral	

16. How likely do you think students are to use the multiple-draft process independently in future classes?

5 – Very Likely
4 – Somewhat Likely
3 – Neutral

2 – Somewhat Unlikely
1 – Very Unlikely

17. In order to use this survey for my research, I would appreciate you reading the following statement, and checking the appropriate box. (All results will be kept anonymous.)

I agree to allow the researcher to use my answers to this questionnaire in future presentations.

Yes ☐ No ☐

APPENDIX D: RESEARCHER'S SCRIPT FOR CLASS VISITS

“Student Attitudes Toward Revision:” Script for 1st visit to class

Hi, everyone; my name is Megan Titus. I am a fourth-year PhD candidate in Rhetoric and Composition in the English Department. This quarter I am conducting a survey of [first-year writing] classes, and your instructor has given me permission to visit your class and ask for your help in carrying out my research. My study pertains to student attitudes toward revision; what students think revision is, and how they revise. I'm especially interested in gathering student voices for this study, as you are the ones who are actually doing the revision work in these [first-year writing] classes. Your voice matters, and I am hoping that we will be able to find out some things that may even potentially change how we think about revision.

This study has two parts. Today, and at the end of the quarter, I am going to distribute a short survey to you. Both are very short, and will only take about 10 minutes.

For the second part of this study, I would like to revisit your class throughout the quarter and collect copies of your first and final drafts of the major paper assignments. I am not looking at your papers in order to determine if they are “good” or “bad” paper; instead, I will be looking only at your possible revisions; what you decide to change (or not) between the first and final draft. If you don't do any revisions to your work, that is fine as well.

You must be 18 in order to complete the survey and take part in the study, so please let me know if you are not yet 18.

(Distributes surveys and subject identification papers.)

Before you begin, I'd like to direct your attention to the subject identification sheet. This is a way for you to have anonymous code that will allow me to track your writing and survey responses, and will give you a way to have a consistent anonymous identifier. Please take a moment, and fill out the sheet in order to arrive at your code. I will pass around a stapler, and I would like you to please staple this sheet to your survey.

Now, please direct your attention to the bottom back side of the survey. At the bottom, there is a note asking your permission to use your survey in my research. It also says that all surveys will be kept anonymous. If at any point in filling out the survey, you decide that you don't want your survey used, just check “No” at the bottom. I assure you, though, that these will be anonymous surveys. As the researcher, all I know about this participant is that she is female, due to the last question, and her 12345. Her name, or any other information that would reveal her identity, is still hidden from me.

Are there any questions? (Researcher allows students to begin.)

(After students have begun finishing up, researcher passes around stapler so students can staple subject identification sheet to survey.)

Thank you for allowing me to study your class. I hope that we can discover some interesting things about what you think revision is. I'll see you in a few weeks, to collect

the drafts of your first essay assignment. At that time, as I said earlier, I will ask you to fill out the subject identification sheet again, and to ask your permission to use your work in my research.

Script for Each Class Visit to Collect Essay Drafts

Hello everyone. (If it's first time, reintroduce self and remind students why researcher is there.) I'm here today to collect the (first/final) drafts of your essays. Please remember that I am not interested in the quality of your papers, or how "good" they are. Instead, I am looking at if you revise your work, and if you do, how you revise it. It's also fine if you don't revise. You must be 18 in order to take part in the study, so please let me know if you are not yet 18.

I'm going to pass out the identification sheet; before you fill it out, please direct your attention to the bottom of the sheet. It asks for your permission to allow me to use your work for my research. Please do not sign your name; just mark the box if you will grant me permission. This will continue to assure that your writing remains anonymous.

I will now pass around a stapler. Once you have created your code and marked the consent statement, please staple it to your draft so I may collect them.

(Researcher allows students to proceed.)

Thank you very much. I will see you again soon!

Script for Final Survey Visit

Hello again, everyone. Today I am here to once again distribute a short survey to you. It will only take about 10 minutes.

Once again, I'd like to remind you that I may be contacting some of you to volunteer to take part in research beyond this quarter. This research is to determine whether or not students use the strategies they learn in [first-year writing] in other courses. If I contact you, I will provide you with detailed information that indicates the expectations for this part of the research.

You must be 18 in order to complete the survey and take part in the study, so please let me know if you are not yet 18.

(Distributes surveys and subject identification papers.)

Before you begin, I'd like to direct your attention to the subject identification sheet. This is a way for you to have anonymous code that will allow me to track your writing and survey responses, and will give you a way to have a consistent anonymous identifier. Please take a moment, and fill out the sheet in order to arrive at your code. I will pass around a stapler, and I would like you to please staple this sheet to your survey.

Now, please direct your attention to the bottom back side of the survey. At the bottom, there is a note asking your permission to use your survey in my research. It also says that all surveys will be kept anonymous. If at any point in filling out the survey, you decide that you don't want your survey used, just check "No" at the bottom. I assure you, though, that these will be anonymous surveys. As the researcher, all I know about this

participant is that she is female, due to the last question, and her 12345. Her name, or any other information that would reveal her identity, is still hidden from me.

Are there any questions? (Researcher allows students to begin.)

APPENDIX E: SUBJECT NUMBER CALCULATION FORM FOR STUDENT

SURVEYS AND DRAFTS

Subject Number Calculation Form – Survey

Please write down the **last 4 digits**
of your social security number:

Record the **month** and **day** of your birthday.
Add this **4 digit** figure to your SS# above.
If the month or day only has 1 digit, please put a '0'
in the first space. For example, if you were born on
January 1, you should record it as '01/01:'

+ $\frac{\text{M}}{\text{M}} / \frac{\text{D}}{\text{D}}$

=

Add the number of letters in your mother's **FULL**
FIRST name. Do not use nicknames. For example,
If your mother's name is Christine, but she goes by
the nickname Chris, you should record it as '09,' the
number of letters in CHRISTINE:

+ _____

Please staple this form to your survey when you are finished.

Subject Number Calculation Form – Essay Drafts

Please write down the **last 4 digits**
of your social security number:

Record the **month** and **day** of your birthday.
Add this **4 digit** figure to your SS# above.
If the month or day only has 1 digit, please put a '0'
in the first space. For example, if you were born on
January 1, you should record it as '01/01:'

+ $\frac{\text{M}}{\text{M}} / \frac{\text{D}}{\text{D}}$

=

Add the number of letters in your mother's **FULL**
FIRST name. Do not use nicknames. For example,
If your mother's name is Christine, but she goes by
the nickname Chris, you should record it as '09,' the
number of letters in CHRISTINE:

+ _____

In order to use your essay draft for my research, I would appreciate you reading and
marking the follow statement. (All results will be kept anonymous.)

I agree to allow the researcher to use this draft in future presentations.

