Tutor Training in a Canadian University's Academic Writing
Centre: An Ethnographic Study of the Pre-Service Training and
Socialization of Junior Tutors

by

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Abstract

Academic writing centres, like the Academic Writing Centre (AWC), depend on a pre-service training program to prepare new tutors to teach academic writing alongside other more experienced tutors. This ethnographic study explores the effectiveness of the current pre-service training program employed by the AWC. Drawing on Engeström's (1987) cultural-historical activity theory, Schön's (1983) "reflective practitioner" theory, Lave and Wenger's (1991) "situated learning" theory, and rhetorical genre theory to build an analytical framework, this study considers how the AWC's cultural-historical context influences its practices, how senior tutors define current pre-service training practices, and how junior tutors are socialized into the AWC. Over a six-month period, three kinds of data were collected and analyzed recursively (Charmaz, 2006): interviews with five tutors and three coordinators (present and former), observations recorded in detailed field notes, and various documents from the AWC. Findings from the study suggest that the training provided to junior tutors, shaped by a complex web of inside and outside influences, is effective in preparing the tutors to work with student writers.

Dedicated to the memory of:

Erin Vance
(1986 – 2012)

Tom De Kemp
(1934 – 2011)

Agnes Nemeskeri
(1952 – 2012)

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Notations

... – indicates missing text in quotations

[] – indicates change in wording in quotations

(*participant/data type, date*) – indicates participants quotation used, data type varies:

- T# – indicates tutor quoted
- C# – indicates coordinator quoted
- I# – indicates interview with participant
- FN – indicates field note
- PC – indicates personal communication

Tutor and coordinator numbers used in quotation reference (all participants have pseudonyms):

- T1 – Stacey
- T2 – Megan
- T3 – Gina
- T4 – Alan
- T5 – Ryan
- C1 – Martha
- C2 – Elaine
- C3 – Alicia

Abbreviations

AMR – Active Member Researcher

AWC – Academic Writing Centre

BAK – Beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (of teaching)

CHAT – Cultural-Historical Activity Theory

ESL – English as a Second Language

ESP – English for Specific Purposes

HOC – Higher-Order Concerns

LOC – Lower-Order Concerns

LPP – Legitimate Peripheral Participation

LWS – Language and Writing Studies

RGS – Rhetorical Genre Studies

SS – Student Services

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Chapter 1 – Introducing the Study

A university academic writing centre provides support for students who seek help in developing as writers. The students drop in to talk about a particular writing assignment with a trained tutor who has experience with different types of student papers. In a mid-sized Canadian University's Academic Writing Centre (AWC), tutors are trained to help students by employing a pedagogy used in many North American writing centres – a pedagogy well characterized by North's (1984) idea of placing the emphasis on developing better writers, rather than on “fixing up” texts. This approach encourages tutors to help students by teaching them strategies for writing and by focusing on the content and structure, or higher-order concerns (HOC), of the student's paper, rather than over-emphasizing grammar and spelling, or lower-order concerns (LOC).

New tutors in academic writing centres generally undergo an initial orientation that introduces the key ideas of the pedagogy used in their new workplace (Jacob, 1983; Kiedaisch & Dinitz, 2007; Posey, 1986; Thompson, 1994). Tutor training typically happens in a top-down manner with the director of the writing centre leading the training. In many writing centres, this approach makes the most sense because the director is typically the longest serving member of the writing centre, given that tutors are usually students who work as a tutor only for a single academic year, or maybe two. The initial orientations that directors lead tend to be a one-off occasion dedicated to helping new tutors learn how to work with students. However, contrary to this type of one-off presentation, it can be argued that tutor training is best regarded as an ongoing process, with tutors learning progressively through their own experiences working with students (Bell, 2001). Accordingly, two questions arise: what might be gained by giving a writing centre's senior tutors a central role in training junior tutors? And how might new tutors

apply and adapt the pre-service training received in their initial orientation as they learn through the hands-on experience of working with student writers?

In keeping with North's (1984) approach, during the AWC's pre-service training, senior tutors encourage junior tutors to treat each student as a peer, using conversation and collaboration to assist the student develop as a writer (Bruffee, 1984). Writing is viewed as a recursive process whereby a student will brainstorm and develop their ideas in a non-linear manner, with tutors expected to help the student at different stages in the writing process (Freedman, 1984; *Tutor Training Manual*, 2011). While many Canadian university academic writing centres have professional tutors (e.g., University of Toronto, University of British Columbia, and Queen's University), the AWC's tutors are typically graduate students in Language and Writing Studies who work in the AWC as teaching assistants. Since AWC tutors do not generally have the understanding of writing being a recursive process when they begin tutoring, the training they receive is a key factor in the success of the AWC. Assuming that the training tutors receive is a key factor in the success of all university academic writing centres, one would think that the training of new tutors would be a widely discussed topic in the literature.

To date, research on tutor training has focused on empirical examinations of how best to prepare new tutors to assist with academic writing. Vandenberg (1999) questioned the effectiveness of a general orientation, which is a common approach employed by writing centres across North America. He argued that training should be ongoing through periodic in-service sessions held throughout the term. Based on this understanding, Dinitz and Kiedaisch (2003) have suggested that the preparation of new tutors should address their own individual prior

experiences as much as possible. Such an approach might introduce different theoretical perspectives informing the teaching of academic writing, such as Rhetorical Genre Studies and English for Specific Purposes. Training programs in other writing centres have attempted to build on this understanding that new tutors come to their work with different backgrounds by introducing tutors to practical issues of tutoring and by providing ongoing support to tutors as they learn the job (Bell, 2001; Gilwicz & Thonus, 2003; Myers, 2003).

Associated with these concerns of tutor training is the issue of how writing centres should approach their work of assisting student writers. The initial orientation for new tutors typically introduces them to the pedagogy employed by the writing centre in which they work. Sloan (2007) identified tensions between North's (1984) influential idea of a writing centre as HOC-oriented and the practical experiences of tutors assisting students in the writing centre. An example of these tensions includes assisting English as a Second Language or multilingual student writers, who tend to have LOC and have been seen as excluded from the general adoption of a HOC-oriented focus in writing centres (Blau, Hall, & Sparks, 2002; Cumming & So, 1996; Myers, 2003). Thonus (2004) found that experienced tutors often assist students in ways that run counter to the writing centre's stated pedagogical approach, principles to which they had been introduced in their pre-service training. Surprisingly, though, no attention has been given to the senior tutors' influence on the writing centres' training program, which introduces its pedagogy to incoming tutors.

In writing centres, senior tutors are the ones who best understand the implications of the training they themselves received, because their practice may have confirmed or challenged the assumptions underlying this training. Thonus (2001) has called for senior tutors in writing

centres to engage in theory-building related to their work. This would allow writing centres to develop, and share with others in the field, a pedagogy based on the experiences of tutors, who are on the front lines working with student writers every day. Would it not make sense for the field to encourage senior tutors to contribute new theoretical understandings derived from what they have learned from their own experiences working with students? Would it not make for a more effective training program if senior tutors were to draw on their experiential knowledge and play a central role in preparing junior tutors to assist student writers? To date such questions, while obviously relevant to the ongoing success of academic writing centres, have not been addressed by researchers. This thesis takes up the challenge of initiating such an inquiry.

The Research Questions

In order to explore the effectiveness of the approaches employed in training new tutors and the potential role that experienced tutors might play in the preparation of new tutors, this thesis addresses four research questions related to the way in which the University's AWC – as one example – prepares its junior tutors to teach academic writing:

- How effective is the AWC in preparing its new tutors to teach academic writing?
- To what extent do influences both inside the AWC *and* outside the AWC shape its current approach to training new tutors?
- How do these same influences shape junior tutors' learning?
- In what ways do the senior tutors contribute to this training? How do institutionalized practices within the AWC shape these contributions?
- In what ways do the junior tutors learn to tutor? How do institutionalized practices within the AWC shape their learning?

Based on the findings of this study, I will be arguing that the training that the AWC provides its junior tutors adequately prepares them to assist students with their academic writing. Through a wide range of contributions – from senior tutors within the AWC, from professors with a theoretical background in teaching writing, and, for those tutors enrolled in Language and Writing Studies, from courses taken as students – junior tutors are socialized into their role both through a carefully designed pre-service training program and through follow-up institutional support within the AWC. Further, I will argue that the effectiveness of the pre-service training received by junior tutors is crucially dependent on the prior learning of senior tutors, who draw upon and contribute their own varied collective experiences in tutoring student writers.

An Overview of the Thesis

The present study is an attempt to offer the perspective of an experienced tutor through an ethnographic account of one writing centre's – the AWC – approach to tutor training. As is discussed in detail below, data presented throughout the discussion was collected over sixteen months between 2011 and 2012 – six of which were focused on daily field notes and interviews – with the intent of revealing the culture behind the AWC's approach to training its tutors. Based on my own experiences and interpretive research, I present an account organized thematically around different roles in the AWC as they relate to tutor training.

The first half of the thesis progresses in the following manner: Chapter 2 situates the present study in relevant literature related to writing centres and the training of tutors; Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical framework which informs the study and is used to analyze the data collected for the study; Chapter 4 describes the methods employed in this ethnographic study, with a discussion of the participants, the research site, the modified grounded theory approach

(Charmaz, 2006) used to collect and analyze data, and the limitations of the study. Next, the findings are presented in four parts: Chapter 5 introduces the culture of the AWC, discussing ways in which historical developments in the pedagogy used in the AWC over the years influence current tutor training practices; Chapter 6 discusses the role that senior tutors' "reflections-in-practice" (Schön, 1983) play in shaping their personal understanding of tutoring as each tutor thought back on their experiences between September 2011 and summer of 2012; Chapter 7 discusses how the AWC went about designing and preparing the pre-service training during the summer of 2012 and explores what, exactly, the training introduced to the junior tutors; and Chapter 8 discusses the junior tutors' socialization and their internalization of the AWC philosophy and practices during the fall term of 2012. Chapter 9 summarizes and discusses the major findings of the thesis by contextualizing them in the relevant literature discussed in Chapter 2. Finally, Chapter 10 concludes this study by reviewing the main argument and suggests the contribution of this research to the AWC specifically and, more generally, to other academic writing centres and the literature on writing centres.

Chapter 2 – Contextualizing the Study

In this chapter, I position the present study on tutor training in the literature relating to writing centres and Writing Studies. I do this by discussing writing centre theory as well as two conceptions about how to teach writing, namely the view of Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS) and that of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). I then locate the study within the literature that treats writing centre work and tutor training as a professional practice. In particular, I discuss research about issues in the current dominant sociocultural pedagogy for training new tutors, such as the need to train new tutors to help multilingual writers.

Sociocultural Writing Centre Pedagogy

In this section, I introduce the current central elements of North American writing centre pedagogy as it relates to issues of tutoring and tutor training. I present theoretical influences on this pedagogy by exploring how writing centres envision tutoring students. I then address how different theories inform writing centre pedagogy by discussing two different conceptualizations of teaching academic writing – those of RGS and ESP.

Tutoring students in the writing centre

The current pedagogy of the Academic Writing Centre (AWC) is very much linked with traditional pedagogical concerns of the North American writing centre culture. Sloan (2007) identified the commonalities that most North American writing centres share by conducting a large-scale, multi-method study addressing the central philosophic positioning of various writing centres. He used both interviews and questionnaires to identify how tutors and coordinators in various locations view the role of the writing centre. Sloan's findings suggest that North (1984)

and Bruffee (1984) have been extremely influential in setting the philosophy of various writing centres. His findings further suggest that there are often tensions or contradictions between North's ideals and practices in the writing centre.

North (1984) viewed writing centres as functioning based on the idea that they serve to make better writers and not better texts. The purpose of a writing centre is to help writers develop their own skills as writers as opposed to a common misconception of writing centres being an editing service. For North (1984), writing centres should not serve as a “grammar and drill centre, the fix it shop, the first aid station” (p. 437). Instead, he suggests that “our job is to produce better writers, not better writing” (p. 438). North further views a writing centre as student-centered and writing-process oriented.

Developed during the 1970s and 1980s, the writing process movement influenced writing centre pedagogy by bringing the understanding that writing is more than an act of simple mechanics (Emig, 1971). There have been different models of the writing process, including cognitive and social models. The cognitive approach saw the writing process as essentially a self-directed process whereby writers started working out their ideas and proceeded through their own process of writing. Writing became conceptualized as a recursive process whereby an author may move back and forth between thinking, writing, and editing (Elbow, 1973; Flower & Hayes, 1981). Advocates of the social model claimed that writing is influenced by the social world. Britton (1982) claimed that the language that an individual uses reflects their sense of reality and, ultimately, their identity.

Building on the social view of the writing process, Bruffee (1984) believed that tutors are peers to the student writers who help students explore their own thoughts through conversation

because writing and speech are grounded in a social context. Peer tutoring creates a social context where collaborative learning can occur because a student learns from the tutor about writing skills and strategies while the tutor learns from the student how to approach tutoring in different situations (Bruffee, 1993). Through the use of conversation, tutorials function to develop students' sense of what academic writing is and their strategies to write effectively. By being encouraged to conceptualize their roles as peers to the student, it is believed that tutors will help students develop a sense of autonomy as writers (Bruffee, 1984, 1993).

North (1984) further proposes that higher-order concerns (HOC) should be addressed before lower-order concerns (LOC). HOC relate to rhetorical and content issues in a text, such as the structure of an essay, the consistency of a thesis statement, and clarity of ideas; LOC relate to sentence-level issues, such as grammar and spelling. While North views writing centres as serving the particular needs of individual writers, he also believes that HOC should be given priority over LOC. A more or less explicit assumption in North's (1984) manifesto about the "new writing centre" pedagogy is that LOC should be disregarded altogether whether or not the student needs assistance with this.

In an essay that revisited his vision of a writing centre ten years later, North (1994) suggested that he had been romanticizing the role of the writing centre while attempting to project a favourable image of a writing centre to a wider audience. He acknowledges the impact of his previous work in setting a model regarding how writing centres should function and in "mythologizing" writing centre pedagogy. In an effort to dispel the mythology he may have unwittingly created, North (1994) proposes to reflect on how his experiences as a writing centre director shaped his understanding of writing centre pedagogy. Specifically, North (1994)

suggests that a writer's identity has a much more significant role to play than previously proposed. He continues to conceptualize a tutorial to be student-centered but acknowledges that different student writers may need different types of help.

While Vygotsky (1998a/b) never spoke explicitly about writing centres, his work has been fundamental in the shaping of writing centre pedagogy. Vygotsky (1998b) held that an individual's development is observable over time, through self-reflection, or by the prompting of someone else, as they transition from one skill level to another. Transitions – development – occur when an individual encounters a situation that challenges their self-perceived ability to perform a task, such as acquiring written language. For example, as a writer encounters a challenge to their perceived sense of how to write, they become situated in a context that shifts their understanding of writing and, ultimately, may mark a new stage in their development as writers. In other words, individuals' develop by interacting either directly or indirectly within a situation that may destabilize their prior knowledge of writing.

Throughout the transitioning phase, a person may experience a shift in their understanding based on new experiences that they have. These experiences may cause a change in their level of development. Vygotsky (1998b) saw that social situations interact with the prior knowledge of an individual to construct an ever-newer sense of self based on the environment around them (p. 197-199). Essential to this is the idea that the environment that a child interacts with influences their perceptions of reality and, in turn, their sense of self. For Vygotsky, human beings develop as they work in what he calls “zones of proximal development” (ZPD). Within a ZPD, Vygotsky claims that

aided by imitation, [an individual] can always do more in the intellectual sphere than he is capable of doing independently. At the same time, we see that his capability for

intellectual imitation is not limitless, but changes absolutely regularly corresponding to the course of his mental development so that at each age level, there is for the [individual] a specific zone of intellectual imitation connected with the actual level of development (Vygotsky, 1998b, p. 201-202).

By imitating what others do, we learn and develop a deeper understanding. Vygotsky's concept of a ZPD accounts for how an individual's cognitive development occurs naturally within a social environment.

For example, if a history student visits a tutor in the writing centre, the discussion they may have in reference to the student's writing may cause that student to see how a more experienced writer approaches the same writing assignment through the questions a tutor asks. Based on this, the student may develop a deeper understanding of how to write a history essay. In this ZPD, there may be complementary knowledge bases in that a tutor may bring their writing expertise to the conversation and the student may know about their discipline. As a student gains more experience, they enter a new ZPD that helps them further develop their intellectual abilities. It can be assumed that peer tutors have some familiarity with ways of decoding academic genres, and with linguistics and format conventions of academic writing. The tutors' knowledge of the writing process may also benefit the students' potential to develop their writing skills. Resulting from this encounter is the potential for a less experienced writer to develop their understanding of writing an academic essay for a history course.

Within a ZPD, Vygotsky (1998a) held that there is a connection between how children learn to write and how they learn to read. Written language is seen here as a way for an individual to read an idea and learn through that interaction as well as a way for the same individual to communicate an idea for another person to read. The cultural development of a writer is dependent on their ability to learn a particular form of written language, such as a

history essay. Vygotsky saw that formal teaching of mechanical aspects of writing was not beneficial to a child learning to write. Instead, children learn to write organically and progressively through a process where “there is as much involution as there is evolution” (Vygotsky, 1998a, p.132). Understanding written language is an essential stage in the cultural development of an individual that is dependent on their previous development. In order to become participating members of a (literate) society, children must learn how to use a particular form of writing to communicate precise kinds of meaning for a specific situation. Learning written language is a process that Vygotsky describes as a child (or adult) attempts to communicate their ideas through written symbols.

In the context of a writing centre, this means that, when placed in a ZPD with a more experienced writer, a novice may learn how to better their own understanding of how written language functions. Over time, the novice writer will learn what works and begin to develop a better ability to write. Students may be able to speed up the development of their writing abilities by working in a cooperative and collaborative manner. For writing centres, this means that a student’s writing skills develop through their interactions with a tutor, who responds to that student’s particular writing needs. An individual understands what is relevant at a particular time in their development because it is through their own experience with writing that learning happens.

In keeping with Vygotsky’s (1998a) argument that formal instruction in mechanical features of the written language is not as useful as learning in a ZPD, the use of a non-directive approach in a writing centre is common. Writing centres encourage students to develop their own understanding of how to represent their thoughts in an effective manner in keeping with the

belief that adopting a directive approach – interfering – in this process of creativity might limit and potentially harm their ability to effectively represent an idea. In other words, writing centre pedagogy has been influenced by Vygotsky's theory of a ZPD by emphasizing a non-directive approach that builds on the implicit socialization as a writer works towards completing a writing task. Writing centres should assist writers by encouraging their development and helping writers access their tacit understanding of the written language.

In addition to influencing writing centre pedagogy, Vygotsky (1998a/b) has also been used by many researchers to explain trends they observe in tutor-student interactions (Anton, 1999; Cumming & So, 1996; Ewert, 2009; Thompson, 2009; Weissberg, 2006; Williams, 2004). Vygotsky's ZPD is a part of the current writing centre pedagogy since it is implied in North's (1984) idea of building better writers and not better texts. Essentially, the use of a ZPD in a writing centre highlights the difference between what a student can do independently and what they can do with the assistance of an experienced tutor. Vygotsky held that human actions are mediated by technical and psychological tools, like language or a text. As students interact with a tool, they begin to master it and ultimately transfer that knowledge from basic mechanical functions into higher mental functions. Working within a ZPD gives students an opportunity to be guided by an expert who can adjust the difficulty of the task as learners gain a sense of self-regulation (Williams, 2004).

Teaching and learning academic writing

In Writing Studies, there is an ongoing debate regarding the question of how written literacy is acquired and, for teachers, how best to approach teaching academic writing. The positions of writing specialists in this debate depend in part on the schools of thought to which

they belong (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Hyon, 1996; Johns, 2003). I consider the positions from Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Other schools of thought exist, such as the Sydney School (e.g., Martin & Rose, 2008; Martin, 2009) and Brazilian School (e.g., Mozdzenski, 2009), among others; however, for the purposes of discussing the issue of teaching writing in an academic writing centre, I focus on RGS and ESP because, to my knowledge, there are no North American writing centres that employ other models. In this section, I use the term “genre” – which means something different to each tradition – to consider each schools perspective of how to teach writing.

Rhetorical Genre Studies

Based on Miller’s (1984) reconceptualization of genre as a text-based social action, RGS scholars hold that learning to write occurs in an organic manner and that explicit teaching – providing models, making corrections, and supplying reference material for student writers to use in their texts – should rarely occur. Freedman (1987) found that law students were able to do quite well despite not receiving formal and/or explicit instruction (p. 227-231). Students were able to replicate the genre of a research essay without the professor having to tell them how to write within the discipline. This led Freedman (1987) to conclude that, at the post-secondary level, genre knowledge is acquired tacitly in that the professors, teaching assistants, and student authors were able to communicate expectations and produce a written text without being told exactly what to do. Freedman concluded that there is no need to adopt a systematic and explicit approach to teaching writing in a post-secondary environment.

Further, Freedman (1993) provides two hypotheses regarding the validity of explicit teaching of genre. In her strong hypothesis, she questions the validity of explicit teaching of

genre because of the underlying threats to a student's learning potential. Freedman sees the Sydney School, which approaches teaching genre through explicit models whereby teachers provide direct instruction for their students' writing (Martin & Rose, 2008), as limiting a student's potential to adapt a genre to particular audiences while fulfilling a specific purpose. Freedman's restricted hypothesis suggests that, while it is reasonable to conclude that explicit teaching is not necessary, providing explicit instruction may accelerate a student's learning – especially in the context of second language learning. Building on Vygotsky's concept of a ZPD, she suggests that explicit teaching *may* enhance a student's acquisition if they are developmentally prepared. Going one step further, the student must be participating in an authentic task where discourse explicating expectations may raise the consciousness of the student writer. Freedman's restricted hypothesis suggests that teaching must be in the context of or in close proximity to an authentic task. She acknowledges that a writing centre may be an appropriate location for such intervention to occur, where tutors can “probe” the student's prior genre knowledge.

The extent to which knowledge of a particular writing task can be probed was furthered by Artemeva and Fox (2010), who suggest that probing the prior or antecedent genre knowledge of students may help them learn and/or explore new genres. Without being told explicitly what is expected of them, students who have a highly developed disciplinary understanding are typically able to replicate a genre based on what they observe while reading and writing a text (Freedman, 1987). By producing a genre, students demonstrate the ability to interact with their audience (i.e., their professor) without being told how they should replicate a genre (Artemeva & Fox, 2010). Teaching genres explicitly, then, *may* not be necessary and *may* even be harmful to the

antecedent genre knowledge of a student, which is often tacitly acquired by students through their interactions with and understanding of texts (Freedman, 1993). From this perspective, explicit instruction *could* set a formulaic and inadapttable model that students may apply to inappropriate situations, such as attempting to write an essay that is acceptable in a history course for an economics course.

Freedman and Medway (1994) understand genres to be learned through a process of becoming a member of a discourse community (Swales, 1990). Learning how to communicate and what genre to use while communicating within a particular context happens *tacitly*, whereby there is little, if any, explicit instruction or guidance given to a new community member. In this sense, genres control how an individual within a community demonstrates and communicates information related to their knowledge. Genres mediate the actions of the author as an individual within a community and mediate an individual's interactions with the larger community in a specific situation (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Russell, 1997). The main concern here is that explicated genre knowledge will serve as a universal model that will not be applicable to the ever-changing social reality that the genre is enacting.

English for Specific Purposes

Another perspective on the nature of how to teach genres and how students learn genres can be seen in ESP, which differs from RGS in their approach to teaching writing. Swales (1990) claims that performing an analysis of multiple texts belonging to the same genre may provide teachers with an understanding of the rhetorical moves performed throughout a text. Among ESP researchers, a genre is seen as "...a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (Swales, 1990, p. 58). Hyland (2004) extends this by

suggesting that teaching genres is intended to raise student awareness of what a genre does.

Analyzing texts with students provides a means of demonstrating "...how texts are structured and why they are written in the ways they are" (Hyland, 2004, p. 11). Texts are broken down by the rhetorical moves that are used to make any given text effective within a particular discourse community (Swales, 1990). It provides a gradual support for students as their level of confidence develops over-time. ESP-based genre pedagogy assumes that exposure to different target texts within a discourse community will help develop the abilities of a writer within a ZPD. For Hyland (2004), discussing such features and rhetorical moves within a genre helps students to access HOC and LOC understandings of the uses of a genre within a discourse community (p. 19-20).

Research has revealed differences in the needs of native speakers of English and multilingual writers (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Grant & Ginther, 2000). Hinkel (2003) suggests that a significant weakness with current second language academic writing pedagogy is that there is a noteworthy difference between conversational and academic discourse. Hinkel understands multilingual students as being exposed to much more conversational discourse than academic discourse. She sees that this exposure is reflected in their writing as there is a higher dependency on conversational lexical-grammatical structures in student writing. Hinkel (2004) further suggests that teachers are responsible to introduce students to "...noticing and analyzing the differences between the features of casual spoken and formal written discourse" (p. 41). Attempting to increase awareness of academic lexical-grammatical use among multilingual writers is one solution to the issue of raising multilingual student academic register (i.e., Coxhead & Byrd, 2007; Qi & Lapkin, 2001).

In different teaching situations, students have different needs according to their level of development in a language that is not their native tongue. Tardy (2009) suggests that genre knowledge – and the degree to which a writer has expertise in that genre – can be assessed through four quadrants, including: formal knowledge (the structural elements of a genre), process knowledge (understanding procedural practices related to writing), rhetorical knowledge (a combination of formal and process knowledge – an understanding of the genre’s intended purposes and audiences), and subject-matter knowledge (a writer’s knowledge of relevant content) (p. 20-22). Taken together, these quadrants overlap as a writer’s genre knowledge. Knowledge here refers to “an awareness (conscious or unconscious) that can deepen and extend as it is applied in new situations and as writers pull together various knowledge features to greater or lesser degrees” (Tardy, 2009, p. 22). Tardy’s conception of knowledge provides insight for teachers of academic writing working with student writers in that this model helps identify specific areas that the student needs assistance with.

Both RGS and ESP-based approaches to teaching academic writing influence writing centre pedagogy. By building different understandings of the potential advantages and limitations of explicitly teaching academic writing, these theoretically-informed perspectives inform writing centre pedagogy as conceived by North (1984) and Bruffee (1984). Specifically, each approach offers writing centre tutors different ways to collaboratively help students of different cultural, linguistic, and disciplinary backgrounds at any point in their writing process. Below, I will discuss how these theories of teaching and writing have influenced writing centre pedagogy.

Issues with Writing Centre Pedagogy Impacting Tutor Training Practices

Having identified the main elements of and influences on current sociocultural writing centre pedagogy, I now address issues within this pedagogy as it relates to tutor training. I focus on mainly empirical research, namely research on multilingual writers and approaches to tutor training in writing centres. Unless otherwise noted, the majority of the studies referred to below adopt a similar methodology. Most writing centre research focuses on the students who visit the writing centre or on the perspectives of a full-time staff member, such as a director. Missing from this discussion are writing centre handbooks which discuss general applications of theories in different writing centres (e.g., Gillespie & Lerner, 2008; Murphy & Stay, 2006).

