Purpose of the Discussion section or chapter (note: this is an abbreviated discussion chapter):

In this chapter, you will begin by briefly summarizing the study. Generally speaking, the purpose of the Discussion section/chapter is to provide readers with a more in-depth interpretation of your findings and to offer practical recommendations for implementing these findings or changes, in addition to outlining the limitations of your study and proposing directions for future research. You will also want to be sure to discuss the significance of your findings. The structure of this chapter can vary from one dissertation to the next, so you'll want to follow your program's recommended structure. When you are writing about your implications and recommendations, you will especially want to consider your audience (audience is always a consideration when writing, but in this chapter, your audience takes on a more specific identity). For example, if I know that I have teaching implications, I need to consider specifically which groups of teachers (elementary, high school, college, etc.) I am making suggestions to, and use this information (informed by my findings), to consider the practicality of my suggestions. In other words, you probably don't want to recommend something that your target audience won't be able to carry out. Additionally, in this chapter you will need to reference scholarship more often then you did in chapter four (findings) because you will be discussing how your study sits with the scholarship on your topic.

Potential Writing Moves to Make:

-Briefly summarize the study

-Use headings and multiple levels of headings as necessary (this helps to guide readers)

-Consider your audience. Knowing who you are making suggestions to will inform what suggestions you make.

-Reference other scholarly literature to help situate your study (Questions to consider: does it contribute to the established scholarship on your topic? Is it in opposition to the scholarship on your topic? How is it similar to, or different from the existing scholarship on your topic? What makes your study/findings unique and/or significant?)

DISCUSSION

Summary of the Study

This qualitative, single case study took place in an advanced English course, entitled "Disability and Writing", and describes the perceptions of feedback of undergraduate seniors and their professor. Additionally, this study describes students' applications of feedback during revision and the professor's rationale and method for providing feedback and using it as a form of writing pedagogy. The findings from this study support the theory that writing is socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1978; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wells, 2000; Halliday, 2013; Smagorinsky, 2013), that it is complex and nuanced much like an ecosystem (Cooper, 1986; Dobrin, 2012; Macmillan, 2012), and that the act of writing is recursive (Emig, 1968; Hairston, 1982; McComiskey, 2000; Murray, 1972; Sperling, 1998).

> **Commented [EKJ1]:** Summary of study design and how theory is linked to findings.

To learn more about student participants' perceptions of feedback and applications of it, I conducted five semi-structured interviews with each of the four student participants, in addition to observing their course and taking notes on each class, and collecting many course materials especially as they related to writing and revision. I also conducted five semi-structured interviews with the professor of the course to gain an understanding of her perceptions and applications of feedback in the context of the course. Of the five semi-structured interviews,

three were centered around students' larger written assignments so that I could understand how they were interpreting and responding to the feedback their peers and professor gave them. My three assignment-based interviews with the professor were conducted to see how she was interpreting students' work and conversing with them through feedback she provided on their written assignments. The remaining two semi-structured interviews included an initial interview where I asked both the students and professor about their perceptions, attitudes toward, and experiences with feedback, while the final interview served as a time for students to reflect on the learning they had done in the course and consider the ways in which their writing improved over the course of the semester. The final interview for the professor also called for reflection on her teaching experience that semester and to identify any growth in her students' learning and writing during the course. Peer review was another significant event both for the course and my study because it offered me the opportunity to witness students giving feedback to one another and to see how the professor intentionally enacted her positive feelings and beliefs toward feedback in the pedagogical practice of peer review.

> **Commented [EKJ2]:** Summary of the data collection and analysis methods.

The purpose of the study was two-fold: (1) to understand participants' perceptions of feedback and gauge how (or if) they were connected to their feedback and revision practices and (2) to examine the conversation that occurred between students and their professor through writing, particularly feedback. Five findings emerged from the data I collected: (1) students perceived feedback to be shaped by their experiences, the way students perceived feedback was situational and context-dependent, and feedback should function to improve the piece, (2) students had similar processes for applying feedback, (3) students used myriad resources to revise their written assignments, however, they were not always aware of all of the resources that they used, (4) the professor perceived feedback as being valuable when it is effective, and

feedback is most effective when it is personalized to the writer, dialogic, and instructive, and (5) when providing feedback, this professor predominantly saw herself as a writing coach and likewise provided coaching-style feedback to students in varied modalities, but primarily through digital end comments.

In this chapter, I focus on further connections between these five themes described previously as they relate to making writing instruction more explicit, adopting an ecological, or holistic perspective of writing and writing pedagogy, approaching course design with greater intentionality, and pursuing student-centered pedagogical practices within writing curricula. I now turn to a discussion of implications and their pedagogical implications and suggest future research.