Yes ☐

No ☐

APPENDIX F: STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEW CONSENT FORMS

Consent Form - Students

Title of Research: "Student Writing and Revision Processes"

Researchers: Megan L. Titus

You are being asked to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your participation in this study. You should receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Explanation of Study

This is a study into student writing and revision strategies in which the researcher aims to determine if and how student writing and revision attitudes and practices change due to taking [first-year writing].

For this part of the study, the student volunteers to participate in a follow-up interview with the researcher. In this interview, the researcher will share with the student the researcher's observations of the student's surveys and essay drafts, and ask the student to reflect and expand on survey answers and choices made in the revision process. This is a one-time interview, and will last between 1-2 hours.

Risks and Discomforts

No risks or discomforts are anticipated.

Benefits

Students participating in the follow-up interview have an opportunity to learn the researcher's observations of the work, something researchers do not often share with subjects. The students also have an opportunity to share their response to the researcher's observations. Students who participate in the follow-up interview have an even greater opportunity to express their opinions about writing and revision in the freshman English classroom. Gaining student insights can potentially further develop the student voices, and the students who participate could potentially have a say in how writing and revision are taught, both at [this university] and beyond.

There has not yet been a study that attempts to capture student voices within this triangulation of data. This study has the potential to be groundbreaking in the sense that

student voices, even if they are anonymous, can make a difference in how the composition community (and the university community at large) views the teaching of revision.

Confidentiality and Records

All emails will be immediately deleted from the researcher's email Inbox, and kept in a folder on a password-protected computer in the researcher's locked office. All audiotaped interviews will be kept in a locked file drawer in the researcher's locked office.

Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:

- * Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;

- * Representatives of [this university], including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at [this university];

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Megan L. Titus (Researcher; mt323005@ohio.edu; xxx-xxxx) or Dr. Jennie Nelson (Advisor; nelsonj1@ohio.edu; xxx-xxxx)

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Jo Ellen Sherow, Director of Research Compliance, [this] University, (xxx)xxx-xxxx.

By signing below, you are agreeing that:

- you have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions
- known risks to you have been explained to your satisfaction.
- you understand [this university] has no policy or plan to pay for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this research protocol
- you are 18 years of age or older
- your participation in this research is given voluntarily
- you may change your mind and stop participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Version Date: 08/13/08

Consent Form – Instructors

Title of Research: “Student Writing and Revision Processes”

Researchers: Megan L. Titus

You are being asked to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your participation in this study. You should receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Explanation of Study

This is a study into student writing and revision strategies in which the researcher aims to determine if and how student writing and revision attitudes and practices change due to taking [first-year writing].

For this part of the study, the instructor volunteers to participate in a follow-up interview with the researcher. In this interview, the researcher will share with the instructor the results of the study for the instructor’s class, and discuss the results with the instructor. This is a one-time interview, and will last between 1-2 hours.

Risks and Discomforts

No risks or discomforts are anticipated.

Benefits

Instructors participating in the follow-up interview have an opportunity to learn the results of the study for their class, something researchers do not often share with instructors. The instructors also have an opportunity to share their response to the results with the researcher. Because instructor voices are often not considered when studying student writing practices, the instructors who participate in the follow-up interview have an even greater opportunity to express their opinions about writing and revision in the freshman English classroom. Gaining instructor insights can potentially further develop the student voices, and the instructors who participate could potentially have a say in how writing and revision are taught, both at [this university] and beyond.

There has not yet been a study that attempts to capture multiple student voices, and the voices of their instructors, their reflections on writing and revision, and the process of learning and/or teaching revision. This study has the potential to be groundbreaking in the sense that instructor voices, even if they are anonymous, can make a difference in how the

composition community (and the university community at large) views the teaching of revision.

Confidentiality and Records

All emails will be immediately deleted from the researcher's email Inbox, and kept in a folder on a password-protected computer in the researcher's locked office. All audiotaped interviews will be kept in a locked file drawer in the researcher's locked office.

Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:

- * Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;

- * Representatives of [this university], including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at [this university];

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Megan L. Titus (Researcher; mt323005@ohio.edu; xxx-xxxx) or Dr. Jennie Nelson (Advisor; nelsonj1@ohio.edu; xxx-xxxx)

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Jo Ellen Sherow, Director of Research Compliance, [this university], (xxx)xxx-xxxx.

By signing below, you are agreeing that:

- you have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions
- known risks to you have been explained to your satisfaction.
- you understand [this university] has no policy or plan to pay for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this research protocol
- you are 18 years of age or older
- your participation in this research is given voluntarily
- you may change your mind and stop participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled.

Signature_____ Date_____

Printed Name_____

APPENDIX G: STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEW TOPICS

Student Follow-up Interview: Interview Topics

In the student follow-up interview, I aim to gain some feedback from students on the results of their class study, and to ask students to discuss their own writing and revising processes. In order to do this, we will cover the following topics:

- Discussion of the researcher's observations of the students' beginning and end of the quarter surveys. In this part of the interview, the researcher will ask students to elaborate/expand on their answers to questions in the survey. For example: why does the student only write one draft of an essay? When did the student begin using the Student Writing Center? Which resources does the student feel are most beneficial to the revising process? Are there other elements not listed that may have contributed to the student's ability to revise? Why did (or why didn't) the student's definition of revision change from the beginning to the end of the quarter?
- Discussion of the researcher's observations of the student drafts. In this part of the interview, the researcher will invite the student to reflect more on choices made (or not made) in the revising process.
 - For example: why did the student choose to revise her introduction/ conclusion/ body paragraphs? If the researcher observes the student moving toward global revision in later essays: why did the student begin to make that move? If the researcher observes more detailed analysis or description in later drafts: why did the student decide to focus on development in her revision?
- Ask student to discuss the writing assignments.
- Ask student about scaffolding activities: what activities did she do in class that helped contribute to the writing and revising process for a particular essay?
- Feedback: what elements does the student rely on for feedback on essays? What element does the student believe are the most helpful? Why?
- How would the student currently define her writing process? Her revising process?
- Overall assessment of course work and revision: how much does the student feel as though the course has helped shape her writing and revising processes?

Instructor Follow-up Interview: Interview Topics

In the instructor follow-up interview, I aim to gain some feedback from professors on the results of their class study, and to ask instructors to discuss why they think the results came out the way they did. In order to do this, we will cover the following topics:

- Discussion of the results of class study: what are the instructor's reactions to the results? (For example, if the results show that students still rely heavily on local revision practices, and the instructor taught revision on a global level, what is the instructor's response to this?)
- Comparison of instructor's survey with results: based on the way revision was taught in the class, what insights can the instructor provide further about the results?