Multilingual writers in the writing centre: Informing tutor training

In the literature discussing multilingual students in the writing centre, many key issues arise, the first being how to understand the nature of how to help multilingual students. Many authors use alternative terms to describe students who are writing in English when it is not their native language, such as English as a Second Language (ESL), second language writers (L2), “Generation 1.5-ers,” and non-Native speakers of English (NNS). I use the term “multilingual” in this thesis because it represents the differences in the various categories for many students who may be writing in a third or even fourth language.

Some literature serves as an example to aid tutors in similar situations in their writing centres (e.g., Bruce & Rafoth, 2004; Thonus, 2003). As will be discussed, much of the literature addresses the gap between current pedagogies and the needs of multilingual students. Taken together, the literature suggests that writing centres need to broaden their pedagogy to be more inclusive and welcoming to multilingual writers. One way to be more inclusive within the

current pedagogy is to adopt a conversational approach that helps tutors connect speaking with writing (Weissberg, 2006).

Much of the research has used case study methodologies to address the effectiveness of writing centre pedagogy in helping multilingual writers. A recurring topic relates to how directive tutors should be when helping multilingual writers. Fox (1989) analysed the transcripts of two interviews from tutorials in the AWC. One was with an ESL graduate student while the other was with a mature first-year undergraduate student. She found that there was a significant difference in the tutorials: the tutor provided more room for the mature student to explore ideas in the writing conference than the ESL student. Fox emphasized that, despite the academic standing of the ESL student, the more directive and less open-ended questions used by the tutor in that session were much less successful than the conference with the mature first-year student.

Ewert (2009) further discusses how two pedagogical frameworks, negotiation and scaffolding, benefit multilingual writers' rhetorical ability as a result of the feedback offered in-session. She claims that certain tutor attitudes and behaviours are more facilitative than others in providing the necessary support for developing writers, such as the use of a collaborative stance and a focus on content and rhetoric. Focusing on these approaches could help motivate multilingual students in that scaffolding may lead to successful revisions. While the findings of these two studies may not generalize beyond the research sites, they suggest that tutors may need to understand a variety of approaches in helping multilingual writers.

Writing centre pedagogy has been organized around a certain principle that implies a restricted approach to multilingual writers. Many researchers have indicated a need to build a more inclusive pedagogy within the existing sociocultural framework (i.e., Ianette, 2004;

Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). Severino, Swenson, and Zhu (2009) analyzed a part of their online data bank to quantitatively determine how effective the feedback was for multilingual students based on the different feedback requests that a native speaker of English and multilingual students give. They found that multilingual students may be unaware of HOC since they often asked for LOC-oriented feedback. They suggest that this may be a result of their prior knowledge of writing having been based on the ESL course work they have experienced. Much of this knowledge was constructed through learning LOC in the feedback they received. While addressing rhetorical concerns is often the intended focus of writing centres, tutors must balance addressing the concerns of a student with creating the space to build their autonomy as writers.

In a qualitative study on twenty graduate student tutors interacting with over forty graduate and undergraduate multilingual students, Thonus (2004) found that drawing out the antecedent knowledge of a student while addressing their concerns – whether rhetorical or syntactic – is possible. She suggests that there is a fluidity implied in the help tutors give multilingual writers in that tutors are more responsive to the differences in such sessions. In the experience of many tutors, there is no universal approach to coaching student writers. That is, the sociocultural pedagogy provides a model that has become a “one-size-fits-all” approach, but the realities of tutoring suggest that students have different needs that tutors *should* be able to address.

Some research suggests that adopting a more explicit approach to tutoring multilingual students is most beneficial to helping them become better writers. In a case study, Cogie (2006) identifies the gap between writing centres’ understanding of how to help multilingual writers and the tutors’ ability to do so by focusing on student participation and second language acquisition

theories. She suggests that tutors in a writing centre can reflect on the unique nature of tutoring multilingual student writers. She also looks at the value of multilingual student participation and contribution to negotiate the meaning of their writing, such as the particular communication problems that block participation in a writing conference. Cogie argues that tutors can gain an understanding of their role in ESL contexts. She builds on Powers (1993), who asserted the value of using a directive approach with ESL students.

Powers' (1993) findings contradict those of Fox (1989) and Ewert (2009) in that she believes that a more directive approach is favourable when helping multilingual students. Cogie (2006) questions the sociocultural pedagogy by claiming that pedagogy should be based on the learning needs of individual students rather than on a philosophical principle. For writing tutors, this suggests that the concerns of multilingual writers are disconnected from the types of services offered in sociocultural writing centres. Williams (2004) found that multilingual writers often benefit more from a session where tutors adopt a more directive approach. Tutors can use scaffolding to identify the linguistic needs or to simplify a task so that students can better understand it, and to set goals for after the session. Williams believes that non-directive approaches may lead a student to guess what a tutor is expecting: "There is much that no amount of questioning, indirect or otherwise, could ever elicit from these writers because there is so much that they simply do not know or understand about their L2 and academic writing" (p. 195). Williams found that the best alternative to asking or telling would be to either show or explain explicitly what a multilingual writer should know. In order to do this, tutors need to be sensitive to the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students.

Multilingual writers seem to strain writing centre staff through this tension between the existing pedagogies and the expectations of the students. Students may expect that the writing centre will be an editing service where they can have their essays reviewed by a tutor. Many tutors feel guilty about editing when confronted with this situation because they are not supposed to – as North (1984) argued, writing centres do not fix texts. Tutors adopt a Socratic or corrective approach to address textual issues with student writing (Cumming & So, 1996).

Blau, Hall, and Sparks (2002) found that the training literature follows this model: “Tutors are consistently advised to be collaborative and non-directive, to avoid proof-reading and deal with higher-order concerns of focus, organization, and development before lower-order concerns of grammar and mechanics, no matter whom they are” (p. 24). Writing centres are responsible for understanding that different students from different cultures require different approaches and that tutors may need to be directive and help students edit in a session. In this sense, tutors should be cultural informants (Blau, Hall, & Sparks, 2002). Myers (2003) builds on this concept with her argument that addressing sentence-level issues is often seen as editing; yet, the needs of a growing student population seeking help with their writing have sentence-level concerns. Myers claims that writing tutors should address linguistic concerns as a response to multilingual students because these needs are often as significant as rhetorical concerns. She claims that writing centres are in a unique position to act as an aid to multilingual writers because they can help address students’ language use in their text to signal the sequencing of the information, which is a means of addressing linguistic *and* rhetorical concerns.

The research discussed above suggests that writing centres commonly encounter similar difficulties in assisting multilingual writers. Much of the literature implies that tutor training

needs to prepare tutors to address issues related to multilingual writers. Taken together, there are several issues within the existing sociocultural pedagogy that lead to questions about the seemingly exclusive practice commonly employed in academic writing centres. Many writing centres have adapted the sociocultural pedagogy in order to be more inclusive to multilingual writers while remaining consistent with the types of assistance offered.

Tutor training

An ongoing concern in the literature is training new tutors to help with student writing (Jacob, 1983; Posey, 1986; Thompson, 1994). Within the recent literature, there is a growing concern that tutor training should explore alternatives to the now-traditional approaches to focusing on HOC and the writing process. While these are still seen as valuable to tutor training programs, there is a call within the literature to move beyond sociocultural pedagogical concerns and address the arising issues identified in the experiences and practices of tutors (Thonus, 2001). The professionalization of writing centre tutors in the literature has made it so that there is a “generalist” tutor who sticks to certain pedagogy; instead, Vandenberg (1999) suggests that tutor training should focus on a more practical, long-term development that gives voice to tutors experiences and concerns.

According to Vandenberg (1999), a “practical” training means having a general orientation and multiple sessions throughout the academic year as a form of ongoing training related to the experiences of tutors. Bell (2001) responded to Vandenberg with his claim that ongoing practical tutor training may not benefit tutors. Bell suggests that tutor training should introduce new tutors to a “structured participation” model where tutors are shown a variety of approaches to tutoring different students. He claims that using this model may help tutors

identify when they need to be more and/or less directive in their approach; however, he cautions that reflection on tutor practice does not always build stronger tutors. For Bell's tutors, reflection was structured as an extra responsibility since he asked tutors to keep journals that were submitted for comments, respond to prompts given in the initial orientation, and to observe another session and analyze their own audio-recorded session. The flaw in Bell's practice was that this exercise was worked into existing power relations; it was a top-down approach to having tutors reflect on their practices.

One way that some of the literature overcomes the issue of a top-down approach is to conceptualize a bottom-up approach to theory-building in the writing centre. Thonus (2001) analyzed the ways tutors, students, and course instructors interact through the work of a tutor. Training manuals emphasize a decontextualized notion of a tutor in the educational system that Thonus saw as blurring the definition of the role of a tutor. She claims that "[t]utoring *mythology* argues that the tutor's role is distinct and different from that of a teacher, propagating a tutoring *methodology* based on what not to do... [b]y operationalizing this mythology, tutoring methodology constrains the tutor's role, limiting it to issues of personality and strategies of interpersonal interaction" (Thonus, 2001, p. 61). Thonus claims that current tutoring "mythology" – the sociocultural pedagogy – relieves tutors of having to conceptualize their own role by placing students as interpreters of their experiences in a writing centre.

Thonus (2001) sees that tutors need to be aware of the role that course instructors play in tutorials. Course instructors' understanding of the types of services offered in a writing centre often influences a writing tutor's identity in an institutionalized way. At the same time, tutors construct their own approaches by responding to the needs of students and their course

instructors and, in doing so, often deviate from the training they receive. By bringing this reality into focus, Thonus suggests placing tutors at the centre of theory-building in a writing centre by letting tutors define their role through their actions and experience.

Thonus' (2001) call to build pedagogy around the experiences and practices of tutors in their local context has been responded to. Kiedaisch and Dinitz (2007) suggest that the training directors lead with their tutors provides tutors with some knowledge and an understanding of how to deal with certain situations, such as identifying a multilingual writer. However, their case study of tutor journals found that tutors did not know how to act when faced with such a situation. Training dedicated to raising tutor sensitivity to such issues was subverted because the assumption was that the student writer and not the tutor was the problem in a session. In an earlier report, Dinitz and Kiedaisch (2003) found that "Each tutor brought to the writing center a unique vision of tutoring, shaped by past experiences as a writer and with other writers, by career goals, personality, values... It informed their reading of writing center theory and their approach to tutoring..." (p. 73-74). They claim that tutors contribute to writing centre theory through their perspectives as tutors, and that tutors create theory through their practice. Gilewicz and Thonus (2003) claim that tutor training can be an ongoing process if tutors analyze recorded sessions. They focus on linguistic analysis of writing tutorials and argue that analyzing them helps tutors learn their practice. Based on these observations that tutors adapt theory to suit their own individual approach to tutoring, they conceptualize that these identities are a theoretical contribution to writing centre pedagogy.

In the sociocultural model, many other issues relate to tutor training, including whether tutors are conceived as the writing expert. To overcome this, Kiedaisch and Dinitz (2007)

suggest that training should focus on developing a tutor's sense of identity through self-reflection because the students are not the only ones who bring differences to a tutorial. Reflecting on the variances tutors bring to a tutorial in the training sessions will contribute to the tutors' understanding the differences that students bring to a session. One aspect of reflecting on these differences relates to their disciplinary background. Walker (1998) sees that discipline-specific and generalist tutors offer different types of help to students. Tutor training should focus instead on an exploration of the ways tutors can help in both situations. Extending this, Clark (1999) claims that both discipline-specific and generalist tutors can benefit student writers. She sees that training should identify that "...in working with academic genres in the writing center, tutors can help students understand that discourse is social and that genres carry the values of the cultures that produce them" (Clark, 1999, p. 24).

Another recurring issue is preparing tutors to help multilingual writers. In her study of an English-medium university in the United Arab Emirates, Ronesi (2009) identified that tutors were better positioned to help multilingual students if they were also multilingual. By pairing multilingual tutors with multilingual students, tutors in a writing centre become positioned to help students with identifiable needs based on the tutors' experiences. Ronesi suggests that tutors should be seen as peers who will help students regardless of their linguistic and/or cultural background. These findings connect with the above identified issues emerging in the sociocultural pedagogy. Multilingual writers often have different needs that are not being met in the writing centre. Ronsei's approach to tutor training supports Myers (2003) in that a writing centre tutor is in a unique position to assist multilingual writers if the tutors are properly prepared.

Tutor training needs to consider issues beyond the traditional sociocultural pedagogies by building on existing tutoring methods. Dinitz and Kiedaisch (2003) identify a gap in the lack of focus given to tutor voices: “information is produced for peer tutors but rarely are these things created by peer tutors” (p. 63). Their case study of three tutors suggests that tutors’ experiences may complicate existing pedagogy because they may contradict the sociocultural pedagogy dominant among North American writing centres. From the perspective of a writing centre, Grimm (2009) believes that “...communication problems are understood as emerging from competing contexts with implicit expectations about appropriate genres, styles, and discourse rather than from a lack within students...” (p. 14). Students bring different issues with them into the writing centre and it is the responsibility of tutors to address those needs. Grimm identifies the major issue within the existing framework as being that tutors are not commonly prepared to assist multilingual writers.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have identified the sociocultural pedagogy commonly employed in academic writing centres and introduced to tutors during their training. Writing centres attempt to bridge theoretical understandings of teaching academic writing by adopting a student-centred approach to tutoring student writers. Tutors are often instructed to help students by focusing on HOC within their writing during any stage of the student’s writing process, rather than LOC. There has been much research related to how effective this pedagogy has been in helping students of different disciplinary and linguistic backgrounds. By adopting the theoretical underpinnings from RGS and ESP scholars, writing centres have attempted to overcome some

emerging difficulties within the sociocultural pedagogy (i.e., Bruffee, 1984; Freedman, 1993; Hyland, 2004; North, 1984, 1994).

The research suggests that tutor training should address a number of different issues relating to working in a writing centre. In general, training new tutors entails providing them with the background in sociocultural writing centre pedagogy. Recent trends have started to shift this focus by addressing the needs of multilingual students (Myers, 2003; Ronesi, 2009). At the same time, the traditional North (1984) and Bruffee (1984) inspired pedagogy has also been adapted to suit the needs of individual students (Cummings & So, 1996; Weissberg, 2006). Bell (2001) suggests developing an ongoing training process where tutors would be required to reflect on their own uses of the sociocultural pedagogy and their experiences with students. He sees this as a job requirement where tutors would be made to respond to specific writing prompts throughout the term and receiving feedback from the director. While this may help tutors understand how they can help students, it does not go far enough – it enforces an existing power structure in the writing centre by making reflection a job requirement.

To overcome this, Thonus (2001) calls for writing centre pedagogy to be constructed around the perceptions and experiences of tutors. Thonus identifies a fundamental gap between writing centre “mythology” and “methodology,” which Sloan (2007) similarly identified as a contradiction between writing centre practice and theory (see Activity Theory below; Engeström, 1987). Similar to Thonus, Dinitz and Kiedaisch (2003) argue that more focus needs to be given to the voices of tutors in order to develop a more inclusive pedagogy. The literature surveyed above has provided many accounts of writing centre pedagogy being constructed through the theoretically-informed perspectives of full-time staff, such as the director. However, in response

to Thonus's (2001) call, more research is needed on how tutors currently contribute and/or construct the training of new tutors. In the next chapter, I introduce the theoretical framework I employ to address the identified research gap.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I present four theories that inform the thesis and that together form the analytical framework used to analyse the data in this study. To begin, Smart, Currie, and Falconer (forthcoming) differentiate between a theory and a theoretical concept: a theory is understood to be a generalizeable, empirically-based assertion or “knowledge claim” about the nature – and sometimes causes – of a material or social phenomenon, whereas a theoretical concept is a particular aspect of a larger theory. My analytical framework is based on the following theories: Engeström’s (1987, 1999) cultural-historical activity theory; Schön’s (1983) theory of the “reflective practitioner” (in conjunction with Woods (1996) concept of “beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge” of teaching); Lave and Wenger’s (1991) theory of situated learning; and rhetorical genre theory (hereafter genre theory, see: Artemeva & Freedman, 2008; Miller, 1984). When combined, these theories allow for an analysis sensitive to three issues: historical developments in an organization, the role of an individual within a collective, and the way that an individual learns a professional practice. In each case, I present the theory, focusing on those aspects most relevant to this study.

Cultural-Historical Activity Theory

Cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) developed out of the work of Vygotsky and Leont’ev and was later further developed by Engeström (1987, 1999). As a theory, CHAT encompasses the material, social, and cultural environment, the history of the collective, and the cultural artefacts (physical, social, and linguistic) that enable and mediate the actions of individual actors participating within a conventionalized division of labour. CHAT further

explains actions that are historically-situated as they unfold in the present in that, over time, new members who contribute to the collective often pick up activities and use artefacts associated with previous developments that, in some cases, occurred long ago.

The concept of an “activity system” (Cole & Engeström, 1993; Engeström, 1987) helps understand how individuals collaborate in an existing goal-oriented social structure. Smart (2003) defines an “organizational activity system” as “people collaborating—over time—within an organizational community-of-practice—in goal-directed activity—using culturally constructed tools to think and act with” (p. 16). That is, an organizational activity system is a local, culturally *and* historically influenced collective of collaborating individuals who share a distributed cognition and epistemological values – a way of “...thinking, knowing, and learning [spread] across a number of people and their work practices...” (Smart, 2003, p. 16) – and work towards the same goal with a shared “toolbox” of culturally constructed mediating artefacts.

Engeström (1987) identified four levels of contradictions that emerge within an activity system. For the purposes of this study, “primary contradictions” are inner conflicts *within* specific components of an existing activity system whereas “secondary contradictions” are conflicts *between* two components of an activity system, such as between the division of labour and the cultural artefacts that enable an individual to participate. Engeström’s (1987, 1999) concept of the “expansive cycle” provides insight into how such contradictions contribute to the growth of a new social structure within an existing activity system. Engeström (1999) claims that “[a] new activity structure does not emerge out of the blue” (p. 33) but rather develops through an “expansive cycle,” which he defines as “a developmental process that contains both

Figure 1: The relationship between the central activity and sub-activities of the AWC

internalization and externalization” (p. 33). Internalization, for the purposes of this thesis refers to how, when given access to a new cultural tool, an individual learns to use it through observing someone else employ the tool. Through reflection, the individual may identify contradictions within the activity system and develop a sense of what issues the activity system needs to overcome. By contributing their personal understanding of the activity, the individual contributes their perspective to the actual design and implementation of a new version of the tool – that is, they externalize their appropriation of the activity. Externalization, on the other hand, refers to an individual’s outward expression of formerly internalized knowledge, for instance through verbalization or the creation of new artefacts. Engeström (1999) notes that externalization reaches its peak when a new model is designed and implemented – a new model of the activity system stabilizes when internalization becomes the dominant focus of an expansive cycle. An expansive cycle marks a new phase in the growth of an activity system in that an identifiable

cycle is often marked by a change in the existing social structure. Engeström further compares the expansive cycle at the level of collective activity systems to Vygotsky's (1998b) notion of a zone of proximal development at the level of individual learning.

In this study, I employ the concept of an activity system to refer to the cultural-historical inheritance of working in the AWC – the division of labour, how specific roles are enabled in the goal-oriented activity, rules governing actions, the ways in which individuals contribute to the collective, and how cultural artefacts mediate these contributions. *Figure 1* depicts the Academic Writing Centre (AWC) activity system where the central goal is to support students' academic writing. Vital to this central goal is the sub-activity of tutor training, which helps maintain consistency in the ongoing service that the AWC provides to the University's student population. I consider tutor training to consist of two activities that are related to the different roles in the AWC (i.e., the senior tutors and junior tutors): (1) the pre-service training, which – through a series of cultural artefacts that enable the individual tutors to participate – works towards the goal of preparing a unified orientation for the junior tutors to begin learning to tutor in a way that is consistent with the senior tutors; and (2) the socialization of the junior tutors, which begins with the pre-service training and continues through the remainder of the term. I consider these activities to be cultural-historical in that they are connected to a particular historical development in the organizational knowledge localized within the AWC.

Throughout the discussion, I use the concept of the expansive cycle when referring to the annual pre-service training. Engeström's (1987) concept of the expansive cycle seems to be a fitting model for this study because, as *Figure 2* (p. 35) depicts, the AWC reproduces itself annually with a new cohort of tutors being trained every year to replace the senior tutors whose

Figure 2: The AWC expansive cycle of the pre-service training

TA contract expired. Typically, tutors will spend between two and four terms in the AWC. When they leave, the AWC goes about preparing new tutors to continue helping with student writing, which maintains a constant flow of new people bringing fresh ideas to the AWC. The junior tutors who learned the role of a tutor in the AWC the previous year become the senior tutors and use their experience-based knowledge to train new tutors. Hence, training is cyclical and yet the cycle is “expansive” because there is an annual growth that begins at the start of each academic year with the influx of new tutors.

I consider the expansive cycle in two steps: first, as they designed and delivered the pre-service training program, the senior tutors *externalized* the experience-based knowledge that they acquired through experiencing and reflecting on a wide range of situations within the AWC; in turn, the junior tutors began to *internalize* the senior tutors’ knowledge as they developed an understanding of the AWC pedagogy while participating in pre-service training. Further, the senior tutors’ externalized knowledge depends on their having previously internalized the knowledge needed to participate in the activity system. Through their own internalization of

knowledge pertaining to their roles, the junior tutors become the senior tutors in the next training cycle.

The Reflective Practitioner's Beliefs, Assumptions, and Knowledge

Developed through studying workplace organizations, Schön's (1983) theory of the "reflective practitioner" provides a lens to analyse how an individual gains professional expertise through continuously learning their practice and building their repertoire through their experience. Three concepts explain how an individual's understanding of their role within an organization develops over time, two of which I employ for the purposes of this study: "reflecting-in-action" and "reflecting-in-practice." Reflecting-in-action occurs as a practitioner becomes conscious of a decision they can make in their practice related to a specific outcome as it relates to a particular situation. More importantly to this study, reflecting-in-practice or reflecting-*on*-action accounts for how a practitioner "...develops a repertoire of expectations, images, and techniques" (p. 60) through repetitive encounters in their specialized practice. Reflecting-in-practice may lead practitioners to develop problem-solving strategies related to specific issues arising in their practice, which helps professionals develop their repertoire by reflecting on their experiences and actions.

Although developed in the context of teachers' education, Woods' (1996) three-fold concept of "beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge" (BAK) of teaching assumes that teachers – or, in Schön's terms, practitioners – bring with them a prior BAK related to their profession that shapes their perceptions of their practice. Schön's concept of reflecting-in-practice highlights how a professional's reflections assists the development of their own practice whereas Woods and Çakir (2011) consider a teacher's BAK to develop over time as they gain experience. Used

in conjunction with each other, reflecting-in-practice helps reveal how a practitioner's BAK develops over time and shapes their approaches in different situations. The concept of BAK highlights how "the reflective practitioner" filters new experiences through their prior beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge to develop a new BAK according to their experience related to their profession.

In my study, I adopt Schön's reflective practitioner to explain how reflection-in-practice helps individual tutors within the activity system contribute to the ongoing, collective actions of the AWC. I use the concept of reflecting-in-practice to analyse how senior tutors perceived issues within the AWC pedagogy. The senior tutors' reflections, which were filtered through their BAK of tutoring in the AWC, led to their realization that there were differences between the AWC philosophy and their own practices, which Engeström (1987) refers to as secondary contradictions that emerge within the activity system. On the whole, I use the concept of the reflective practitioner to highlight the role of tutors' self-reflection in the preparation and uptake of the pre-service training.

Situated Learning

Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of "situated learning" conceptualizes learning as a social practice. Lave and Wenger suggest that learning entails more than receiving factual knowledge; instead, learning occurs through situated practice and interaction in a community-based, cultural-historical environment. Learning occurs when novice practitioners are placed as "legitimate peripheral participants" (LPP) with more experienced practitioners – that is, when they occupy a position that is legitimate within an existing social structure and yet peripheral to the ongoing goals of the community. Over time, as novices are socialized into the existing

community their participation becomes less peripheral and they become full practitioners in a “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

In my study, I use Lave and Wenger’s (1991) theory of situated learning to explain how junior tutors learn on-the-job. I adopt the concept of LPP in combination with a CHAT framework to analyse tutor training both at an individual level, as the junior tutors are socialized into the AWC by means of legitimate peripheral participation, and at the collective level, as part of the expansive cycle of the AWC. Also, I further combine Lave and Wenger’s theory with CHAT to consider the activity of the pre-service training as being connected to specific historical developments in the AWC in that the senior tutors rely on their experience-based knowledge, acquired through their own socialization, to prepare the training.

Genre Theory

Genre theory provides a lens for understanding how writing is taught, learned, and used in social settings. Research in academic writing uses genre theory to understand how students learn a new genre and to what degree genre knowledge is transferable from one situation to another (Artemeva & Fox, 2010; Freedman, 1987). Research in workplace writing has employed genre theory to look at the functions that writing and texts play in the accomplishment of work in fields such as science (Bazerman, 1988; Wickman, 2010), central banking, (Smart, 2006), and engineering (Winsor, 1990).

A seminal concept in genre theory is Miller’s (1984) reconceptualization of genre. Miller redefined genres as typified text-based social actions occurring in response to perceived recurrent situations and exigencies. Bakhtin (1986) argued that all utterances, oral and written, while situated within a particular historical moment, are dialogical: they respond to past utterances

while simultaneously anticipating future utterances. Russell (1997) builds on CHAT by conceptualizing how genres serve as mediating cultural artefacts – “tools-in-use” – in a particular activity system. Russell sees that the genres connect collaborating actors within an activity system.

In this study, I use these conceptions of genre when discussing different aspects of the pre-service training and the socialization of junior tutors. I use Miller’s (1984) concept of genres as social action to discuss how two mediating genres (Russell, 1997) – the tutor notes and the mentor team observations – assist with the junior tutors’ socialization. Tutor notes are written by tutors at the end of a tutoring session and stored in a central database that is accessible only to members of the AWC. These notes are later read by a tutor who has an appointment with the same student. Mentor team observations consist of an oral and written component: senior tutors observe junior tutors while the latter help a student writer. While observing, senior tutors keep notes about the session for a final report that they give to both the junior tutor and the coordinator. Before submitting the report, the senior tutor discusses the session with the junior tutor.

