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Writer Self-Efficacy and Student Self-Identity in Developmental Writing Classes: a Case Study

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WRITER SELF-EFFICACY AND STUDENT SELF-IDENTITY IN DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING CLASSES: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how instructional approaches to teaching developmental writing at a large urban community college foster the development of college students' self-efficacy regarding academic writing and self-identity as college students. The case study examined the perspectives of four instructors and six students. The research considered: 1) how students experience the development of self-efficacy related to their academic writing; 2) how students experience their self-identity as college students; 3) how writing instructors foster students' development of self-efficacy as writers; and 4) how writing instructors foster students' self-identities as college students. The findings of this study provided a description of some of the specific ways students enrolled in developmental writing courses experienced the development of self-efficacy and self-identity. The study illuminated some of the practices that instructors use to facilitate both self-efficacy and self-identity in their approaches to teaching. With regard to students, what emerged in the analysis of this data was a sense that they felt both more empowered toward writing in an academic context and more self-identified as college students. The significance of the study demonstrated that fostering relationships among students and with the institution itself, along with scaffolding and contextualizing assignments, builds effective pathways to student success.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The Problem

When some students enter institutions of higher education, they lack certain prerequisite skills, such as basic writing, reading and mathematics skills. Regardless of the reason why students enter higher education without the necessary skills to be successful in college-level coursework, they must be further prepared prior to enrollment in such coursework. Institutional approaches to preparing students in advance of credit-bearing coursework vary widely—some institutions require prerequisite or co-requisite coursework to help prepare students, and some institutions require students to seek remediation prior to enrollment. Programming that prepares students within the context of the specific institution at which they are enrolled is referred to variably—as remedial, developmental or basic. Such programming has existed in higher education since the formation of many higher educational institutions. However, in the latter half of the twentieth century, many institutions of higher learning expanded such programming to accommodate enrollment from a more diverse range of students. During this period, many community colleges with open admissions policies were founded. Such open admissions policies meant that programming needed to be available to address the needs of students underprepared for study at the college-level. This need at these institutions

still exists today, as community colleges continue to be places where students in need of remediation prior to achieving a college degree are welcomed. Community colleges provide educational opportunities for a diverse population of students seeking workforce development, associate degrees, and transfer to four-year institutions ("Federal and State Funding of Higher Education," 2015).

Large numbers of students attend community colleges seeking educational and economic opportunities. Many of these students—nearly 52% of all students enrolled in two-year colleges—require remediation (Complete College, 2012). Students from minority and lower SES groups require remediation at higher percentages (Complete College, 2012). Current approaches to remediate students are largely unsuccessful, and those students who require remediation are less likely to be successful in their higher educational endeavors (Complete College, 2012).

In addition, students who occupy developmental (remedial) classes, are stuck in a liminal educational space—they are in academic non-places betwixt and between. In other words, they are enrolled in classes that they must complete in order to gain entry to college-level classes that actually help them to progress toward educational goals. Many students are stuck in remedial courses for multiple semesters or even years.

While many policymakers and program developers at community colleges are seeking ways to better help students with respect to mastery of specific academic competencies, the recognition of the role affective factors, such as the development of self-identity and self-efficacy, is noticeably lacking in the conversation. These factors play an important role in student success and should be considered in conjunction with the formation of academic skill mastery. Both self-efficacy and self-identity are important

in an individual's success in the academic setting (Bandura, 1977; Weidman, DeAngelo, & Bethea, 2014).

One framework that might be useful is one with a more self-directed, collaborative approach, such as a community of practice (Monaghan, 2011; Wenger, 1999). This approach could help with the development of these critical affective factors in a basic writing class, as this framework is known for its effectiveness in fostering affective development in a self-directed, collaborative pedagogy. Students in developmental education courses within higher education are often not given the type of educational activities that foster self-directed learning, a skill that can lead to greater success in college-level coursework. Students in developmental education coursework are usually not encouraged to develop their own self-identities as college students. Within developmental educational programming, students are not always given tools that foster their ability to take ownership of their own learning. Instead, programming defaults to a more didactic and teacher-centered approach. Learner-centered approaches, such as those derived from a community of practice framework, might be effective in developing better self-efficacy related to academic writing and student self-identity. There are few qualitative studies that examine the influence of self-directed and collaborative versus traditional pedagogical approaches to the instruction of basic writing. Further, a study is needed that will provide a deeper understanding of how these two different pedagogical approaches influence students' development of specific affective factors. If these affective factors contribute to student success at the college-level, then an understanding of how they are influenced by pedagogy is essential.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how instructional approaches to teaching basic (i.e., developmental or remedial) writing courses at a large urban community college foster the development of college students' self-efficacy regarding academic writing and self-identity as college students.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed by the study:

1. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience the development of self-efficacy related to their academic writing at the college level in basic writing classrooms?
2. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience their self-identity as college students in basic writing classrooms?
3. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of self-efficacy as writers?
4. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of student self-identity?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study contribute to both the theory and practice of developmental writing in a community college environment. Theoretically, the study illustrates a case where scaffolding theory in the construction of assignments contributed to the development of self-efficacy in a particular group of students. Further, the study illustrates how the framework of future possible selves operates in student identity. A student's self-efficacy and self-identity are important in an individual's success in the

academic setting (Bandura, 1977; Weidman et. al., 2014). This study's examination of basic writing classes is an important vehicle to examine the best practices for achieving optimal development of these specific affective factors.

Practically, instructors might consider how the use of scaffolding in the construction of assignments could foster the development of self-efficacy in their students. Self-efficacy toward academic writing is an essential affective dimension that can help students as they progress beyond developmental education courses. Further, the study illustrates how instructors' views of the situation of developmental writing can differ from that of their students. Building instruction and choosing materials that foster students' future-focused self-identities could help to strengthen student identities and lead to greater levels of success.

Definition of Terms

Remedial Education: According to Arendale (2007), consists of "a group of courses and/or activities to assist learners to achieve secondary school level basic skills in their identified academic deficit areas" (p. 26).

Developmental Education: Arendale (2007) defines developmental education programs as those that "commonly address academic underpreparedness, diagnostic assessment and placement, affective barriers to learning, and development of general and discipline-specific learning strategies (p. 18).

Learning Assistance: A program that "enables a student to develop the attitudes and skills required for successful achievement of academic goals" (Arendale, 2007, p. 22).

Basic Skills: Broadly refers to a competency level in areas of reading, writing, and mathematics that are necessary for success in higher education and/or the workforce at

the entry level. It is the expectation that these competencies are achieved in primary and/or secondary education. Often refers to literacy programming taking place outside of higher education.

Basic Writing: Shaunessey (1977) attempted to re-frame the experience of remedial education in order to de-stigmatize it. She writes, “the territory I am calling basic writing (and that others might call remedial or developmental writing)” (p. 4).

Preparatory Education: A historical term used in higher education to refer to programming intended to prepare students for college-level courses.

Academically underprepared: Students who have “the potential for success in college when appropriate educational enrichment and support services are provided” (Arendale, 2007, p. 13).

College-ready: Students that have an adequate level of preparedness; this term describes those who do not require developmental coursework, but it is frequently used as negation (e.g. “students who are not college ready”).

Self-efficacy: An individual’s belief that she/he is capable of executing a particular action (Bandura, 1997).

Self-identity: One's self-identity in a psychological sense is a collection of beliefs that a person holds about herself/himself—this construct is also referred to as self-concept in the literature (Baumeister, 1999).

Community of Practice: A community of practice is defined by six key characteristics: “1) self-forming and self-governing, 2) Members share a common interest or passion for a particular topic, 3) Members are involved in the creation of new knowledge, 4) Learning occurs in a real time context, 5) Communities of practice can occur in any area

of an individual's life, and 6) A community of practice facilitates the development of shared meaning and identity formation for professionals" (Monaghan, 2011, p. 430).

Learning Community: "The learning community approach fundamentally restructures the curriculum, and the time and space of students. Many different curricular restructuring models are being used, but all of the learning community models intentionally link together courses or coursework to provide greater curricular coherence, more opportunities for active teaming, and interaction between students and faculty" (Smith, 2004, p. 32).

Self-directed Learning: "Self-directed learning is learning in which the conceptualization, design, conduct and evaluation of a learning project are directed by the learner. This does not mean that self-directed learning is highly individualized learning always conducted in isolation. Learners can work in self-directed ways while engaged in group-learning settings, provided that this is a choice they have made believing it to be conducive to their learning efforts" (Brookfield, S. D., 2009, p. 2615).

Collaborative Learning: "an umbrella term for a variety of educational approaches involving joint intellectual effort by students, or students and teachers together. Usually, students are working in groups of two or more, mutually searching for understanding, solutions, or meanings, or creating a product… Collaborative learning represents a significant shift away from the typical teacher-centered or lecture-centered milieu in college classrooms. In collaborative classrooms, the lecturing/ listening/note-taking process may not disappear entirely, but it lives alongside other processes that are based in students' discussion and active work with the course material" (Smith & MacGregor, 1992, p. 9).