APPENDIX H: DATA RESULTS FOR STUDENT SURVEYS, MULTIPLE CHOICE
ANSWERS

Table A.1

Survey Results for Ray's Class: Single-Answer Multiple Choice Questions³⁵

Question Number	Pair and Description	N Students	Mean	Std. Deviation
3 – Beg.	Beg. Hours Revising	16	1.50	.86
4 – End	End Hours Revising	16	2.71	1.38
4 – Beg.	Beg. Number Drafts	16	2.50	.76
3 – End	End Number Drafts	16	3.36	.93
10 – Beg.	Beg. Import. Peer Feedback	16	3.93	.73
10 – End	End Import. Peer Feedback	16	4.36	.74
11 – Beg.	Beg. Import. Teacher Feedback	16	4.86	.36
11 – End	End Import. Teacher Feedback	16	4.86	.53
14 – Beg.	Beg. Satisfied w/ Writing	16	3.93	.83
15 – End	End Satisfied w/ Writing	16	3.57	1.16
15 – Beg.	Beg. Drafting Helpful	16	4.14	1.03
16 – End	End Drafting Helpful	16	4.64	.84

³⁵ The last four questions for each of the next three tables are scaled from 1 to 5, 1 being the least, and 5 being the most. For example, for question 10, students answered on a scale of 1 – Very Unimportant to 5 – Very Important.

Table A.2

Survey Results for Liza's Class: Single-Answer Multiple Choice Questions

Question Number	Pair and Description	N Students	Mean	Std. Deviation
3 – Beg.	Beg. Hours Revising	19	1.30	.77
4 – End	End Hours Revising	19	1.94	.90
4 – Beg.	Beg. Number Drafts	19	2.06	.75
3 – End	End Number Drafts	19	2.35	.70
10 – Beg.	Beg. Importance Peer Feedback	19	3.88	.12
10 – End.	End Importance Peer Feedback	19	4.59	.62
11 – Beg.	Beg. Importance Teacher Feedback	19	4.94	.24
11 – End	End Importance Teacher Feedback	19	5.00	.00
14 – Beg.	Beg. Satisfied w/ Writing	19	3.82	.81
15 – End	End Satisfied w/ Writing	19	4.29	.69
15 – Beg.	Beg. Drafting Helpful	19	4.18	.81
16 – End	End Drafting Helpful	19	4.35	.70

Table A.3

Survey Results for Susan's Class: Single-Answer Multiple Choice Questions

Question Number	Pair and Description	N Students	Mean	Std. Deviation
3 – Beg.	Beg. Time Revising	18	1.12	.49
4 – End	End Time Revising	18	1.59	.62
4 – Beg.	Beg. Number Drafts	18	2.06	.69
3 – End	End Number Drafts	18	2.47	.62
10 – Beg.	Beg. Importance Peer Feedback	18	3.65	1.27
10 - End	End Importance Peer Feedback	18	3.76	.90
11 – Beg.	Beg. Import. Teacher Feedback	18	4.65	1.00
11 – End	End Import. Teacher Feedback	18	4.71	.99
14 – Beg.	Beg. Satisfied w/ Writing	18	4.00	1.12
15 - End	End Satisfied w/ Writing	18	3.94	1.09
15 – Beg.	Beg. Drafting Helpful	18	3.94	1.43
16 - End	End Drafting Helpful	18	4.29	1.05

Table A.4

Survey Results for Ray's Class: Multiple-Answer Multiple Choice Questions³⁶

Question Number, Beginning and End of the Quarter Survey: 8	Survey Question: What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a first → second draft? If you don't revise, please mark that as well. (Please circle all that apply)			
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Responses	Percentage of N Students	Percentage Difference
Ideas – Beg.	14	6	42.9	7.1
Ideas - End	14	7	50.0	
Thesis/ Focus – Beg.	14	7	50.0	35.7
Thesis/Focus - End	14	12	85.7	
Evidence – Beg.	14	8	57.1	14.3
Evidence - End	14	10	71.4	
Analysis – Beg.	14	7	50.0	0.0
Analysis - End	14	7	50.0	
Organization – Beg.	14	11	78.6	7.2
Organization – End	14	10	71.4	
Grammar – Beg.	14	11	78.6	-35.7
Grammar – End	14	6	42.9	
None – Beg.	14	1	7.1	0.0
None – End	14	1	7.1	
Other – Beg.	14	3	21.4	-14.3
Other - End	14	1	7.1	

³⁶ For these questions, featured in the next three tables, students were allowed to choose more than one answer. I have listed each possible answer, the frequency with which the students answered for the introductory and concluding surveys, and the percentages for each. I have also broken up the table by questions for clarity.

Question Number, Introductory and Concluding Survey: 9	Survey Question: What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a second → third draft? If you typically don't revise beyond one draft, please note that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)			
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Responses	Percentage of N Students	Percentage Difference
Ideas – Beg.	17	3	21.4	21.5
Ideas – End	17	6	42.9	
Thesis/Focus – Beg.	17	4	28.6	28.5
Thesis/Focus – End	17	8	57.1	
Evidence – Beg.	17	3	21.4	35.7
Evidence – End	17	8	57.1	
Analysis – Beg.	17	7	50.0	14.3
Analysis – End	17	9	64.3	
Organization – Beg.	17	2	14.3	42.8
Organization – End	17	8	57.1	
Grammar – Beg.	17	3	21.4	28.6
Grammar – End	17	7	50.0	
I don't revise – Beg.	17	3	21.4	0.0
I don't revise – End	17	3	21.4	
Other – Beg.	17	0	0.0	7.1
Other – End	17	1	7.1	

Question Number, Introductory Survey: 12; Concluding Survey: 13	Survey Question: Outside of the classroom, what services do you utilize in your revising process? (Please circle all that apply)			
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Responses	Percentage	Percentage Difference
My own ideas – Beg.	17	13	81.3	6.3
My own ideas – End	17	12	75.0	
Friends/ Peers – Beg.	17	11	68.8	12.5
Friends/Peers – End	17	13	81.3	
Writing Center – Beg.	17	3	18.8	0.0
Writing Center – End	17	3	18.8	
Spellcheck – Beg.	17	13	81.3	6.3
Spellcheck – End	17	12	75.0	
Family Member – Beg.	17	4	25.0	0.0
Family Member – End	17	4	25.0	
Other – Beg.	17	1	6.3	0.0
Other – End	17	1	6.3	

Question Number 2, Concluding Survey Only:	Do you believe that your definition of revision has changed since the beginning of the quarter? Why or why not?		
Answer	N Students	N Responses	Percentage of N Students
Yes	17	13	77
Somewhat	17	1	5
No	17	3	18

Question Number 14, Concluding Survey Only		Are there certain services that you have utilized more or less this quarter than previous in your writing and revising process? If so, please explain:	
Answer	N Students	N Responses	Percentage of N Students
None	17	8	47.1
My own ideas	17	1	5.9
Friends/ Peers	17	4	23.5
Writing Center	17	1	5.9
Other	17	2	11.8