I consider these genres to be typified utterances – oral and written – that are situated within a particular historical moment and that enable specific actions leading up to, during, and after the pre-service training. Both of these genres serve as mediating “tools-in-use” that externalize and encapsulate a tutor’s knowledge of tutoring for the coordinator and both current and future tutors. I also consider these genres to encourage tutors to reflect-in-practice in that they create a moment for tutors to conceptualize their own approaches to tutoring in different

situations as they occur on-the-job. As such, these genres are considered to be “reflective genres” in that they are part of the toolbox of the tutors’ reflective practice in the AWC activity system.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided an account of the theoretical framework employed throughout my study. I have introduced theories that account for an organization’s development and that provide different ways to explain the role(s) of individuals within a collective. In order to address the issue of how senior tutors’ experiences with students contribute to the preparation of the training and how novice tutors learn their roles, I employ an analytical framework that draws on CHAT, Schön’s theory of the reflective practitioner with Woods’ (1996) concept of BAK, Lave and Wenger’s theory of situated learning, and genre theory. The four theories can be used in combination because their underlying assumptions about the nature of reality and knowledge are compatible. Employing these theories allows for an analysis sensitive to three issues: historical developments in an organization, the role of an individual within the collective, and the way that an individual learns a professional practice. Engeström’s CHAT is used as the primary theoretical framework because it explains how individuals work in collaboration and is historically aware of an individual’s contributions as they shape the activity system. Schön’s theory of the reflective practitioner is used to consider how the reflective analysis of individual tutors contributes to the expansive cycle of the AWC’s pre-service training. Also, Lave and Wenger’s theory of situated learning furthers how individuals learn within the collective and genre theory explains how different genres contribute to the practices of individuals as well as enabling communal actions.

Throughout this study, I employ the four theories in combination to consider, in the context of tutor training in the AWC, how individuals (specifically tutors and coordinators) may shape organizational knowledge and how the organization may shape individual knowledge. In the data chapters, I use my theoretical framework to show the cultural-historical inheritance tutors acquire when they join the AWC activity system. Tutors filter the training they receive through their prior BAK of writing and teaching as they are socialized into their role. Just before a new academic year, the senior tutors reflect on their experiences and begin to externalize, by means of verbalization, their knowledge for junior tutors, who initiate a new round of the expansive cycle as they begin to internalize the cultural-historically inherited AWC pedagogy that has been explained to them. Junior tutors' internalization suggests that the training can both enable *and* constrain tutors. Before I show specifically how these theories and theoretical concepts have been used to analyse the data, I introduce the methods used in this ethnographic study. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology and methods used in data collection and analysis.

Chapter 4 – Methods

Smart (2008) makes a useful distinction between research methodology and research methods. While he defines a method as “a set of procedures for collecting and analysing research data,” he views methodology as “a method *plus* an underlying set of ideas about the nature of reality and knowledge” (p. 56). In this chapter, I describe the research methodology and research methods used in this study on tutor training. I begin by describing my research approach and the research site, introducing the participants, and discussing my stance as a researcher. I then describe how the data were collected and how I Charmaz’s (2006) modified, constructivist grounded theory approach for my ethnographic study. Finally, I discuss the methodological limitations of this study.

The Research Approach: Ethnography

The study is based on my experience of working for sixteen months in the Academic Writing Centre (AWC) between September 2011 and December 2012. The data for the study were collected during a six-month period from May 2012 to October 2012. As is further discussed below, my research emerged from my own interpretations of the culture of the AWC as it relates to tutor training and is also *heavily* informed by the perspectives of the five participating tutor informants. Such a prolonged engagement and my intent to understand the culture of a specific organization – the AWC – from a participant-observer perspective are attributes of ethnographic research.

Ethnography requires the researcher, as participant-observer, to have a sustained involvement in a social community of some kind. While in the field, the researchers collects

multiple sources of data related to the human, material, and social realities of the community under study (Bishop, 1999; Lillis, 2008; Smart, Currie, and Falconer, forthcoming). In doing this, the ethnographer works to construct a representation of the cultural dynamics at play in the research site. Interpretative ethnography (Geertz, 1983) produces an interpretation of the cultural habits, recurrent social events, and “local knowledge” of the community (Smart, 2006). The ethnographers collect accounts from multiple informants, documents (and sometimes other artifacts) used in real-world situations within the community, and observations of communal experiences and uses this data to build a “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) of the people, places, and routines of the culture under investigation.

Consistent with interpretive ethnography, I adopted an approach informed by the Chicago School of pragmatism (i.e., James, 1907/1981; Menand, 2001; Rorty, 1979) to consider the cultural *and* historical elements at play in the AWC as it trains junior tutors. Accessing these elements was a complicated task whereby I had to consider the individual perspectives of each participant on the history and current practices of the AWC. An organization like the AWC has multiple members participating in the collective actions associated with its goals – adding a historical dimension assumes that participants come and go over time, leaving their impression on those they interacted with while in the AWC as well as having their own impression constructed by their experiences with their colleagues. For example, a tutor interacts with students, the coordinator, and other tutors while working in the AWC. Based on these interactions, a tutor may have a positive *or* negative memory of the AWC. In later discussions related to their experiences and perceptions of the AWC, former members will construct their sense of the environment during their time in the AWC. I look at specific individuals –

coordinators and tutors – as they experienced and constructed their perceptions of the AWC. Combined, the perspectives of multiple people give a better rounded depiction of the cultural-historical dimensions of tutor training in the AWC.

To my knowledge, there has been no prior research involving the AWC that has attempted to consider the historical influences on its current cultural practices. In doing so, I felt it necessary to include a certain element of historical research in the overall design. Adopting an interpretive ethnographic methodology provided a constructive way to consider these dimensions without conducting strictly archival research. Through interviews and minor archival research in the AWC files, interpretive ethnography created the space I needed to access historical developments by interviewing former members of the community. Past members constructed their own interpretation of the AWC and how it changed over time, which gave me a sense of what the AWC previously did in relation to the culture that I actively participated in as a participant-observer (i.e., tutor-researcher).

The Research Site

The AWC is physically located in the Library on a mid-sized Canadian's University campus. The AWC was established in the mid-1970s in the English Department, later moving first to Language Studies and then to the Student Services (SS), where it currently resides. Since 1976, the AWC has helped undergraduate and graduate students of all disciplinary backgrounds develop their writing skills through one-on-one tutorials on work-in-progress. Tutors who have worked in the AWC over the years have typically been graduate students, typically studying language and writing, with a teaching assistantship awarded through their department. In principle the AWC aims to include tutors from a variety of disciplines; however, for the most

Table 1: Participating tutors' history in the AWC and disciplinary background

Tutor	Role	Length of Tutoring	Academic Background
Stacey	Senior Tutor	Sept., 2011 – Dec., 2012	LWS
Gina	Senior Tutor	Sept., 2011 – Dec., 2012	LWS
Megan	Senior Tutor	Sept., 2011 – Dec., 2012	LWS
Alan	Junior Tutor	Sept., 2012 – Present	LWS
Ryan	Junior Tutor	Sept., 2012 – Dec., 2012	Engineering

part, tutors have come from Language Studies Masters program in Language and Writing Studies (LWS).

The Participants

I have collected data from eight informants – five tutors, the current coordinator, and two previous coordinators of the AWC. Given the ethnographic nature of this study, I also participated as an active participant-observer in my role as a tutor and tutor trainer (Adler & Adler, 1987). I received approval from Carleton University's Research Ethics Board to conduct this ethnographic study using human participants.

The Tutors

In *Table 1*, I have indicated each tutor's name, their role in the AWC (senior or junior tutor), the length of time they have been in the AWC, and their academic background. The senior tutors (including myself) were the majority of the tutors working when I started collecting data and the junior tutors were a small fraction of those who started in September. These participants reflect the collective experiences of both senior and junior tutors because their experiences, while individual to their own constructions of reality, are situated in the same factual, communal events in which each participated. Interpretations, while they differ from tutor

to tutor, are constructed in reaction to the events. By accounting for a variety of these interpretations, I have attempted to show the similarities and differences in the collective events.

The Coordinators (past and present)

The AWC has a permanent coordinator who manages the organization; the three coordinators who participated in the study were selected for their involvement with the AWC, the period of time they spent as Coordinator, and their willingness to share their stories. The interviews with the coordinators focused on topics such as their perspective of the philosophy of the AWC, any changes in pedagogy they made during their tenure, and their understanding of the role of the AWC. All three coordinators interviewed for this study were female and had spent varying lengths of time in the AWC. They also have different backgrounds, which proved to be a significant factor regarding their views of the AWC: Martha, a career university administrator and not an academic, has recently come to the position and has been learning her role as well as the theoretical underpinnings of writing centre work in general; Elaine spent many years as Coordinator, beginning with her research in the 1970s which provided the pedagogical framework for the design of the AWC to becoming the director of the coordinators in the late 1980s; while Alicia served as a tutor prior to becoming Coordinator in the early 2000s. Each of these individuals brought a particular background to the position and faced specific challenges that were unique to their period in the role. These challenges help us understand the cultural and historical conditions that current tutors have inherited in the AWC.

My Role as an Active Member Researcher

For the researcher, an ethnographic enquiry entails the challenge of recognizing and acknowledging one's own position in the social context under study. My role as a researcher was that of an active participant-observer or, in Adler and Adler's (1987) terms, an active-member-researcher (AMR). As an AMR, the researcher "[does] more than participate in the social activities of group members; they take part in the core activities of the group... In so doing, they generally assume functional, not solely research or social, roles in their settings.... Instead of merely sharing the status of insiders, they interact as colleagues: co-participants in a joint endeavor" (p. 50). As a fully active and participating member of the AWC, my role in this study was clearly that of an AMR.

I have been a tutor in the AWC since September 2011 and was an active researcher from May 2012 through October 2012. During the time of my involvement in the AWC, my thinking regarding potential researchable issues was shaped by the experiences I had as a tutor. Starting in May 2012, I kept field notes on my observations of daily events in the AWC, operating as both a researcher and an active tutor simultaneously. With the support of the coordinator, I approached the team of tutors twice to publically announce my research: once in a meeting with all tutors in mid-summer 2012, and again during the pre-service training for new tutors in September 2012.

There were times when I felt tensions between my role as researcher and my role as tutor, feeling that my research was constrained by the rules and regulations of the job itself. Having to perform the duties of a tutor on-the-job meant that I had to focus on coaching students when meeting with them. At the same time, however, I was able to reflect on these coaching experiences and my understanding and focus deepened. In order to maintain my analytical

distance from the community, I ensured that there would be no mention of the research outside of the interviews. This meant that there would be the analytical distance needed between participants, other tutors, and my turning the research into office gossip.

Also, I at times played an active role during data collection because of my position as an AMR. For example, during the training sessions, I participated in delivering one presentation and actively contributed to the conversation outside of my session. Later in the term, I also collected data from my mentor team observations, which have been included in the discussion below. I acknowledge at times that my active participation may have led to particular insights in the data.

My position as a senior tutor also meant that I had a particular understanding of the goals of the pre-service training that developed through my participation in the meetings. During meetings, I participated in discussions related to what the junior tutors would have to learn in order to tutor in the AWC. This participation would later influence my understanding of the training and mentor teams in that, as a senior tutor, I was attempting to help maintain consistency in the approaches junior tutors adopted in helping with student writing. As a result, it is important to acknowledge my original acceptance and understanding of the rules which governed working in the AWC.

A Grounded Theory Approach: Data Collection and Analysis

I adopted Charmaz's (2006) "modified grounded theory" approach, in which a researcher engages in repeated cycles of collecting and analyzing data, allowing the researcher to proceed with the next phase of data collection informed by reflection on the analysis in the previous cycle. Through initial analytic coding, constructivist grounded theorists return to the research site to collect more data as a way of following the themes emerging from the data itself in a recursive

or iterative manner. Charmaz's approach "assume[s] that neither data nor theories are discovered. Rather, we are part of the world we study and the data we collect" (2006, p. 10). In keeping with Charmaz's approach, I included two extra modifications: (1) I adopted an interpretive ethnographic methodology (i.e., Geertz, 1973, 1983; Smart, 2006) for data collection and analysis; and (2) I also employed an extensive theoretical framework (i.e., Artemeva & Freedman, 2008; Engeström, 1987; Lave and Wenger, 1991; Schön, 1983; Woods, 1996), discussed in Chapter 3, to analyse the data.

My research proceeded through ongoing cycles of gathering a certain amount of data, analyzing it, reflecting on what I was seeing, and then moving on to collect more data, and so on. My interviews were designed to get a sense of how the participants viewed their own experiences and saw their role as tutors. By analyzing the transcripts of interviews with the participants, I was able to get a sense of how *they* perceived and constructed their sense of membership in the AWC. I tried to get a feel for each tutor's working philosophy, which James (1907/1981) described as "our more or less dumb sense of what life honestly and deeply means" (p. 7). In the context of tutor training in the AWC, I interpreted this to mean each tutor's intuitive sense of what working life is from their perspective. Adopting a social constructionist perspective (i.e., Rorty, 1979), I assumed that there are multiple conceptions of the AWC that collectively construct the cultural reality I attempt to capture in this study.

Data collection: A triangulated data set

In this section, I introduce the data collected for this study. Dörmei (2007) defines a triangulated data set as one containing multiple sources of data, which creates validity and credibility within the data set. My data was triangulated through my use of three tools to collect

data: a series of ongoing interviews with participating informants of their perceptions of the AWC; extensive field notes of my experiences and observations of working life in the AWC related specifically to tutor training; and a wide variety of documents used in the daily practices of the AWC. For Silverman (2000), triangulation offers a “realist approach” to qualitative data analysis, which he refers to as the ability of the researcher to employ credibility checks within their own data. Researchers confirm their own internal understandings of their data by fitting it in with some form of the external reality (Silverman, 2000, p. 122).

Interviews

I had a total of fifteen interviews with all eight participants (Appendix A). Interviews done in person were audio recorded; others were conducted via e-mail. The interviews themselves are understood to be “...contextually grounded and jointly constructed by interviewer and respondent” (Mishler, 1986, p. 34). All interviews were semi-structured and based on a list of open-ended questions that arose during the interview (Appendix B). Transcriptions of audio-recorded interviews were, in terms I used with my supervisors, “paraphrased transcriptions” – transcriptions that, unless quoted below, paraphrased the interviewees’ main ideas. I listened to the recordings multiple times to analyze them as I continued conducting further interviews. All interviews were done between mid-July and late-October 2012 and I had a total of eighty-seven typed pages paraphrasing the interviews.

Silverman (2000) discusses the way interviewees construct their realities or “generate plausible accounts of the world” (p. 123) through a narrative account of their personal experiences based on the questions they respond to. Listening to the ways that participants understand and present their own realities helped analyse the culture of the research site from a

perspective separate from my own. Given my cultural-historical focus, I have listened to the narratives of each participant as they construct their perceptions of the AWC. I consider these narratives – in particular, those of former coordinators – as constructing the institutional history of the AWC. I consider the individual perceptions of coordinators because, given their role, they have the most influence on the ways that tutors may assist students; however, the history is much more complicated than the individual perceptions because their account is of one individual in one role. Based on the particular socio-historical moment that this research was conducted, tutors told a different story that fit with and contrasted former coordinators perceptions.

Having been a co-tutor with the senior tutors from day one meant that I already knew much about tutoring and the pre-service training, but only from my own perspective. As a researcher, I tried to account for this limitation by triangulating the perspectives of all the tutors, including those interviewed, and by using open-ended questions during interviews. I designed the interviews to gain insight into each tutors' beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (Woods, 1996; Woods & Çakir, 2011) of tutoring in the AWC. I asked for concrete examples in order to get the participants' perceptions of what it was they were doing as tutors. When terms came up that I knew I was familiar with through my shared experience with these tutors, I asked them to define it to understand exactly what *they* meant. Using probing questions helped get participating tutors to provide a deeper explanation of what they meant.

Field notes

In total, I had notes for forty-eight days of the six months I collected data that totaled forty-five typed, single space pages. I used three different strategies for my field notes that were different depending on the context. First, I used the format of two columns for my observations

of writing conferences in order to document as accurately as possible the happenings as well as my own immediate analysis (Bishop, 1999; Charmaz, 2006). Second, for general notes of observations of daily happenings and the pre-service training, I adopted Silverman's (2000) idea of recording what I see/hear and how I feel I have been received. Silverman explains that by recording this type of information, researchers can gain access to the immediate interpretation of their surroundings. Being an active participant-observer made it easier for me to collect general data as I was often in the AWC as a tutor on-duty at the time. The third strategy that I adopted in my field notes was to write memos or, as I labeled them, analytical notes based on either my experiences that week or reflections of previous data in my log. Doing so helped me access memories of events that happened during my entire time as a tutor (2011-2012).

AWC documents: In-house sources of data

I collected several types of documents related to the job of tutors, some of which were publically available (i.e., AWC handouts) while others were internal to the AWC. Specifically, the main documents collected include tutor notes, e-mails from the coordinator and tutors, the power point presentations used during the pre-service training, and my mentor team observation reports. Tutor notes, totaling a corpus of thirty six from junior tutors, are written immediately after a tutor concludes a session and offer insight into a tutor's knowledge via an immediate reflection of a session *and* historical understandings of tutoring student writing. I collected a total of sixty-four e-mail chains from July 2011 through October 2012. These chains suggest how the AWC organizes and coordinates its activities. I collected the power point slides from all sessions in the 2012 pre-service training that used them. These slides provide access to the actual topics of discussion as they were presented to junior tutors during the orientation. I conducted and

wrote a total of three mentor team observations, two of which I consider below. These reports provide access to the expectations of junior tutors from the perspective of a senior tutor.

Approaches to analysis

In this section, I discuss two methods that I employed to assist in data analysis. I first introduce my approach to data analysis and then explore my use of progress reports and computer-assisted data analysis.

A grounded approach to interpretive analysis

Grounded theory implies recursive collection and analysis whereby theory or theoretical concepts emerge from the data (Charmaz, 2006). Having modified this approach with an extensive analytical framework, my data collection and analysis occurred recursively. Also, approaching the analysis of data in the light of American pragmatism, which considers the social realities that an individual interacts with as defining our own individual perceptions of the world around us (Bazerman, forthcoming; James, 1907/1981; Menand, 2001; Rorty, 1979), helped me to gain insight into both the organizational and individual understandings of what happens in the AWC (i.e., how a collective maintains an understanding developed through multiple participants over time and how an individual develops their understanding of the organizations goals). It was important for me to get a sense of how the tutors perceived themselves as individual tutors as well as how they felt they fit in or contributed to the overall goals of the AWC as a professional community.

Progress reports

A part of recursive data analysis entailed the use of what I called “progress reports” with my supervisors (Appendix C). Progress reports were sent on a weekly or biweekly basis to both supervisors in order to help me show them what I had done since the previous meeting. At the same time, these reports served as a means of reflecting and analyzing the data that I had collected and how it fit with previous collected data. That meant that I would collect data, analyze them, write a progress report, and begin the cycle again. My supervisors would then understand some of the developing findings as well as the direction in which the project was heading. Our conversations were another part of the progress report in that these often challenging conversations helped further my analysis of how the findings fit together. This continued throughout the transcription and the write-up process.

Computer-assisted data analysis

I used Nvivo – a computer program designed to assist qualitative researchers in data management and analysis – to analyze the data while collecting (and entering) new data. Nvivo provided a more systematic approach to what case study researchers call open-coding (Dörneyi, 2007). Combined with the progress reports, which were also stored in Nvivo, open-coding assisted in my interpretation of the cultural-historical elements involved in tutor training in the AWC.

The Limitations of the Study: Methodological Concerns

Like any research endeavor, this study has certain limitations. First off, I excluded observing the junior tutors in-session because my focus was on tutor perceptions and experiences

relating to training as opposed to tutor practices. However, doing so would have provided a deeper understanding of their acceptance or resistance of the AWC guidelines introduced by the pre-service training. To overcome this, I used the interviews with two junior tutors, Ryan and Alan, to explore their perceptions of how the pre-service training is influencing their tutoring. I asked all tutors to tell stories related to their own understanding of what life in the AWC is like. Gathering these stories proved to benefit this study by providing access to the perceptions of the professional practices and understandings of tutoring in the AWC.

My positioning in the research site as an AMR (Adler & Adler, 1987) was a strength of the study – providing access to an understanding of the culture – but at the same time the risk was that I could be blind to some nuances of the culture that an outsider would have picked up on. For example, I am one of the senior tutors who helped develop the pre-service training based on my own understanding of what it means to tutor in the AWC. My perspective as an insider may have blinded me to the subtle terms adopted by tutors in the AWC to describe the job itself as well as to the ways in which junior tutors were expected to learn. One difficulty relating to the junior tutors was that I was already socialized with the specific language and culture of the AWC. I attempted to overcome both of these threats to validity by ensuring to collect data that reflected participating tutors' perceptions. For example, I would ensure to ask the tutor to specify what they meant when AWC-specific terms came up, such as a writing "coach." By gaining insight into the perspective of the tutors, I was able to move beyond my limitation of being blinded to the particular culture of the AWC. As a researcher, I overcame these issues by putting distance – time – between my initial data collection, analysis, drafts, and the final report. I

noticed that having more time away from the data helped broaden my analytical perspective in terms of what I noticed in the data as a researcher as opposed to being a senior tutor.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced the ethnographic methodology employed in this study, the research site, the participants, and my stance as an AMR (Adler & Adler, 1987). I then explained my adoption of a modified grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006). That is, I analyzed the data in a recursive manner – I would collect some data, analyse it, and then collect more data – and new theoretical concepts emerged from the data. I then described my methods of data collection and analysis. I collected and triangulated three types of data: interviews with the eight participants, detailed field notes, and documents that are available to AWC staff. Finally, I introduced the methodological limitations of this study. In Chapter 5, I apply these methods in my discussion of the findings that relate to the historical activity system of the AWC.

Chapter 5 – The AWC Activity System: A Cultural-Historical Inheritance

In this chapter, I use the personal histories of three Academic Writing Centre (AWC) coordinators to trace the development of the pedagogical practices employed within the AWC since its founding in the mid-1970s. I then discuss the current culture of the AWC in relation to tutor training. Next, I describe the workplace rules and regulations that tutors inherit when they first begin to work in the AWC. To do this, I look at historical developments within the AWC from its origins with a focus on the impact of major changes in its departmental affiliation within the institution of the university on tutor training. In all of this, I view the AWC as constituting an activity system.

To investigate the current AWC training practices, I consider how the historical developments of the activity system shaped the current realities of working in the AWC. Engeström (1987) notes that, while the rules and regulations of an activity system may remain the same, new members of an activity system bring previous background(s) and experience(s) – their beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (Woods, 1996) – that can prompt a change in the division of labour. As well, Engeström understands that new members entering an existing activity system often reveal contradictions between different aspects of the system. Accordingly, an activity system changes over time as new members replace old members, with contradictions in the existing social structure being revealed.

I look at three coordinators – Elaine, Alicia, and Martha – to consider how the coordinator contributes to the AWC activity system, exploring how each of the three

coordinators brought with them their own vision of the goals of the AWC. I then consider how the historical culture of the AWC informs current tutor training practices.

The Origins of a Writing Centre: A Research-Based Academic Service

In this section, I trace the historical development of the AWC from the perspective of two former coordinators – Elaine and Alicia – to situate the current practices of the AWC as they relate to tutor training. I consider the role of the coordinator and conceptualize this role as typically being the most influential and longest serving member of the activity system. I discuss two phases in the AWC history: the origin and development of the AWC pedagogy and then the recent changes in the departmental affiliation of the AWC. I then connect the historical developments in pedagogy to the current culture of the AWC.

Developing organizational values: The AWC in the 1970s to 1990s

Under Elaine, the AWC started in the mid-1970s in the University's English Department as a research project aimed at understanding how to better teach literacy, with a particular focus on writing. Supported by both the Dean of the Faculty and the Ministry of Education, Elaine's research combined multiple fields of interest: American and British literature on education, literacy/writing, related linguistic research, and social science methodologies. Initially, each tutor was a graduate student in the English Department who tutored English students exclusively.

Tutors were trained through a three-day pre-service training that introduced them to some theories about writing as well as some approaches to discussing writing with students. Tutors were trained to offer a general perspective of a reader trying to understand that student's writing while discussing the importance of the disciplinary writing conventions. Sessions were

conducted on a one-to-one basis where the student would work with a tutor on a particular writing task at any point in their writing process. The AWC provided a service directed towards students who were already relatively strong writers in their courses.

At that time, Elaine based the AWC pedagogy both on the best available options from other examples and on her experiences with both tutors and students in the AWC. She was also influenced in particular by her experiences with other writing centres:

I would go to conferences [and] I would go to Writing Labs [and] I would realize they were just talking about correcting grammar in the narrow sense of grammar. [I]t was just so simplistic. Also, we never started out with the notion that we were remedial because of the English department, where people already wrote well and just wanted to write better or needed to write better. We never had that sense that they were being punished by doing it. They could opt into it – nobody had to go to the Tutorial Service, people choose to. So, it was the best of all possible worlds in terms of an actual teaching situation (*C2/I1, Aug. 10, 2012*).

Being uniquely situated in an environment where students were more advanced in their needs led Elaine to focus specifically on higher-order concerns (HOC) related to the writing process, which predates even North's (1984) often-cited vision of writing centre pedagogy. The original philosophy seemed to have focused specifically on students in the English Department, which excluded responding to multilingual writers and lower-order concerns (LOC) more generally.

In 1976, after a couple of years of providing this service to English students, Elaine commented that the AWC:

[S]tarted getting requests from people who were not in English as to whether...they could also send their students for advice on writing from other disciplines. We also had students who came for advice asking for help from other disciplines and there was this sudden realization: were we going to say yes at all and what that would entail, and I became very sensitive – as did the tutors – to the fact that those were very different kinds of writing. If you're going to be talking about sociology and the tutors didn't really know how to do it, and I wasn't so sure I knew how to do it either. So, this was a little shock and confrontation with reality (*C2/I2, Aug. 8, 2012*).

When Elaine and the tutors at the time received such requests, they were faced with a sense that the approaches they used with English students needed to be broadened to other disciplines.

Interestingly, Elaine listened to the experiences of the tutors working in the AWC at that time while noticing the changing demands placed on the AWC. This suggests that they realized that what they were doing was inadequately meeting the growing demands, which echoes Engeström's (1987) idea of a contradiction being revealed in the AWC activity system.

At the same time, the Faculty moved the AWC from the English Department to Language Studies because there was an opening in that department and Elaine's research seemed to fit well within that department. Being in Language Studies gave Elaine access to then-emerging concepts of writing which would significantly influence the AWC pedagogy. Elaine learned of Miller's (1984) idea of genre as social action and Bakhtin's speech genre (1986), which shifted her thinking about writing, literacy, and how students learn to write. Elaine summarized:

All of a sudden, it just made sense... what I love about it, when you look at their work – and this is different from the Australians – it's the acknowledgement of the dynamics of the whole thing. So, genres are changing and the person who enters that field can change it in the process of writing, you know, generically... there's a sense of agency... the genre itself is dynamic (*C2/I2, Aug. 8, 2012*).

Theoretical understandings of the social discourses in different disciplinary contexts advanced her understanding of how to help students with their writing. As a result of Elaine's research, the AWC adopted new approaches to helping students in a wide range of disciplines in the Faculty while remaining consistent with the original HOC and process-oriented philosophy.