Direct Instruction: “There are five overlapping uses of the term direct instruction: 1. Academic instruction that is led by a teacher regardless of the quality of instruction, 2. The instructional procedures that were used by effective teachers in the teacher effects research, 3. Instructional procedures used by teachers when they taught cognitive strategies to students, 4. Instructional procedures used in the Distar (Direct Instruction Systems in Arithmetic and Reading) programs, 5. Instruction where direct instruction is portrayed in negative terms such as settings where the teacher lectures and the students sit passively” (Rosenshine, 2008, p. 1). For the purposes of this study, the first and fifth of these are relevant.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Study Purpose & Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how instructional approaches to teaching basic (i.e., developmental or remedial) writing courses at a large urban community college foster the development of college students' self-efficacy regarding academic writing and self-identity as college students.

The following research questions were addressed by the study:

1. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience the development of self-efficacy related to their academic writing at the college level in basic writing classrooms?
2. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience their self-identity as college students in basic writing classrooms?
3. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of self-efficacy as writers?
4. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of student self-identity?

Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to explore literature related to developmental education in a community college context, basic writing instruction, and learner-centered pedagogy.

The chapter will begin with a brief discussion of the terminology relevant to developmental education within higher education; such terminology has been nebulous at times and is not used consistently throughout the literature. Following this discussion of terminology, I will explore the construct of developmental education—its history and its current situation in higher education, particularly in community college contexts. While I will explore the current programming approaches to developmental education in general, my specific focus in this section will be on developmental writing programs and models. The next section of this literature review will focus on the context of community college and specifically how students in developmental education courses in these institutions are situated. Within this section, I will introduce three theoretical frames—liminal space, non-place, and heteroglossia—with which to conceptualize the situation of developmental education in a community college context. The last major section of this chapter will focus on literature related to learner-centered pedagogy and basic writing instruction. Within this final section, I will discuss the theoretical framework of a community of practice as one tool to understand self-directed, collaborative learning in the context of higher education. Finally, I will discuss the specific affective factors, i.e., self-efficacy and self-identity, as they relate to academically underprepared college students.

Terminology

There are a number of terms that are associated with this area of postsecondary education. *Remedial*, *developmental*, and *learning assistance* are used throughout the literature to refer to the types of programs that operate between secondary and postsecondary educational programming in higher educational institutions. A remedial

education program, according to Arendale (2007), is “a group of courses and/or activities to assist learners to achieve secondary school level basic skills in their identified academic deficit areas” (p. 26). He defines developmental education programs as those that “commonly address academic underpreparedness, diagnostic assessment and placement, affective barriers to learning, and development of general and discipline-specific learning strategies (p. 18). Finally, he defines a learning assistance program as one that “enables a student to develop the attitudes and skills required for successful achievement of academic goals” (p. 22). Here the nuanced distinction between each term is elucidated, though it should be acknowledged neither researchers nor those actually naming programs at various postsecondary institutions necessarily use any of the above-mentioned language consistently. However, there is utility in recognizing the overlapping terminology and the widespread inconsistency in the literature that exists, prior to discussing this programming in further detail. Further, sometimes such programming is referred to as *basic skills* education or broadly as *preparatory education*, although the former usually refers to literacy education outside the context of higher education and the latter term to programming that existed earlier in the history of higher education.

There is also widespread inconsistency as to how to best refer to the student population in need of this type of postsecondary educational programming. Such students are referred to as *academically underprepared*, *developmental*, or *remedial*. As is true for the programs intended for bringing them success in college-level coursework, each of these terms has a subtly different meaning; although all of the definitions, according to Arendale (2007), refer to students who have “the potential for success in college when appropriate educational enrichment and support services are provided” (p. 13). Recently,

the term *college-ready* has emerged to refer to students that have an adequate level of preparedness; this term describes those who do not require developmental coursework, but it is frequently used as negation (e.g., “students who are not college ready”). It should be noted as well that many college-ready students might at some point require some form of learning assistance—for example, tutoring or counseling.

For the purposes of this analysis, I will keep my discussion consistent with the terms as they are used in individual sources as I mention them. In other cases, where I am not explicitly referring to the work of another researcher, I will use the term developmental education to refer to programs that prescribe specific coursework as a remedy for academic underpreparedness. When appropriate, I will employ the term learning-assistance to refer to those programs that offer support outside of actual coursework. I will refer to students enrolled in developmental education or learning assistance programs as students academically underprepared in a specific subject area, as students enrolled in developmental coursework, or as students participating in learning assistance programs. I will also discuss that very little critical language analysis has been done with regard to the pejorative tone of much of the language used to refer to both this programming and this population of students. The pejorative tone of much of the language used in this field needs to be given thorough consideration through further research as future programming evolves.

Developmental Education

This section will explore developmental educational programs from a historical perspective along with a taxonomy of current models of developmental education in higher education. In addition, I will explore the mechanism for placement in

developmental education; I will end with a brief discussion of considerations germane to the future of such programming in higher education.

A Brief History of Developmental Education

Both Arendale (2011) and the ASHE Higher Education Report (2010) recognize six distinct phases in the history of developmental education in U.S. higher education. Each chronological phase is delineated on the basis of the type of offerings that were available during the time period in question. Programming for students academically underprepared for college-level work began in the early history of the creation of higher educational institutions in the United States. This is classified as "Phase One: 1600s-1820s." A second phase runs from 1830s to 1860s and a third until the mid 1940s—for the purposes of my discussion, I shall refer to these three phases collectively as "The Early Period." I will discuss the phases comprising the mid-1940s through the 1990s as the "The Middle Period," and the final phase as "Current Approaches." In each of these cases I will provide an overview of the programming available during the given time period as well as at least one salient example of the type of program being discussed.

Early period. The need to remediate or develop students in order to ensure successful completion of college degree programs actually emerged as early as the fifteenth century in the higher educational institutions of the United States. Interestingly, developmental education emerged almost immediately in the history of higher education in the United States. It not merely a twentieth century phenomenon, but has been a component of higher educational institutions in the United States throughout their entire history (Arendale, 2011; Rose, 2012). At one point in time, tutoring programs were offered in various forms to prepare students for the demanding academic coursework at

institutions like Harvard and Yale. Prospective students would seek tutoring so that they could gain admission to said universities; students also sought to learn languages necessary for academic study, like Greek and Latin (ASHE Higher Education Report, 2010). In fact, Harvard continued to offer and even required supplementary study and tutoring for its first-year students in the form of recitation sessions. As such, Harvard was the first institution to require some kind of remediation of its students (Boylan & Appalachian State U, 1988).

Tutoring programs remained the primary form of learning assistance for academically underprepared students from the fifteenth through the mid-nineteenth century. It is worthwhile to note that many, if not most, students required some form of learning assistance in order to be admitted to college during this period, as the "quality of primary and secondary education was missing or uneven in most of the United States" (ASHE Higher Education Report, 2010, p. 27). It is also notable that developmental education programs existed only to support the educational objectives of the privileged classes of white males.

During this period, separate institutions emerged to assist in preparing academically underprepared students for college-level study. Appropriately, these schools were called preparatory academies. While many of them were closely associated with a particular school, they were funded and administered independently (Ignash, 1997). Then, in the mid nineteenth century, the University of Wisconsin (UW) instituted an internal department designed to address student underpreparedness in higher education. It was called "The Department of Preparatory Studies" and offered courses in reading, writing, and mathematics. Many colleges and universities soon followed the lead of UW

and created their own departments designed to make up for deficiencies in the public school system. This was a way for them to both increase enrollment and maintain certain levels of academic standards (Brier, 1984). Thus, developmental education programming was broadly integrated into colleges and university curricula. While these programs helped to make a college degree accessible to more people, the majority of people enrolled in colleges and universities were still white males, even with the help that developmental programs offered.

Middle period. It was not until the middle of the twentieth century that new populations of students began to seek the educational advantage of a college degree. Veterans of twentieth century American wars, children of late-nineteenth and early twentieth century immigration waves, African Americans, and women all sought degrees at colleges and universities in increasing numbers during this period. As such, new types of educational programming emerged to meet their needs. While preparing students to successfully complete college coursework was still the goal, these new programs were not focused exclusively on academics—they augmented remediation with a consciousness of racial, ethnic, gender-based, or socio-economic factors. In essence, programs were now imbued with an awareness of the social and cultural circumstances of its student population (ASHE Higher Education Report, 2010).

After World War II, compensatory educational programs emerged; the intention of such programs was to compensate for the social and environmental factors that brought some students to higher education underprepared for the work ahead of them. During this period, colleges and universities began to educate a far more diverse population of learners than ever before. Some were the first in their families to attend

college. This meant that supportive services offered by higher education were far more important than they had been in the past. Compensatory programs sought to equalize opportunity to higher education completion by helping students from traditionally underrepresented populations acculturated to higher education—a problem that their privileged white male counterparts did not have.

A salient example of an emergent compensatory educational program in this period are the TRiO programs, which originally included Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services programs. TriO emerged as a result of the 1969 civil rights law and now extends to a total of eight programs. TRiO and other compensatory educational programs offered special developmental educational services to students who met certain criteria (parents not college graduates, disability, or from a lower SES). These programs were similar in some ways to the previous models in content; they offered tutoring, counseling, and supplemental coursework (ASHE Higher Education Report, 2010). What distinguished this programming was not its approach to education, but the fact that it was intended for an entirely new population of learners, as previous remediation was not aimed at populations traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

It was also during this time that the term *developmental* emerged to replace *remedial*, a term that carried some amount of stigma by this point. Developmental education as both a term and an approach to programming became prevalent in the 1970s. “Proponents of developmental education view it as more comprehensive model regarding the student because it focuses on the development of the person in both the academic and affective domains” (Arendale, 2005, p. 72). While remedial and compensatory programs

looked at students as deficient in skills, developmental education viewed students as inherently capable. Developmental education sought to assist students with a natural progression toward college-level skills. The developmental model integrates other types of encouragement such as career exploration and the building of academic “soft-skills,” like time-management and good study habits. In some cases developmental education offers a “variety of courses that teach material not typically offered in high school but frequently necessary for success in college” (Boylan & Bonham, 2007, p. 2). Examples of such programming are courses like “freshman seminar” or other courses that have curriculum focused on learning strategies and study skills. Critical to the developmental educational model is this recognition that affective skill development alongside the development of academic skills can foster student success.