Table A.5

Survey Results for Liza's Class: Multiple-Answer Multiple Choice Questions

Question Number, Introductory and Concluding Survey: 8	Survey Question: What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a first → second draft? If you don't revise, please mark that as well. (Please circle all that apply)			
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage	Percentage Change
Ideas	19	8	47.1	7.1
	19	5	29.4	
Thesis/ Focus	19	7	41.2	35.7
	19	10	58.8	
Evidence	19	5	29.4	14.3
	19	6	35.3	
Analysis	19	9	52.9	0.0
	19	9	52.9	
Organization	19	14	82.4	7.2
	19	13	76.5	
Grammar	19	13	76.5	-35.7
	19	15	88.2	
None	19	0	0.0	0.0
	19	0	0.0	
Other	19	0	0.0	-14.3
	19	0	0.0	

Question Number, Introductory and Concluding Survey: 9	Survey Question: What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a second → third draft? If you typically don't revise beyond one draft, please note that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)			
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage	Percentage Change
Ideas	19	1	5.9	0.0
Thesis/Focus	19	3	17.6	17.7
Evidence	19	3	17.6	5.9
Analysis	19	5	29.4	-11.8
Organization	19	4	23.5	29.4
Grammar	19	5	29.4	11.8
I don't revise	19	9	52.9	-17.6
Other	19	0	0.0	0.0
	19	0	0.0	

Question Number, Introductory Survey: 12; Concluding Survey: 13	Survey Question: Outside of the classroom, what services do you utilize in your revising process? (Please circle all that apply)			
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage	Percentage Change
My own ideas	19	14	73.7	5.2
	19	15	78.9	
Friends/ Peers	19	14	73.7	0.0
	19	14	73.7	
Writing Center	19	3	15.8	21.0
	19	7	36.8	
Spellcheck	19	18	94.7	10.5
	19	16	84.2	
Family Member/ Guardian	19	11	57.9	5.3
	19	12	63.2	
Other	19	0	0.0	0.0
	19	0	0.0	

Question Number, Concluding Survey Only: 2	Survey Question: Do you believe that your definition of revision has changed since the beginning of the quarter?		
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage
Yes	19	9	47
Somewhat	19	2	11
No	19	8	42

Question Number, Concluding Survey Only: 14	Survey Question: Are there certain services that you have utilized more or less this quarter than previously in your writing and revising process?		
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage
None	19	9	47.4
My own ideas	19	0	0.0
Friends/ Peers	19	4	21.1
Writing Center	19	4	21.1
Other	19	2	10.5

Table A.6

Survey Results for Susan's Class: Multiple-Answer Multiple Choice Questions

Question Number, Intro and Concluding Survey: 8	Survey Question: What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a first → second draft? If you don't revise, please mark that as well. (Please circle all that apply)			
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage	Percentage Change
Ideas	18	7	38.9	11.1
	18	9	50.0	
Thesis/ Focus	18	11	61.1	5.6
	18	12	66.7	
Evidence	18	8	44.4	0.0
	18	8	44.4	
Analysis	18	10	55.6	0.0
	18	10	55.6	
Organization	18	14	77.8	5.5
	18	15	83.3	
Grammar	18	18	100.0	5.6
	18	17	94.4	
None	18	1	5.6	-5.6
	18	0	0.0	
Other	18	1	5.6	5.5
	18	2	11.1	

Question Number, Intro and Concluding Survey: 8	Survey Question: What areas of your writing do you focus on when revising from a second → third draft? If you typically don't revise beyond one draft, please note that as well. (Please circle all that apply.)			
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage	Percentage Change
Ideas	18	2	11.1	16.7
	18	5	27.8	
Thesis/Focus	18	3	16.7	27.7
	18	8	44.4	
Evidence	18	2	11.1	16.7
	18	5	27.8	
Analysis	18	5	27.8	0.0
	18	5	27.8	
Organization	18	6	33.3	27.8
	18	11	61.1	
Grammar	18	10	55.6	11.1
	18	12	66.7	
I don't revise	18	6	33.3	-27.7
	18	1	5.6	
Other	18	0	0.0	11.1
	18	2	11.1	

Question Number, Intro Survey: 12 Concluding Survey: 13	Survey Question: Outside of the classroom, what services do you utilize in your revising process? (Please circle all that apply)			
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage	Percentage Change
My own ideas	18	14	77.8	-11.1
	18	12	66.7	
Friends/ Peers	18	8	44.4	32.3
	18	12	76.7	
Writing Center	18	2	11.1	16.7
	18	5	27.8	
Spellcheck	18	16	88.9	-16.7
	18	13	72.2	
Family Member/ Guardian	18	9	50.0	0.0
	18	9	50.0	
Other	18	0	0.0	0.0
	18	0	0.0	

Question Number, Concluding Survey Only: 2	Survey Question: Do you believe that your definition of revision has changed since the beginning of the quarter?		
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage
Yes	18	3	17
Somewhat	18	1	6
No	18	14	77

Question Number, Concluding Survey Only: 14	Survey Question: Are there certain services that you have utilized more or less this quarter than previously in your writing and revising process?		
Answer Choice	Total N Students	N Students for Intro/Concluding Survey	Percentage
None	18	7	41.2
My own ideas	18	1	5.9
Friends/ Peers	18	4	23.5
Writing Center	18	3	17.6
Other	18	2	11.8

APPENDIX I: DATA RESULTS FOR STUDENT SURVEYS, SHORT ANSWER

Table A.7

Survey Results for Ray's Class: Short Answer

Student Number	Beginning Survey Q11: Previous Classwork Student found Beneficial	End Survey Q12: Eng 151 Classwork Student Found Beneficial	End Survey Q14: Services the Student Found Helpful
1172	"Sorry, I can't think of any ideas."	"Looking at my paper on the projector is beneficial. I can see the problems with my paper."	No answer.
2142	"Discussion of the topic can make me re-think my ideas."	"Analyzing and criticizing excerpts from magazines and newspapers."	"I have never used the Writing Center before and it helps enormously."
5648	No answer.	"Peer reviews."	"My own ideas."
9105	"To rewrite the paper a few times, and also reread it several times."	"When we trade papers and revise each other's by talking and giving each other ideas."	"No I wouldn't."
9120	"Teacher reviews and comments make a huge difference. One, because they're a fresh pair of eyes, and secondly, because they have more experience."	"I really enjoyed going over each other's papers on the overhead. It showed me other's mistakes and how to correct them. It also encourages me to work harder on my own piece."	"Friends. I had my roommate look over every paper and tear it apart."
9850	"Class discussions of character development, plot, foreshadowing, etc."	"Having other people read my essay so we can compare ideas. I am fairly skeptical of other students reading my work; however, their comments can be helpful. I'd rather have a closer friend (with better	"Not really, but I don't think I ask my teacher for help as much. I don't feel that personal connection."