A part of the wide range of student requests included assisting multilingual writers.

Elaine explained how the AWC approached helping this student population:

While I was there, the change had to do with the enormous expansion to many other disciplines but then also...in terms of responding to second language students, because

originally, we didn't want to do that. Then we decided that we would take in second language students, that we would look at second language students and we would deal with them, initially with having people who had a background in second language... but then realized that when students were quite good, the only reason they may need some help from someone with a background in second language would be to explain to them why they had a problem and it wasn't clear that they needed the explanation. In other words, all you really need to tell someone is 'you should say "the" there,' I mean the two big issues are the articles and tenses... I don't have to give you the rule... you've picked [it] up or not. The rule is very difficult to formulate – a native speaker knows when to use it. That's what you need is native speakers working with them (*C2/I1, Aug. 10, 2012*).

Initially, Elaine would not help multilingual writers. Eventually, she had tutors with a background in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) helping multilingual writers but later realized that having a native speaker of English assist these students was sufficient. During the late 1980s, Elaine was aware that the AWC philosophy was not initially set up to assist these students but responded to the growing demands of multilingual writers coming to the AWC.

In the early 1990s, Elaine introduced new theories into the pre-service training to assist with tutoring multilingual writers in the AWC. She explains in detail these influences:

[One is] reformulating – this is what you would do with second language students who were quite developed. And what you would do is you would let them write something and then you would reformulate what they had written in a specific sentence to say exactly the same thing but just using the idioms that were more native. And then they would go back and look at that again... if you have motivated people and they see it enough, they start intuiting the rules. ...But then we realized that there [were] a few more complicated issues: One relating to rhetorical form. English, in general, is so direct and logical and emphasize 'first,' 'second,' 'third.' ...they won't signpost the same way. Robert Kaplan wrote about different patterns. And the other sort of related issue, and it's a big issue in University, is plagiarism. [...] I left about the time we were really getting into it. (*C2/I1, Aug. 10, 2012*)

Elaine introduced three important concepts to the AWC pedagogy: native-like reformulation, understanding cultural differences in expectations of rhetorical form, and with proper documentation of citations and sources. The central pedagogy of building better writers remained

consistent in that helping multilingual writers meant not editing an essay, but providing a student access to the intuition of a native English speaker, which seems very close to proofreading.

The change in awareness of students from different disciplinary and linguistic backgrounds having different expectations of AWC tutors occurred from 1976 into the early 1990s. That Elaine implemented changes in response to her growing awareness of the different backgrounds of students suggests that the AWC adapted to new realities while maintaining the original philosophy. There was a change in the rules of the AWC yet a consistency in the central pedagogy employed. It started to help students outside of the English Department while being physically moved into Language Studies. Elaine further researched theories of teaching and learning to write, which influenced the pre-service training in that she would introduce tutors to theories and approaches to assisting students of different disciplinary and linguistic backgrounds. This adaptation echoes Engeström's (1987) concept of a contradiction in an activity system as influencing a change in the existing social structure. That is, Elaine was able to respond to growing demands put on the AWC by the student population while remaining consistent with the central philosophy initially employed in the mid-1970s.

Tutor training and departmental affiliations

Alicia became Coordinator of the AWC in 2001 after conducting an operational review of how the AWC may be able to better serve the student population. She had been a student in Language Studies and was introduced to the theories of teaching and learning to write by Elaine through courses on academic and workplace writing. While studying in Language Studies, Alicia had been a tutor in the AWC for two years and had been introduced to the central pedagogy developed by Elaine. She had been a student of Elaine's and a tutor in the AWC, which had a

major influence on her perception of the role of the AWC on-campus that she developed while coordinating the AWC.

As Coordinator, Alicia maintained many of the core aspects of the AWC pedagogy established by Elaine; however, the ways in which tutors functioned in their day-to-day realities shifted as the AWC moved into specialized teams. The core of working in the AWC remained the one-to-one tutorials, but tutors began to get involved in specific tasks. Alicia saw that the AWC should

[H]ave a research function, [be] a home for writing research in the institution. I never developed that; it was a site – people conducted writing research there when I was the coordinator, and before too, [the AWC] was the result of research. It's not that I was the one who started that, I just saw myself as continuing and trying to make the most of that or keep that alive (*C3/11, Sept. 27, 2012*).

Alicia wanted to maintain the central pedagogy employed by Elaine and the other preceding coordinators; yet, she broadened the role of a tutor to one that more closely resembles the current realities of tutors in the AWC by implementing a research component to their work.

Alicia's vision of having specialized project teams resulted in a major shift in the practices of tutors. Projects included a large variety of tasks related to updating the image of the AWC on-campus as well as raising awareness of its services among faculty and student populations. Projects included "a technological transition" (*C3/11, Sept. 27, 2012*) that entailed creating the AWC website, including the mission statement and logo, updating and unifying the AWC handouts which tutors gave students during tutorials, and expanding the number of in-class workshops delivered by tutors. Alicia attempted to change faculty perceptions of how to teach writing through the workshops that were delivered by her and the tutors. The role of a tutor was thus expanded into a three-fold one: tutor in one-to-one sessions, learner in the pre-service

training, and researcher in specialized project teams. This suggests that the AWC continued to develop in light of the original pedagogy developed by Elaine while Alicia broadened the responsibilities of tutors, which further echoes Engeström's (1987) contradiction in the activity system expanding the social realities.

With respect to tutor training, Alicia encouraged tutors to help students at different stages of the writing process – including LOC, like grammar – while recognizing that the writing belonged to the writer and not the tutor. A part of her training sessions dealt with using questions to talk about student writing. Alicia indicated that “it’s a really tricky job, not everyone can do it... You have to trust [them and not] over think tutoring but...remember that it’s just a conversation” (*C3/II, Sept. 27, 2012*). In order to help with this process of learning better methods to assist with student writing, Alicia saw herself as a mentor to the tutors. Acting as a mentor entailed coaching the tutors through their learning curves, which she saw as the sole responsibility of the coordinator.

Given Alicia's passion for, experience with, and theoretical knowledge of teaching academic writing in a writing centre, she played a central role in training new tutors and providing support for them. For Alicia, “tutors are the people who represent the organization to everybody, so it’s a very important role.” She continued:

I see tutors as the most important people in the AWC, for sure. I mean, they do most of the work directly with students. Whether it’s literally tutoring people one-on-one or ...the workshops... Ideally, [the relationship between the coordinator and tutors is] a mentoring relationship. [I]t’s really important for people to grow into knowledge and to know things through practice and experience... you want to provide some theory and parameters and all of that stuff but really, then you want people to learn and grow and you want to just sort of support them along the way. So, it’s a tutoring relationship (*C3/II, Sept. 27, 2012*).

Tutor training entailed supporting the tutors beyond the initial training as they grew into their roles, or by placing them in a role of legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Being a mentor to the tutors meant that Alicia was able to use her experience and knowledge from tutoring in the AWC to coach them as they learned their new roles.

Lastly, Alicia oversaw a second shift in the departmental affiliation of the AWC. In 2008, the AWC was moved from Language Studies, where it had been since 1976 under Elaine, and placed in the Student Services (SS). At this point, the AWC saw a continuation of the practices that had been instituted since the initial shift into Language Studies. Alicia had introduced a collaborative model in the AWC with the central elements of what the AWC had done under Elaine by involving tutors in the process of defining the AWC and researching academic writing. Her major influence on the practices of the AWC in relation to tutor training was the number of in-class workshops and the expansion of the tutors' responsibilities into a three-fold role. However, the process of shifting the departmental affiliations, initially overseen by Alicia, marked a turning point for the AWC.

The transition of the AWC from Language Studies to SS happened, in part, because there was a financial reassessment of departmental spending. The Dean of the Faculty at that time decided to move the AWC into SS in order to readjust the budget as government funding decreased for programs in Arts. Alicia experienced this as a dramatic shift in her perceptions of the role of the coordinator, who also played an administrative role. She learned that there was more to the AWC than theory and tutoring when she was asked by the Dean to justify why the AWC even needed to exist. For Alicia, the Dean of the faculty seemed less supportive of the AWC than in previous years as the faculty cut the number of tutors in the AWC in half.

An important change that occurred with this transition was that the coordinator's role became a full time position. Alicia reflected on her experiences in the AWC:

...when I first started, it was a one-quarter of an instructor's position [in Language Studies] to run the AWC. After a year of putting way more time than that into it, I went to the head of [Language Studies] at that time [and] he made it into a half of a position, which is still not enough, in my opinion. Especially since there was some administrative support but not set up in a way that I think is the best – was the best. Other than that, the whole personnel changes every year. So it's basically one-half of a person's time is the whole continuity and that's not sufficient to build something that's going to last and grow and flexibly meet the needs of a whole university. ... When it moved to SS, one thing that was good was that it became someone's full-time job to run the AWC. I think that that is fitting (*C3/11, Sept. 27, 2012*).

Alicia felt that moving the AWC into SS meant that the coordinator would be better able to perform the administrative duties and the other research-oriented aspects that the role entailed.

While Coordinator, Alicia experienced a change in the landscape of the AWC in that it was deeply connected to Language Studies – which is, since 2008, a separate activity system outside the AWC – through her studies and professional experience in that department. She experienced a shift in the departmental affiliation that changed the overarching rules and regulations of the AWC that guided its central pedagogy. While SS is primarily focused on assisting with students' practical academic needs, Language Studies developed empirical understandings of how best to assist student writers' growth. Alicia was able to maintain practices consistent with Elaine's initial philosophy despite fundamental changes in the rules of the services that resulted in the change in departmental affiliations, which alludes to another contradiction in the AWC (Engeström, 1987). Under her coordination, the AWC oversaw the expansion of the role of a tutor and the coordinator. Tutors' duties extended into a three-fold role entailing a research component dedicated to in-class workshops and the coordinator became a

full-time faculty position that reported to SS and not Language Studies, as it had previously done.

Current Practices in the AWC: 2011-2012

In this section, I trace the development of the AWC discussed above as it relates to current practices as well as recent events that saw the introduction of Martha, the current coordinator. I discuss the shift in the coordinator from 2011-2012, how Martha further extended the AWC pedagogy in relation to the historical developments discussed above, and how the senior tutors helped Martha learn her role as she developed her vision for the AWC.

Working in the Academic Writing Centre: Experiences from 2011-2012

In 2011, Anne, the coordinator at the time, had succeeded Alicia in 2008 and was the coordinator when I started as a tutor. Anne had close ties with Language Studies through her experience as a language teacher. The central principles of the AWC had been placed in a new environment in SS, which is dedicated to serving students on a more practical level than the theoretically-informed AWC philosophy suggested. During the 2011 pre-service training, Anne's role seemed to be to provide tutors with some theory (i.e., the writing process and HOC) informing the practices of tutoring in the AWC. She recruited assistance from some experienced tutors to help discuss certain practical issues related to tutoring. During those sessions, some other returning tutors discussed their experiences to provide insight into the nature of tutoring in the AWC. She also had a professor from Language Studies visit to discuss the role of a tutor through his experience. As Coordinator, Anne inherited the shifts of Alicia's coordination as

being theoretically informed, experienced in teaching academic writing, and performing administrative duties.

During my time as a tutor, there was a significant shift in the role of both the coordinator and the tutors that contributed to a shift in pedagogy. The senior tutors participating in this study (including myself) all started while Anne was the coordinator. When Anne left in October 2011, Heather, the coordinator of another SS service, the Learning Support Services (LSS), was left as the temporary coordinator of the AWC. SS then went about hiring a temporary coordinator to fill Anne's position in her absence. It was sadly announced that Anne had unexpectedly passed away in early February 2012.

After a long recruitment period, Martha was appointed the new coordinator in early May 2012. Martha had previous experience in SS as manager of the mentors in the University's Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) program and had no previous theoretical or practical experience in teaching academic writing in a writing centre. She began coordinating the AWC with six returning tutors working during the summer months. Martha's initial perception was that "[t]he coordinator is over to the side making sure that things keep going right... the tutors carry everything out" (*C1/II, Aug. 8, 2012*). She continued:

[T]he tutors was where I was going to learn the most... if we don't have good tutors, we have nothing. The students that come to the AWC don't come see me. They don't have any interaction with me whatsoever. So, the tutors need to know what they're doing, they need to be comfortable... they need to be encouraging [to get the students to come back]... it all depends [on] them (*C1/II, Aug. 8, 2012*).

As I discuss in more detail below, all of the senior tutors helped Martha learn what the role of a tutor was while she adjusted to her role as AWC Coordinator. She also relied on the Writing

Studies expertise of Language Studies faculty and various conferences to develop her theoretical understanding of the academic research related to teaching academic writing.

The final shift in the role of the coordinator was solidified as new roles were institutionalized under Martha – the coordinator now played an entirely administrative role and she created the role of a senior tutor, who she saw as the writing experts in the AWC and trainers of the junior tutors. Throughout its development, the original AWC philosophy that guided the practices of tutors has remained consistent, which can be seen through the senior tutors (including myself) who were working in the AWC when Martha started, having maintained the practices developed by Elaine and Alicia. Yet, the philosophy has taken on different meanings as different coordinators and tutors have learned it for their own practices. Each previous coordinator brought their own vision of the AWC while maintaining the central pedagogy, which reshaped the *use* – application of theory – of the AWC philosophy in many different ways.

As Coordinator, Martha inherited many decisions made throughout the past thirty-five years regarding how to teach academic writing in the AWC. The philosophy guiding the training of tutors has been re-framed through the shifts and the experiences of workers in the AWC. This suggests that living organizational knowledge is activity-centred and rooted in past developments (Carlsen, Klev, & von Krogh, 2004, p. 11). The current practices and uses of the AWC philosophy extend from historical transitions in approaches and departmental affiliations. More specifically, Martha performs administrative duties and sees the role of the coordinator as dependent on that of the tutor. From an internal perspective, Martha believes that a tutor-centred conception of the practices and teaching model of the AWC is of major concern, which reminds of Thonus' (2001) call to build pedagogy through tutors' experiences. At the same time, she

seems concerned with ensuring that as many students as possible may benefit from the types of services offered by the AWC.

Coordinating the AWC: A student-service perspective

Martha learned about writing centre work by attending conferences and discussing the role of a tutor and the AWC with the senior tutors throughout the summer term. Given her background in SS, Martha understood the AWC differently from previous coordinators:

We're here to help students with writing, well what does that mean? If its philosophy is that we're here to help with only the writing process [and not lower-order concerns]...if we're [student] service, maybe we need to be doing that. There are a lot of students coming in that are not prepared for university... [they] need practical help with that. Maybe the AWC needs to step-up with that (*C1/II, Aug. 8, 2012*)

Martha envisioned the AWC in relation to the overarching principles of SS – that it should provide more practical assistance with student writing, which echoes Cogie (2006) in that Martha believes that tutors should help students on an individual basis. Having learned about the existing pedagogy in the AWC without being theoretically-informed by Language Studies, Martha brought a different perspective by suggesting that the former HOC-oriented approach to helping students may not be the best option. From Martha's perspective, the types of students visiting tutors have become increasingly oriented toward LOC and tutors should assist students based on their individual needs.

Martha used the tutor notes, which are written by tutors at the end of a session as documentation of the students' concerns, to identify a need to address these issues. For Martha, "it sounded...like a frustration that [tutors] couldn't actually directly respond to what that student wanted at that time" (*C1/II, Aug. 8, 2012*). Looking through the tutor notes, she noticed that there were a considerable number of multilingual students visiting the AWC who had what she

identified as more practical needs than native speakers of English. Martha felt that “It’s a very diverse student body that we have...we are a student service now [and] as a student service, we have to respond to what the students want” (*C1/II, Aug. 8, 2012*), which reflects the service orientation of SS. Martha’s vision for the AWC was essentially that being situated in SS entailed the need to create space for both HOC and LOC within a philosophy that was less “abstract than practical” (*C1/II, Aug. 8, 2012*), as she understood it had been in Language Studies.

For Martha, the tutor notes served as a mediating genre in the transmission of practices and knowledge specific to the AWC. From the perspective of Engeström’s (1987) expansive cycle, tutor notes are the externalized product of a tutor’s internalized understanding of what they did and were supposed to do during a session. In turn, these notes helped Martha understand – internalize – this inherited body of knowledge that is built and encapsulated by the notes. From her vision of a student-service approach, Martha did not seem to fully embrace the AWC philosophy that the notes reflected but rather added her perspective to the existing pedagogy as it was captured in the tutor notes. As the current coordinator, Martha was positioned to critique the inherited knowledge as opposed to accepting it as an authoritative knowledge of what the AWC does and how it should do so. Martha’s vision was mediated by the tutor notes as the tutors displayed a sense that they could divert from their training despite the contradictions they may have felt between the AWC pedagogy and a student’s needs.

Further, the senior tutors’ perceptions of the AWC pedagogy influenced Martha’s developing sense of the AWC. Stacey, a senior tutor, thought that the teaching philosophy had not changed on a collective level during her time as a tutor; rather, individuals within the community had developed their understanding of tutoring student writers. She felt that there was

“no radical shift the AWC mentality” (*T1/I3, Sept. 21, 2012*). Another senior tutor, Megan, saw that the regulations of tutoring in the AWC were never re-written in that the AWC still does not provide a proofreading service. Megan explained that each tutor uses the AWC philosophy uniquely:

We kind of have this general idea of what we’re supposed to be doing... We’re supposed to be friendly and welcoming and approachable to the students and we’re supposed to address higher-order concerns first and lower-order concerns kind of take a secondary focus – those are all things that we all know and those are the...main ideas that are sort of carried over. [...] I think [Martha’s] great and she’s done a really great job with organizing us and being supportive. She’s so open-minded and really.... listens to us and encourages us to give our perspectives [...] I think that she has given us a lot of control over... the training (*T3/I3, Sept. 21, 2012*).

As a result of the significant amount of changes in coordinators that tutors experienced between September 2011 and May 2012, the tutors were given a much larger role to play in developing the training. For Stacey and Megan, the little changes depended on the people who worked in the AWC but there was a specific framework within which tutors developed their own practices.

Through learning how the AWC has historically approached teaching academic writing, Martha better understood how integral the relationship was between Language Studies and the AWC in that she “[has] to make and maintain relationships with [Language Studies] ...because this is where writing expertise comes from” (*C1/I1, Aug. 8, 2012*). She recognized that the input of Language Studies was really important in keeping the AWC informed by Writing Studies research. At the same time, she had taken an active interest in Writing Studies through her relationships with Language Studies and in attending conferences, which was a similar to Elaine’s development of the AWC philosophy. These experiences helped Martha build an understanding of writing centres from a student service perspective through initiatives related to expanding the service(s) available to different student populations.

Within the AWC, there is a general understanding of teaching academic writing that has been passed through the tutors to Martha, whose learning of this knowledge was mediated by her background in SS, the tutor notes, and the senior tutor perceptions of the AWC as it developed from 2011 to 2012. This communal understanding of the role of the AWC has been reinterpreted by Martha from her student service perspective, which shifted the role of the AWC on-campus. Based on this, the current practices of the AWC are influenced by previous developments in the AWC pedagogy. The departmental affiliation of the AWC created space for a new understanding of how to help students with their writing needs. A combination of the experienced tutors and time of year that Martha started (i.e., summer – the time of year when the AWC is least busy) were fundamental in her developing a sense of the current needs of the University's students and how the AWC can cater to these needs. In Engeström's (1987) words, this suggests that a contradiction emerged within the activity system that led to an expansion in the types of services offered through and division of labour within the AWC.

Conclusion

Despite various shifts throughout the history of the AWC, there is a long-standing culture that influences current training practices. This cultural inheritance has developed from the initial research and experience of Elaine, which itself has been influenced by different theories that Elaine found in the literature surrounding genre theory and second language writers. Resulting from the shift in departmental affiliations from the English Department to Language Studies, the philosophy and practices of the AWC expanded. Such an expansion is an example of a change by resolution of a secondary contradiction in that Elaine realized that the AWC could not help students from non-English departments (Engeström, 1987, 1999). Tutors realized that there were

different types of writing occurring beyond that those with which they were familiar in their English courses. After realizing what it meant to tutor students from different departments, Elaine oversaw a period of transition within the AWC. In order to branch out, Elaine responded to the contradiction by developing new approaches consistent with the AWC philosophy based on a combination of her research and experiences in the AWC. Pedagogy was initially centered on sociocultural writing centre ideals (North, 1984, 1994) and tutors would help students with HOC at any point in their writing process (Freedman, 1984). What emerged from this was an interdisciplinary pedagogy that was aware of both disciplinary and linguistic differences in the types of concerns had by students visiting the AWC.

During her coordination, Alicia dealt with many important aspects of the AWC which influenced current tutor training practices. She built on the original pedagogy developed by Elaine by maintaining the previously instituted practices and expanding the presence of the AWC at the University. In-class workshops were designed to raise the awareness of the University's faculty and students about the AWC. That Alicia included tutors in this process expanded their role into one that was three-fold (i.e., tutor, learner, and researcher), yet they remained focused on tutoring students in the one-to-one sessions. Alicia saw tutor training as an ongoing process that slowly socialized new tutors into their full duties under the sole mentorship of the coordinator (Lave & Wenger, 1991). While trying to advance the AWC, Alicia encountered a changing context as the departmental affiliations shifted.

When the AWC moved from Language Studies to SS, the role of the coordinator became a full-time position which is more administrative than academic. This, in turn, expanded the current practices of tutors within a student-service model. In order to do this, Martha prepared

the AWC to help with the writing needs of students of different disciplinary and language backgrounds, as it had done within a sociocultural pedagogy (i.e., Bruffee, 1984; North, 1984). Yet, there was a shift in the types of services offered in the AWC: tutors would be encouraged to address the specific needs of the student on an individual basis, even if these needs were LOC. Martha's role as an administrative coordinator significantly shifted the roles of the tutors. Tutors were able to help Martha develop her own understanding of the AWC while simultaneously becoming the in-house writing experts. Doing so expanded tutor responsibilities into a four-fold role: writing coach in tutorials, instructor during in-class workshops, mentor as senior tutor, and learner as junior tutor. In the next chapter, I discuss how these historically inherited practices influenced the development of the pre-service training.

Chapter 6 – Reflective Practitioners: The Senior Tutors' Experience-Based Knowledge

The Academic Writing Centre (AWC), as an organization dedicated to building better writers, employs a particular approach to teaching academic writing that its tutors are expected to adopt. Dinitz and Kiedaisch (2003) note how tutors each have their own understanding of the ways that writing centre pedagogy can be used to help a wide range of students. Building on Dinitz and Kiedaisch's conception, this chapter examines the current practices of the AWC from the perspective of three senior tutors – Megan, Stacey, and Gina – all three students of Language and Writing Studies (LWS). Interviews with these three senior tutors were used to prompt them to reflect on their initiation into the practice of tutoring and their experiences with students – relating all of this to their original conception of a writing centre as well as to changes in this conception as they gained experience working in the AWC. I also consider how the senior tutors used their individual reflections on their tutoring-related beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (BAK) (Woods, 1996) to design the pre-service training for new tutors. I show how the senior tutors' prior BAK influenced how they used the guiding philosophy of the AWC in their tutoring practice and how this experience contributed to their personal understanding of their role as a tutor.

To show how each senior tutor drew on their BAK of tutoring and writing in conceptualizing how learning to tutor occurs, I employ Schön (1983), Engeström (1987), and Lave and Wenger (1991). Schön (1983) notes that “reflective practitioners” look back on their practice and consider what does and does not work in their practice – or, in his words, they “reflect-in-practice”. Doing so enables individual practitioners to develop a deeper understanding

of what it means to practice in their profession while further developing their BAK. Engeström (1999) notes that new contradictions often emerge when a member of an activity system reflects on what may no longer work in the existing social structure. Lave and Wenger (1991) consider learning to be situated in a practitioner's work; that is, learning a professional practice occurs through on-the-job experience as opposed to the application of theoretical knowledge.

In the following three sub-sections, I discuss the three tutors, Megan, Stacey, and Gina's initial conception of a writing centre before starting in the AWC and show how their experiences as tutors changed their perceptions. I suggest how influences originating both inside and outside the AWC shaped each tutor's understanding of what an effective pre-service training should address. I consider how each individual gained different understandings while remaining very similar to each other in their use of the meta-language developed in the 2011 training. I explore how all three tutors introduced important concepts that would be carried forward into the 2012 pre-service training.

Megan's Reflections: Tutors as Writing Coach

Perceptions and influences

Megan never visited her campus writing centre as an undergraduate student because she thought that attending it meant a student was struggling with his/her writing. Her idea about a writing centre was that it was dedicated to helping with grammar and proofreading, which she learned is "what we don't do" (*T3/II, July 24, 2012*). Megan understood the AWC philosophy to be a general, non-directive approach that tutors take in helping students. She understood that a tutor "is limited to tutoring [but when] I see a student who's upset and I just want to help them"

(*T3/I1, July 24, 2012*). Over time, she had come to see the role of a writing tutor in a particular way. Megan claims that

A tutor is more – you’re not telling someone what’s right or wrong, you’re just helping them along the way. There [are] different types of tutors, like the tutoring that I’ve done in the past has been with younger kids... I’ve often explicitly [taught]; but, our role is more like a... writing coach.... We do offer explicit answers sometimes but ... it’s a lot more about working together on things and... asking questions and figuring out what the student needs, which isn’t what a teacher does [...] The point of a tutor is to look at a student and ask them things and figure out what they need help with... (*T3/I1, July 24, 2012*)

Megan understood a tutor to be a writing coach, where a tutor collaborates with a student by working together on the student’s text. Her use of the term “coach” suggests that tutors serve as a supportive peer to the student with their writing task.

While working in the AWC, Megan had been a graduate student in LWS in the Applied Linguistics (AL) stream. She identified that many tutors in the AWC are in the same program but in the Discourse and/or the Writing Studies stream of the program, which she felt provided other tutors insight into some theories related to the AWC. She felt that her background in AL provided her with an understanding of teaching languages, such as the amount of input and output that learners need in a social context to learn a language. From a teacher’s perspective, Megan learned that slower and more explicit instruction may be helpful but she felt that students need to learn language in a more common environment, such as in conversation. Learning this in her methodology course influenced how she understood the role of a writing coach in the AWC (*T3/I2, Aug. 13, 2012*). Megan empathised with multilingual students and believed that her training as an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher influenced her coaching in the AWC. Through her degree program, she developed an understanding of what it means for students to write in another language that is not their native tongue. She also learned about genre theory and

was aware of the different “schools” of genre (Hyon, 1996) and felt she does not intentionally adopt a particular approach. While she identified the importance of disciplinary context in coaching different students, she did not connect genre theory with her experiences in the AWC.