Current Approaches to Developmental Education

While many higher educational institutions offer some kind of developmental education or learning assistance to students who are underprepared for college-level courses, there are many differences in the types of programming that are currently available and have been available historically. Recently, programming intended to serve students who are academically underprepared for college-level coursework has come under some scrutiny by institutional administrators and policy makers—as funding models for public institutions have been evolving. Programs are losing funding, being forced to reduce available services, or being eliminated altogether—this is especially true at four-year, public universities ("Federal and State Funding of Higher Education," 2015). This trend continues despite the fact that enrollments, especially among students needing supportive programming, continue to rise (ASHE Higher Education Report, 2010). Many

institutions are seeking to accelerate the time students spend in developmental education, as funding is now being tied to graduation rates instead of enrollment rates. As participation in developmental education increases the overall time a student will take to graduate with a degree, it is seen as an impediment to maximizing funding for many public institutions.

Programming designed to serve students who are academically underprepared for college-level coursework takes several forms. Some models focus on preparing students in advance of their enrollment in college courses, while others offer supportive services concurrently with college coursework. Both of these approaches have existed throughout the history of higher education.

Prerequisite models. In prerequisite approaches, students are required to complete at least one, but sometimes a sequence of courses, prior to enrolling in college-level coursework. In some cases, students complete this coursework at a separate facility, such as a preparatory school. In other cases, developmental courses are offered on a credit basis within the actual institution of higher education. The credits students earn for completion of these courses do not, however, count toward graduation requirements (ASHE Higher Education Report, 2010). Further, students who depend on financial aid can use up their maximum allowance prior to finishing their degree program.

Bridge programs. In this accelerated approach to developmental education, students who are not academically prepared for college-level courses take a short course in advance of the start of the academic term. These programs typically do not span an entire term, but only a few intensive weeks. Often these bridge programs are offered during the summer prior to the beginning a new school year. Bridge curricula can consist

of both academic and affective components (McCurrie, 2009). Administrators favor this approach to remediation as it is relatively cost-effective, while writing instructors view the programs less favorably in many contexts—in short, teachers felt bridge programs were effective only when they were well integrated with the relevant college-level course and not merely skill-development workshops (McCurrie, 2009).

Course sequences. At many institutions offering developmental education, students complete a series of courses that prepare them to be successful in college-level courses. Students are placed into a particular course based on their performance on a prescribed placement test and then complete the series from that point of placement. While some are only required to take one course in advance of college-level courses, others—those with lower scores—are relegated to taking a number of courses prior to enrolling in college-level courses (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2009). One example of such a program, among many (this is the most common model in use at community colleges) is at Landmark College (ASHE Higher Education Report, 2010). At this institution, students who are academically underprepared are enrolled in a "pre-credit developmental skills program," which consists of two courses (reading and writing) that are aligned with "skills support" programming (i.e., tutoring, technological resources). Engstrom (2005) claimed that this program is successful because it allows students "opportunities to participate in a variety of reading and writing experiences, understand the multifaceted process of reading, and be active observers of their own reading styles so that they can develop the skills, strategies, and confidence to be successful students" (p. 38). Supporters of prerequisite course sequences see this programming as necessary preparation that must be completed before students can achieve success in college-level

coursework. Opponents of this approach believe that multiple course sequences decrease the likelihood that students will persist to graduation, as they must complete additional coursework that does not count toward graduation requirements, thus extending the total time that it takes to complete a degree program.

Co-requisite models. Programs offering supportive services alongside college coursework take two forms—voluntary and non-voluntary. Voluntary services include tutoring and counseling services; students elect to participate in them as they deem necessary. Non-voluntary co-requisite models either embed developmental curricula within the college level course itself or offer a supplemental session for students who are academically underprepared. Supporters of co-requisite approaches argue that students are more likely to be successful when they are moved through college coursework more quickly, a direct counterpoint to the problems that some have with prerequisite models. According to Hern (2012), "nationwide studies have shown that the more semesters of remediation that a student is required to take, the less likely that student is to ever complete a college-level math or English course" (p. 60). Thus, co-requisite models aim to decrease the amount of time a student spends in developmental courses, thereby increasing their likelihood of success (i.e., degree attainment).

Accelerated learning program. A co-requisite approach to developmental writing instruction, the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) program claims to have dramatically increased the success rates of its academically underprepared students in college-level writing courses. Here students enroll in a complementary course designed to scaffold the requirements of the actual college-level Composition course, which is a nearly universal requirement across all higher-educational institutions for the attainment

of either an associate or bachelor's degree. In CCBC's Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), students were successful because they were supported contextually (Adams et al., 2009). In other words, they were given direct support alongside the required college course, which proponents argue is one of the primary reasons why ALP works. They argue that prerequisite models have lower success rates because completion of developmental courses do not necessarily lead to the ability to succeed in college-level courses because there can be a prolonged period between the completion of a prerequisite and enrollment in the relevant college course. Further, ALP works because it is, in fact, "accelerated." Proponents argue that students often fail to complete lengthy developmental course sequences because they "gave up at some point in the process"—not because they lacked the necessary ability to complete the coursework (Adams et al., 2009, p. 62). Adams el al (2009) argued that underprepared students give up on the prospect of completion for a variety of reasons, but that in general models with long "pipelines," such as those with multiple prerequisite courses are the least successful because students have many opportunities to stop along the way.

Accelerated approaches in California. Other institutions have adopted approaches similar to that of the ALP in practice at CCBC. The California Acceleration Project (CAP) is a program in place in the community college system of California that aims to increase the utilization of accelerated programs like ALP across the entire system. CAP advocates such approaches be used in both Mathematics and English departments. CAP programs are not all identical; instead, participating institutions craft programming according to shared principles of acceleration: backwards design, just-in-time remediation, and intentional support for affective issues (Hern, 2009). CAP programs

have seen increased success rates among student participants, which Hern (2009) attributes to the implementation of the shared principles of acceleration. She argues that most of the knowledge and skills that are taught in developmental course sequences are not used by students in the correlating college-level courses, and therefore, the type of contextual support offered by CAP programs is far more effective.

Developmental Education Placement

Students who are referred or placed in developmental education programs are deemed lacking in at least one essential skill: reading, writing, or mathematics. Generally, the need for developmental education is determined only by the absence of well-developed skills in one or more of these areas. Little to no attention is paid to the reasons why students might lack certain academic skills, which is problematic, as these causal factors could have a direct bearing on the effectiveness of programming. In a given developmental course, students could be returning to school after a significant hiatus, have an untreated learning disability, have a behavioral or emotional condition, speak English as a second language, or have dropped out of high school without ever learning the skill in question. Other systemic factors that contribute to students' need for remediation at the college level include having attended an under-resourced secondary school, lower socioeconomic status, and being a first-generation college student.

Regardless of previous educational experiences, students are placed in developmental education on the basis of standardized tests. In some cases, students are placed using standard college admissions test, such as ACT or SAT. In other cases, they are asked to take a placement exam as part of the admissions process. Community colleges use a range of testing tools for this purpose; some examples include

ACCUPLACER and COMPASS. These placement tools are popular at institutions where all matriculating students have not necessarily taken the standard college entrance exams (ACT or SAT) because the opportunity was not provided to them at their high school or because many years have elapsed since they completed high school. Many students place into developmental education programs because they do not have the requisite skills to be successful in college-level coursework, even though they have successfully completed high school, including college preparatory coursework (Hoyt & Sorenson, 2001). In short, there is a preparation gap between high school completion and college placement that exists, especially in areas where public school districts are low performing.

Developmental Education in the Future

As the previous discussion of history elucidates, developmental education and the surrounding debate are not new in the realm of higher education. Programs intended to prepare otherwise underprepared students have existed in some form throughout the history of higher education. “The controversy over [developmental education] is certainly not new. Bridging the academic preparation gap has been a constant in the history of American higher education and the controversy surrounding it is an American educational tradition” (Arendale, 2011, p. 67). Given this history, it is imperative that programs for students underprepared for college level work continue to be funded and improved upon. It is time to stop looking at developmental education programs as ancillary services offered as a courtesy and begin seeing them as a fundamental and inextricable component of higher educational programming.