Contributions of the Study

In preparation for this study, my research indicated that there were three kinds of dissonance regarding writing pedagogy with respect to feedback and revision: 1) the unfulfilled expectations of faculty that arise as a result of their pedagogical practices, (2) differing perceptions of feedback and revision between students and faculty, and (3) miscommunications between faculty and students. However, my study challenges these dissonances because *if* they occurred, they did so on a small, less significant scale than the literature indicated (Doe et al., 2013; Dorow et al., 1998; Glew et al., 2011; Gruber, 1999; Reardon, 2015; Sommers, 1980, 1982; Sperling & Freedman, 1987; Stellmack et al., 2012; Stonewater, 2002; Szymanski, 2017; Warnock et al., 2017; Zhu, 2004).

In my study, I found that student participants often met their professor's expectations for their work and learning, as evidenced by the multiple, short assignment-based interviews that I conducted with Dr. Darcy about her reflections on students' work. This can be attributed to the

fact that Dr. Darcy was highly intentional about every activity that she planned within her curriculum, an idea that I discuss in more detail below. In essence, her students met her expectations because she expertly guided them in doing so. With that said, the one instance that students did not meet her expectations was when they failed to recognize that all of their papers were of the same genre, and so they kept making the same kinds of writing mistakes as a result of this. Dr. Darcy attributed this to their lack of experience with identifying genre conventions and to the fact that she did not discuss the genre features of the papers with them. Upon reflection, she realized that if she was to teach this course again, she would explicitly address the genre and its conventions and have students practice working with this genre before submitting a major paper assignment within it. Thus, her expectations were not met partly because she did not explicitly discuss the genre of their papers with them, corroborating what the literature indicated about the gap in faculty expectations and practices (Doe et al., 2013; Dorow et al., 1998; Gruber, 1999; Stonewater, 2002; Szymanski, 2017; Warnock et al., 2017; Zhu, 2004). However, Dr. Darcy reflected on her pedagogical practices and made a plan to adjust them for the next time she taught the course, which is really the takeaway here.

The findings from my study differed from the literature about students and faculty perceiving feedback and revision differently (May et al., 2010; Smith, 1997; Sommers, 1980; Sperling & Freedman, 1987; Wallace et al., 1996) because unlike the literature, my participants had similar understandings of them. All participants believed that the purpose of feedback was to improve the writing and should be constructive in nature. However, both student participants and their professor's perceptions of feedback were influenced by their past experiences with it and knew that its success was determined by the context in which it was given and received, notions that were not thoroughly discussed, if at all, in the literature that I reviewed to inform this study

(Agricola et al., , 2020; Bilbro & Clark, 2013; Can & Walker, 2014; Chong, 2018; Dowden et al., 2013; Straub, 2000; Treglia & Treglia, 2009). In this way, my study extends our knowledge of how students and faculty perceive feedback and reveals the complexity of feedback events that we as educators need to be more attentive to. As for both groups' perceptions of revision, the student participants in my study were aware of the varying levels of revising and they each had their own plan for approaching revision. This is in contrast to what much of the literature indicated about students having the belief that revision equated to proofreading (Anthony et al., 2008; Bleakney, J. & Pittock, 2019; Castello, et al., 2012; Crawford, 1993; Garner & Shank, 2018; Macpherson et al., 2015; May et al., 2010; Wallace et al., 1996) and so they failed to deeply engage with true revision, or a re-visioning of the paper that would require global level changes to be made in order to improve the work. Because the student participants in my study and Dr. Darcy were aware of these varying levels of revision, they did not experience a dissonance or gap in their expectations of what revision meant and the students' revision plans and revised papers reflected this as did Dr. Darcy's responses to our assignment-based interviews. Their similar understandings may be due to the fact that these students were upper-level undergraduate students who were familiar with general expectations regarding the quality of their writing within their discipline and also their experience with writing and being more aware of their writing processes. Another contributing factor could be that Dr. Darcy created peer review guidelines that had students focus their feedback on global level changes versus local level changes, and so the kinds of revisions that students made were influenced by the guidelines that Dr. Darcy gave them. All of these factors contributed to their shared perceptions of and expectations for feedback and revision.