Experiences in the AWC

In general, Megan’s experiences in the AWC were positive. Her first semester (fall 2011) was very busy, which made it feel “more formal – you have to be a more professional person” (*T3/I2, Aug. 13, 2012*). She thought that students expected a certain level of professionalism despite the use of a peer-to-peer approach. Students expect someone who is taking their job seriously because they want to find someone to help them: “If they come in and I’m sitting here with food all over my desk... they probably will think ‘who is this person, why is she credible to help me?’ Not everyone thinks that way but some people do [but when it’s quiet] I can do what I want... we’re all friends here, so it’s like [relaxing] at home” (*T3/I2, Aug. 13, 2012*). During her first session, she felt nervous because she had never tutored before. Based on the 2011 pre-service training, she felt like she had no comprehension of what sort of dynamics would be at play or how to help with student writing. Despite this, she felt that it went well because she was sure to be clear with the student that she was a “peer on their level” (*T3/I1, July 24, 2012*).

After her first session, Megan experienced students searching for an editor on their professor’s recommendation:

It kind of bothers me that... professors don’t really know that we don’t do that, so [students] come here and have this certain expectation and we have to tell them ‘no, that’s not what we do’ ...that’s often a point of contention, I think, between students and us. They are misinformed of what we do and they are kind of let down because they haven’t gotten their paper proofread (*T3/I2, Aug. 13, 2012*)

Megan saw that there was a missing connection between faculty perceptions and tutor roles that mislead students visiting the AWC. In order to handle this, Megan learned to explain to the student what tutors in the AWC do (i.e., not a proofreading service). Students who are asking for assistance related to LOC end up receiving help in analysing their own abilities to write in English.

Typically, Megan found that multilingual writers expected her to correct their errors, but she knew through her course work that this is often ineffective and beyond her role in the AWC. She felt that multilingual students were concerned with LOC because they expected “to have some kind of structure that [they] can control” (*T3/I2, Aug. 13, 2012*). She explained this as occurring because multilingual students typically receive LOC-oriented training in ESL courses and expect this type of help when they visit the AWC. Megan believed that there were issues that tutors could point out if students demonstrate a consistent error in their writing and discuss that particular thing, which is “not proofreading because you’re working through something” (*T3/I2, Aug. 13, 2012*). Megan believed that this happened because “if you help with a few grammatical things that satisf[ies] what [the students] were looking for. You tell them why you won’t fix it but tell them that you can point out different issues and talk about why they need to be changed” (*T3/I2, Aug. 13, 2012*). That Megan’s courses in LWS influenced her understanding of how to help different students suggests an influence from outside of the AWC, which echoes La Maistra and Paré (2004) in that the object of one activity became a mediating artefact in another. Megan’s experience with multilingual students shaped her understanding that assisting with LOC that interfere with HOC is an effective approach to helping better their writing skills. Her approach to this suggests that there was a contradiction between the AWC philosophy and a

tutor's addressing of the needs of a student, which she seems to overcome in her practice (Engeström, 1987).

Constructing the pre-service training

Reflecting on her learning to tutor, Megan commented that the pre-service training helped with only certain elements of understanding her role as a tutor. She felt that the 2011 pre-service training focused on theoretical issues as opposed to the “real-world” situations surrounding a student-centred approach. She believed that the 2012 training could not be prescriptive because “we get such a variety of different students from various disciplines and levels in their academic careers [but] some role-play would help tutors get a little more prepared” (*T3/I1, July 24, 2012*). For Megan, the pre-service training should set the basic guidelines for junior tutors in the AWC, such as basic exchanges of building rapport with students based on the context of the session and their needs. For junior tutors, Megan felt that learning meant “[tutoring] a bunch of times and reflect[ing] on what works and what hasn’t... You have to take the knowledge that you’ve learned and tailor it accordingly to the person” (*T3/I2, Aug. 13, 2012*). For Megan, learning to tutor occurs while helping students in different situations that occur on the job (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Megan’s belief echoes Schön (1983) in that individual’s learning to tutor develop an understanding of how to best serve different students as they encounter and reflect on their experiences.

Stacey's Reflections: Building a "Repertoire of Knowledge"

Perceptions and influences

During her undergraduate degree, Stacey never went to her campus writing centre. She thought that getting help with writing would focus more on remedial concerns than on helping students improve their writing skills. Stacey felt that "when we started [tutoring], no one really knew what we were doing. You figure it out over time, as you develop your abilities as a tutor" (*T1/I1, July 17, 2012*). At the start, she felt more like an instructor; after tutoring in the AWC, she saw herself as a peer who has a conversation about a student essay. As Stacey remembered it, the AWC philosophy states that tutors help "to make better writers and not a better essay this time" (*T1/I1, July 17, 2012*). She tried to help by adopting a non-directive approach, which helped her develop a mutual understanding with the student about their writing throughout the conversation. In that appointment, Stacey's approach seemed to attempt to address the student's needs, which she acknowledged as being shaped by the 2011 tutor training program. For Stacey, the training defined the role of a tutor as not being a proofreader but someone who focuses on HOC by helping students come up with strategies and not fixing things for them. In a non-authoritative position, she would identify HOC in the students' writing process, such as brainstorming, developing a thesis statement, or discussing the organization of the students' work.

For Stacey, learning to tutor occurred simultaneously with being a Masters student in LWS, which made her feel that "...it [is] hard to know the difference between the influences between being in the AWC and an MA student in LWS program..." (*T1/I1, July 17, 2012*). Receiving constructive advice from her professors and observing her peers using different

writing strategies showed her that everyone has a different approach to writing that works for them. Stacey's perception of tutoring in the AWC was that tutors build their "repertoire of knowledge" (*T1/I1, July 17, 2012*) - their understanding of how to handle different students in different situations – through their practice as a tutor.

Experiences in the AWC

Overtime, Stacey developed her own understanding of how to tutor different students. Stacey felt that her first session went well but that her second one did not. In her first session, she understood what the student did not understand in the assignment prompt and she could explain it to him. This first student was thankful for the help and Stacey felt as if she could assist him. The second one was difficult because the student had followed the assignment, which left her feeling confused about how to help the student. Since then, she learned to ask questions while skimming a student's essay in order to get a sense of his/her writing abilities.

Stacey noticed that there were some typical issues with different students. Generally, she helped with many different kinds of writing-related issues. She noticed that "it's common to see a thesis statement missing [especially with] first- and second-year students [who] don't feel comfortable doing that" (*T1/I2, Aug. 15, 2012*). She noticed that junior year students are preoccupied with things like citation accuracy and title pages because they had likely not encountered that before, whereas upper year students are focused the organization of their paper.

Stacey's experience showed her that many multilingual writers often have few issues with writing in English; however, others have an issue with their proficiency in English not being high enough to write academic essays. She saw that tutoring is limited in helping them:

It's not really their grammar; it's teaching them English... To me, it's only a real problem if their English is not – if it's difficult to understand their ideas because their English isn't at a level that it should be for this paper... it's just beyond what we can do here. Obviously we help non-native speakers but we can't teach them English. This is the whole thing, we all know that if they want you to check their grammar and you go through and find consistent errors – patterns – we can help them... but in practice, it's not like they have one mistake you find over and over... when it's everything is just not right and I can't understand what they're even trying to say in the paper, then it's an issue beyond what I can do at the AWC – I can't rewrite their paper for them (*T1/I2, Aug. 15, 2012*).

Stacey felt that helping students within the AWC philosophy could be very difficult. Being HOC-oriented meant focusing on the meaning and points in which their wording got confusing, which suggests that Stacey also saw a contradiction between what she was supposed to do and what students asked her to do (Engeström, 1987). Stacey learned different strategies to balance helping the student as a coach and following the expectations of the workplace.

To overcome this gap, Stacey found that the best approach to helping students is to simply let them talk. She did this by asking questions about what they are writing and how they decided to organize their essay, which she felt gave her a sense of what they had done before even reading their text. Through non-directive questioning, she found that students sometimes answer their own questions. Stacey constructed her own approach through her own repertoire of knowledge to overcome the contradiction between the AWC philosophy and the realities of tutoring, which suggests that the activity system had been in transition throughout her time as a tutor (Engeström, 1987).

Constructing the pre-service training

Reflecting on her experiences and learning to tutor in the AWC, Stacey seemed to have a strong sense of belonging with that community. She felt that many tutors discussed different

issues with each other that they had encountered, which helped them learn and deliver a consistent service. For Stacey, there was no such thing as an “expert tutor” who had nothing left to learn because every situation and student “can lead to something new in your repertoire” (*T1/I1, July 17, 2012*). She felt that junior tutors should be aware that they are *not* responsible for a student’s mark. Stacey felt that the training “can only prepare you for so much [because] you learn how to deal with it as you go” (*T1/I2, Aug. 15, 2012*). In her experience, tutors help each other understand how to build their own repertoire by asking each other questions during a session. At the same time, she felt that there was a general sense among the senior tutors that learning to tutor occurs through experiencing sessions with students. She felt that the training was validated by her experiences; however, she felt that it was near impossible to prepare junior tutors for all those experiences. That the training could not fully prepare the junior tutors develop their repertoire of knowledge suggests that learning occurs as tutors gain experience and reflect on this experience over time (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Schön, 1983).

Gina’s Reflections: Student Writers as Autonomous Individuals

Perceptions and influences

Gina’s conception of a tutor’s role in a writing centre was that students would come in with an essay that was complete and the tutor would proofread and/or edit it. During the 2011 pre-service training, she learned that this is “not our job” (*T2/I1, July 19, 2012*). The training helped Gina understand that the AWC philosophy is student-centred, which means tutors focus on a student’s concerns because, ideally, they are the ones who lead the session. For Gina, tutors help students with their writing process by working on what students want to address while providing space for them to freely express their ideas through writing.

Gina had previously been an ESL teacher, where she “was supposed to teach students this step-by-step process of writing...it was very, very prescriptive” (*T2/I1, July 19, 2012*). As she gained experience in the AWC, she realized that tutoring is very different from teaching ESL. She identified that there is a gap in what she can do as a tutor and what students seek:

I do think that there should be some sort of centre or something where these ESL students can go and get writing advice, you know, on their problems. And maybe, yeah, maybe getting some help with editing grammar and that kind of thing because I have formal training in English grammar, but I know some tutors, when the student asks ‘okay well, why do I do this and not this?’ that’s their problem. That’s what they need help on. And maybe it’s not a higher-order concern, but when it happens enough and it makes their paper incoherent, yeah, we do need to address those problems (*T2/I1, July 19, 2012*)

Gina believed that tutors should be able to help students according to their individual needs, which suggests that there is a gap, or a contradiction (Engeström, 1987), between what she had been trained to do in the AWC and as an ESL teacher outside of the AWC. Gina believed that the 2011 training over-emphasized HOC-oriented tutoring and limited the potential benefit multilingual students could have from visiting the AWC.

As a graduate student, Gina has taken courses in the Writing Studies stream of LWS. Through these courses, her experiences as a writer showed her the validity “[of] the idea that writing is social” (*T2/I1, July 19, 2012*). Being in LWS introduced her to genre theory, which has directly influenced her practices:

Just being aware of the different theories – I’m not saying I side with one 100% - but just being aware of the theories, you start to gain this... meta-knowledge and you start to step back and think ‘how have I been doing things?’ and ‘what might work with these students?’ So I think definitely that’s influenced my coaching practices (*T2/I3, Aug. 15, 2012*).

Learning about the debate between explicit and implicit instruction, discussed by Freedman (1993), highlighted the differences between coaching – which, interestingly, she adopted as her

own term – in the AWC and teaching as an ESL instructor. Gina felt that knowing the different genre “schools” (Hyon, 1996) provided her with the terminology to discuss various issues with students and knew when to ask specific questions while encouraging students to look at their own writing critically. In the AWC, she saw the teaching and learning of writing as occurring implicitly in the sessions according to the individual needs of a particular student.

Experiences in the AWC

Gina’s first session caught her by surprise because she was expecting the first day to be quiet but was booked for the entire day. She found it difficult to begin because the training had focused on what to do, what feedback to give, and how to approach student writing as opposed to practical issues, such as building rapport with a student. Her first session was with an international student who wanted to discuss writing, which was a part of her job that she did not expect. Before, she thought tutoring meant that there was some sort of concrete text to be discussed in the session.

As time went on, Gina encountered different students who shaped her understanding of how to tutor in the AWC. She found that multilingual writers have different needs from native speakers of English while their professors expect that they have the same ability to write despite English being an additional language. Yet, she did not believe that all multilingual writers have the same knowledge of LOC as native English speakers. Gina explained that

[W]hat I’ve seen [are] students who just – I mean I hate saying this, I really do – but just that cannot write clearly in English. With those papers, you really do not know where to start. I’m not saying it only happens with second language learners... it certainly happens with native speakers, but... with second language learners, sometimes they have not produced a coherent essay and it’s a *huge* problem... where do you start? You have fifty minutes, you know? What do you do? In those cases, you just try to direct them – ‘do you have a TA in this course that can help you with these problems? Do you have a professor

that you can contact?’ [...] It’s kind of layers of problems. So, maybe they didn’t produce this essay but maybe it’s because they don’t understand the content, you know? And maybe they don’t understand the content because...their teacher didn’t explain something to them clearly enough (*T2/I3, Aug. 15, 2012*).

Gina felt that helping multilingual students put her in a difficult position because of her ESL training and the expectations of tutoring in the AWC, which suggests a contradiction in the activity system (Engeström, 1987). She emphasized the importance of approaching different students in a similar way and believed her approach was constructed on-the-spot for each student because she tried to treat them as individuals.

Gina believed that native speakers of English and multilingual students benefit from being approached as autonomous individuals because she had seen it work. In her experience, she may have been more explicit with multilingual writers *and* some native speakers of English. She believed that her approach depended on the student’s learning style and what they expected from her as a tutor and not according to a generalized grouping of students. Through her realization that each student had different needs, she had been influenced significantly by rhetorical genre theory scholars (e.g., Freedman, 1993). Gina claimed that “the problem is that a lot of us – the tutors – don’t have that disciplinary knowledge... a lot of the problem is us not being experts in that discourse community” (*T2/I3, Aug. 15, 2012*). She realized through this experience the validity of conceptualizing the discipline-specific context within which students were writing.

Constructing the pre-service training

By reflecting on her learning to tutor and experiences with students, Gina thought about the inter-relation between tutoring in the AWC and studying in LWS. She felt that learning to

tutor entailed learning the different expectations of the different coordinators, which reflects the period of transition she experienced from 2011-2012. For Gina, the 2011 pre-service training made it clear what she would have to do in a session but she still felt unprepared by the training. For junior tutors, Gina believed that the training informs a new tutor of some theories but could not do justice to tutoring as a practice because learning entails experiencing different students, which echoes Lave and Wenger (1991). She found the stories that experienced tutors told during the 2011 training should be something that senior tutors did in the 2012 training because they helped her learn. Also, she felt that the training should address multilingual writers:

It's not just the grammar, you have to understand the situation that they're going through, you have to understand... their expectations... these are things that taking classes in...teaching English methodology can prepare you for... Sometimes you're called upon to be more directive and that should be okay (*T2/I1, July 19, 2012*).

Gina felt that tutors should see students who need the type of assistance that tutor can offer because each tutor has different areas of expertise. Her sense that tutors are limited by the AWC philosophy in the types of assistance they can provide suggests that tutors may be called upon to perform a role beyond the prescribed pedagogy, which further echoes Engeström's (1987) concept of a contradiction in the activity system.

Conclusion

From the perspectives of the senior tutors, the 2011 tutor training practices seemed to provide a general introduction to a meta-language needed to teach academic writing. The senior tutors' reflections revealed that learning to teach academic writing in the AWC was situated in their actual tutoring sessions with students (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Schön, 1983). The 2011 pre-service training seemed to provide a general framework in the AWC philosophy for the tutors to

individually conceptualize their role in the AWC. Interestingly, the 2011 pre-service training seemed to have created a similar tension in the individual experiences of Megan, Stacey, and Gina – that tutoring multilingual students according to their individual needs was at odds with the existing philosophy – and yet the three participating tutors displayed different BAKs of what would effectively prepare the junior tutors to teach academic writing.

By reflecting on their practice, Megan, Stacey, and Gina suggested that the individual experiences of tutors in the AWC construct a variety of understandings of the effectiveness of the pre-service training. They each claimed that they had left the 2011 training feeling under-prepared to tutor students. Yet, they also seemed to have developed an understanding of the AWC philosophy, which was discussed at length during the 2011 pre-service training. They further seemed to use the AWC philosophy as a guide in assisting student writers by addressing HOC in the students' writing. They did so while adopting their own personal approach to tutoring: Megan saw tutors as writing coaches – a metaphor that resurfaces – who take a non-directive approach to helping students realize their own weaknesses as writers; Stacey felt that tutors build a repertoire of knowledge through their experiences with students; and Gina felt that tutors should treat students as individuals – regardless of their disciplinary and linguistic background – by figuring out how to help them with their writing assignment. Taken together, these three senior tutors' reflections suggest that the pre-service training is an introduction to the AWC that prepares tutors to conceptualize ways to discuss writing with a wide variety of students.

The tutors clearly felt that they had to adapt the philosophy to their own style of tutoring (Dinitz & Kiedaisch, 2003). Engeström (1987) notes that an existing social structure changes

when practitioners reveal contradictions between two parts of an activity system. In the case of the AWC, the tutors' reflections discussed above suggest that they saw a gap or contradiction between the AWC philosophy and the realities of tutoring. In particular, Megan and Gina identified that multilingual students do not receive appropriate assistance within the HOC-oriented pedagogy employed by the AWC. The contradictions that emerged relate to how the AWC philosophy works in practice and suggests that the individual experiences of tutors construct the development of the training. The annual pre-service training is informed by the individual senior tutors' reflections on and verbalizations of – externalizations – their experiences, which in turn contribute to the learning – internalization – of knowledge by the junior tutors. In Engeström's (1987) words, the pre-service training is the beginning of the annual expansive cycle in the AWC.

Reflective practitioners reveal that learning in the existing activity system is situated in the actual practices of tutors (Engeström, 1987). Megan, Stacey, and Gina contributed their own unique perspective about the ways in which learning occurred, how that knowledge was internalized, and how each tutor felt that knowledge related to the development of the 2012 training. In the next chapter, I discuss how the senior tutors' reflections contributed to the central role that senior tutors played in designing and leading the training of the junior tutors. I look specifically at how the reflections and recent expansions in the role of a tutor placed the senior tutors as central to the pre-service training.

Chapter 7 – Tutor Training: The Senior Tutors’ Central Role

Tutor training in the Academic Writing Centre (AWC) has its origins in the senior tutors’ reflections on their own experiences of learning to tutor and working with student writers. With the increased responsibilities recently given to senior tutors in the AWC, this chapter explores how the tutors’ individual conceptions of their role contributed to the pre-service training for junior tutors in the fall of 2012. Specifically, I discuss how the AWC decided on a new direction for the design of the training and how the senior tutors played a central role in the training.

I characterize the design phase of the pre-service training as a further opportunity for the senior tutors to reflect-in-practice (Schön, 1983) with respect to the own experiences as tutors. Schön notes that reflecting-in-practice occurs when a practitioner reflects on their actions to evaluate what has worked and what has not worked in their practice. I also describe three different roles assumed by different actors in the activity of training the junior tutors, drawing on Engeström’s (1987, 1999) theorizing of how different actors fulfill different roles according to the division of labour and rules and regulations within an activity system. Engeström (1987) also notes that an “expansive cycle” occurs through the internalization and later externalization of knowledge when new practitioners enter a workplace activity system.

In the case of the senior tutors’ role in the training, the AWC started the first phase of its expansive cycle of the pre-service training. Throughout this chapter, I explore how the senior tutors went about externalizing their experience-based knowledge and played a central role in the 2012 pre-service training for new tutors. I consider how the senior tutors’ reflections on their work in the AWC contributed to the training activity. I also discuss how different players participated in the training.

Preparations for Training the Junior Tutors

Here, I explore how Martha and the senior tutors used the pre-service training meetings to design the training. I then discuss how the senior tutor sessions were designed according to the common direction agreed upon in the meetings.

Pre-service training meetings

In this section, I discuss the three pre-service training meetings; each was held a month apart: July 11, 2012, August 15, 2012, and September 11, 2012. I explore how Martha led the meetings and how tutors discussed their ideas for the 2012 training.

First meeting: Reflecting on the 2011 training

Martha led the first meeting, which focused on having tutors reflect on the 2011 training in order to develop the 2012 training. Martha circulated the 2011 pre-service training agenda and asked the tutors what they thought worked and what did not work to determine what should be included in the 2012 training. Tutors discussed how the 2011 training introduced them to the guidelines of working in the AWC, namely the AWC philosophy, conceptions of the writing process, and tutor-student interactions, such as assisting multilingual and emotional students. Stacey mentioned how beneficial she felt the stories that experienced tutors in the 2011 training related to different situations they encountered were and suggested that the 2012 training adopt a similar approach. There was a consensus among the tutors that there should be a more hands-on approach in the 2012 training because tutors felt that this was lacking in 2011.

Part of the conversation in the first meeting addressed how tutors learned to work in the AWC. Each tutor told stories about their experiences with students and how they informed their

practice. The consensus was that tutors learn from both the good *and* bad experiences – or, as Stacey claimed, as they build their repertoire of knowledge. One tutor emphasized that the bad experiences seem to leave a longer-lasting impression of what is acceptable and unacceptable as a tutor. The tutors discussed their learning to tutor, which seemed to have some common phases of being uncomfortable in their new role, learning how to help with particular kinds of writing, making mistakes and understanding how to correct it the next time they encountered a similar situation, and learning to be comfortable in their unpredictable day-to-day practices. Everyone agreed that this was a slow process but were sure that their habits developed over time.

Second meeting: Developing the 2012 training

During the second meeting, Martha started with a series of updates on her organization of the training: (1) there would be two professor's from Language Studies assisting with the training, both presenting theoretical issues related to teaching academic writing – Professor's Smith and Webster; (2) there would be junior tutors coming from business and engineering, which she was excited about because she had become aware of the difficulty of securing tutors from disciplines like engineering; and (3) there would be a mentorship program, which would place a senior tutor as team leader responsible for observing and mentoring a small number of tutors, to continue training junior tutors after the days of the training.

The rest of the meeting established the senior tutor sessions through conversations about the topics of each group. Since the previous meeting, Martha organized teams of senior tutors for their sessions in the training: Stacey's group would introduce difficult tutoring situations, Megan's group would introduce tutoring multilingual students, and Gina and I would introduce the role of a tutor/role of a student in the AWC. During this meeting, tutors explored issues

relating to their groups' topic. For example, Stacey's group asked all the tutors about difficult tutoring situations they encountered on-shift and received a wide range of suggestions, such as handling mature students and proofreading requests. Martha took a secondary role and listened as tutors shared their stories. Sharing experiences provided tutors with an opportunity to reflect on their experiences collectively, and thereby engage in what Schön (1983) calls reflecting-in-practice.

Third meeting: Organizing the final details

The third meeting focused on the final preparations for the 2012 pre-service training, which would be held on the Friday and Saturday of the same week. Martha led the meeting by reviewing the schedule for the workshops with some updated changes. She continued to explain the mentorship program in more detail. The six returning tutors would be the "go-to" person for questions or concerns that a junior tutor may have. Martha clarified that each senior tutor was required to perform one observation session of an appointment for each member of their team. A part of this would be to give both verbal and written constructive feedback after the session. Her goal with this was to encourage active learning among the junior tutors based on the senior tutors' comments. The mentorship program was designed to be an effective means for the senior tutors to share their knowledge of tutoring, thus allowing institutional knowledge about the AWC and its practices to be passed on.

This meeting allowed the tutors to build a common repertoire of knowledge about tutoring by sharing more of their reflections on their experiences. Each group of tutors were able to gather additional insight on the topic of the workshops they had to prepare. For example, Gina and I heard Megan's metaphor of a tutor as a writing coach during this meeting. The discussion

also brought Gina's idea of students visiting the AWC as being autonomous individuals.

Megan's "coach" metaphor and Gina's idea of students as autonomous writers proved to be influential in our workshop on the role of a tutor/the role of a student.

Developing the workshops

In this section, I present my experiences working with Gina as an example of how the senior tutor sessions were developed. Based on the communications between myself and the other senior tutors during the meetings and the interviews I conducted while researching, our experience is illustrative of how other teams prepared for their sessions. I use "we" to refer to Gina and myself specifically.

Designing 'The role of a tutor/the role of a student'

Our preparation was collaborative. Beginning at the end of August, we started to communicate via e-mail about organizing our session. In a response to Gina, I suggested some initial ideas about what to include:

I would like to show tutors as coaches by talking about the writing process as recursive and how tutors interact with various disciplinary and language backgrounds at any point in that particular student's process. I think it would help to mention the main points in the writing process where we have had students coming in, I know that things like brainstorming, organization of ideas, drafting, and editing are important to mention. Those are our points of interaction whereas we can't really help with incubation... I'd also like to get at the idea of tutors being peers to the student (*Personal Communication, Aug. 28, 2012*)

I suggested discussing the AWC pedagogy through Megan's metaphor of a tutor being a writing coach. Following this e-mail, Gina and I continued to work independently to define what we felt the junior tutors would need to learn about their new role.

In a meeting before the third pre-service training meeting, we shared our respective views on the role our session would have in shaping the junior tutors perceptions of tutoring in the AWC. We agreed that we would introduce the role of a tutor as writing coach – picking up on Megan’s metaphor – before discussing some theoretical and practical issues, such as the writing process and common points of interaction between a tutor and a student. We also wanted to address the ways in which knowing and not knowing the writing conventions of a specific discipline may benefit a tutor. For more practical concerns, we agreed to introduce the basics of a session, such as how to build rapport with a student, identifying the goals of a student, and the differences between directive and non-directive tutoring.

This conversation suggests our awareness of the communal goals established in the pre-service training meetings. It also picked up on many issues that Gina discussed in her reflections and many other ideas that I reflected on through the research interviews I conducted with both Stacey and Megan. I introduced Megan’s idea that tutors are writing coaches and Gina was immediately in-favour of using the idea to discuss how tutors support students. The notes made during that session provided a means for us to verbalize – externalize in Engeström’s (1987) words – our understanding of the role of a tutor. We met again before the pre-service training and discussed the changes that both of us had made to the original slides. We agreed that the main guidelines we would introduce the junior tutors to would be that a tutor is a writing coach who uses conversation as their main tool in helping students as a peer.

The Pre-Service Training: Introducing the Guidelines to Junior Tutors

In this section, I consider the pre-service training as it was carried-out by Martha, the outside writing experts, and the senior tutors. I first look at Martha’s role and explore the

administrative details she covered, I then consider what the outside academic writing experts introduced, and then revisit the sessions led by senior tutors.

Martha as administrator: Guidelines in SS

Martha's part in the pre-service training focused specifically on details associated with her administrative role. Martha introduced the overall mandate of the AWC as well as the goals within the Student Services (SS). Specifically, SS's primary goal is to "[help] undergraduate students at the University achieve their academic goals" ("Overview of SS" handout from pre-service training). SS is focused on assisting students in their personal development as they better certain academic skills. As Anne had done in 2011, Martha placed the AWC within this context by beginning the entire pre-service training with this session. Doing so framed the tone of the pre-service training from the student-service model that Martha envisioned for the tutor orientation (*C1/11, Aug. 8, 2012*).