While most community colleges do offer some kind of developmental education or learning assistance to students who are underprepared for college-level courses, there

are many differences in the types of programming that is currently available and has been available historically. Recent trends in educational policies and funding strategies have forced community college administrators to re-evaluate the success of developmental education with the goal of increasing graduation rates. “A shift in funding formulas toward performance-based funding for community colleges has increased the importance for institutions to improve students’ success in developmental courses” (Polk-Conley & Squires, 2012, p. 14). However, despite the focus upon developmental education, there is little comprehensive data on the programming— “Most studies draw generalizations based on single-institution data or surveys, do not control for student preparation levels, and lack information about indicators of effectiveness and/or the selection of institutional sites” (Handel & Williams, 2011, p. 30). This is an appropriate starting place for any discussion over the reform of developmental education; policy makers need to consider the heterogeneous populations of developmental education programs, as well as consideration of multiple sites and programs before drawing conclusions. Emergent developmental education programs should have a clear learner-centered consciousness that places student needs at the top of the pyramid, as well as clear consideration of the heterogeneity of the population in a given developmental education program. A recognition of the varying needs of students who are categorically “academically underprepared” is noticeably lacking in developmental educational programming. As Rose (2012) says, “we have to know [students who place into developmental education] better, move beyond ready-made labels and explanations and understand how they go into Basic English, Basic Math, or Reading” (p. 45). Moving in this direction, however,

would require that institutions look at students differently, not as standardized outcomes on a placement exam, but as individuals with unique needs and challenges.

Community College Context

The purpose of this section is to examine developmental education programs in the community college context—to explore how developmental education is situated in community colleges as institutions and among community college students. The discussion that follows will briefly examine institutional characteristics that shape developmental education in community colleges, as well as a description of the student population that participates in developmental educational programming in two-year community colleges.

Two-year colleges were originally developed in order to support the needs of larger four-year schools by offering freshman and sophomore courses, thus allowing the four-year schools to concentrate on both research interests and the teaching of more advanced students with fewer needs (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). These institutions were originally private and called *junior colleges*. When two-year public colleges, called *community colleges*, emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, their private counterparts largely disappeared—they either merged with community colleges or ceased to operate. During this period, two-year institutions offered open enrollment, which meant students with any level of preparedness were free to enroll. Community colleges began to focus on offering programs to serve students academically underprepared for college-level coursework (ASHE Higher Education Report, 2010).

The intentions of such preparatory education programs are laudable, as they strive to offer opportunities to all students seeking the economic benefits of a college degree—a

credential that is increasingly seen as a requirement for middle-class employment in the United States (Georgetown U Center on Education and Workforce Analysis, 2012). According to Keene (2008), "the community college represents the only form of universal access to education, and is thus purported to be the gateway to low-income and minority students' realization of the 'American Dream'" (p. 65). As such, the purpose of this section is to explore the history of developmental education programs, as such programs have recently come under intense scrutiny by educational policy makers, as well as college administrators. In order to foster a complete understanding of such programs, a brief discussion of relevant terminology precedes the discussion of the history of developmental education. Finally, a taxonomy of different approaches to programming in this realm will provide an overview of the types of programs that exist and the arguments that support their existence and continued relevance in higher education.

Community colleges champion philosophies of open-access to students of all backgrounds. In fact, "all publically funded community colleges offer developmental education programs, and almost half provide contracted remedial courses to business and industry" (Perin, 2006, p. 340). Accepting all students who apply means that the promise of a college education is available to all who seek it—anyone willing to do the work necessary to complete a given program and pay tuition fees. Recent trends in the way that public funding is allocated to community colleges have caused many institutions to question this philosophy. Pressure from policy makers to show results, i.e., an increase in completion and graduation rates, has led to an increased focus on the standards at community colleges. This follows the general trend toward quantitative accountability in

the K-12 education system and the four-year college system. Thus, funding is now being allocated to many public colleges and universities based on the number of students who graduate, not the number who are enrolled. Further, developmental education programs are being scrutinized because students enrolled in them have significantly lower completion rates than their college-ready counterparts (Perin, 2006). According to Daiek, Dixon, and Talbert (2012), "developmental education as it is now practiced is not very effective at overcoming academic weaknesses" (p. 37). Their assertion is supported by data compiled in 2012 by *Complete College Now*, that reports only 22.3% of students who enroll in remedial coursework complete it and associated coursework in two years, while only 9.5% of those students actually graduate within three years.

Student population. Many students enrolled in developmental courses at community colleges occupy a type of liminal space (Boys, 2011)—they are enrolled, but not earning credit toward a degree. They are not in high school, but studying concepts traditionally associated with secondary curriculum. In some cases, these students have earned diplomas and passed standardized tests. In other cases, they have earned a General Educational Development (GED) diploma, which is the educational equivalent of a high school diploma. Still, for various reasons, these students have not been able to demonstrate the necessary skills on a placement exam as administered by a postsecondary institution. Adequate scoring on such an exam would allow students to enroll in the college courses that count toward degree requirements, such as college-level composition or mathematics. Instead, these students are relegated to spend a semester or even an entire academic year taking courses intended to prepare them for such college-level courses.

Many students who are underprepared for college-level coursework matriculate at community colleges (NCES, 2012; Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2008; Bettinger & Long, 2009), almost all of which offer programming for academically underprepared students (AACC, 2013). While open-access four-year public colleges and universities do remediate some students, a great number of students needing remediation matriculate to community colleges (Complete College America, 2012).

Students enrolled in developmental education at community colleges are a diverse population. In general, students from populations traditionally underrepresented in higher education—African American, Hispanic, and lower socioeconomic status—are more likely to participate in developmental education programs (Complete College America, 2012). As such, open access is particularly important, since community colleges offer underprepared students some of the only opportunities available to obtain a college degree and by extension the economic and social mobility such a degree affords. There is diversity in students' academic needs as well; students enter developmental education with varying needs, requiring skill development in mathematics, writing, and/or reading.

Several studies (Koch, Slate, & Moore, 2012; VanOra, 2012) have examined the attitudes and perceptions of students participating in developmental education in community college settings. VanOra (2012) gathered data pertaining to the challenges and motivations experienced by these students. He concludes that students find assignments, particularly writing assignments, to be too difficult. In addition, students find it difficult to balance multiple demands upon their time and note that the quality of teaching in developmental courses were inadequate. Koch, Slate, and Moore (2012) observed that affective factors, such as self-efficacy, were in need of development in

addition to academic ones within this student population. Further, students enrolled in developmental courses are likely to bring "many complicating life issues to the educational setting including employment and familial responsibilities" (Crews & Aragon, 2007, p. 638). While these few qualitative analyses do provide some description of the psychology of students enrolled in developmental education, they are seriously outnumbered by the preponderance of research that looks at developmental education quantitatively, computing enrollment and graduation rates.

Theorizing Developmental Education in Community Colleges

The urban space of the developmental writing classroom in the context of the community college can be seen through three theoretical lenses. First, it can be seen as a type of liminal or transitional space (Boys, 2011). Second, it can be seen as a non-place as expressed by Augé (2008). Finally, it can be viewed as a heteroglossia as theorized by Bakhtin (1988). The question of developmental education in this context is indeed a complex one, as the classroom is called upon to equalize lifetimes of social and educational inequity in order to afford economic opportunity to those who inhabit it. Students in need of developmental education at the college level face enormous barriers in their attempts to become college-ready, while educators and policy makers charged with crafting effective programming are equally challenged. By looking at the developmental education classroom through these three lenses, one can begin to understand the enormous importance of these educational spaces, as well as some of the difficulties that they face in contemporary higher education.

Liminal Space. Boys (2011) describes learning in the contemporary time as both liminal and transitional: "It has been shown that learning is articulated in contemporary

educational theory as transitional and liminal space, where participants negotiate their way via particular boundary conditions and specific social and spatial practices and repertoires" (p. 121). This is particularly true of the developmental education classroom, where students are negotiating their way from underpreparedness to being college-ready. The concept of liminality emerges from the work of Turner (1987), who studied rites of passage in indigenous people—defining liminality as the state of passage from one role in society to another. The identity of a person in such a state is both the old identity and the new one simultaneously. Field and Morgan-Klein (2010) point out the liminality of studenthood:

> Studenthood is a distinctive form of identity because educational programmes themselves are almost invariably associated with transition. The formal status of being a "student" is relatively clear-cut in higher education, where people are required to undergo prescribed procedures, which clearly designate them as being students. The status of student is also a transitory status, after which most will expect to become something else – a graduate, who will enjoy graduate status in a credentialist labour market (p. 1).

If being a student is itself a transitional experience, then being a student who attends classes at the institution and pays tuition but does not yet earn credits towards the educational goals they have is a special kind of transitional space—it is educational liminality.

Non-place. Augé's (2009) theory of non-place, while originally intended to apply to spaces such as airports, bus stations, and grocery stores, seems an appropriate theoretical method by which to view the developmental classroom in community college.

He defines a non-place in relationship to a place as follows: “If a place can be defined as relational, historical, and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place” (p. 77-78). Non-places, according to Augé, are places of transit from one place to another—they are not actual destinations, but spaces one occupies temporarily in order to move to the next place. Because developmental education is itself a transit from one educational destination to the next, it can be seen as a non-place, particularly because it is generally not credit bearing. So, students are enrolled in the courses, but are not actually earning credit toward a degree—the assumed purpose of their enrollment in college-level courses. The developmental education course, much like Augé’s non-place, is a point of transit, but not a destination. A student must travel through a course like English 99 or Mathematics 80 in order to get to the traditional freshman level course like English 101 or Mathematics 100. Failure to succeed in the developmental course means the student never really arrives to the college level—they never become a college student. This is what makes Augé’s framework so interesting, as he defines place so clearly as being connected to identity. Developmental education classrooms are non-places in that they do not allow the students to develop an identity as college students—instead they are poised on the edge of such an identity. Further, Auge’s framework is applicable when one relates developmental education using the following thought: “Clearly non-place designates two complementary, but distinct realities: spaces formed in relation to certain ends (transit, transport, commerce, leisure), and the relationships individuals have with these spaces” (p. 94). Developmental education, as it is currently practiced, is surely a transit from one’s previous educational context to college-level curriculum. However, what is

problematic about this transit-state is that it can delay a student's progress toward a degree and ultimately a more lucrative place in the workforce. It is because of this delay that many institutions are reconsidering the approach that is taken with the education of underprepared students.