Lastly, my study challenged much of the literature (Bilbro & Clark, 2013; Kim, 2004; Prior, 1995; Smith, 1997; Sommers, 1982; Sperling & Freedman, 1987; Treglia & Treglia, 2009) that I reviewed in preparation for this research in that student participants and their professor did not experience miscommunication between each other with respect to feedback and revision. This was pleasantly surprising to me because I fully expected to witness such miscommunications, however, they did not occur for either party. During our multiple interviews, students repeatedly reported that they understood Dr. Darcy's feedback and, with the exception of not always meeting the genre conventions of the papers, their revised work evidenced this as well. Student participants always felt that Dr. Darcy understood them because her comments reflected as much and her suggestions for revision were on par with ways in which students envisioned improving their work. Based on my interviews with Dr. Darcy, she did not feel as if she struggled to communicate effectively with students, nor did she indicate that she felt she and her students were experiencing any disconnects outside of them failing to initially recognize that their papers were of the same genre. I attribute their successful communication to her explicit writing instruction, the clarity of her written assignment prompts, the fact that she used the assignment prompt as she assessed their work to ensure that she was accurately assessing them per her prompt, and her commenting style and clarity with which she provided feedback to her students, all of which are important pedagogical practices that we as educators can take away from this study and apply in our own pedagogies.

Implications and Recommendations

Let's face it, writing is personal. The data and my findings all speak to this in some way, whether it be through participants' experiences with and attitudes toward feedback or the professor's rationale and pedagogy being rooted in her own experiences with and beliefs about

feedback as an important aspect of writing pedagogy. If writing is so individualized, then a follow-up question might be, 'well, how can I apply what I learned from this study to writing instruction?' In answer to this question, I claim that although the findings may seem more useful to the study's participants, they are still transferable to broader writing contexts because several themes emerged that have important pedagogical implications which I will discuss in more detail below.

Pedagogical Implications

The instructional implications below are meant to assist educators as they plan writing instruction for upper-level college students, but could also be applicable to educators of students in higher education who will be engaging in writing-intensive courses as well. Overall, allowing opportunities to provide feedback to students in addition to utilizing activities where feedback from peers (such as peer review) is involved is an excellent route to providing writing instruction when created with much intentionality and executed effectively (Chaktsiris & Southworth, 2019; Mitchell et al., 2019; Mulder et. al., 2014; Poveda de Brusa & Harutyunyan, 2019; Reddy et. al., 2021; Yalch et. al., 2019). I argue that a student-centered approach to writing instruction and connecting one's instructional goals with one's writing activities are essential to improving writing pedagogy.

Moving from Implicit to Explicit Pedagogy: Giving Students Access 'Behind the Curtain'

Although upper-level undergraduate students such as juniors and seniors have become enculturated into their disciplines and are likely familiar with many genres of writing used within their discourse community, (a group of people who share a set of discourses, understood as basic values and assumptions, and ways of communicating about their goals) (Gee, 1989; Johns, 1997; Swales, 2017 as cited in Wardle & Downs, 2020) they are still in need of academic support from

Commented [EKJ10]: This is a mini-introduction to this section. As you may have realized from my notes on previous chapters, I really like including these mini-introductions because they help guide the reader by previewing for them what is to come. This is a very popular writing move to make in academic writing.

Notice that I ask a rhetorical question here. I do this because I am writing the question that I anticipate readers have—something along the lines of, "how does this study relate to me in my situation/context?" Readers of academic writing are often reading for that purpose—they want to know how they can apply what they've learned to their situation. So here, I ask the question and promise the answers in the following section, which as you will see, I make good on.

Commented [EKJ11]: I like the specificity of this title because it tells readers right away who my general audience is (I get more specific about this in the first sentence of this section). By doing so, readers can decide, if they haven't already, whether or not they'll be able to apply what they've learned to their context.

Commented [EKJ12]: Identification of my specific audience.

Commented [EKJ13]: I clearly state my argument—remember, you can think of the entire dissertation as an extended argument of sorts. Yes, it's research and aims to be unbiased as possible, but realistically, everyone has a purpose for conducting research, which is an underlying agenda of sorts. So yes, it's appropriate to use persuasive language in this context.

Commented [EKJ14]: Something you'll want to notice in this chapter are the multiple levels of headings. I can't stress enough how much these guide readers, so don't be afraid to use them! You are or will be suggesting much, so to keep readers anchored, it might be helpful to organize your suggestions (before writing them out) by topic. When I first wrote this, I didn't do that—I just kind of discussed each suggestion without much thought to how I presented/ordered it, and then the feedback I received, in addition to reading over it, suggested that I needed to do a better job organizing my suggestions. Making a brief list or outline might help with this.

educators (Link, 2018). In the case of my student participants, they were no longer novices to writing within their English major, however, they could not be considered experts or masters either because they had not yet acquired or rather, had yet to become adeptly skilled at writing and speaking within their shared, academic discourse community, thus designating them as intermediate-level members of this discourse community (Gee, 1989; Johns, 1997; Swales, 2017 as cited in Wardle & Downs, 2020). Because they were not fully fledged members, they still required explicit writing instruction as they continued their apprenticeship as English majors with the hope that they may one day gain the level of expertise to more fully participate in this discourse community (Gee, 1989; Johns, 1997; Swales, 2017 as cited in Wardle & Downs, 2020). We as educators of upper-level undergraduate students need to be mindful that although these students have more experience writing and communicating within their academic discourse community, we still have much to teach them about our academic communities of practice (Johns, 1997 as cited in Wardle & Downs, 2020).