Martha's primary responsibilities included introducing the junior tutors to administrative details associated with working in the AWC. She provided each tutor with their schedules and oversaw the training for the scheduling system, Scheduling and Reporting System (SARS). SARS is an in-house computer program that manages the schedules of tutors as well as the tutor notes written in each student's AWC file. On-top of this, she organized the tutors into their mentor teams to help tutors meet their new co-workers.

Martha's presence was strong during SS-related sessions mainly because this is when she addressed the tutors. During most of the senior tutor sessions (the second day in particular), she left the senior tutors responsible for training the junior tutors as she was not present during the majority of those sessions. This indicates that she truly believed that the senior tutors were the

writing experts and confirms Megan's idea that the senior tutors were the ones who knew the job and theoretical underpinnings best. Martha seemed concerned with providing a *structure* to enhance the learning of junior tutors with the training and the mentorship program. Such a program in effect helped institute distinctive roles for the senior and junior tutors.

Outside academic writing experts: Theoretical underpinnings of tutoring

Two outside academic writing experts contributed to the first day of the training. Their role in this activity was to introduce tutors to theoretical orientations that may inform their practices. Professor Smith talked about tutoring from the theoretical perspective of Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS) while Professor Webster introduced theories relating to tutoring multilingual writers, such as contrastive rhetoric and performing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) based needs analysis. In this section, I discuss how the outside academic writing experts used their theoretical backgrounds to contribute to the training.

Professor Smith on discipline-specific tutoring

Professor Smith's session introduced tutors to determining the help a student might need with a particular focus on the purpose, audience, and appropriate genres for a student's writing. Informed by RGS, Professor Smith emphasized that writing is a recursive and social process individual to each student. For Professor Smith, writing is a process that involves other people at different stages. She used a handout that included Devitt, Bawarshi, and Reiff's (2004) conception of writing processes to introduce tutors to where in a students' writing process tutors are likely to intervene and how best to do so.

Professor Smith suggested to tutors the importance of understanding the background of a student visiting the AWC. Specifically, tutors should try to figure out the student's personal goals relating to university and the specific writing assignment they bring. She encouraged tutors to think about the language used in different disciplines that they had written in and the differences in audience expectations in those different disciplines.

Professor Smith used two sample essays as an example of how to conceptualize the background of the student and their writing assignment when they visit the AWC. Junior tutors immediately commented on lower-order concerns (LOC) (i.e., wording, citations, transitional language) of the student's writing and some picked up on the higher-order concerns (HOC) (i.e., how the students addressed the prompt). That junior tutors would do so is a reminder of how all three senior tutors' reflections suggested that they initially felt tutoring meant helping with LOC.

Professor Webster on second language writing

Professor Webster introduced tutors to issues relating to the transfer of language and writing skills through an ESP genre perspective. He introduced four profiles of different multilingual writers to get tutors thinking about how a student's language history and experience with writing in English may lead a session towards certain types of help. These four profiles were intended as illustrations of different types of second-language writers with different types of needs, such as "Generation 1.5" writers or mature professional writers.

Professor Webster emphasized that performing a needs analyses based on the language needs of a student would be an effective beginning for a tutorial. The framework that he provided was Tardy's (2009) model of genre knowledge. For Tardy, successful writing means an ability to perform a genre. Doing so entails four overlapping types of knowledge: subject-matter

knowledge (i.e., course content), formal knowledge (i.e., proficiency in English), knowledge of the writing process, and rhetorical knowledge (i.e., meeting the expectations of the reader).

Professor Webster encouraged tutors to assess which aspect of genre knowledge the writers appeared to have difficulties with in order to identify where to begin helping as tutors.

Professor Webster introduced tutors to the idea that cultures have different rhetorical expectations by emphasizing that multilingual writers may not understand North American writing conventions. He made reference to HOC and LOC. Referring to Tardy's (2009) model, he associated rhetorical, process, and subject-matter knowledge with HOC and formal knowledge with LOC. Professor Webster further explained that understanding the transfer of writing skills through a needs analysis entails tutors approaching each session as a new situation. Tutors may need to draw on different parts of their genre knowledge and should thus be aware of their own personal limitations in helping students. A part of this entails understanding the cultural variation in writing conventions. He concluded by emphasizing that sometimes LOC impede HOC and that a tutorial is in an ideal context for raising student awareness of weaknesses in using written English, echoing Myers (2003) call for writing centres to help with LOC.

Senior tutor contributions: Training sessions and mentor teams

Another important component of the pre-service training were the senior tutor sessions, which provided an opportunity for the senior tutors to “pass the torch” – to convey their experience-based knowledge while establishing certain guidelines for the junior tutors to follow. In this section, I summarize the main points from the senior tutor sessions, introduce the group activity from the mentor teams, and discuss the senior tutors' perceptions of the training.

The senior tutor sessions

The role of a tutor

As previously discussed, Gina and I introduced Megan's conception of a tutor as a writing coach while discussing how tutors should interact with students in different moments of their writing process. The main points of our session were as follows:

- (1) Coaches should use conversation to position themselves as peers to students while attempting to help develop student writing strategies
- (2) Tutors should support students with their writing assignment while trying to build their autonomy as writers
- (3) Students are responsible for writing their essay and proofreading it, which means that tutors are not to phrase ideas but to ask questions to get the student to use their own ideas

We emphasized that tutors should assist students by asking a series of questions that may be more directive or non-directive, depending on the tutors' understanding of the students' current writing abilities. Building on Professor Smith, this session introduced some basic, practical examples of how a tutor could approach students as a coach. This session also built on Professor Webster's session by encouraging tutors to be aware that each session is different and would require the tutor to identify and help with different skills and strategies based on the specific needs of the student in front of them.

Tutoring ESL students

Megan's group discussed theoretical and practical issues related to helping multilingual students, such as cultural norms of communication with reference to body language. Their session focused on theories from contrastive rhetoric as helping tutors understand how cultural

variations exist in writing. They explained how the distinction between HOC and LOC helped inform their tutoring. In assisting multilingual students, they instructed the tutors to address HOC before LOC; however, they pointed out that if the LOC interfere with the HOC, it is acceptable to identify and discuss recurring sentence-level issues. They contended that while *not* providing a proofreading service, tutors can help students with LOC when they notice repeated mistakes in student writing. In particular, their session built on Professor Webster's session by emphasizing that tutors are to treat students as individuals who have different needs. Megan built on Gina's contributions to the pre-service training meetings by suggesting to the junior tutors that tutors help students by assessing their individual needs. In other words, she recognized that there are times when students need help with LOC over HOC, while emphasizing that, as a coach, tutors are responsible to know their own limitations and understand how they can help students as individuals.

Tips for tricky tutorials

Building on discussions with other senior tutors during the pre-service training meetings, Stacey's group addressed difficult situations that have commonly occurred in their experience. The 'tricky tutorials' that they identified included:

- (1) Helping with a thesis statement
- (2) Assisting with developing an outline for an essay
- (3) Identifying high school standards in university essays (i.e., five paragraph essays)
- (4) Helping mature, anxious, and emotional students.

Stacey constantly referred to two points: (1) different experiences with students build a repertoire of tutoring, and (2) tutor notes serve an important purpose in communicating with

other tutors. That is, she emphasized that different situations arise with different students and that a tutor learns through their practice, which echoes Lave and Wenger (1991). Each tricky tutorial adds to a tutor's understanding of what situations may arise in their roles as well as how to handle it. Tutor notes help communicate different situations with tutors who may have the same student in the future. Stacey's observations were clearly based on her own practice, illustrating how she was building on her own reflection-in-practice (Schön, 1983) in conveying her experience-based knowledge.

Mentor teams: New activities

At the end of the first day of the pre-service training, Martha had all the tutors get into their mentor teams. Through the mentorship program, Martha brought a new idea into the AWC.

Stacey commented:

I didn't feel uncomfortable last year asking anyone...for advice when I needed, including new tutors... or more experienced tutors... and right now, I think it's really great that we all have to do observations but I don't necessarily think that it has to be within a specific mentor system. I would want all the new tutors to feel like they can ask any of us for advice or help... they all know who the senior tutors are but I don't think they need to think of us in that role... I feel that it's just the dynamic of being in the room at the AWC – we all will...ask anyone anything, and I think that's more of the vibe that we should portray to the new tutors [...] It's a weird hierarchy that I don't think is necessary (*T3/I3, Sept. 21, 2012*).

As a senior tutor, Stacey felt that there was not necessarily a need for the mentorship program.

Martha's implementation signaled a shift towards placing senior tutors as central to the ongoing training of junior tutors by institutionalizing a mentoring system for tutors, which is a reminder of Alicia's previous view that training tutors was a coaching relation. Contrary to Stacey's perception, the mentor team seemed to be an effective approach to the training.

The final activity in the pre-service training had tutors return to their mentor teams to discuss a sample book review. Both senior and junior tutors found the activity to be useful because it helped connect the different sessions to a practical example. Megan's team read the text and the junior tutors proceeded to ask questions about it in different possible situations. Her team members were curious about what she would do in these situations. Megan thought that the advice she gave "was all mentioned before but it was helpful to see it in the context of an essay" (*T3/I3, Sept. 21, 2012*). One of the junior tutors, Alan, thought that this session was particularly useful. In his group, the senior tutor offered a chance to discuss how to approach the essay. The mentor teams seemed to provide a better context to put the theory discussed during the training sessions into more practical terms according to the specific concerns of the junior tutors. In general, the mentor team activity allowed: (a) the senior tutors to affirm the guidelines set by the pre-service training; and (b) for junior tutors to reflect on the training while applying some of the ideas they encountered throughout the orientation.

An effective training program?: Senior tutor perceptions

After reflecting-in-practice (Schön, 1983) as they developed the pre-service training, the senior tutors attempted to pass their experience-based knowledge through the training. They explained the rules guiding their practice in the AWC to the junior tutors; they introduced a tutor's role as being writing coaches who have a variety of theoretically-informed approaches to helping student writers of various disciplinary, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. In general, senior tutors thought that the training could only do so much for new tutors. While "[s]ome people did sort of start to drink the kool-aid, [...] some people are just sort of not there" (*T1/I3, Sept. 21, 2012*). Tutors were able to discuss their own experiences through telling stories when

other tutors were presenting their session, which was a part of the entire design that developed throughout the summer.

Essentially, the pre-service training introduced the junior tutors to the experience-based knowledge of the senior tutors. As Megan claimed,

We kind of have this general idea of what we're supposed to be doing... We're supposed to be friendly and welcoming and approachable to the students and we're supposed to address higher-order concerns first and lower-order concerns kind of take a secondary focus – those are all things that we all know and those are the...main ideas that are sort of carried over [...] the pedagogy didn't change but we developed as tutors [...] we've all just kind of developed our own styles and they're not so different from each other, I mean there's a lot of agreement. That's kind of how we developed the training (*T3/I3, Sept. 21, 2012*).

Megan felt that the senior tutors used their experiences in tutoring to prepare the junior tutors to continue the services offered by the AWC. The senior tutors seemed to feel that the junior tutors would learn the pedagogy as they became comfortable in their roles.

Collectively, the senior tutors provided instructions of tutoring in the AWC based on their knowledge of tutoring that they had previously learned. The tutoring philosophy they communicated signalled a shift from an exclusive focus on HOC to a focus that combines HOC and LOC. The 2012 training initiated a new phase in the AWC in that tutors could now assist with LOC when they impede HOC. The training provided an opportunity for the senior tutors to convey their experience-based knowledge for the junior tutors – in Engeström's (1987) words, initiated a new phase in the expansive cycle in that the senior tutors externalized their tacit understanding of tutoring.

Conclusion

The AWC used a series of institutionalized practices for preparing the senior tutors to convey to the junior tutors the important lessons the former had learned while tutoring. Through a series of ongoing meetings, Martha prompted the senior tutors to reflect on their experiences while designing the pre-service training. The senior tutors participated in a series of meetings over a three-month period in which they reflected-in-practice (Schön, 1983) on their own experiences and developed a common understanding of what information should be communicated to the junior tutors during the pre-service training. The senior tutors developed a common vocabulary of metaphors and descriptions – e.g., tutors as writing coaches building a repertoire of knowledge, students as autonomous individuals, – to communicate what it means to tutor in the AWC. In doing so, they played a central role in designing the training by depicting – externalizing, in Engeström's (1987) terms – their personal understandings of tutoring. Having agreed that the training would be limited in how much information the junior tutors could absorb, the senior tutors decided to focus on informing the junior tutors of their own experiences while providing some insight into how they used the AWC pedagogy in their practice.

As the senior tutors contributed to the common understanding that was developing during the meetings, they worked together to each develop their sessions to communicate their experience-based knowledge. During this design phase of the pre-service training, an open dialogue allowed the senior tutors to discuss their own reflections on tutoring in the AWC – in other words, they reflected on their practice (Schön, 1983) to externalize (Engeström, 1987) and share with one another their experience-based knowledge. As shown by my experience with Gina in designing our session in the pre-service training on the role of a tutor, the senior tutors

developed their assigned sessions based on the contributions of all the senior tutors during the meetings. This marked the beginning of a new expansive cycle (Engeström, 1987) for the AWC in the sense that the senior tutors externalized their knowledge while developing their sessions.

Supported by the contributions of Martha, the two outside writing experts, and the senior tutors, the pre-service training introduced the junior tutors to the general expectations that the AWC had for their tutoring practices. Martha's role in the training suggests that the historical transitions in the role of the coordinator, discussed in Chapter 5, had finalized the shift toward a full-time, non-academic role, with the coordinator's position having become purely administrative. She introduced the junior tutors to their role as members of Student Services (SS) and provided administrative details related to tutoring, such as the scheduling system, the tutor notes, and the mentoring teams. As described to the new tutors in the pre-service training, Martha's role would be one of supporting the tutors by managing their schedules and handling any issues arising from tutor-student interactions.

The outside writing experts – both professors in Language Studies – introduced junior tutors to theoretical issues informing the teaching of academic writing. Professor Smith introduced a Rhetorical Genre Studies informed approach for tutoring whereby tutors assist students with their writing at any stage in the writing process. Professor Webster introduced an English for Specific Purposes informed approach for performing a needs analysis of a student's writing ability, with a focus on multilingual writers. Together the outside writing experts were able to convey theoretical knowledge that could serve tutors in different tutoring situations. As an external influence, the outside writing experts represented the continuing connection between Language Studies and the AWC, despite the move of the AWC to SS. This demonstrated how

the AWC activity system continues to be influenced by Language Studies, with theories informing its practice coming from Language Studies faculty (Engeström, 1987).

In the pre-service training, the senior tutors conveyed their experience-based knowledge of tutoring in three sessions on tutor/student roles, tutoring multilingual writers, and handling tricky tutorials. Through these sessions, the senior tutors were able to provide insight into how they understood their practice within the framework of the AWC pedagogy, drawing on the metaphors and descriptions they had developed in the pre-service training design meetings. Senior tutors re-visited the theories informing tutoring in the AWC by connecting their own experience-based knowledge to the theories discussed by the outside writing experts. The pre-service training sessions drew on the externalized tacit knowledge of the senior tutors (Engeström, 1987) to introduce the junior tutors to the expectations that the AWC had for their tutoring. This use of the senior tutors' knowledge of tutoring echoes Thonus (2001) in that the pedagogy discussed in the pre-service training sessions was developed through the experiences of the tutors.

The senior tutors understood that learning to tutor occurs as tutors build their own repertoires of knowledge about tutoring. This supports Lave and Wenger's (1991) claim that learning a practice happens as a novice gains experience in a community of practice and grows an understanding. Megan in particular felt that the training was productive because of the inclusion of the mentor team activity, which she felt affirmed the expectations introduced during the pre-service training sessions led by the senior tutors. Martha's introduction of the mentorship program signaled a shift in the training from an isolated event to an ongoing series of actions that

all the tutors were required to participate in, a shift which resonates with Bell's (2001) call to institute an ongoing training program within the existing hierarchy of a writing centre.

The knowledge – in the form of guidelines – that the senior tutors externalized through discussion of their practices provided the junior tutors with realistic expectations for tutoring student writers. In the next chapter, I discuss the extent to which the junior tutors adopted, or internalized, these guidelines and the role of other practices employed by the AWC. In particular, I examine how junior tutors' prior beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (Woods, 1996) filtered their perceptions of the pre-service training and the AWC's institutionalized practises that enabled junior tutors to reflect-in-practice (Schön, 1983) as they participated in the AWC's expansive cycle.

Chapter 8 – Reflective Learning: Junior Tutors' Socialization

During their pre-service training the junior tutors were introduced to various pedagogical guidelines they were expected to follow in their practice in the Academic Writing Centre (AWC). Through the senior tutors' contributions, the AWC attempted to provide clear instructions on the range of expected approaches to tutoring that junior tutors would adopt. The junior tutors were then left to decide how to apply the pre-service training to their practice once they started to tutor student writers. The junior tutors received ongoing support through their participation in the mentor teams, under the supervision of a senior tutor. But the question remains, how did the junior tutors learn to work effectively with student writers?

In addressing this question, I employ five concepts: Engeström's (1987) notion of an expansive cycle; Russell's (1997) notion of activity-mediating genres; Lave and Wenger's (1991) social theory of learning; Schön's (1983) reflecting-in-practice; and Woods (1996) BAK – beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge. Engeström's (1987) concept of an expansive cycle entails internalizing knowledge. Russell (1997) builds on Engeström's (1999) cultural-historical activity theory by combining it with genre theory, claiming that genres are mediating artefacts in an activity system. Lave and Wenger (1991) view learning as occurring through active participation in a community of practice whereby a novice, placed in an initial role of legitimate peripheral participation (LPP), is gradually socialized into the role of a full-fledged participant in the community. Schön (1983) sees reflecting-in-practice as a way for practitioners to learn through their own experiences. To these five concepts, I add the idea of "reflective genres" as text-based social actions used on the job in moments of reflection-in-practice.

In this chapter, I begin by exploring the perceptions of two junior tutors, Alan and Ryan, regarding the pre-service training. I compare how both felt the training prepared them to teach academic writing in the AWC. I then consider how two reflective genres – the tutor notes and the mentor team observations (where senior tutors observe junior tutors) – mediated the junior tutors' socialization into the AWC. I describe how the pre-service training, the use of tutor notes, and the mentor team observations together assisted the junior tutors in performing the expected work of a AWC tutor.

Reflecting in Legitimate Peripheral Participation

In this section, I consider how the personal reflections of Alan and Ryan provide a glimpse of their socialization into the role of a AWC tutor. The two had different backgrounds: Alan was a first-year Masters student in Language and Writing Studies (LWS) who taught English as a Second Language (ESL) and Ryan was a third-year undergraduate student in Engineering.

Alan's reflections: Tensions between self and collective

In the following excerpt from an interview I conducted with Alan shortly after the pre-service training, he shared his views of how the training changed his understanding of what a writing tutor does from his preconceived notion:

I would have expected to be doing a lot more editing... I was a little surprised initially when there was such an emphasis on the fact that 'we don't edit'. It makes sense though, I totally get it. I was expecting to sort of work with students on a bit more of a micro-level to help students structure sentences and things like that. So, I was thinking that I'd be working with them on the nuts and bolts, to kind of coach them towards improving the fundamentals of how they write. In a sense, we still do, but it's the nuts and bolts on a macro-level instead of the micro. The emphasis is on the higher-order concerns over the lower-order concerns. The coaching that we're offering has more to do with structure on

the large scale – how to put together the whole thing and make it flow from beginning to end. I expected to be focused more on sentence structure and things like that (*T4/I1, Oct. 1, 2012*).

From his own experience as a writer and teacher, Alan expected to help student writers with their sentence-level errors. His prior BAK of writing led him to envision that every student would be like himself and be concerned primarily with sentence-level concerns, which he enjoys doing. The orientation changed his perception of the role of a writing tutor.

Alan found Professor Webster's discussion on multilingual writers and the stories from the senior tutors to be very helpful. In particular, Alan found Professor Webster's discussion on cross-cultural rhetoric helpful because it led him to a different understanding of what to be aware of when helping multilingual students. He also found the use of Tardy's (2009) model of genre knowledge helped him "conceptualize how a single text may be able to get help from different perspectives" (*T4/I1, Oct. 1, 2012*). Before hearing the senior tutors' stories, he was not expecting so many non-native speakers of English. He thought that the training prepared him to help multilingual students.

Alan's first session was with an international student who wanted to discuss how to approach writing a university essay. Alan commented, "I was a bit nervous because it was my first time and I [was worried that I] would receive a paper that was just all over the place and I would be scrambling all over the place to try and get it together, or I would have a student who was anxious...." (*T4/I1, Oct. 1, 2012*). Helping students in the AWC meant that Alan had to in part reconsider what it means to teach writing. He further reported that, based on the student's apparent satisfaction with it, the approach appeared to work.

Alan consciously aligned himself with the tutoring guidelines given during the training session by stopping himself from editing written errors in a student's work, which he felt was one of the most challenging aspects of learning to tutor. Alan's lasting influence from his experience as a writer and as an ESL teacher was a challenge for him in the AWC:

[M]y own inclination is to edit because I like doing that. I think on last Wednesday I caught myself, I may have gone a little too far with some circling and crossing out and stuff. But it wasn't really a big deal, I just sort of became conscious and said 'Oh, let's get back to the bigger picture here.' [...]The thing is, we're not supposed to but if the student was never going to come back, it wouldn't matter. If I spent the entire session in full-on editing mode and it was the students' last essay in university, and wasn't going to return, it wouldn't matter. But because the student may come back and be with another tutor and the other tutor may be more cautious about doing any of that, the student may say 'well, the last tutor did this' and I just don't want to create that situation. It's going to lead to disappointed students if we serve them in different ways (*T4/I1, Oct. 1, 2012*).

Knowing that the student may return and cause an issue with the consistency of the service offered by the AWC kept Alan in line with the approach outlined in the pre-service training. The orientation helped Alan realize that he would have to be consistent with other tutors in order to meet the expectations of the AWC.

Ryan's reflections: Engineering student as writing coach

The initial impression Ryan had of a writing tutor was someone who "would typically be a natural poet or love Shakespeare...someone who loved to read as much as they love to write" (*T5/I1, Oct. 31, 2012*). The support that Ryan received while learning to tutor came from his experiences with students. As Ryan stated, "I usually just ignore their criticism or jokes [from engineering students], and remember the responses I get from students leaving. When someone genuinely thanks you for having helped them, you know you did a good job" (*T5/I1, Oct. 31,*

2012). He found that his peers in Engineering do not understand his work in the AWC and how he came to be a tutor in the first place.

Ryan's experience in the pre-service training was eye-opening for him. Given his background as an Engineering student, Ryan sometimes felt out-of-step with the topics discussed in the training:

Getting into this position, I had no idea what to expect, I understood the basics about writing but I never thought of it from the readers' perspective. It's probably the one thing that really hit me by surprise, being the reader and trying to think as to how the writer came up with their work, whether or not they kept in mind the necessity to keep the paper on topic. Being the reader I found that someone's work would always leave hints as to how focused they were on imparting information on to you. [...] When I tell people that I am a tutor at the AWC, they usually have a priceless reaction; "YOU!? The engineer!?" I think the typical expectation of a writing tutor is someone who corrects your grammar and spelling, and to make sure you follow the '5 paragraph essay high school format' – intro, body, conclusion (*T5/II, Oct. 31, 2012*).

Ryan found that the pre-service training was overwhelming at first but that tutoring became easier after his first session. He seemed to internalize the idea that tutors are writing coaches who act "as a guidance counsellor, that is, their giving guidance not just strict rules on how to write" (*T5/II, Oct. 31, 2012*), which suggests a continuation of Megan's "coach" metaphor. Coming from an Engineering background meant that Ryan's prior BAK of writing was limited to a non-Arts discipline. His background also meant that he had to learn a different understanding of the variety of disciplinary conventions and writing assignments common in the Faculty.

Ryan's first session suggested his adoption of the guidelines introduced during the training because he was able to help a student with a comparative essay of religious institutions, which was something that he "didn't expect would ever be an assignment" (*T5/II, Oct. 31, 2012*). The student had no written work but he remembered stories told by the senior tutors and "[t]he fact that 'some students don't have any written work done when they come into the

AWC”” (*T5/I1, Oct. 31, 2012*). Ryan’s aligning with the AWC pedagogy was rooted in the pre-service training, namely Professor Smith and the senior tutor sessions.

Ryan found the pre-service training to help him move beyond his disciplinary perspective in that he realized that “I may not have the expertise on a subject that they are in, [but] if they’re able to present it in a logical way, I should be able to get by with understanding what they’re talking about” (*T5/I1, Oct. 31, 2012*). The training also taught him about the basic processes for writing a paper, which was very new to him. In this sense, Professor Smith was very influential in his learning. As Ryan claimed:

For someone in engineering, virtually all of the presentations done were new information for me... The one memorable moment that stuck with me was [Professor Smith] setting the context of our work, that when we step into an appointment we are walking in blind with respect to our knowledge on the field of study the student is in. I feel like this was something should be noted for any tutor, especially when their student is in engineering, science, or any other technical program (*T5/I1, Oct. 31, 2012*).

Ryan’s experience in the training seemed to have prepared him to act as a writing coach for students of various disciplines. As a writing coach with a limited background in the faculty-related genres, Ryan seemed to offer a “generalist” approach to tutoring as opposed to a discipline-specific approach to tutoring (Clark, 1999; Walker, 1998). For Ryan, the training was essential to his understanding of how to teach academic writing.

Reflective Genres: A Mediated Socialization

In this section, I consider two reflective genres as mediating artefacts in the AWC: the tutor notes and the mentor team observations. I first explore Ryan’s understanding of the tutor notes and then discuss my mentor team observations as the junior tutors in my team, Sheila and

Max, learned their new roles. In both cases, I consider how these genres mediated the socialization of the junior tutors.

Tutor notes

Tutor notes are required to be written by tutors after a session and are stored in the AWC database (Scheduling and Reporting System) for other tutors and the coordinator to access. In general, tutors read any available notes at the start of the day or before a session to understand a returning student's history in the AWC. Tutor notes generally include a paragraph with details about a session, "such as what type of assignment they were writing, and what part of the assignment the tutor and student worked on together [...] we write down anything that we think will be helpful for someone else working with the student" (*T2/I2, July 25, 2012*). Gina commented that tutor notes help "us prepare for our daily appointments and waste less time. [I]f in a previous note the student has already explained the assignment in detail and [the tutor] has talked about that student's main difficulties, the new tutor can pick up from where the previous tutor left off" (*T2/I2, July 25, 2012*). Martha commented that she uses the tutor notes to check on tutors, explore recurring issues and problems students bring to the AWC, and "[t]o learn and record what problems, questions, etc are the most prevalent [which] can serve as a starting point for future services that AWC could offer" (*C1/I2, Aug. 8, 2012*). As such, tutor notes connect tutors and the coordinator to the daily events in the AWC and a student's history within the AWC. Given that they are a job requirement for tutors to write, notes serve as an institutionalized and often unconscious moment for tutors to reflect-in-practice (Schön, 1983) about what worked in a particular situation. Essentially, tutor notes help build a tutor's repertoire of knowledge, to

adopt Stacey's term. For junior tutors, writing the notes provide an opportunity to reflect as a part of their job, which is a part of their socialization into the AWC.