Heteroglossia. Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia emerged as a tool of literary analysis; it was his analytic approach to the literary genre of the novel. He argued that the novel was a collection of fractured language, i.e., that the novel was a collection of diverse discourses that coalesce in the genre. He argued that the diversity of voices within the novel were one of its essential characteristics, as it differentiated the novel as literary form from poetic and dramatic forms (Bakhtin, 1988). The heteroglossia, he contends, is the interaction of these different voices within a single language that makes the novel a powerful literary genre. "These distinctive links and interrelationships between utterances and languages, this movement of the theme through different languages and speech types, its dispersion into the rivulets and droplets of social heteroglossia, its dialogization—this is the basic distinguishing feature of the stylistics of the novel" (Bakhtin, 1988).

When applied to the developmental education classroom in the context of the community college, one can see how the various voices co-exist. The developmental education classroom brings together heterogeneous voices and is distinct from other classroom spaces in the community college. It is my argument that the developmental education classroom is the interaction of the distinct voices in the heteroglossia—students occupy the space of the developmental education classroom for many reasons. Some never developed the requisite skills to be deemed college-ready in their previous educational experiences, while others have seen ten or more years elapse since their last

formal education. In other cases, students have learning impairments that preclude them from becoming fully college-ready alongside their peers. Each of these distinct voices make up a heteroglossia of sorts, as each of their backgrounds is so distinct, yet each of them find themselves within the same educational space. This is a clear strength of this educational space, as there is a vibrant diversity that forms in the classroom space—there is not a homogenous population, but a group of diverse learners that can all add their voices to the overall discourse of the classroom.

The value of moving through these three distinctive conceptual frames is to develop a more enlightened view of developmental education practices in community college contexts. Instead of looking at the developmental educational classroom as merely a curricular issue, looking at it conceptually as a type of urban space that is occupied by urban dwellers is an important distinction. Theorizing the community college classroom as liminal, non-place, and heteroglossia allows one to reflect on how space contributes to both institutional and individual identities, as the occupation of space is a mechanism of identity—where a person is in space is often indicative of both how they view themselves and how others view them. In the case of students in a developmental educational context, is it clear they are occupying that particular space with the intention of creating better economic opportunities for themselves. As such, it is important to approach the development of programming with both sensitivity and practicality in a way that allows for students to identify fully as college students and travel through the educational space to their career goals as expediently as possible.

Approaches to Developmental Writing

This section will begin with a brief discussion of three key theorists—Shaunessey, Bartholomae, and Rose—whose work on basic writing has shaped the field. Next, I will discuss the pedagogical paradigm of learner-centered instruction, which will lead to a detailed discussion of communities of practice in higher education. Through the discussion of these two theoretical bodies, I hope to show how a learner-centered paradigm, specifically one imagined through the framework of a community of practice (i.e., one that is both self-directed and collaborative in nature) can help to foster the development of the affective domain in students. I will conclude my discussion with an exploration of conceptualizations of self-identity and self-efficacy.

Basic Writing Theory

The field of Basic Writing is a subset of the broader field of College Composition. Basic Writing focuses on the remediation of students underprepared for academic writing at the college level. Shaunessey's (1977), *Errors and Expectations*, was developed at a time in the history of higher education when open admissions policies became prominent, as many community colleges and other institutions saw increased enrollments, particularly of underprepared students. Her work served to define what she saw as the patterns of errors that marked basic students as operating with sets of incorrect or misunderstood grammatical and syntactical rules. Bartholamae's (1986) work pointed to a different problem with regard to basic writers at the college level. He argued that a student has to better understand the conventions of academic discourse to be able to imagine herself/himself into the position where she/he can write in the appropriate academic voice. "He has to learn to speak our language, to speak as we do, to try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that

define the discourse of our community" (p. 4). He concluded that basic writers progress to more skilled academic writers when they are able to imitate and ultimately internalize the voice(s) of academic discourse. Drawing on the work of Bartholamae, Bird (2014) asserted, "We all want to help our basic writing students gain access to the academic community and gain the confidence and expertise necessary to represent themselves in academic conversations. This access and expertise requires immersion in academic texts and in concepts that lead students from mimicking academic discourse (Bartholomae) to participating holistically, self-identifying as academic writers" (p. 89). Finally, Rose (2005) argued that cultural, socio-historical, cognitive, and linguistic factors are what can help or hinder student success in basic writing context. In addition, Rose made an argument for the use of the term basic writing to characterize coursework intended to remediate students underprepared for college-level writing.

Teacher-Centered Instruction

Teacher-centered instruction is defined as instruction where the teacher or instructor is the most active, while students are passive participants in the learning process. The teacher-centered model places the teacher, not the learner, at the center of the teaching-learning exchange (Weimer, 2013). In teacher-centered instruction, the balance of power in the learning relationship shifts heavily in the direction of the teacher. The teacher has most or all of the decision-making authority in the relationship. Within this paradigm, content is static and must be acquired by a learner through the transaction with the teacher—learners memorize facts and other discrete pieces of information. In teacher-centered models, the teacher's role is to control the learning process by transmitting knowledge to students—this typically occurs via direct instructional

methods. Further, learning is the responsibility of the teacher, not the student in this model. Finally, within a teacher-centered model, learners do not have very much autonomy. They are not self-directed, but teacher-directed (Weimer, 2013).

Learner-Centered Instruction

Learner-centered instruction is defined as instruction whereby the learner takes a more active role in the learning process, as opposed to instructor-centered or teacher-centered instruction, which places the teacher at the center of the process (Weimer, 2013). The contention made by proponents of this model of instruction is that it places the learner in a position to more actively engage with the content in question, and as result has a richer experience of learning. According to Weimer (2013), when learner-centered instruction occurs, the power relationship between teacher and student is balanced, course content functions as a vehicle in the learning process, the role of the teacher is to promote learning (as opposed to being primarily a content expert or classroom manager), students are responsible for their own learning, and assessment promotes students' own skills to self-assess learning.

Bista (2011) explored the benefits of a learner-centered approach to teaching English as a second language in the community college setting. In general, she provides definitions of the concept and examples yielded from the specific context of ESL learning. Cullen, Harris, and Hill, (2013) view learner-centered instruction through the lens of curriculum design. They look beyond the redesign of a specific course and purport that the scope of a single course is too small. Instead, they suggest that in order to accommodate learner-centered pedagogies, curricula itself needs to be reconsidered. Further, they explore the implementation of such redesigned curricula and the specific

challenges it presents. King and Heuer (2009) described the effectiveness and transformative nature (according to Mezirow's model) of the learner-centered contexts in adult basic education contexts. In the scenario they describe, learners in a GED classroom benefited greatly when the instructor took a facilitator role and allowed students to play a more active role in the learning process. They look at this instructional method as part of a larger process leading to the occurrence of transformative learning. O'Banion (1997) reported on the subject of learner-centered practices in community colleges when discussing efforts by community colleges to shift the instructional strategies to a more learner-centered model, as it presumes that said instructional methods are more effective for students in these settings. Further, the report looks at the teacher-or instructor-centered paradigms of instructional methods as being bureaucratic and ineffective.

Rossi (2010) asserts that learner-centered teaching methods are more effective in the community college setting where the study was conducted. This St. Louis University study was conducted using Introduction to Business courses as the research study. "The results indicated that there was a significant and positive relationship between students' motivation and students' perception of learner-centered teaching practices. The results of the survey also showed that students that valued task mastery while actively engaged with learning explained an increased degree of motivation in regard to the five learner-centered teaching practices" (Rossi, 2010)

Walters (2009) also looks at learner-centered paradigms in the community college setting, as this study seeks to assess the progress of faculty members in implementing learner-centered methods. The study looks at the progress of these faculty persons using

a quantitative research method of analysis. Faculty who participated in the study attended instructional workshops, and then attempted to alter their classroom approach. The findings indicate that the balance of power shift—one of the criteria of learner-centered approaches—was difficult for faculty to implement.

Sommers (2011) explores the utilization of learner-centered approaches to encourage students to exercise more independence and initiative about their own learning in a composition course at a two-year community college. In this study, he explains that the students' responsibility is to learn all that is possible, while the instructor provides opportunities for learning. Reynolds (2006) emphasizes the importance of community colleges making the shift to a learner-centered paradigm: "The construct supports learning environments that create intrinsic motivation, accommodate individual learning-style characteristics, give increased control to individual learners, and see all learning as multidimensional" (p.1).

Communities of Practice

The gap between theory and practice is one that is discussed widely across a range of disciplines. In the academic fields of education and psychology, models of learning are constructed in order to understand the process of acquiring knowledge and skills. At the same time, practitioners in these disciplines construct ways of disseminating knowledge and building skills. While the two goals—theory construction and educational practice—are inextricably linked, their relationship is not always a cohesive one. At times, there is a clear path from theory development to successful classroom practice or vice versa, and at other times theory and practice are disconnected.