		writing skills) edit my paper.”	
9672	“Class discussions on the relating themes are very important because it provides a ton of insights besides my own.”	“Peer editing, by far. It gives other voices to my paper and lets others see what I fail to notice is wrong.”	No answer.
4493	“Peer editing has always been helpful in my own revisions during classtime.”	“Putting our paper on the overhead and having them torn apart by each other.”	“Friends/peers. I have asked so many people to peer edit my papers.”
2694	“None.”	“Nothing in this class has been helpful.”	“No.”
9534	“Classwork that goes over how to write and organize your paper.”	“In-class writing assignments. We go over them and the teacher tells us what’s right and what’s wrong.”	“No.”
1813	“Multiple peer revisions. My peers give me lots of good ideas to make my paper better.”	“Any time we’ve looked at a paper as a class and revised it, I felt like it helped. Seeing other papers being revised gives me better ideas about my own paper.”	“Peer revision. I always try and have at least one of my close friends read my papers.”
894	“When I wrote my term paper, I actually did bust my butt on that! I finished it I would say two weeks before it was due. The most valuable information I got was from a peer editing session with my teacher. I respected her judgments more than I would students.”	“I’m not entirely sure. I guess peer editing. It forces me to write my assignment ahead of time.”	“I never used to actually print out and revise. Now I do.”
6811	“I find that peer revising can be very helpful because they aren’t familiar with the paper and can give better feedback.”	“Having the entire class/teacher give positive and negative feedback.”	“Not really.”

6441	“Writing.”	‘Collectively evaluating each others’ essays on the projection screen. Freewriting possible introductions.”	“Peer proofreading.”
8525	No answer.	“Reviewing papers on the projector in front of class is always helpful.”	“No.”
4536	“Very little. I mean that in all honesty.”	“Seeing the prof revise helps. He has showed me that sometimes you have to delete large sections of a work and rewrite them.”	“The prof. I have realized that it’s not cheating to ask questions.”
1109	“Re-reading my paper and checking if it flows well.”	“Looking at others papers on Blackboard and talking about them.”	“No.”

Table A.8

Survey Results for Liza's Class: Short Answer

Student Number	Beginning Survey Q11: Previous Classwork Student found Beneficial	End Survey Q12: Eng 151 Classwork Student Found Beneficial	End Survey Q14: Services the Student Found Helpful
8410	"Grammar practice. Reading papers by peers."	"The in-class writing assignments and note taking."	"No."
3616	"Individual papers, in which the revision process is focused. Only check for grammar on a paper one night. Then revise for organization the next night, etc."	"Peer revision meetings. The preparation for the meeting made me a more critical reader and peer reviewer which allowed me to take a more critical view on my own writing."	No answer.
7728	"In high school we used to have copies for everyone in the class and we would edit papers as a class."	"Peer review groups because I got feedback from more than one person."	"I used to go to the Writing Center a lot."
3164	"When I write long papers that we have to turn in for a big grade I love when people revise my paper to make it better."	"When we have peer review groups because three other people revise your work and tell you their opinions."	"Asking friends for help."
9342	No answer.	"Peer review."	No answer.
6458	"Just writing in general. Practice makes perfect."	"What was beneficial was the peer editing group. Those help."	"Writing Center."
10220	"Activities, prewriting."	"Prewriting in class and discussing topics."	"My friends because I now appreciate their input a lot more."
7527	"I like to revise by myself."	"Any time spent reading a paper aloud. It's easier to catch mistakes."	"No."
3147	"Writing first drafts in	"Our peer reviews."	No answer.

	class, then going to revise on the computer.”		
2334	“Notes, books we read, and teacher’s input.”	“Outlines in class, because they give me set time to get my ideas out.”	No answer.
713	“Letting other peers read my work.”	“Classwork that I have found to be beneficial to my revising process is group work, because it allows me to see how others revise.”	“Yes. I have gone to the Writing Center at the library.”
4653	“Peer revision and teacher feedback because normally it is hard for me to pick out what’s wrong with my writing.”	“I found that in class we go over how a paper should be set up as well as grammatical stuff to look out for.”	“My family members, just because my dad gives really good thoughts on my essay.”
4376	“Learning grammar and sentence structure.”	“Peer reviewing, because it helps me look for mistakes in my paper.”	“Peers.”
4939	“Writing chapter responses to our papers.”	“Peer review with meeting with the teacher also.”	“The Writing Center helped out a lot!”
9021	“Peer revising on things we do in class because it gives you practice.”	“Short papers.”	“No.”
7465	No answer.	“None.”	“Family and friends. I trust their judgment.”
5630	“Writing responses to articles.”	“In-class writing assignments.”	“No.”
2581	“Going over grammar.”	“I guess all the essays and everything that we wrote.”	“Peers. I never had other people’s insights on my papers before.”
3447	“Getting my peers to look at it.”	“Our peer review groups.”	“I used the Writing Center once.”
9653	No answer.	“Freewriting and open discussion.”	“No.”
7968	“Peer editing.”	“Activities.”	No answer.

Table A.9

Survey Results for Susan's Class: Short Answer

Student Number	Beginning Survey Q11: Previous Classwork Student found Beneficial	End Survey Q12: Eng 151 Classwork Student Found Beneficial	End Survey Q14: Services the Student Found Helpful
4875	"Doing second and third drafts and being forced to turn them in. Sometimes it has the opposite effect because I redo things that were once beneficial."	No answer	"I count on my friends and parents more than before."
8839	No answer.	"My peer critiques were my best help because I was able to get a real person's opinion."	"No, this is the only English I need to take so I don't put too much focus into it."
10230	"Only teacher revision. Students don't take it seriously."	"Peer critique."	"Haven't used any."
1680	"Work with prewriting and grammar."	"Peer critiques. They give me a different perspective of looking at my paper."	"No."
1021	"I like prewriting in class because it keeps me focused so I can get as many ideas as possible."	"Worksheets on comma splices because I love to put commas where they are not needed."	"Not really."
1251	"The book we bought called <i>The Writer's Harbrace</i> ."	"Critique from professor."	"I used the Writing Center once."
2733	"Outlining."	"Review of MLA."	"No."
317	No answer.	"Peer critiquing. Other than that, nothing."	No answer.
3959	"In class time to review, and have teacher review."	"Peer critiques."	"Yes in the past we turned in our papers, then got to revise them and turn them in a second time. Not doing this sucked."
7405	"After class or towards the end when [the teacher	"The peer critiques because everyone has a	"I should have used the Writing Center