Provide explicit genre instruction. In the context of writing, these upper-level undergraduate students may be expected to have certain mastery-level qualities that they do not yet possess, one of those being genre knowledge (Fisher, 2019). In the case of my study, students had what I would consider to be a well-developed understanding of definitions of genre and furthermore, the social actions of genre (Miller, 1984). However, despite their functional, or "working" knowledge of genres, students needed to possess a technical knowledge of genres in order to properly engage in unassisted transfer (Hill, 2020; Wardle & Downs, 2020) from one assignment in the same genre to the next also in the same genre. A technical knowledge of genre would indicate that students could easily identify the genre and its conventions and furthermore, be able to write in those conventions (Devitt et. al., 2003). In the case of my study, students were

Commented [EKJ15]: Notice the active language in my titling. I'm very obviously making suggestions just in the way I've worded my titles. This is a good move to make so that if readers are just scanning over your document, which, let's be honest—they are, then they can quickly identify what your implications and recommendations are just from the headings and can decide from there if they need to read further on how to implement them.

aware of, or could recognize genre, but they struggled to identify conventions of the genre and furthermore, apply those conventions to a paper that they were writing. Thus, the feed-forward (Walker, 2009 as cited in Merry et. al., 2013), genre-focused feedback that their professor provided them with did not operate as effectively as it could have because students were "missing" the connection that all of their major written assignments were of the same genre and that similar conventions could be applied to future writing assignments within the course. Therefore, I suggest that educators explicitly discuss genres used in their courses, perhaps even disciplines, and identify the features or characteristics of those genres and discuss how students can make certain writing "moves" to successfully address these genre conventions. I also recommend providing students with opportunities to practice identifying genre conventions so that they are able when writing to address the genre more accurately. Doing so will enable students to make the kind of high road transfer (Hill, 2020; Wardle & Downs, 2020) that we as educators look for them to make.

Teach students how to provide feedback to one another. In a similar vein, upper-level undergraduate students still need instruction on how to provide feedback to one another (Holmes et al., 2018; Ondrusek, 2012). As educators, many of us rely on what we think is students' implicit expertise on how to provide effective feedback, when that is not necessarily the case (Holmes et al., 2018; Ondrusek, 2012). While the students in my study appreciated the higher quality feedback they received from one another as opposed to feedback they received from their peers in general education courses, some students, most obviously Finn, still struggled to reconcile their feedback experiences with their own approaches to giving feedback. For example, Finn experienced much tension from the long held and widely circulated belief that receiving feedback needed to include a dimension of pain to be experienced on behalf of the receiver, the

writer. Thus, he restrained himself from giving feedback that had a more global orientation and instead limited his feedback to comments on local concerns. Another student, Rebecca, indicated that she thought feedback was effective when one received a paper back that was "covered in red" also fitting into the narrative that feedback should be painful for the writer to receive. While none of the students in my study made comments that could be interpreted as hurtful or painful to another writer, some of the myths of what feedback is or what it is supposed to do can be obliterated, or at the very least, de-intensified if students are taught how to provide feedback to one another in a way that is *both* kind and constructive and not destructive.

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Limitations

This study is not without limitations. Conducting a single case study allowed me to gain valuable insight into how upper-level college students and their professor perceived feedback, how students applied it, and how the professor provided it. In essence, I was able to not only study the ongoing conversation through feedback between students and their professor, but because I took an ecological perspective, I was also able to observe the intricate "web" (Cooper, 1986) or network of experiences, attitudes, and prior knowledge that all participants carried with the them as they produced and responded to papers. Although I gathered much valuable information on this group of participants that has actionable pedagogical implications, the findings from this study are not generalizable. However, case studies are not meant to be generalizable because their purpose is to deeply investigate a phenomenon and "understand in a meaningful and nuanced way, the view of those within the case" (Stake, 1995, 2000, 2005 as cited in Hesse-Biber, 2017).

Commented [EKJ16]: Skipping content for functionality's sake.