To further complicate matters, learning theory has often been decontextualized, as it has focused deeply on the behavior and cognition of the learner. Throughout much of the twentieth century, behaviorist and cognitive theories of learning dominated the conversation. The limitations of such paradigms of education are many, but one key criticism is how such theoretical frames ignore experiential learning and the context in which learning takes place. A Community of Practice (CoP) is both self-directed and collaborative in nature; it is both contextual and experiential. It is a framework that sits on the opposite end of a spectrum spanning teacher-centered through learner-centered approaches.

According to Monaghan (2011), a community of practice is defined by six key characteristics:

> 1) Self-forming and self-governing, 2) Members share a common interest or passion for a particular topic, 3) Members are involved in the creation of new knowledge, 4) Learning occurs in a real-time context, 5) Communities of practice can occur in any area of an individual's life, and 6) A community of practice facilitates the development of shared meaning and identity formation for professionals (p. 430).

In their seminal work on situated learning, Lave and Wegner (1991) argued that learning was not the mere acquisition of skills or accumulation of knowledge. Instead, they conceptualized learning as a social process in which learners are situated in communities of practice (CoP), groups of people who share a common developmental goal. CoPs allow for learning to be situated in a practical context, which differentiates it from other

types of learning theory or practice. While Lave and Wegner did not claim to have created the CoP model, they are largely credited with ascribing the term CoP to situated learning contexts, which are common across a variety of academic and professional disciplines.

Expanding upon the work he did with Lave, Wegner (1999) further developed the CoP model in another seminal book, *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Wegner argued that learning is not an activity that can be separated from other situations and life experiences. He argues for a model of learning he calls a "social theory of learning," which encompasses dimensions of learning such as social structure, collectivity, practice, meaning, situated experience, power, identity, and subjectivity. In essence, Wegner does not propose that his "social theory of learning" should replace other models of learning, rather that his model is an attempt to better understand how learning operates with the social structure. A Community of Practice is distinct from a learning community, which is a common practice in higher education. Smith (2004) described the latter in the following way,

> The learning community approach fundamentally restructures the curriculum, and the time and space of students. Many different curricular restructuring models are being used, but all of the learning community models intentionally link together courses or coursework to provide greater curricular coherence, more opportunities for active teaming, and interaction between students and faculty.

What follows is a preliminary investigation of some studies, which explore the uses of CoP in higher educational contexts, particularly those that focus on the instruction of undergraduate students in such institutions. However, because of the broad application of CoP structures, they can be found in a variety of contexts in higher education. For instance, they are used in the contexts of faculty development and graduate level education. Further, CoPs are found in many workforce and organizational contexts, where they are useful in professional human resource development.

According to Zimitat (2007), a CoP "describes social mechanisms by which novices are inducted into expert ways of knowing, thinking, and reasoning in their professional or practice circle" (p. 322). Learning is both socially situated and socially constructed. Zimitat's study examined the use of CoP in a graduate-level midwifery program. Study participants were students in the graduate program who were given a case study constructed from a prototypical patient-care scenario in the field of midwifery and asked to respond clinically to the scenario. Once they had responded to the case study scenario, they were given the responses of four expert midwives and given the opportunity to revise their responses. The design of this study simulated the way novices in a field might interact with experts in a CoP situation. In essence, the study attempted to capture the learning that a CoP can foster. The results were positive in that the novice midwives produced better clinical responses to the case study given the opportunity to interact with both novice peers and experts in the field. Further, in interviews conducted with the novice midwifes, it was determined that student learning was enhanced by the simulated CoP situation.

Like Zimitat, Andrew and Ferguson (2008) also studied CoP in the context of medical education. They argued, "CoPs provide a potentially useful framework for constructing practice-based collaborative learning" (p. 1). They further argued that in the field of nursing, "a CoP can move individuals from one state (accepted knowledge) to another state (transformed knowledge)"(p. 3). As such, a CoP can be an important tool for use in nursing education, as they can provide a practice-based situation where learning can develop. Andrew and Ferguson examine how CoP can help integrate the divide between the academic and the clinical in nursing education. The development of CoP in nursing-education settings encouraged collaboration between members' various levels of experience in the profession and allowed students to constantly negotiate their emergent professional identities. The introduction to the CoP "promotes a dynamic, social participative approach to learning and practice" (p. 11). This type of social participative experience provides a more seamless transition for nursing students from academic to clinical situations.

Moule (2006) also studied CoP in a medical educational context, although her study examined the use of a CoP in an online learning community. Moule's study participants, like Andrew and Ferguson, were nursing students. However, Moule also studied the impact of the CoP learning context on radiography and radiotherapy students; the combination of these three healthcare fields mirrors actual professional contexts where various healthcare professionals interact on a regular basis. The heterogeneity of the fields in this particular study is an interesting element, as many CoP studies are conducted with homogenous professional populations. This study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, a questionnaire was administered to 109 students, and in the

second phase, data was examined from multiple sources: online discussion boards, online student diaries, and interviews with student participants. The data in Moule's study suggest, "some students were able to develop elements of mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire" (p.136). While these themes suggest the positive formation of the key elements of a CoP, the data also revealed that additional barriers exist in the use of CoP in an online situation. In order to maximize the potential of an online CoP, participants should enter the situation with some fluency with the online tools, otherwise such tools limit the development of CoP.

Cappelli and Smithies (2009) conducted a study that also explores an online CoP in a case-study format. They looked at the use of an online CoP as a change agent in an organizational context. The researchers attempted to analyze whether an online CoP can act as a change agent in an organization. In this research, the CoP was developed alongside another tool, change agents, which was used to facilitate the change aspect of the study goal. The participants in this study are a group of tutors living in geographically disparate locations who deliver curricula to undergraduate medical students. Findings from this research indicate that many similarities exist between CoPs and change agents. However, in order for a CoP to strengthen the change aspect of the program, it needs to be presented in an enabling environment. Thus, it is essential that a CoP be allowed to develop organically, as a "top-down" approach to the development is generally not effective. French (2011) looks at the structure of a CoP in business education, but also as a means for developing change within an organizational structure. As such, French's study established CoPs in the business school. The study looked at data collected from the actual CoP, which was comprised of faculty members and the outcomes of

undergraduate students enrolled in courses. The study results indicate that CoP structures have the capacity to promote change, as well as foster organizational development in university settings.

Bridging the theory-practice gap is one of the most important functions of the CoP situation. In a well-functioning CoP, identity formation is paramount. Yap (2012) studied the experiences of Australian undergraduates participating in a "work integrated learning (WIL)" course, which was a collection of programs designed to merge business education and the business world. Yap's study used semi-structured interviews with undergraduate students and workplace supervisors along with student reflection papers to construct the results of the study. Several key themes were revealed in the data. Increased student confidence, improved communication skills, development of problem-solving skills, and acquisition of practical experience in their discipline were among the emergent themes in Yap's data. She cites some limitations resulting from the WIL course experience, such as the lack of data about the improved employability of students as a result of the course. If participation in the WIL course leads to better employment rates among student participants, then the program could be deemed truly successful. However, given the emergent themes coded by Yap, it seems significant to recognize that students and employers had an overwhelmingly positive experience of the CoP model in this setting.

O'Donnell and Tobbell (2007) studied the effect of a CoP on mature adult students who were enrolled in a course for adults entering academia without having completed high school. This course provides a substitute credential for mature adult students wishing to obtain a university degree. Through semi-structured interviews, data

was collected from seventeen participants in the program to access their experience of the CoP model embedded in the course. Three major themes emerged in the data: peripheral participation, academic practices, and belonging. Each of these themes is a key aspect noted in Lave and Wegner's (1991) seminal work, which is credited with ascribing the name, "community of practice," to this type of learning environment. In terms of peripheral participation, study participants acknowledged awareness of their presence on the periphery of higher education, a context which produced a degree of anxiety about their ability to perform. Study participants tended to also acknowledge that "learning by doing" was an essential component in preparing them to perform in higher education. The CoP provided these opportunities as it offered sessions on such essential academic skills such as essay writing and note taking. Finally, the study participants identified that a sense of belonging emerged as a result of their participation in the course. The sense of belonging described by participants led to increased confidence to participate in academic practices. "Following initial anxieties, the participants in this study all became more comfortable engaging in practices of being a student, such as attending classes, studying, and writing essays" (p. 323). Thus, the CoP experience allowed students to begin to develop an identity as university students, which they did not possess at the onset of the course.

Chapman (2012) also examined a CoP, which engaged mature adult students. In this study, the perspectives of eight students across a variety of disciplines were examined through interview data collected at several points during their first year of university study. Each of the eight participants failed to fully recognize themselves as viable participants in the university community. Because of the fact that they were not

traditional college students entering the university directly from high school, they did not identify as legitimate. “When constructing and (re) negotiating their identities as ‘students’, most of the mature students in this study had mixed feelings and felt ‘different’ or ‘outside’ the main student body” (p. 51). Chapman notes the importance of identity formation as “novice academics” rather than as mere “students” in the process. Further, she indicates that participation in the CoP had the effect of increasing motivation in students, and that motivation was developed concurrently along with identity as a result of CoP participation.