Analyzing the notes that Ryan wrote in the first month of working in the AWC, it became clear that Ryan's notes assisted his adoption of the AWC guidelines – in Lave and Wenger's (1991) terms, writing the notes helped Ryan move from a position of LPP into a full (reflective) practitioner. The notes suggest his internalization of Professor Smith's session and how he perceived himself as a tutor in the AWC. His first note summarized what the student brought with him and how Ryan tried to help:

[The student] came in today to discuss his paper that required him to describe his experience at a religious institution of choice. He seemed a bit concerned about this assignment as it was worth 30% of his final grade, unlike his assignments in highschool [*sic*]. Today he came with his outline along with his...notes [from] his experience at the mosque (his choice of religious institution). He wanted clarification on what he was expected to do and mentioned that he was good at coming up with ideas about what to write but had trouble putting them on paper [...] [The student] followed the assignment with moderate care but I do believe he did not read through the e assignment objectives clearly [...] We came up with some unanswered questions he may have about the religious institution that he should look into included in this paper (*Ryan, Sept. 21, 2012*).

Ryan stated that he did not know how to approach this session because the student did not have an essay with him (*T5/I1, Oct. 31, 2012*). This note shows him struggling with the ideas that he encountered during the pre-service training because he seemed to not yet be sure how he could comfortably help the student.

In a later note, Ryan exhibited signs that he had discovered how he, as an engineering student, could help students who are writing in the faculty. The note summarized two parts of a session, the second of which is considered:

His second assignment was an essay based on discussions on a specific article from his tutorial. The subject was based off the article that was about the governor generals desicion [*sic*] to prorouge [*sic*] the government. In his tutorial they discussed alot [*sic*] of

different explanations of her decision. His paper was intended [*sic*] to build off of some of the ideas mentioned and to practice expository writing. His paper was completely lacking structure and I again was getting lost as he was not building off of topics he was bringing up. I suggested that an outline was the best thing he could do to understand what he was doing wrong in his writing (*Ryan, Oct. 5, 2012*).

Ryan found himself offering the perspective of an outside reader to this student. Adopting a generalist approach (Clark, 1999) enabled him to discuss what he felt worked in the paper while addressing some strategies that the student might employ in future writing assignments.

Through writing the tutor notes, Ryan seemed to have moved from a position of LPP towards a full practitioner in the AWC. I observed Alan asking Ryan about a particular student who he had an appointment with early in October – Ryan had the same student two weeks before. Alan was reading Ryan's note and found it difficult to pronounce the student's name, so he asked Ryan how to pronounce it. From there, Alan asked Ryan about the student's session. Ryan provided a detailed description without re-reading his note and Alan was able to ask him about what he thought helped that student best (*FN, Oct. 9, 2012*). The mediation of the tutor note suggests that Ryan and Alan, while partaking in separate activities, were able to understand the general goal of the AWC as it relates to their practice (Engeström, 1987; Russell, 1997). The level of confidence that Ryan showed in discussing this student suggests that he had socialized into the AWC. Not only had he reflected on the session in his note, he was able to recall the particular case when approached by Alan. This suggests that, by the third week of the term, the junior tutors had started to show that their own reflective learning had helped their confidence grow as he moved further away from the periphery and into the community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Mentor team observations

As a part of my responsibilities as a senior tutor, I performed a total of three observation sessions with the junior tutors in my mentor team – two of these are considered here involving Sheila and Max. Senior tutors were asked to observe at least one session of each junior tutor in their team and give constructive feedback about how closely a junior tutor seemed to be following the AWC philosophy. Tutors were asked to list two strengths and weaknesses from the session they observed and to have a conversation with the tutor based on this feedback.

Sheila adopted a casual, non-directive approach and was very supportive and encouraging to the student. She did not interfere with the content of the students' writing and was not shy in directing the students' writing process. Based on my observations, I commented on her use of metaphors to explain different strategies to focus the students' writing process, her use of probing questions to get the student thinking about their text, and her ability to shift her approach in different situations (i.e., “built students autonomy by getting her to think/explain [and] asked for help when you needed but never undermined the students confidence”) (*FN, Oct. 11, 2012*). I was also able to give comments relating to some weaknesses I identified in that session, such as: “be sensitive to your body language in-session” and “be careful with being directive in supporting as a coach because the advice about writing you gave seemed to lead to the student expecting you to fill the gaps you identify” (*FN, Oct. 11, 2012*). Sheila's practice in this session suggests that she had become a full-fledged practitioner – she seemed to have internalized the pre-service training and was able to show her knowledge by acting as a writing coach (Engeström, 1987).

While Sheila seemed to have aligned with the guidelines of the AWC, Max showed that not all tutors had done so at that point. Max seemed to assume the role of a teacher and acted less like a coach, which I felt had to be addressed because it is not consistent with the other tutors' practices. I commented that he had been very supportive, calm, and welcoming to the student, that he effectively used outside examples to explain how to structure a comparative essay, and that he asked for help from another tutor when he was unsure of an answer. However, he had not shown signs that he had aligned with the pre-service training despite clearly trying to indicate his understanding of the guidelines. I commented that his weaknesses in that session related to his understanding of his role in the AWC more broadly:

Reflect on the different roles of a tutor and teacher – remember that you are in an academic writing centre where your role is of a coach (you support the student and steer them in the right direction by asking them questions) and not teacher [and] Try to think about how to support a student by letting them lead the session. I think of any session as sitting down with a friend to talk about their essay (*FN, Oct. 23, 2012*)

This observation session showed me that Max may have resisted the pre-service training. My reaction speaks to the expectation that junior tutors would conform to a certain role in the AWC. I thought that he was acting more like a teacher than a coach, which was something that I could not mentor him through because I had no prior teaching experience. In order to help, I approached another senior tutor to share his experience in learning to coach after having taught as a teacher. The senior tutor told Max that he had to forget about teaching and have a conversation with the student about their writing. Martha and I agreed to have a follow-up session to ensure Max was performing the duties associated with tutoring in the AWC in early November.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have described how junior tutors were socialized during the first months of their service in the AWC. Over this period, the junior tutors gradually moved from a position of LPP to the role of a full practitioner in the AWC by participating in institutionalized processes (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The junior tutors learned not only by working with student writers, but also through various interactions with other individuals in the AWC. Their learning involved both the internalization of the pre-service training *and* the use of the reflective genres employed in the AWC.

Alan and Ryan came to the AWC with an understanding of tutoring that was derived from their respective backgrounds. During the pre-service training, this initial understanding was re-oriented through Alan's and Ryan's exposure to new theories introduced by outside writing experts and to the experience-based knowledge of the senior tutors. Alan's and Ryan's perceptions of tutoring were influenced by what they heard from one of the outside writing experts in particular. With his background in teaching ESL, Alan was attracted to Professor Webster's views on tutoring multilingual writers, while Ryan, with his background in Engineering, a non-Arts degree, was drawn to Professor Smith's presentation on RGS-informed tutoring. At the same time, exposure to the experience-based knowledge of the senior tutors helped both new tutors learn about, or internalize, lessons regarding recurrent situations with the student writers who come to the AWC. Both Alan and Ryan appeared to filter the training through their prior beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (BAK) of writing (Woods, 1996), reflecting Dinitz and Kiedaisch's (2003) claim that tutors adopt their own approaches based on the training they receive.

Interestingly, neither of the new tutors mentioned how Martha helped them understand their roles as tutors. This may suggest that Martha's administrative role separated her from Alan and Ryan's training and learning. At the same time, however, through the structure that she provided for the junior tutors, Martha was a silent presence while the junior tutors were socialized into the AWC. Martha created a mentorship program that extended the training from the kind of general practical introduction suggested by Vandenberg (1999) to an ongoing, the type of supportive training envisioned by Bell (2001). As Coordinator, Martha put in place institutional practices within the AWC to ensure that the junior tutors would be introduced to issues relevant to the work of tutoring student writers. In this way she ensured that the training introduced new tutors to both theoretical *and* practical issues related to teaching academic writing.

As institutionalized reflective genres, the tutor notes and written mentor team observations mediated the socialization of junior tutors and assisted them in learning to use the guidelines introduced during the training. The importance of the tutor notes in helping Ryan move from a position of LPP into a full practitioner in the AWC suggests that tutor notes play a much larger role than documenting a students' history, as was suggested during the training (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The tutor notes prompted the new tutors to reflect-in-practice (Schön, 1983) immediately after working with a student writer, thus helping the tutors build their repertoire of pedagogical strategies and their confidence as tutors. The mentor team observations also seemed to have aided the socialization of junior tutors.

Both Sheila and Max benefited from the mediating genre of the mentor team observations; they received informal feedback on how they were doing on the job. Martha's idea

of making the observations a job requirement for senior tutors to observe and provide feedback for junior tutors allowed her to structure an environment within which the new tutors could get a sense of how their peers perceived their actions. For senior tutors, this provided an opportunity to see how each junior tutor had internalized the pre-service training in their practices working with student writers and, in a sense, validated their collective experience-based knowledge by effectively “passing the torch.” That is, the expansive cycle of the pre-service training effectively prepared the junior tutors to teach academic writing according to the AWC pedagogy (Engeström, 1987)

The experiences of some junior tutors suggest tensions with the pedagogy employed by the AWC. For example, Alan was quick to apply what he learned during the training to his understanding of what it means to teach writing. He resisted the impulse to edit students’ writing in order to ensure that students would receive consistency in the assistance provided by different tutors in the AWC. In contrast, Max seemed to resist the pre-service training and the guidelines for working with students. Such resistance may suggest that there are differences in how the AWC needs to approach preparing new tutors to assist student writers in line with the pedagogy it employs.

The junior tutors seem to have had different experiences in their socialization into the AWC. Through their central role in the pre-service training, the senior tutors contributed to the socialization of the junior tutors, drawing on their own reflective practice in the AWC. The following chapter summarizes the major findings presented in the previous four chapters and contextualizes these findings in relevant literature.

Chapter 9 – Discussion: Placing Tutors at the Centre

In this chapter I add a more theoretical dimension to the examination of training and learning in the Academic Writing Centre (AWC) that has been presented in the four preceding chapters. After summarizing the main findings on tutor training, I begin by addressing the first two research questions guiding this study, specifically: (1) the effectiveness of the efforts of members of the AWC for preparing junior tutors to teach academic writing; and (2) the significance of both inside and outside influences on the training *and* learning of junior tutors. I then situate the major findings in prior writing centre research on tutor training programs.

Analysis of Major Findings

Throughout this study, I have argued that the preparation the AWC provides for junior tutors adequately prepares them to teach academic writing. I have further tried to show how the training of junior tutors reflects not only current tutoring practices in the AWC but also a historical heritage of pedagogical practices employed since the mid-1970s. These current and historically-influenced pedagogical practices are embodied in the senior tutors, who have been members of the AWC for at least a year and have developed their own experience-based understanding of tutoring. These senior tutors have carefully developed the training provided to junior tutors and also offer further support over time as the latter are socialized into the AWC. Through the significant involvement of senior tutors, the AWC undergoes an ongoing expansive cycle (Engeström, 1987) because the senior tutors externalize their experience-based knowledge for the junior tutors to begin internalizing it for their own practices.

In the following sub-sections, I draw specific conclusions related to my central claim that the AWC effectively prepares junior tutor to teach academic writing. Specifically, I analyse the

wide variety and complex web of influences coming from both inside and outside of the AWC. In particular, I analyse how their experiences inside and outside the AWC contribute to the ongoing expansive cycle of the AWC.

Influences on tutor training: Inside and outside of the AWC

Inside influences

Inside influences are those which relate to the AWC as it has developed and/or the recent shifts in the AWC activity system. There are at least three inside influences on the training, including: (1) the historical developments in the AWC pedagogy as it relates to tutor training; (2) the recent shift in the division of labour, which itself is the result of an external influence – the AWC was moved from Language Studies to Student Services (SS) because of a decision made by the University’s administration; and (3) the senior tutors’ reflecting-in-practice on their experiences learning to tutor and with student writers. These inside influences may be mediated by genres used by the AWC, such as the tutor notes.

A cultural-historical inheritance: Why history matters

Over the years, the AWC has developed an organizational understanding of how to train new tutors that has reflected changes relating to both pedagogy and departmental affiliation. Originally, the pedagogy employed was to pair tutors with students of the same disciplinary background (i.e., within the English Department). As the AWC activity system encountered shifting realities – “contradictions” within the activity system, in Engeström’s (1987) terms – with students of different disciplines visiting for writing help, the coordinator, starting in 1976, prepared tutors to help students outside of the English Department. Helping students of various

disciplinary and linguistic backgrounds led to tutors being trained to act as a peer of the student while attempting to assist with higher-order concerns (HOC) found in student writing.

In 2008, when the AWC was officially moved from Language Studies to SS, the coordinator was positioned as a full-time employee responsible for preparing the training program and carrying out various other administrative duties. More recently, the role of the coordinator has become more purely administrative because the new coordinator had no previous background in writing centre theory. On the other hand, Martha brought a new perspective to the AWC philosophy. She developed her understanding of the AWC primarily through the mediating genre of the tutor notes, which encapsulate a tutor's observations on a tutoring session, recorded immediately following the event. Martha read the tutor notes and noticed tensions within the existing pedagogy with regard to assisting multilingual students. With Martha occupied with learning how the AWC functioned, the tutors became the acknowledged in-house writing experts and assumed primary responsibility for training junior tutors.

For the tutors, being positioned to have a major influence on the training meant that their experiential knowledge would inform the training. Their prior training provided a connection to the AWC philosophy, which has remained consistent since 1976, as it informs contemporary tutor practices. The continuity of the AWC philosophy – or, as I have also referred to it, the organizational knowledge – suggests that the senior tutors embodied the cultural-historical inheritance of the AWC activity system and would inform its continuation. The AWC relied on its experienced tutors to build theory related to tutoring as the senior tutors started to prepare the pre-service training, which echoes Thonus (2001) in that tutors built theory for the training of new tutors according to their “methodology” and not writing centre “mythology.”

Senior tutors' contribution

Being positioned as theory-builders in the AWC, the senior tutors played a central role in designing and carrying out the pre-service training. Through the pre-service training, the senior tutors would use their experience-based knowledge – that is, the knowledge that they acquired through experiencing and reflecting on a wide range of practices and situations related to tutoring in the AWC – to inform the junior tutors of the expected behaviours of tutors in the AWC. Their experiential knowledge shaped the training because, through their own reflections, the tutors conceptualized how they learned to tutor and what, from the training they received in 2011, would benefit incoming tutors.

Through interviews conducted for the purpose of this study, the senior tutors revealed the important role that reflecting-in-practice (Schön, 1983) played in designing the training. The tutors' reflections suggested that each tutor filtered the general orientation through their prior experiences as writers, teachers, and students to develop their personal understanding of tutoring (Dinitz & Kiedaisch, 2003). Each tutor's experiences shaped their beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (BAK) of tutoring (Woods, 1996), which in turn helped them develop their own metaphors and descriptions of tutoring (e.g., Megan's "coach" metaphor). These metaphors and descriptions then became instrumental in the senior tutors' explanation to the junior tutors of the ways in which the AWC philosophy informs tutor practice.

The senior tutors' reflections also assisted the tutors in building theory through their practice in that the AWC shifted its pedagogy when designing the pre-service training. The tutors' experiences revealed that they felt tensions – contradictions – between the AWC HOC-oriented philosophy and the writing needs of students they encountered, such as when helping

multilingual writers. To overcome this issue, the tutors and the coordinator, Martha, agreed that the training would address difficult situations that the senior tutors experienced in helping with student writing. In particular, their experience-based knowledge suggested that tutors should help with lower-order concerns (LOC) if they impede HOC. Through reflective practice, the senior tutors were able to conceptualize issues they perceived with the 2011 training, namely that they felt unprepared to tutor afterwards and learned to tutor on-the-job. That senior tutors learned through their practice is in keeping with Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of learning in situations of LPP on both individual and collective levels.

During the 2012 pre-service training, the senior tutors informed – externalized their knowledge – the junior tutors of how theories relating to tutoring in a writing centre may be used in practical situations. That is, based on their own experience-based knowledge, the senior tutors told the junior tutors how theoretical conceptions like the writing process may influence their practice. The senior tutors instructed the junior tutors to follow the AWC philosophy to the best of their abilities, which meant that the tutors were expected to continue building better writers and not better texts (North, 1984). The externalization of the senior tutors' knowledge of appropriate tutoring practices in the AWC that occurred during the pre-service training can be interpreted as a new phase in the expansive cycle of the AWC, marked by the annual training. Engeström's (1987) notion of an expansive cycle proves insightful in describing the training cycle of new tutors annually, with each cycle bringing some opportunities for change or expansion while transmitting and reproducing past knowledge and practices. The 2012 training showed growth in the AWC's expansive cycle by introducing the mentorship program, which was new to the training program. Through the mentor teams, the senior tutors started an ongoing

coaching relation with the junior tutors, which institutionalized a hierarchy between senior and junior tutors while ensuring that the AWC pedagogy would continue to be applied consistently by each tutor.

Outside influences on the AWC pre-service training

Outside influences on the pre-service training are those that have a direct impact on the training but come from an activity system separate from the AWC. There are at least two outside influences on the training, which include: (1) the tutor's own BAK of writing from previous and current experiences outside of the AWC, including having taught English as a Second Language (ESL) or the disciplinary background each tutor brings to the AWC; and (2) the ongoing historical connections between Language Studies and the AWC, which seems to continue to influence the theories used by tutors through the participation of professors in the training and the tutor's own course work in Language Studies.

A tutor's prior beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge of writing

Each tutor brings their own personal understanding of writing and how to best help with writing to the AWC. As Dinitz and Kiedaisch (2003) claim, each tutor filters the general training they receive through their own experiences as students, writers, and teachers – or, in Woods (1996) terms, their prior BAK of writing. Each tutor interviewed during this study suggested that they did not anticipate learning that tutoring in the AWC meant building better – and more autonomous – writers (Bruffee, 1984; North, 1984). Instead, the tutors' anticipated that they would help specifically with sentence-level LOC. This suggests that, before receiving the training, each tutor previously assumed that helping with writing meant assisting with grammar

and editing student writing. For example, Alan felt that students visiting the AWC would receive mainly editing and proofreading assistance from tutors.

Other tutors' BAK were shaped by their experiences as language teachers. For example, Gina and Alan previously taught ESL and were initially prepared to offer similar assistance they provided in those roles. In particular, Alan felt that his background as a teacher and his comfort in discussing LOC would be a beneficial service to provide students. He assumed that students visiting would also expect help with grammar and spelling. As a teacher, he had previously taught students how to write sentences in English to multilingual students. When he finished the pre-service training, he was surprised that the AWC would focus on HOC and had to re-align his understanding of what assisting with student writing entailed. That he had to shift his focus as a tutor in the AWC suggests that his BAK of writing was shaped by his experiences as a student and teacher – both of which were based on experiences from before starting in the AWC.

Ongoing connections between Language Studies and the AWC

While the AWC has been formally removed from Language Studies for about five years, Language Studies continues to contribute in significant ways to the ongoing success of the AWC. With the AWC being a part of SS, there has been a recent transition in the role of the coordinator and the tutors that meant that writing expertise – expertise in theoretical understandings of teaching and learning academic writing – had to be acquired through outside academic writing experts. As an external activity system, Language Studies provided writing expertise from Writing Studies experts in two major ways: through the participation of professors, such as Professors Smith and Webster, in the pre-service training; and the majority of

tutors being students in Language Studies Masters program, Language and Writing Studies (LWS).

Language Studies professors' contributions

During the pre-service training, Professors Smith and Webster introduced tutors to theories that inform teaching academic writing. Professor Smith introduced rhetorical genre theory as it informs the AWC pedagogy, which it has historically. She introduced concepts related to the writing process with a focus on tutors helping student writers identify the purpose and audience of the assignment. Professor Smith also introduced the idea that tutors with a particular disciplinary background may be able to adopt a more directive – explicit – approach to helping with student writing. Freedman (1993) questioned the effectiveness of adopting an explicit approach to teaching academic writing, which informs writing centre theory in that the sociocultural pedagogy calls for tutors to help students better their writing skills and not their text (Bruffee, 1984; North, 1984). Freedman further explains that if a teacher is of the same disciplinary background some explication of the genre conventions may benefit the student. Professor Smith introduced Freedman's perspective, which is a debate that echoes through Clark's (1999) and Walker's (1998) discussions of a generalist or discipline-specific tutor.

Tutors also learned about theoretical perspectives of how to assist with multilingual writers visiting the AWC. Professor Webster introduced an ESP-based needs analysis to tutors by referring directly to Tardy's (2009) model of genre knowledge. For tutors, he recommended that this model may help with identifying the needs of a student and emphasized the difficulties that multilingual writers may face. Professor Webster's session echoes Hyland (2004), who suggested that a more explicit approach to teaching writing helps students better understand how

texts are structured. A fundamental point that Professor Webster made was that helping with writing may mean having to help with LOC when they impede HOC – different writers have individual needs that should be assessed by the tutor and discussed during the session. This point resonates with Myers (2003) claim that writing centre tutors are in a unique position to correct multilingual writers' language use in a one-to-one situation.

Tutors' coursework in LWS

Another important way that the Language Studies activity system continues to contribute to the AWC is through the tutors who are students in LWS. The senior tutors interviewed during this study suggested that their learning to tutor entailed having access to different theories introduced to them during courses in LWS. For example, Megan felt that her language teaching methodology course helped her identify how to better help multilingual writers with their writing. Through their coursework, each tutor seemed familiar with key concepts used in Writing Studies, such as rhetorical genre theory. The extent to which each tutor applies a particular "school" of genre (Hyon, 1996) remains unclear. Yet, Gina was introduced to genre theory in her academic writing course and felt that it did add to her repertoire of tutoring.

It seems that Language Studies provides its students who tutor in the AWC with a theoretical background that informs their tutoring. Given the variety of interests among tutors studying in LWS, tutors also bring a range of knowledge to their practices. Tutors learn about recent developments in theory and practice related to Writing Studies and teaching ESL, which in turn seem to inform their practice on some level. Through their reflections, each tutor suggested that the theories they learned informed their practice in the AWC. They knew how the theories may be applied in a session and brought this experience-based knowledge to the pre-

service training, where they built on their professors' presentations through more practical discussion(s) of tutoring. This suggests that the ongoing historical connections between Language Studies and the AWC continue to inform tutor training – and the AWC pedagogy more generally – in important ways because the AWC activity system remains connected to Language Studies.

Summary of outside influences

That there are outside influences on the practices of the AWC suggests that there is constantly room for growth in the services it offers. Through a tutor's BAK of writing and interactions with the Language Studies activity system, such as the participation of professors from Language Studies in the training and the coursework of tutors in LWS, the AWC maintains an ability to adapt to the changing environment at a mid-sized Canadian University. These influences mean that tutor training in the AWC focuses on preparing new tutors to adopt the AWC pedagogy while gaining theoretical insight from the University's writing experts in Language Studies. Theory continues to inform the practices of AWC tutors in that they are introduced to some conceptions of how to teach academic writing in the training and, for those studying in LWS, gain further insights into how these theories inform their practices in the courses they take. These tutors then bring that knowledge to the AWC activity system and influence the tutor training.

One of the biggest strengths of the outside influences on tutor training is that the outside academic writing experts introduce more than one approach to teaching academic writing. Tutors filter the training through their BAK of writing and may find one approach to tutoring best fits with their experience. As seen with Alan and Ryan, the junior tutors are introduced to different

theories that inform their practice. In Alan's case, he was more comfortable with Professor Webster's model because of his experience as an ESL teacher. Ryan favoured Professor Smith's because it provided him insight into how he could help with student's writing in disciplines he was unfamiliar with (i.e., students in the faculty). This implies that teaching academic writing takes many forms; in a writing centre, tutors may use multiple approaches to assist the diverse student population requesting writing help.

Tutors benefit from learning about the different theoretical approaches to teaching academic writing because their BAK of writing is likely to differ on a tutor-to-tutor basis. Having the outside influence of the professors from Language Studies meant that tutors were introduced to the debate of how to best teach writing, which can be reflected, for instance, in the contrasting positions of Freedman (1993) and Hyland (2004). As exhibited in the AWC, an effective training program embraces the individual differences of various tutors' BAK of writing and creates opportunities for the tutors to think about writing in terms they are comfortable with. It also informs the AWC with regards to overcoming issues with the sociocultural pedagogy it employs (i.e., Blau, Hall, & Sparks, 2002; Cumming & So, 1996; Myers, 2003; Thonus, 2004).

Reflective learning in the AWC

Adding to the complexity of the effectiveness of the AWC tutor training program is that this action assumes that junior tutors will learn to tutor in the AWC. The junior tutors' reflective learning – that is, socializing into their new roles as they gain experience and reflect on the ways the AWC philosophy may inform their practice – occurs through similar influences that affect the training. Each junior tutor brought their own BAK of writing to the AWC, which functions as a filter for their developing sense of how to teach academic writing. They begin to learn what

tutoring in the AWC means when they participate in the training; but, their reflective learning occurs as they work *with* student writers, which, interestingly, was anticipated by the senior tutors.

The pre-service training introduced the junior tutors to the major elements of the sociocultural pedagogy employed by the AWC. During the training, the junior tutors were introduced to the AWC as the senior tutors established the guidelines of tutoring – more specifically, guidelines for helping students with HOC as well as LOC in different circumstances, a point which was echoed by Professor Webster. Junior tutors learned that tutors in the AWC act as a writing coache and as a peer to the student by using conversation to support a student's writing at any point in their writing process. The junior tutors' learning is dependent on the prior learning of senior tutors, who use their own varied, collective experiences to develop the approach to pre-service training.

Learning to tutor in the AWC occurs through a series of ongoing interactions whereby the junior tutors are introduced to the AWC pedagogy and are supported in their application of the expected practices. Junior tutors are socialized into the AWC as they move forward from the pre-service training into their first session and gain further experience – as they move from a position of legitimate peripheral participation (LPP) and become a full-fledged practitioner (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The different situations that junior tutors experience in working with student writers build their repertoire of tutoring while developing an understanding of how the AWC guidelines apply to different types of situations. Through this transition period, the junior tutors' reflect on their practice (Schön, 1983) and, in doing so, they appeared to have internalized the training and participate in the expansive cycle of the AWC.