Commented [EKJ17]: This section was initially difficult for me to write because I viewed it as an opportunity for me to beat myself up about the faults/weaknesses of my study. I was wrong—this is not the perspective you want to have going in to writing this section. Instead, you want to admit that there are limitations to your study, but there are strengths as well, and so you should discuss both. Here, I started out with the strengths, and moved to limitations in a judgment-free way of writing.

Furthermore, the small sample size and convenience sampling methods resulted in findings that were only specific to the population under study and not all upper-level college students and professors, again making the generalizability of this study low. As such, findings represent a snapshot of students and their professor at this moment in time, and since writing and feedback activities are fluid, these participants may experience shifts in their beliefs and practices over time.

Another limitation is the context of the course itself. As previously mentioned, the course under study was conducted in a special topics class called "Writing and Disability", and so this was more of a content-focused class that still required much writing rather than a class that was particularly focused on studying writing while being writing-intensive. This distinction is important because learning was directed more toward learning concepts in disability scholarship and less so on learning more about the craft of writing or composition, so this slightly impacted my ability to observe how writing was viewed and discussed by participants in a classroom context because disability concepts took priority. However, the topic of the course itself is especially important as it relates to promoting social justice, equity, and respect for all people.

Additionally, my working relationships with several of the participants may have influenced the ways in which they participated in the study, such as how they responded to questions during interviews and their level of commitment to the course and study itself. Lastly, this study is limited by my inherent biases as influenced by my own perceptions, attitudes and experiences as a writer, student, and writing educator.

Future Research

I suggest that future research should seek to do the following: (1) continue to study the writing and revision practices of upper-level undergraduate students because this population has

been under-represented in the literature on this topic, (2) more studies should take a holistic or ecological perspective (Cooper, 1986) on writing and revision so that the whole process of writing is investigated rather than just the final product or paper, and (3) future research should continue to examine the conversation and interactions between students and professors as they engage in feedback because much of the literature on this topic primarily studies one side of the conversation instead of both (students and professors). Now that more people are seeking both undergraduate and graduate degrees (United States Census Bureau, 2019), it is imperative that we learn more about the ways in which this population interacts with writing so that we as writing educators can better serve them. Upper-level undergraduate students certainly have more writing experience than their novice counterparts, but still have much to learn about writing and giving and receiving feedback, and so we cannot assume that they have expertise when they do not. Furthermore, if we adopt the mindset when researching that writing is personal and the final paper or product is representative of the tip of the iceberg, then we will learn significantly more about students' composing and revising practices which will enable us to tailor our pedagogy to addressing their learning needs and development as writers.

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Commented [EKJ20]: Notice this shift in pronouns to "we." I'm indicating that I'm speaking on behalf of my audience and colleagues. I also do this as an attempt to get readers on my side so that they will the problem and suggestions I have from my perspective and be willing to initiate change.

</div>

Conclusion

When I began this study, I already suspected that people's prior experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of writing, feedback, and revision played an important role in their current writing lives, and in the case of the professor, her curriculum design. However, I could not have anticipated the degree to which these factors heavily influenced their writing lives and pedagogy. All of these factors played a role in developing their interest in writing and helped to cement their identities as writers. Because of their interest in writing, it was easy for participants to recall positive and negative writing experiences. Although all participants had endured negative writing

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Commented [EKJ21]: Admittedly, I didn't know what to write for this section—I just knew that I didn't want to summarize. So, I used this section as an opportunity to talk about how I grew as a researcher in my knowledge of feedback by discussing what my expectations were prior to the study and how my thinking changed as a result of the study. You can conclude however you want, but I recommend staying away from summary. You want to end on a good note, not an re-hashed, boring one.

</div>

experiences, their positive ones outweighed these negative ones and ultimately shaped their identities as writers and led them to their current academic and professional pursuits.

I also learned that students use far more resources than I had suspected, and this pleasant surprise helped me to better appreciate the invisible work that students do while writing and revising and furthermore, inspired me to think about ways that I could generate awareness to students and educators about this important work. Lastly, working with Dr. Darcy encouraged me to think more deeply about my own writing pedagogy and improvements that I could make as a writing instructor that would enhance my teaching and assist me in better aligning my learning goals for students with my own beliefs. I learned so much from all of my participants and have become a better writer, teacher, and researcher because of their participation in this study. Ultimately, it is my hope that other writing educators will benefit from engaging with my study and that they will find practical applications for instruction that they can use in their own classrooms. Writing is truly a collaborative venture, and although the study has concluded, I hope that the findings and implications remain exigent and positively shape writing pedagogy and students' own perceptions of writing, revision, and feedback for years to come.