Maitland (2008) also examined the effect of identity development in pre-undergraduate students within a CoP in a higher educational context. Maitland used observational data to examine the CoP format in a group of “tutor-mentors” at a South African university. The tutor-mentors in this study were older, experienced students employed to support pre-undergraduate students who were in a program designed to increase their academic success once they officially enrolled in the university. The tutor-mentors offered both academic (specifically mathematics) and psychological support to students. The development of tutor-mentors in this program is fostered through a CoP, which adheres to the theoretical framework Lave and Wegner (1991) used to define CoP. Engagement within the tutor-mentor CoP provided participants with an increased sense of belonging in the university community, as well as helped them to develop better practices for both tutoring and mentoring. The participants developed the ability to more positively contribute to both the program that employed them and the university as a whole. Maitland argues that such positivity aided these students in areas beyond the program, such as wider university engagement and eventual careers.

Madrigal (2012) described the use of CoP in an upper-division undergraduate course at a liberal arts college focused on the Synoptic Gospels. The author summarizes the educational context of a CoP as follows: "This social learning theory suggests that people learn best by participating in worthwhile tasks within a meaningful community" (p. 126). This study of CoP in undergraduate education employs CoP as a means of exploring the Synoptic Problem in the literary analysis of the New Testament of the Bible. Using a qualitative methodology, Madrigal enlisted eleven undergraduate students studying the Synoptic Problem to participate in a social-learning situation in the classroom. Data was collected using a variety of methods, including test data, interviews, observations, and focus groups. Findings revealed that the CoP "definitely enhanced the learning experience of these undergraduate students, as determined by the pre-and post-test results. Opinions expressed during interview sessions and during the focus group session confirm this conclusion" (p. 136). In this study, the CoP approach was shown to be an effective means for engaging students within the discourse of a complex intellectual problem.

Donath et al (2005) studied the use of a CoP with undergraduate engineering researchers. The researchers describe the students as being engaged in an active-learning situation, which was structured as a CoP, as a context where "learners share and construct goals, skills, values, conventions, and other knowledge" (p. 403). This particular study sought to examine the learning of undergraduate researchers through the examination of various discourses. The observed speech events of participants were analyzed to assess the impact of the learning context on the study participants. The researchers concluded that the learning context of CoP is an effective one in this particular program: "This kind

of structure prompts interactions between multiple participants with varying levels of expertise and experience (i.e. peers and near-peers)—a context which fosters the development of an authentic academic community in which student directed and group negotiated learning may occur" (p. 411). Because the CoP group in this study was comprised of researchers, it was essential to develop both these components.

Hodge et al (2011) argued that situated learning models are essential in examining learning in modern higher education. The researchers examined situated and experiential learning across three different Australian universities. This study concludes that practice-based learning, facilitated through CoP structure was a "highly valued learning experience for students" (p.179). It is essential to consider learning in a broader, more contextual way. As this study suggests, learning in university settings takes place in a variety of ways, not just in formal or intentional processes. "Formal 'academic' learning can no longer be characterized as a generic exercise in intentional instruction, or viewed as an individualized process 'where knowledge must be demonstrated out of context'" (p. 181).

As the preceding discussion reveals, CoPs have broad applications in undergraduate higher education. Because of their capacity to develop academic identities in participants, they have the potential to enhance both the learning and engagement of university undergraduates. In general, the heterogeneous student population enrolled in developmental education coursework in higher education could be well served by the CoP model, as this strategy allows for such flexibility while being both self-directed and collaborative in the nature of its approach to learning.

In summary, a teacher-centered paradigm is one where the teacher's role is to provide knowledge and instruction to students, usually in the form of a lecture. In this approach, students' roles are generally more passive. Philosophically, this approach is one that values the knowledge of the teacher greatly. Students are recipients of knowledge and information. On the other hand, a learner-centered paradigm is one where students are more actively engaged in the learning process. In learner-centered paradigms, self-directed and collaborative activities are employed; both students and teachers share the goal of knowledge creation. A CoP model is one where self-directed and collaborative approaches are central. Thus, a CoP is one of many possible approaches to learner-centered teaching.

Affective factors

College Student Identity. Identity is a complex term that carries multiple meanings. Its familiar definition—the qualities that are essential to distinguishing one individual from another—is used in a variety of familiar contexts. Identity in its psychological definition is at least subtly different. Weinreich (1991) described identity in the psychological sense as the way an individual self-construes, including past and future self-construal. Many dimensions of identity are discussed within the vast field of psychology—group identity, ethnic identity, gender identity, and self-identity to name just a few. Each of these theoretical constructs has its own complex set of assumptions that relate to how an individual or groups understand their distinct boundaries and characteristics. One's self-identity in a psychological sense is a collection of beliefs that a person holds about herself/himself—this construct is also referred to as self-concept in the literature (Baumeister, 1999). A self-identity is comprised of a number of different

beliefs—academic self-identity or self-concept refers to one's belief in one's own academic abilities (Bong 2004; Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Essentially, the academic self-identity that one possesses has implications for both motivation and performance over the course of an individual's educational history.

Specific identities related to social roles are common in the literature of social psychology. Individuals negotiate their belonging to articulate social roles in the course of their lives and careers. Self-identity is, in part, shaped by the roles that one ascribes to oneself; one such role is that of student. Studenthood is a described by Field and Morgan-Klein (2010) as a transitory or liminal identity with critical implications for participation and retention in higher education—they conclude that the formation of this identity, albeit a transitory one, is tied to completion. They argue that for non-traditional students, such an identity can exacerbate a sense of marginalization within the frame of higher education. Markle (2015) also found that institutional policies within higher education contributed to perceived marginalization by non-traditional students. Kasworm (2010) studied the negotiation of adult-student identity at a four-year research university, suggesting that age and competing life roles contributed to a fractured sense of student identity in a competitive research university context—because the culture within that particular context was far more youth-oriented. Weidman et al (2014) discussed how Weidman's (1989) model of undergraduate development operates in various studies—they concluded that a number of academic and non-academic factors influence the development of student identity. However, the focus of these studies and the subsequent analysis is on four-year schools with residential student populations. Further, it is important to note that one of the means by which students negotiate their student identity

is through successful academic writing (Le, 2003; Tapp, 2014). Effectively finding their voice within academic discourse helps to foster a positive student identity.

Self-Efficacy as Academic Writers. Broadly defined, *efficacy* is the power to produce an effect—the power to complete an intended action (Merriam-Webster, 2015). Efficacy indicates that the agent is in possession of the necessary skill needed to complete the action in question. Self-efficacy is an individual's belief that he or she is capable of executing a particular action (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy is the belief in one's own ability to successfully complete a task. Bandura (1997) distinguishes the construct of self-efficacy from that of the more colloquial term, confidence; he argues that self-efficacy is defined in its specificity regarding a particular task or skill, as well as the affirmation that one can actually perform or attain with regard to that task or skill. Pajares (1996) examines the impact of self-efficacy on academic performance—indicating that while students cannot perform a task simply because they believe they can, self-efficacy has a strong relationship to motivation in an academic setting which means that it can and does lead to higher levels of attainment. In one study, McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer (1985) found a strong positive relationship between students' self-perception of their abilities as writers and their actual performance as writers—those students who believed in their ability to succeed were actually more successful. Self-efficacy influences a great deal when it comes to student success in writing—namely motivation, effort, persistence, and, perseverance (Pajares, 2003; Pajares & Johnson, 1994; Schunk, 2003). When students have higher levels of self-efficacy, they are more likely to persist when given a new writing task, which leads to greater rates of success and improvement (McCarthy et al., 1985; Schunk, 2003). Further, higher levels of self-efficacy are related to higher levels of

performance on academic writing tasks (Pajares, 2003; Pajares & Johnson, 1994; Schunk, 2003; McCarthy et al., 1985).

Conclusion

Few qualitative analyses provide a description of the psychology of students enrolled in developmental education, and they are seriously outnumbered by the preponderance of research that looks at developmental education quantitatively, computing enrollment and graduation rates. As such, I argue that it is necessary to approach the subject of developmental education through a qualitative lens—the lived experiences of students and educators in this realm need to be explored to fully understand some of the complex issues arising when students are underprepared for participation in higher education. Increased student confidence, improved communication skills, development of problem-solving skills, and acquisition of practical experience in their disciplines were among the emergent themes in Yap's (2012) data—these emergent themes serve as a focus for my research questions. As O'Donnell and Tobbell (2007) studied the effect of a CoP on mature adult students who were enrolled in a course for adults entering academia without having completed high school—their results underscore the potential benefits of using a CoP framework, specifically a learner-centered pedagogical approach that is both self-directed and collaborative, in developmental education for the purpose of identity development and self-efficacy, specifically with respect to literacy skills.

CHAPTER III
METHODS

Study Purpose & Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how instructional approaches to teaching basic (i.e., developmental or remedial) writing courses at a large urban community college foster the development of college students' self-efficacy regarding academic writing and self-identity as college students.

The following research questions were addressed by the study:

1. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience the development of self-efficacy related to their academic writing at the college level in basic writing classrooms?
2. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience their self-identity as college students in basic writing classrooms?
3. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of self-efficacy as writers?
4. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of student self-identity?

Introduction

This chapter describes the qualitative research methodology that was used to accomplish the purpose of this study. As discussed in Chapter One, the study aims to explore some dimensions of a developmental writing classroom in a community college. Through the exploration of experiences inside basic writing classrooms, I hoped to better understand the experiences of students in this educational situation, specifically how they experience development of self-efficacy as academic writers and self-identity as college students.