	is] available to ask questions. After class are normally office hours for a teacher. Or to go to the Student Help Center for questions, peer revision, etc.”	different style and insight and knows what to look at better than me revising my own paper.”	more.”
7378	“None to date.”	“Pretty much all the teacher has taught.”	“My friend [name of friend].”
7298	“Peer revision allows students at the same level to revise your paper. Teacher conferences, because they know what to correct in order to produce an A paper.”	“Grammar exercises because the more you do, the less mistakes you’ll make.”	“I have used more friend critiques.”
10139	“Grammar work.”	“Just how many papers we have done.”	“Yes, this is harder than high school.”
4612	“Peer review.”	“Working on thesis statements.”	“No.”
9585	“I find when my first drafts of essays are revised it helps me.”	“Peer edits. Sometimes peers come up with clever ideas for my paper.”	“I used the Student Writing Center this quarter. I believe it helped me.”
10377	“Writing outlines and rough drafts, because they help transition your paper from your head to your pen.”	“The peer critiques were very beneficial; they picked up on a lot of grammar mistakes.”	“I have had a lot more people look over my paper than I had previously.”
6169	“Any class in which you are asked to express an idea on paper. Because I’m a disorganized person and I need time to go back and correct things and organize things.”	No answer.	No answer.
1941	“Usually the first draft because that’s the draft I usually revise or have revised.”	“The revising in class and getting classmates’ feedback because I believe getting feedback from my classmates is the best way to revise.”	“Mostly my own ideas.”

APPENDIX J: STUDENTS' DEFINITIONS OF REVISIONS, BY CLASS

Table A.10

Survey Results for Ray's Class: Definitions of Revision at the Beginning and End of the Quarter

Student Number	Definition of Revision – Beginning of Quarter	Definition of Revision – End of Quarter	Does Student Think Definition of Revision Changed? Why/why not?
1172	"Going over a paper and correcting or changing the way something was written."	"Looking over your first drafts and making changes to the content."	"I thought that revising meant correcting grammatical errors more than changing whole paragraphs."
2142	"Revision is the act of taking a work and making observations and corrections before you're finishing reading."	"Revision is the double check of any literary work, checking for grammatical, punctual, and word mistakes."	"No, because I do what I've always done, just a little more carefully."
5648	"Removing unwanted information, changing the way you explain something, adding a part your forgot about. Adding detail/ subtracting detail. Using a more effective way to explain something in the paper."	"Adding/Subtracting/ Clarifying, re-organizing, going more in depth, focusing."	"Yes, I spend more time doing revisions. Before I would only work on mostly grammar and word choice when I revised, now I work on more."
9105	"To go back to what you wrote and change, move, or rewrite what you already had written down. To change anything to make the paper sound better."	"I would define revision as going back to something I have wrote and reading over and correcting it 3 or 4 times at least."	"Yes, I think revision is very important to developing a well written paper. I learned that revision is one of the key ways in catching your mistakes."
9120	"Going back through a	"After writing out your	"Absolutely, I use[d]

	written document to correct errors and rewrite bad sentences.”	draft, you revise by looking through and see[ing] what works and what doesn’t. You then rewrite the bad parts and move sections around until it’s completely right. Then the last thing you do is check all the spelling and mechanics one last time.”	to write a ‘first draft’ and revise it by checking grammar and spelling. Now I know it’s a longer process and I know how to accomplish it.”
9850	“The process of reworking, re-editing, rethinking, reanalyzing your paper.”	“A process of going back and looking at previous writing in order to make it better. This process involves closely re-editing, writing to create better support of ideas, better flow, correction of grammar, nit-picky details.”	“Not much.”
9672	“Revision is making various changes to a work, including changes in grammar, rhetoric and thought progression.”	“The obvious correcting of gramm[a]r and word choice aside, revision to me is primarily going through a paper to give ample support and ‘girth’ to the paper, adding on to the general framework I laid down in my rough draft.”	“I think my definition has become more centralized to one aspect of my former definition, which was far more broad.”
4493	“A revision is a cleaning or complete reconstruction of a paper. A time to solidify your ideas and be sure all points are made clearly.”	“Completely rewriting my paper numerous times while keeping some ideas of my rough draft.”	“YES. I had no idea what revision was, I had always just fixed spelling errors.”
2694	“Editing the rough draft for major/minor errors.”	“Going back through and correcting unusual mistakes.”	“No, because it is still the same thing.”
9534	“Going back to check over, and correct mistakes.”	“The process of re-editing your paper, going back to fix mistakes that you may	“Yes, I think I understand how to more than I did

		have overlooked.”	before. I’ve learned about the details of it.”
1813	“Fixing something to make it better in some way.”	“Going through a paper to check for any mistakes, disorganization, or any other problem, and fixing it!”	“I believe it did a bit. When I used to think of revision, I used to only think of the small things to fix such as spelling, grammar, and mechanics. Now I think about revising the paper as a whole.”
894	“I would define revision as when you go back through a draft of a written piece of work and correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure.”	“Going back through your work to check your sentence structure, and for grammatical errors.”	“No, to be honest, I do a lot more editing in the actual Word document on the computer than I used to.”
6811	“The process you take to improve a work.”	“The process through which you make changes to a written work.”	“Probably, because I’ve become so used to revising my paper and not just making mechanical changes, but really taking things apart and reading them.”
6441	“I would define revision as a way to correct errors for best results. It is similar to words, like proofreading or rereading.”	“ ‘Revision’ is a very crucial part of the writing process. After every rough draft, you must revise a paper to improve it. This is repeated as many times as it takes to be satisfied with the final piece.”	“I think I take the word more seriously than I used to. I never used to revise my work as much as I do now – I see how beneficial the concept it.”
8525	“Reviewing a work and making any necessary changes.”	“Revision is the process after putting all of your ideas down that allows the writer to make any and all changes that need to be made.”	“Slightly yes, because I think I understand the process more now.”
4536	“The process of changing a work in order	“Revision is making a significant change to a	“Yes. At the beginning of the

	to adjust the flow, structure, or grammatical form.”	work, whether to add support or clarity to the work.”	course, I thought to revise meant fixing spelling/grammar.”
1109	“Changes to help improve a paper and to help enhance the overall quality.”	“Correct and add more ideas and support.”	“Yes, because I never even used to revise.”
4493	“A revision is a cleaning or complete reconstruction of a paper. A time to solidify your ideas and be sure all points are made clearly.”	“Completely rewriting my paper numerous times while keeping some ideas of my rough draft.”	“YES. I had no idea what revision was, I had always just fixed spelling errors.”
2694	“Editing the rough draft for major/minor errors.”	“Going back through and correcting unusual mistakes.”	“No, because it is still the same thing.”