Still, the junior tutors participating in the study seemed to feel that the pre-service training was not what they had expected. Alan and Ryan both indicated that the pre-service training introduced more theoretical than practical issues; however, both showed signs that the training shaped their understanding of tutoring. Both aligned themselves with the AWC pedagogy that was introduced in the training. In particular, Alan indicated that the training directed the assistance he would provide to student writers in that he would restrain himself from editing student writing despite believing this service to be beneficial. The fact that Alan and Ryan aligned themselves with the AWC philosophy indicates that they perceived it as being an effective approach to teaching academic writing.

An important point here is that had the training been limited to the pre-service training, it would not have been as successful in assisting junior tutors in aligning themselves with the AWC. The junior tutors' learning was found to depend on institutionalized practices beyond the pre-service training. The AWC uses reflective genres – genres, such as tutor notes and mentor team observations, which enable tutors to build their repertoire of knowledge – to prompt junior tutors' reflections-in-practice. The tutor notes included in the study suggest how junior tutors typically apply the pre-service training in their role as tutors in the AWC. Writing the notes provides an institutionalized moment for tutors to reflect on the session and report on what they did to help the student. The tutor notes considered in chapter 8 provided evidence of the tutors using the guidelines introduced during the training, which suggests that the practice of writing the notes helps tutors show that they align with the AWC philosophy.

It was also found that the AWC' practice of organizing mentor team observations further contributed to the junior tutors' socialization. As a reflective genre, the mentor team observations

allow the AWC to follow up on how a junior tutor positions themselves with the AWC guidelines. In using this approach, the AWC attempts to ensure that all tutors provide similar assistance to students visiting the AWC through prompting junior tutors to reflect-in-practice. Those who are found providing assistance inconsistent with the AWC pedagogy is further prompted to conform to the AWC philosophy. Similar to the tutor notes, the mentor team observations also help Martha follow the junior tutors' practices in that she reads all reports to ensure that tutors are providing a consistent service for student writers. This is an example of how reflective learning in the AWC is supported through particular mediating genres – the tutor notes and the mentor team observations – employed to continue socializing junior tutors after the pre-service training.

Tutor Training as Ongoing and Tutor-Based

These findings support Thonus' (2001) claim that the sociocultural writing centre pedagogy developed by North (1984) and Bruffee (1984) restricts what methodology may be employed in the writing centre. Tutor agency is restricted by the guidelines that are set by the tutor training in that, as an employee, they are required to provide certain types of assistance to students. Dinitz and Kiedaisch (2003) responded to the issue of pedagogy limiting tutor agency by claiming that the voices of tutors should contribute to a more inclusive pedagogy. The AWC went beyond having tutor voices contribute through the use of a series of meetings for senior tutors to design the pre-service training.

Thonus (2001) called for tutors to develop a methodology based on their own experiences in the writing centre, which clearly happened in the AWC preparations and support for training junior tutors to teach academic writing. Through a series of historical and recent changes in the

coordinator's role, senior tutors became central in the training of junior tutors because they embodied the living organizational knowledge of the AWC philosophy. The senior tutors questioned the effectiveness of the 2011 training and conceptualized what the 2012 training should set as the AWC guidelines for tutoring. It was through their experiences that contradictions in the activity system were revealed, which contributed to the expansive cycle of the AWC and the overall success of the training.

The AWC employed a similar approach to Bell (2001), who claimed that tutor training should occur through an ongoing institutionalized process of reflection or through "structured participation." Bell holds that tutor training should prepare new tutors to identify situations to adopt a more directive or non-directive approach, which is similar to the AWC training program. Training in the AWC occurred through an ongoing reflective process that lasted from July 2012 through October 2012 whereby senior tutors played an active role in designing the orientation. The senior tutors introduced various situations and ways to approach them with regards to being directive or non-directive based on their experience-based knowledge. Junior tutors were introduced to the AWC through the training and were socialized through their use of the two reflective genres discussed above. The AWC differs from Bell's (2001) training in that the AWC arranged for the senior tutors to be primarily responsible for supporting the socialization of junior tutors as opposed to the director.

The AWC relied on an implied hierarchy in its division of labour whereby the senior tutors attempted to pass their experience-based knowledge to the junior tutors. Doing so allowed the AWC to transition between coordinators while maintaining consistency with the AWC activity system. The coordinator assumed administrative responsibilities while establishing a

hierarchy among the tutors to train junior tutors. Having junior tutors in a mentor team with senior tutors from the start of the training through October 2012 ensured that junior tutors would develop their confidence in tutoring. Vandenberg (1999) found that writing centres were becoming uncomfortable with hierarchies being excluded from tutor training. In the AWC, a hierarchy was used to ensure that the training maintained a consistency with previous pedagogy in the AWC and to support junior tutors as they were socialized.

Tutor training introduces new tutors to issues related to teaching academic writing in the writing centre. Thonus' (2004) sees that training implies a set approach to tutoring through the introduction of the sociocultural pedagogy. As new tutors are introduced to this pedagogy, a writing centre that builds theory through the experiences of its tutors reconsiders what type of assistance students should receive. Cogie (2006) suggests that writing centres should approach student writing on an individual basis, which echoes Martha's vision for the AWC. The AWC training program provided new insights into tutoring through the voices of the senior tutors, who designed the training and supported the junior tutors' reflective learning that occurred on-the-job.

Regarding multilingual writers, Myers (2003) suggested that tutors should be prepared to offer assistance with HOC and LOC so that all students may benefit from visiting the writing centre. In the AWC, tutors were trained to help multilingual writers by being introduced to the sociocultural pedagogy (i.e., Bruffee, 1984). Pedagogy in the AWC employs Myers' (2003) recommendation, which was clearly communicated during the training. Building pedagogy through the experiences of senior tutors in the AWC created the theoretical space needed to construct a more inclusive pedagogy.

Tutor training provides a writing centre with a means of building organizational knowledge related to tutoring as the demands that students place on a writing centre change. Thonus (2001) called for a methodology to be constructed based on the experiences of tutors in the writing centre so that the mythology of the sociocultural pedagogy may be challenged. The pre-service training of the AWC is an example of how tutor training can be designed according to the methodology employed by its tutors as opposed to the principles of the sociocultural writing centre pedagogy. Most notably, the greater importance given to the experience-based knowledge of the senior tutors led to a shift in pedagogy in the AWC in that tutors could assist with LOC when they impede on HOC. This change meant that students visiting the AWC would be more likely to receive assistance with their individual academic needs while receiving consistent help from the tutors.

Within the hierarchy of the AWC, junior tutors successfully learned to teach academic writing based on the experiences of the senior tutors. The nature of learning to tutor seems to be related to how the junior tutors are guided in the application of the knowledge externalized during the pre-service training. With the senior tutors providing insight during the training and supporting the tutors in their mentor teams, the AWC was able to provide an effective structure to prepare the junior tutors to teach academic writing. The senior tutors were able to prepare their knowledge of learning by reflecting on their experiences as they prepared to coach the junior tutors. The success of the training was that the AWC institutionalized multiple practices that prompted junior tutors to reflect-in-practice as they became full participating member of the AWC activity system.

Tutor training entails enabling *and* constraining new tutors. It enables new tutors by introducing them to a new understanding of writing and how to teach academic writing. It constrains new tutors by providing a particular framework within which they are expected to work. The training is fundamental to the success of an academic writing centre yet limits an individual tutor's agency within the writing centre. At the same time, though, tutors are expected to respond to the specific needs of the student writer in front of them. Tutors in the AWC are trained to adopt an approach that is either directive or non-directive, depending on the individual needs of the student writer. Focusing on HOC has been a historically significant aspect of the sociocultural pedagogy commonly employed in an academic writing centre. This pedagogy is enacted by the tutors, who are on the front-lines every day.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented an analysis of the major findings of this study by connecting them with previous published research on tutor training in writing centres. The analysis has explored how historical *and* cultural influences from outside and inside the AWC shaped the pre-service training and the reflective learning of junior tutors. It has also been argued that the coordinator's listening to the voices of experienced tutors is very important when the writing centre is preparing to train new tutors, and yet junior tutors are ultimately responsible for internalizing the knowledge that experienced tutors have externalized as the former are socialized into their new workplace. The next chapter concludes the thesis by recapping its main argument and exploring the implications of the argument.

Chapter 10 – So What?: Conclusion and Implications

In this chapter, I address the proverbial question faced by researchers: “so what?” (Smart, 2006). First, I recap the main argument of the study and discuss its implications for the Academic Writing Centre (AWC) and for the training of new writing-centre tutors more generally. Next, I discuss the implications for theory-building. Finally, I briefly consider possible directions for future research.

Recapping the Main Argument

I have been arguing that the AWC effectively prepares its junior tutors to teach academic writing through a complex web of practices. Specifically, the AWC placed experienced tutors as central to training the new tutors by having the senior tutors design and carry out the pre-service training based on their own reflective practice (Schön, 1983), and provide ongoing support in the mentor teams. The AWC tutor training program is effective because, in foregrounding the experiences of the senior tutors, it allows for shifts in pedagogy based on the returning tutors’ perceptions of what is working and needs revising in the existing sociocultural pedagogy. It also creates opportunities in the orientation session for tutors to hear about different perspectives of how to teach writing in different situations, such as assisting multilingual students. It is ongoing and acknowledges that learning on the job (as opposed to only in the training) is another aspect associated with training new tutors. That is, an effective program creates room for junior tutors to learn on the job and reflect-in-practice about their experiences as they happen.

By placing tutors at the centre of tutor training, the AWC showed how a writing centre may adapt to changing realities while maintaining its heritage. That the perceptions of junior

tutors today resemble those of the original coordinator in the 1970s and 1980s is quite remarkable and suggests that the AWC has been able to maintain and transmit a consistent pedagogy throughout its history. At the same time, noticeable differences between the original pedagogy and the pedagogical approach recommended during training, for example in the ways of addressing the needs of multilingual writers, also points to the AWC's capacity to adapt its approach by incorporating new insights from tutors.

For the AWC, this study suggests that the pre-service training, as it was developed and implemented in 2012, was successful because junior tutors seemed to adopt the AWC pedagogy. However, another important finding, as pointed out by the senior tutors, is that a two-day pre-service orientation cannot adequately prepare junior tutors. Rather, it must be complemented by a structure that provides ongoing support for on-the-job learning. In the AWC, such a structure was provided by the mentorship program and the keeping and monitoring of tutor notes.

Implications for Tutor Training in the AWC and in other Writing Centres

Based on this study, I have four recommendations for the AWC. First, I would recommend that tutor notes or a similar type of documentation remain a focus. Tutor notes assist both senior and junior tutors to reflect on their understandings of how they help students. Having these notes stored in a central database the way they currently are means that tutors and the coordinator are able to understand the types of sessions tutors encounter and to reflect on best practices. The notes also allow tutors to share their reflections among themselves and with the coordinator in an effort to further best practices.

Secondly, this study suggests that the training model employed in 2012 is, by and large, worth repeating in the years to come. Having each cohort of senior tutors contribute to the pre-

service training will ensure that there is a continued development in the pedagogy employed by the AWC.

Thirdly, although this recommendation may reflect my disciplinary and researcher bias of being associated with Language Studies, I believe that the AWC should continue to seek tutors primarily from Language Studies. The theoretical knowledge needed to teach academic writing comes not only from the writing expertise of visiting professors and their sessions but also in the courses that tutors take as students of Language and Writing Studies. At the same time, having tutors with this theoretical knowledge will assist the AWC in developing discipline-specific tutoring because the tutors will bring a rhetorical understanding of academic writing to the AWC. Tutors with a rhetorical understanding of teaching academic writing can assist in training tutors from other parts of the university who have knowledge of writing in a particular discipline.

Lastly, I recommend that the AWC should seek a full-time tutor or researcher in addition to the coordinator to maintain a consistent understanding of current relevant theories and best practices in the writing centre. Doing so will continue to benefit the majority of the student population while also allowing for the AWC to respond to new needs in the student population. Tutors currently remain on staff for a maximum of two academic years. In fact, tutors often serve for less than one full year. The relatively quick turn-over of tutors in the AWC means that it is constantly relying on tutor training to maintain a consistent approach to assisting student writers.

On a broader level, the implications of this study for other writing centre tutor training practices are four-fold. First, tutor training is dependent on the active reflection-in-practice of experienced tutors. One way of promoting reflective practice and reflective learning is by having tutors engage in reflective conversations about their experiences. Such conversation can be used

as a tool for helping students in a session *and* as a tool that helps build an approach to developing the training programs that are vital to the continued success of a writing centre. Second, the study suggests that reflecting-in-practice *should* be not only encouraged but also, somehow, a job requirement for tutors. Reflective genres are one way of implementing and monitoring the reflective practice of tutors. Different genres, such as tutor notes and mentor team observations, help develop a tutor's confidence to assist other students with their academic writing. A third implication of the study is having experienced tutors assume a central responsibility in training new tutors helped to maintain a consistent approach to tutoring within a writing centre while new tutors were socialized into their roles. This suggests that having tutors play a central role in the training can help a writing centre transmit its pedagogical tradition and heritage. At the same time, however, this study also suggests that pedagogy grows – and should grow – in response to the rising tensions that exist between the existing philosophy of a particular writing centre and the beliefs and experiences of the majority of the tutors. One way in which pedagogy can evolve is by incorporating the experiences and reflections of senior tutors in the training of new tutors.

Implications for Theory-Building

As discussed in Chapter 3, Smart, Currie, and Falconer (forthcoming) differentiate between a theory and a theoretical concept. A theory can be seen as a broad generalizing claim about the nature or cause of a material or social phenomenon, whereas a concept can be viewed as one particular facet of a broader theory. Three theoretical concepts emerged from the findings of the study: “experience-based knowledge,” “reflective learning,” and “reflective genre(s)”. Reflecting Schön (1983) and Lave and Wenger (1991), “experience-based knowledge” refers to knowledge that is acquired through experiencing and reflecting on a wide range of situations

related to a professional practice. More specifically, it refers to the “know-how” that experienced practitioners develop over time.

Also reflecting Schön (1983) and Lave and Wenger (1991), the term “reflective learning” refers to learning that occurs on the job as novice practitioners begin to reflect on their experience(s) and conceptualize what it means to practice their new profession. One way that reflective learning may occur is through an individual’s experience with a “reflective genre,” a concept that emerges from the intersection of Miller’s (1984) conception of genre and Schön’s (1983) theory of reflective practice. A reflective genre is a text-based social action that prompts a moment of reflection-in-practice on the part of a practitioner, with this reflection-in-practice contributing to the individual’s repertoire of professional knowledge. Examples of reflective genres in the AWC include tutor notes and mentor team observations. By prompting reflective learning, reflective genres may assist novice practitioners in becoming socialized into a new profession or workplace as they progress from an initial position of legitimate peripheral participation towards the role of a full practitioner.

Directions for Future Research

Finally, there are several lines of future research that could follow on from this study. First, researchers could focus on tutors who are not native speakers of English. Considering the needs of multilingual *tutors* in the training may provide insight into potential gaps existing between current tutor training practices and the needs of multilingual tutors. Related research could also explore the tutoring needs of multilingual student writers. Also, future research could investigate social interactions between tutors and students during tutorial sessions. Here the issue to be addressed would be how tutors’ reflections-in-practice emerge out of particular types of

experiences in these sessions with student writers. Lastly, the ways in which some tutors appear to resist the accepted pedagogy in a writing centre during their pre-service training and early experiences of working with student writers could be examined. Such research could help improve the effectiveness of tutor training. Combined, these avenues for future research may deepen our understanding of how pedagogy is taught, learned, and used in a writing centre employing tutors of various disciplinary and linguistic backgrounds.

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Appendix A: Interviews with Participants

Table 2: Interviews with participants

Interviewee	Date of Interview	Length of Interview
Stacey (Tutor 1)	I1 – July 17, 2012	54 minutes
Gina (Tutor 2)	I1 – July 19, 2012	54 minutes
Megan (Tutor 3)	I1 – July 24, 2012	51 minutes
Gina	I2 – July 25, 2012	E-mail
Martha (Coordinator 1)	I1 – August 8, 2012	56 minutes
Martha	I2 – August 8, 2012	E-mail
Elaine (Coordinator 2)	I1 – August 10, 2012	97 minutes
Megan	I2 – August 13, 2012	61 minutes
Stacey	I2 – August 15, 2012	52 minutes
Gina	I3 – August 15, 2012	47 minutes
Stacey	I3 – September 21, 2012	41 minutes
Megan	I3 – September 21, 2012	65 minutes
Alicia (Coordinator 3)	I1 – September 27, 2012	49 minutes
Alan (Tutor 4)	I1 – October 1, 2012	62 minutes
Ryan (Tutor 5)	I1 – October 19, 2012	E-mail

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Tutor Interviews

First interview: A general introduction to the tutors experience in the AWC

- Could you give me an overall sense of how you feel your experience as a tutor in the [AWC] has gone?
- Do you remember your first writing tutorial/session and how it went?
- Could you talk about how you viewed the role of a writing tutor before you began working at the [AWC]?
- Has your view of the role of the writing tutor changed as you gained more experience, and if so, how has it changed?
- Could you talk about your understanding of the [AWC's] philosophy on working with students? Has this influenced your tutoring practices and if so, how?
- Could you tell me about how your views about writing itself have changed since becoming a tutor?
- Do you think you've grown as a person in any way since starting in the [AWC], and if so, how have you grown? What do you most value about this experience?
- Having tutored for as long as you have, would you have some advice that you might give someone who has just started tutoring in the [AWC]?
- Is there anything else you think I should know to understand your experience as a tutor better?

Second interview: A discussion on the coaching practices of tutors

- Could you describe a typical day in the [AWC] for you when you're on duty? [Probing questions – good vs. bad?]
- What kinds of problems have you encountered in working with different students in tutorial sessions? Could you talk about what you think caused these problems?
- Have the staff in the [AWC] (the Coordinator(s) and other tutors) been helpful in learning how to deal with these problems and if so how have they helped?
- Could you talk about the process of learning how to work with students when they come to the [AWC]? What did this learning involve and who did you learn from?

- What do you think is the best way to work with student writers when they visit the [AWC]? Have your views on this changed over time?
- Are you aware of genre theory? If so, do you think that it influences your coaching practices, and if so, how does it influence your practices?
- Do you have any thoughts about working with students who aren't English native speakers and who have difficulties with their writing because of this?
- How do you approach working with these students? Is it different from your approach with English native speakers?
- Is there anything else you think I should know to understand your coaching practices?

Third interview: Pre-service training

- How did the pre-service training go?
- What did you do in order to prepare for the training? How did the tutors organize the workshops they way they did?
- Did new tutors understand what we were trying to say? If so, how did they seem to interpret the discussions in the different sessions?
- Were there any memorable moments in the training session?
- How do you see the mentor system that the coordinator has set up?
- Do you think there are any changes in the [AWC] pedagogy in the pre-service training and, if so, what influenced these changes?
- How did the pre-service training prepare new tutors for their first session(s)?
- Was there anything about the training that you would do again?
- Was there anything that you would do differently?

Interview with Junior Tutors

- Could you give me an overall sense of how you feel your experience as a tutor in the [AWC] has gone?
- Do you remember your first session and how it went? Did the pre-service training prepare you for your first session and, if so, how did it prepare you?
- Could you talk about how you viewed the role of a writing tutor before you began working at the [AWC]?

- Has your view of the role of the writing tutor changed as you gained more experience, and if so, how has it changed?
- Could you tell me about how your views about writing itself have changed since becoming a tutor? How has this influenced tutoring students in other disciplines?
- How did the pre-service training go? Were there any memorable moments in the training session?
- How do tutor notes help you in your daily role as a tutor? Do they help you learn from your experiences and, if so, how do they?
- Having tutored for as long as you have, how would you say you've been learning to tutor? Have there been any particular influences in this process?

Coordinator Interviews

Interview 1 with Martha (C1)

- Could you give me an overall sense of how your experience as the coordinator in the [AWC] has gone?
- Could you talk about how you viewed the role of a writing centre prior to becoming a coordinator yourself?
- Has your view on this changed as you gained more experience, and if so, how has it changed?
- Could you talk about your sense of the [AWC's] philosophy? How has this influenced your overall sense of what the [AWC] does on-campus?
- What vision do you have for the [AWC] with the new academic year? Do you plan to change any of the [AWC] approaches, and if so, how will you change it?
- How do you view tutors in the [AWC]? What role do they play?
- Do you think you've grown as a person in any way since starting in the [AWC], and if so, how have you grown? What do you most value about this experience?
- Having coordinated in the [AWC] for as long as you have, what advice would you give to someone who has just started tutoring in the [AWC]?

Interview 2 with Martha (C1) and Gina (T2)

- What topics, issues, ideas, questions, etc. do tutor notes address?
- Why do you read the tutor notes?

- Under what circumstances do you read them (at their leisure, on the run)?
- What purposes do tutor notes fulfill? How do you use them?

Interview with Elaine (C2)

- Could you give me an overall sense your experience as the coordinator in the [Academic Writing Centre (AWC)]?
- Could you talk about the origins of the [AWC]? Was there a need that you were trying to fill? When did you start it? Why? For what purpose?
- Did research influence your ideas for the [AWC], and if so, how/who did it?
- Could you talk about your sense of the [AWC's] philosophy? How had this influenced your overall sense of what the [AWC] did on-campus?
- How did you approach changes in pedagogy? Would you make any specific considerations?
- How do you view tutors in the [AWC]? What role do/did they play?
- Do you think you've grown as a person in any way through your experience in the [AWC], and if so, how have you grown? What do you most value about this experience?
- Having coordinated in the [AWC] for as long as you have, what advice would you give to a new coordinator?
- What advice would you give to someone who has just started tutoring in the [AWC]?

Interview with Alicia (C3)

- Could you give me an overall sense of how your experience as the coordinator in the [Academic Writing Centre (AWC)] has gone?
- Could you tell me about your view of the role of a coordinator before and how it has changed?
- Could you talk about your sense of the [AWC's] philosophy? How had this influenced your overall sense of what the [AWC] did on-campus?
- What vision did you have for the [AWC]? Did you try to change anything from the existing pedagogy?
- Could you tell me what you saw the role of a tutor being?

Appendix C: Progress Report Samples

From Progress Report 7

I've been able to do three interviews with tutors over the last two weeks. I managed to find a third tutor as a participant... I've had one interview with each of them based on the first "BAK"-oriented interview questions. I've loved the experience of listening to other tutors talk about their perceptions of the [AWC] in different aspects. Some things that are emerging in that first wave of data is that tutors are: a) influenced directly by the courses they are taking – tutors involved in writing studies courses have identified genre theory as an influence in their practices while others have identified that the methodology courses in LWS do the same; b) everyone has a good understanding of the "rules" of the [AWC]. By that, I mean that they understand the pedagogy presented to them in their training program and all try to abide by it whenever possible; and c) there are similarities in tutors identifying specific students as difficult students to coach in a writing conference (mentally handicapped, multilingual writers, and mature students).

One thing that has been very interesting is to hear the similarities in each tutors understanding of different aspects of the [AWC] philosophy – we all received one training session and interpreted it in similar ways. Over time, these tutors identified that they learned what it meant to tutor in the [AWC]. When I asked about their first sessions, two of three tutors identified that it was a tough experience for them because they didn't know what the theoretical ideas from their training meant until they gained some experience. Something else that is interesting came from my question about the advice they would give novice tutors and the ways in which they've changed as individuals as a result of their experiences as tutors (again, participant-identified as inseparable from being grad students in [LWS]). For novice tutors, the consensus is that it takes time to learn how to coach student writers – even the most typical and "easy" student to have. Regarding the how they've changed as individuals, it sounds like they have taken parts of their identities as writing coach and applied it to other areas. One tutor identified that she is more patient than before. When asked how she learned that, she said that she had a student who had a learning disability that was not apparent and she learned with hindsight that she had to be patient with everyone because she didn't know that such circumstances existed.

[...]

I'm gearing up to start a second wave on interviews (the one that I hoped to hear from tutors this week – that term paper needed more attention at later stages in my draft than I thought it would). It's related to tutor perceptions of genre theory (which two identified in the first interview) and multilingual writers (which the same two also identified). I am also preparing to start interviewing the current coordinator as well as [Elaine] next week. I plan to use both of these interviews to get a better-rounded sense of the historical conditions within which the [AWC] developed and how the current coordinator views their role, the role of the [AWC], and any experiences that influence that perception (their history in academic learning environments).

From Progress Report 9

[...]Something that I've been able to think about is the organizational context that is the [AWC]. I have interviewed two key informants (coordinators) for this part and have been able to connect some dots between them. From the current coordinator's perspective, there is a natural progression because the [AWC] is now envisioned to specifically address the needs of students. I think that there might be a disconnect between the perception of the coordinator and the previous pedagogy – there's the thought that the [AWC] was purely an academic –based service that did not address the students needs; it was identified originally that the students needs were not oriented towards lower order concerns. However, that was when the [AWC] was hesitant to even open its doors to non-English majors (which implies a disciplinary-based genesis for the [AWC]), let alone L2 writers. There was an evolution that happened throughout the 1990s where L2 writers were welcomed. The service they received matched what had been in-place when I started there – help L2 students with higher order concerns to help with their ideas and not the lower order concerns. This was informed by research in that multilingual students writing in university courses were found to have similar needs to native speakers of English. The pedagogy evolved by looking at specific disciplinary writing, such as engineering. The focus of the [AWC] has culturally and historically been disciplinary-based and not language-based. The 2012-2013 academic year is at a crossroads with that history in that it is moving into relatively uncharted territories for the [AWC]. There was a previous effort to look at the needs of L2 writers, which seemed to have faded away...

From Progress Report 10

[...] During the pre-service training, I was able to introduce my study to the group with a five minute talk. Afterwards, there was a very positive response from the new tutors. I was able to choose who I would like to include and have since contacted two tutors' to see if they would like to participate. One tutor is an MA in [LS] and the second is an engineering undergraduate student... I am pretty sure that this is the first engineering student to ever become a tutor in the [AWC]... Before, I defined the role of a tutor as four-fold: Coach in writing conferences, mentor in training, teacher in workshops, and learner in training sessions. I think one way that my data is suggesting to limit my focus in the final report is to look in particular at the mentor and learner in the training sessions and the coach in writing conferences. I think that it would be fascinating to go into more detail about the workshops that tutors take on as a part of their job but I think that this is one aspect that I can cut out from the final report because I am writing a Masters thesis and not a dissertation. That's something that could be taken up in future research, similar to including student perceptions in the [AWC] (which is another idea that I have). It's clear that the primary role of tutors in the [AWC] is to function as a writing coach. Our training this year has focused on how to coach students within and outside of your disciplinary expertise and how to coach second language (or multilingual) writers. I am interested in seeing how the discussions that we have had in the pre-service training influence and are observable in the practices of new tutors. We set the tone for what we expect tutors to do in their primary role and have had experts come in to discuss specific theories that would help tutors in their role and had experienced tutors discuss the practicalities of coaching [...]