Table A.11

Survey Results for Liza's Class: Definitions of Revision at the Beginning and End of the Quarter

Student Number	Definition of Revision – Beginning of Quarter	Definition of Revision – End of Quarter	Does Student Think Definition of Revision Changed? Why/why not?
8410	"A change for the better, usually on a paper."	"Going back and changing things for the benefit of your paper."	"Yes. I see now that you need to revise in order to make your paper the best it can be."
3616	"Revision is ideally a lengthy, efficient, detailed process that assures the writer or notifies the writer that changes must be applied to grammar, sentence structure, the focus of the thesis, the analysis of evidence, and enticing/ effective introductions and conclusions."	"Revision is the process of editing a previous draft; a process which a writer undergoes to improve already written text. These changes include organization, grammar, logic, tone, etc."	"I would not say that my definition of revision has changed. Although, I have chosen to emphasize revision more so in my writing process."
7728	"To correct or make better."	"Correction, improving or making better."	"No, I still think that correction revision means the same thing."
3164	"Revision is when you read something over and try to make it the best it could possibly be and make corrections and edits."	"Going through a paper you've written and making changes for the better to improve your paper. Sometimes having someone else may help and getting another person's input."	"Yes, I worked a lot harder on revising my papers because they were worth so much and because we had to revise other people's papers too."
9342	"Changing an original copy."	"Changing something from its original info."	"No."
6458	"Looking over your draft, and making your paper better."	"Revision means reading over and over fixing sentences,"	"Yes, because I didn't really care at first, now I

		words, punctuation in order for your paper to be the best.”	realize how important it is.”
10220	“Revision is looking at something thoroughly checking for mistakes and improvements.”	“Review[ing] your work along with peers to improve and add to the information that is already there.”	“Yes, my idea of the process has changed and I have gained so much more from reviewing than I did before.”
7527	“Change, usually positive.”	“Change.”	“I did not, through high school we did the same thing.”
3147	“To change something.”	“To change something.”	“No, because I knew how to revise before this class.”
2334	“To add changes, add something, or take away something in, in this case a paper, that is already pre-written. Rough draft to final draft.”	“Adding or changing to something you had before.”	“No, I always change or add to what I already had.”
713	“Making something better.”	“Editing a paper – making it better.”	“Yes, I know how to revise papers better.”
4653	“Rereading what I write and changing the things I find wrong.”	“Revision is going back through one’s work and improving it to the best of one’s abilities.”	“Yes, because before I would just look for grammar but now I look for stuff to add and change around.”
4376	“Changing work for the better.”	“Changing your ideas and structure for the better.”	“Yes, I used to just change the structure and not my ideas.”
4939	“Revision is looking over the paper to look for errors such as grammar and punctuation.”	“Changing items in a paper that you feel are weak or parts that you feel are mistakes.”	“Yes, I feel revision is a big thing or step that has helped me a lot!”
9021	“As looking over something or double checking.”	“Making corrections on your final paper from your rough draft?”	“No, I knew what revision was at the beginning of the

			quarter.”
7465	“Taking a finished essay and refining the overall viewpoint to better portray one’s personal stand on a given issue with concise and knowledgeable information.”	“Revision is a process of selecting the most relevant information for a paper.”	“My definition has changed only in the sense that I now have a broader understanding of what revision is.”
5630	“A way of reworking and adding to your paper.”	“A correction to your paper from punctuations, word choice, and comprehensive paragraphs.”	“No, because I have always revised a lot.”
2581	“ <u>Revision</u> – looking over, and making it better.”	“ <u>Revision</u> – is making changes to a paper.”	“It really hasn’t.”
3447	“Correcting and changing an essay/paper/etc. to make it better.”	“Correcting a piece of writing by fixing grammar, sentence structure, and sentence order.”	“Somewhat, because I think it is easier for me to revise more.”
9653	“Revision is the process of reading over a paper and making changes to it to improve the overall quality of the paper.”	“Reading over your paper and changing any errors.”	“Yes, I’ve realized it’s more important.”
7968	“Helping to change something into a better version than it was to begin with.”	“To change something and make it the best it can be.”	“No, b/c...”

Table A.12

Survey Results for Susan's Class: Definitions of Revision at the Beginning and End of the Quarter

Student Number	Definition of Revision – Beginning of Quarter	Definition of Revision – End of Quarter	Does Student Think Definition of Revision Changed? Why/why not?
4875	"Advising a thing for a second, third, fourth, etc., time."	"Revision is the process of re-writing and assessing papers and work."	"Yes. I agree revision is important even though sometimes it doesn't feel that way."
8839	No definition.	"Doing all the necessary editing to an essay or related work in hopes of it being better than the first attempt."	"No. I didn't take this survey at the beginning of the quarter."
10230	"Going over a paper, finding mistakes and fixing them, or adding something I feel necessary."	"Going back over something to make it better."	"No, it seems the same."
1680	"Re-doing something as to make it better than before."	"Correction of a previous document."	"No, what I've done to revise hasn't changed."
1021	"Re-doing work to make the final a better paper."	"Making the 2 nd or 3 rd draft better structurally and grammatically."	"Yes. I focus more on revision and change everything from material to commas."
1251	"To make changes to a particular item."	"Revision is to change a document in order to critique in [the] best possible way."	"No, I think that it has remained the same."
2733	"Re-reading and making changes to better the final product."	"Re-editing and tweaking a written piece of work."	"No, mainly because my process has remained the same. My high school always emphasized the importance of revision."

317	“Revision is the step in paper writing after you have completed a draft and you go to make general changes that are broader than editing, which happens after all revisions are done.”	“Going through a rough draft of a paper and making any changes.”	“No, no one has told me differently.”
3959	“Any changes you make...it can be grammar, ideas, the topic, the layout, general idea.”	“The changes you make after your first rough draft.”	“No. I do the same thing still.”
7405	“Reviewing and analyzing your mistakes to make a better outcome than what it previously was.”	“Looking over a paper and fixing mistakes to make it better.”	“Yes, I guess because I have been taught to view critiques as revision in itself and that has helped me to view my papers better.”
7378	“Correcting on augmenting something for better effect.”	“Going back and improving any set of writing.”	“No, but I do it more often.”
7298	“An edit to a paper in order to improve it.”	“A critique to improve a piece of work.”	“No, because I had revised papers in the past.”
10139	“Improvements made before final copy.”	“As a way to make a paper better.”	“No, still the same.”
4612	“Making a change to make something better.”	“Correcting errors in a paper, and making changes to make a paper better.”	“No, because I still think it means the same thing.”
9585	“Something that is edited or somehow altered to make better.”	“A revision is when another person revises or proofreads your paper or work and checks it for mistakes and also tells you a way to make it better.”	“No, it is still the same.”
10377	“It is a change from a wrong format to the right format.”	“The correction of mistakes on a paper.”	“I believe I have taken more time on revising my paper than I did

			previously.”
6169	“Revision is any edit or change from a previous idea, piece or work.”	“An editing of a previous draft.”	“I don’t know. It’s probably similar.”
1941	“Revision is check[ing] your work for errors. All misspellings, grammar errors, sentence errors, and fixing them.”	Revision is taking an original draft of a paper and making corrections on it for the final draft.”	“No, because my definition of revision has always been the same.”

APPENDIX K: SELECTION FROM RAMAGE, BEAN, AND JOHNSON'S *ALLYN & BACON GUIDE TO WRITING* ON GLOBAL VS. LOCAL REVISION

SKILL 2 Revise globally as well as locally.

To think like an expert writer, you need to appreciate the difference between "global" and "local" revision. You revise *locally* whenever you make changes to a text that affect only the one or two sentences that you are currently working on. In contrast, you revise *globally* when a change in one part of your draft drives changes in other parts of the draft. Global revision focuses on the big-picture concerns of ideas, structure, purpose, audience, and genre. Consider this analogy: When you revise globally you think of your essay as an ecosystem where alterations in one component (the introduction of a new predator, the loss of a food source, climate change) can alter the whole system. By analogy, what you say in the introduction of your essay shapes what you do in the middle of the essay. Revisions you make in the middle of the essay might lead you to rewrite the whole introduction or to change the tone or point of view throughout the essay. The parts, in other words, all connect to an integrated whole. Moreover, every large ecosystem contains many smaller subsystems. Not only can you revise a whole paper globally, but you can also revise sections or paragraphs globally.

Because they blend into each other, there is no hard-and-fast line that distinguishes global from local revision. Our point is simply that expert writers often

*The terms "writer-based" and "reader-based" prose come from Linda Flower, "Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing," *College English*, 1979, 41.1, 19-37.

make substantial changes to their first drafts. Moreover, this passion for revision is one of the distinguishing characteristics of expert as opposed to novice writers. What follows are some on-the-page strategies that you can adopt to practice the global revision strategies of experts:*

ON-THE-PAGE STRATEGIES

for Doing Global and Local Revision

Strategies to Use on the Page	Reasons
Throw out the whole draft and start again.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original draft helped writer discover ideas and see the whole territory. • New draft needs to be substantially refocused and restructured.
Cross out large chunks and rewrite from scratch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original passage was unfocused; ideas have changed. • New sense of purpose or point meant that the whole passage needed reshaping. • Original passage was too confused or jumbled for mere editing.
Cut and paste; move parts around; (then write new transitions, mapping statements, and topic sentences).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts didn't follow in logical order. • Parts occurred in the order writer thought of them rather than the order needed by readers. • Conclusion was clearer than introduction; part of conclusion had to be moved to introduction. • Revised thesis statement required different order for parts.
Add/revise topic sentences of paragraphs; insert transitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reader needs signposts to see how parts connect to previous parts and to whole. • Revision of topic sentences often requires global revision of paragraph.
Make insertions; add new material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting particulars needed to be added: examples, facts, illustrations, statistics, other evidence (usually added to bodies of paragraphs). • New section was needed or more explanation was needed for a point. • Gaps in argument needed to be filled in.

*We have chosen to say "on the page" rather than "on the screen" because global revision is often facilitated by a writer's working off double-spaced hard copy rather than a computer screen. See page 279 for our advice on using hard copy for revision.

Strategies to Use on the Page	Reasons
Delete material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material is no longer needed or is irrelevant. • Deleted material may have been good but went off on a tangent.
Recast sentences (cross out and rewrite portions; combine sentences; rephrase sentences; start sentences with a different grammatical structure).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passage violated old/new contract (see pp. 315–320). • Passage was wordy/choppy or lacked rhythm or voice. • Grammar was tangled, diction odd, or meaning confused. • Passage lost focus of topic sentence of paragraph.
Edit sentences to correct mistakes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writer found comma splices, fragments, dangling modifiers, nonparallel constructions, or other problems of grammar and usage. • Writer found spelling errors, typos, repeated or omitted words.

APPENDIX L: DATA RESULTS FOR STUDENT ESSAY DRAFT CHANGES AND
CODED SAMPLE STUDENT ESSAYS

Table A.13

Ray's Class: Number of Global vs. Local Revisions in Sample Papers

Student #	Essay 1 Local Rev	Essay 1 Global Rev	Essay 2 Local Rev	Essay 2 Global Rev	Essay 3 Local Rev	Essay 3 Global Rev
R4536	4	9	33	5	8	9
R6811	7	4	7	7	11	5
R1172	13	17	10	10	16	5
R2694	27	21	4	6	31	2
R1109	20	5	7	3	12	10
R9120	14	5	40	9	40	6
Totals	85	61	101	40	118	37
Total Local	304					
Total Global	138					

Table A.14

Liza's Class: Number of Global vs. Local Revisions in Sample Papers

Student #	Essay 1 Local Rev	Essay 1 Global Rev	Essay 2 Local Rev	Essay 2 Global Rev	Essay 3 Local Rev	Essay 3 Global Rev
L2581	29	6	3	3	25	20
L9585	40	20	10	11	27	6
L7728	15	8	14	6	29	19
L3616	19	12	9	23	14	13
L8410	12	6	17	10	7	1
L3447	8	6	15	16	10	11
L9653	2	6	6	5	0	4
Total	125	64	74	74	112	74
Total Local	311					
Total Global	212					

Table A.15

Susan's Class: Number of Global vs. Local Revisions in Sample Papers

Student #	Essay 1 Local Rev	Essay 1 Global Rev	Essay 2 Local Rev	Essay 2 Global Rev	Essay 3 Local Rev	Essay 3 Global Rev
S9585	40	20	10	11	27	6
S10139	19	8	12	6	9	4
S7298	12	8	5	5	2	2
S10377	28	0	48	1	15	3
S317	11	0	24	3	2	5
S2733	24	7	11	0	12	1
Totals	134	43	110	26	67	21
Total Local	311					
Total Global	90					

APPENDIX M: SUSAN'S PEER CRITIQUE FOR ESSAY 3: AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Writer's Name _____

Respondent's Name _____

Assignment Title _____

To be filled out by the writer:

Are there any things in particular you would like your respondent to comment on?

Responder, your job is to provide a thoughtful, helpful response. Read the essay completely before writing anything. After you have read the essay, examine the following items:

1. Examine the introductory paragraph. Does it provide adequate background? Are there at least 5 sentences leading up to the thesis statement?
2. Identify the thesis statement. Is it centered on the specific experience? If not, what suggestions could you offer?
3. Comment on the organization of the essay. Is there a clear progression of time? Are there problems with shifting tenses? How could the writer make the order of events more clear?