When some students enter institutions of higher education, they lack certain prerequisite skills, such as basic writing, reading and mathematics skills. Regardless of the reasons why students enter higher education without the requisite preparation for higher education, they must deepen their skills in order to be successful in coursework. Institutional approaches to preparing students in advance of credit-bearing coursework vary widely. However, despite the myriad curricular approaches in practice, a common problem is a lack of self-directed learning in developmental education, which can help students develop greater self-efficacy as learners and a deeper sense of their self-identity as college students. Students in developmental education coursework are often not encouraged to develop their self-identities as college students, nor are they given the type of educational activities that foster self-directed learning, a skill that can lead to their greater success in college-level coursework. Within developmental educational programming, students are not always given tools that foster them to take ownership of their own learning. Instead, programming defaults to a more didactic or teacher-centered approach, similar to elementary and secondary curriculum. Further, because basic skills are often taught in ways in developmental courses that take them out of the context in

which they will be used in later coursework, students often leave developmental educational sequences still lacking the necessary preparation for success in college-level coursework.

Research Design Rationale

This study topic was addressed through a qualitative research approach, as the research questions that I developed were best answered in complex, linguistic terms. I was seeking answers in a narrative form—a dialogic explanation of experiences rendered in the storied language of the participants. Such answers demanded both complexity and flexibility in their responses. Further, I was not seeking a particular answer or response from the participants, only their rendering of their experiences as students in the basic writing classrooms, the connections they drew from their work in those classrooms, and the political context that surrounds them. In other words, I sought to understand the experiences of the study participants through the language they used to describe their own experiences of basic writing instruction. Further, the overall relationship between developmental education and graduation rates has been called into question in many contexts.

The study aimed to explore the context of these student and instructor experiences through their participation in particular classroom settings. As such, this study is best conducted in the form of a qualitative case study. Merriam (2009) defined case study in qualitative research as an "in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (p. 40). In this study, four basic writing classes within a single community college were described and analyzed in order to better understand how various instructional approaches affect students' understanding of their own development of self-efficacy in

relation to academic writing and self-identity as college students. The four classes were considered a single case for the purposes of this study, were analyzed as components of a single case for the purposes of answering the research questions. Qualitative researchers study the interactions of individuals with their world and the way individuals construct meaning and experience from these interactions (Merriam, 2009). While "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (Merriam, 2009, p. 7), the goal is to capture and make sense of the participants' experiences.

Qualitative Case Study

The four research questions driving this study were best addressed using a research method that allowed me to examine the particulars of individual student experiences in basic writing classrooms in a community college setting and to explore the transferability of the student experiences across different classroom settings where different approaches to teaching were employed. Yin (2005) explained that one of the most appropriate applications of case study research is when a researcher wants "to illuminate a particular situation, to get a close (i.e., in-depth and first-hand) understanding of it" (p. 381). He continued, "The case study method helps [the researcher] to make direct observations and collect data in natural settings" (p. 381). This distinguishes it from research methods with a narrower focus that rely on a single dimension or value, such as a test score or other similar metric. In this study, I intended to illuminate the particular situation of basic writing classes at a particular community college with a focus on how such classes affect students' development of self-efficacy and identity. Further, because a dimension of the study calls for analysis of the classroom structure itself, it is

essential that the research method is one that allows for data collection in a natural setting, i.e., the basic writing classes that are selected as part of this study's sample.

Hancock and Algozzine (2011) defined case study research being "richly descriptive because it is grounded in deep and varied sources of information" (p. 16). This is another important reason why case study was chosen as the approach for this qualitative study. Because the research questions asked for an exploration of aspects of basic writing students' experiences, it was essential that multiple sources of information were used. Human experience is such a complex phenomenon that more than one source of data is often needed to approximate or describe it. Qualitative case study allows for data to be collected from various sources within the bounded system of the case. It is through the analysis of these various sources of input that I was able to answer the questions using rich description.

Yin (2009) defined a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and with its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident" (p. 18). In many ways, Yin's preceding definition is quite useful as it illustrates how the experiences of the student and instructor participants and their experiences were related to the context of the class in which they were situated. In other words, the experiences of students and instructors are central to the study, but the relationship of those experiences to the context of the class where they were placed is also a point of inquiry.

Using a qualitative case study approach allowed me to explore both teacher-centered and learner-centered instructional approaches to basic writing instruction. The primary focus was to examine how these pedagogical approaches related to students'

development of self-efficacy toward academic writing and their self-identity as college students. Exploring the specific and particular domain of the writing classrooms selected for this proposed study helped to shape my understanding about how the pedagogical approach employed in a basic writing class informed student experiences in the classroom as well as aspects of students' identities related to their academic lives. Stake (1995) described the case as "an integrated system" where the parts may not be working well or may be irrational, but it is a system. This is an important point to illuminate, in terms of the choice of case study as the methodological approach for this study, as the underlying premise is that a class is one of the naturally bounded systems within the context of education. A class is bounded in numerous ways—it meets for a prescribed period of time (a semester or academic year), it is a defined group (students are enrolled in the course and remain the same for the entire duration), and its content is defined (most courses have a set of educational objectives or outcomes). It is through the bounded system of the individual class that students' experiences are shaped. My interest was to explore how particular dimensions of basic writing students' experiences are related to their interaction with the approaches taken by their instructors. In this study, both teacher-centered and learner-centered approaches were examined.

Stake (2000) provided a basic taxonomy of case studies—cases can be intrinsic, instrumental, or collective. Intrinsic case studies are undertaken when the case in question is of particular importance because the case has such particular features. On the other hand, instrumental case studies are defined as those where "a particular case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or redraw a generalization" (p.437). He continued, "The case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates

our understanding of something else" (p. 437). This definition of instrumental case study is illuminating, as it defines how the case will function in this particular proposed study, where the case of the basic writing classes at a single community college served to illuminate the experiences of students' development of self-efficacy and self-identity. According to Stake (2000), in an instrumental case study, the case is still studied with great scrutiny, but such scrutiny leads the researcher to "pursue external interest" (p.438). Stake (2000) defines collective case study as one where multiple instrumental cases make up a single collective case. In the instance of this study, it is the cases of particular pedagogical styles in basic writing classes/classrooms that allowed me to explore student self-identity development and levels of self-efficacy as academic writers. This particular study included the analysis of a single case, which is comprised of four basic writing classes.

As this study described a single case made up of four classes at a single community college, it can be conceptualized as an instrumental case study. This study defines the four basic writing classes as part of an individual bounded system. The four classes were chosen using convenience sampling. All instructors scheduled to teach one of two basic writing classes—Basic Language I and Basic Language II—during specific academic term were offered the opportunity to participate in the study. The four classes that make up the case in this study were selected on the basis of instructor interest and willingness to participate. During the academic term that data collection was conducted, class enrollments in basic writing courses were particularly small—ranging from three to ten enrolled students.

Philosophical Stance/Interpretive Framework

The interpretive framework for this study was primarily constructivist in nature; the research questions were answered in multivariate ways—the human experiences that were explored in these particular research questions were best explored within a constructivist philosophy. Lincoln and Guba (2013) clearly explicated the nature of the constructivism in terms of how this philosophical stance related to four fundamental questions about knowledge and inquiry—what is the nature of reality? (ontological); what is knowledge, and how is it known? (epistemological); how can knowledge be obtained? (methodological); and what knowledge is the most valuable and life-enhancing? (axiological). The nature of reality within a constructivist paradigm is relativism—i.e., the only true reality is the one that exists in the minds of those contemplating it. In other words, reality is created in the minds of people. The relationship between the knower and knowledge is key in constructivist epistemology—the highly subjective and contextual transaction that takes place between the knower and the known is where knowledge itself is located in this paradigm. Lincoln and Guba (2013) provided the following explanation:

> The transaction is necessarily highly subjective, mediated by the knower's prior experience and knowledge, by political and social status, by gender, by race, class, sexual orientation, nationality, by personal and cultural values, and by the knower's interpretation (construction) of the contextual surround. Knowledge is not "discovered" but rather *created*; it exists only in the time/space framework it was created (p. 40).

It was both the subjectivity of the knower(s) and notion that creation of knowledge takes place in a learning transaction that was one of the important elements at play in this

study. The knowledge generated in this research was a co-created production of the researcher and participants. There was not a single objective reality that I was seeking to describe, rather several versions of truth, according to the experience of the participants. Within a constructivist philosophy, methodology is one that must include the exploration of the minds of the participants, specifically that focuses on meaning-making. In addition, a constructivist methodology must allow for a confrontation of the various constructions held by the participants. Finally, the axiology of the constructivist approach places the most value on subjective knowledge as co-created by the researcher and research participants. The idea of an objective reality or truth is wholly rejected.

Creswell (2013) defined this paradigm as social constructivism, where "individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meanings of their experiences—meanings directed toward certain objects or things" (p. 24). According to Creswell, researchers operating from a social constructivist set of assumptions do not seek narrow meanings or understandings in response to their set of research questions. Rather, researchers look for meanings that are varied and multiplicitous. Further, Creswell underscores the way that the participants' view of the context or phenomenon being studied is highly valued. In my research, it was actually the participants' view of the classes that I hoped to capture, with less emphasis on my own interpretation. Like Lincoln and Guba (2013), Creswell (2013) examined social constructivism by explaining how it was situated in ontological ("multiple realities are constructed through lived experiences and interactions with others"), epistemological ("reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched and shaped by individual experiences"), axiological ("individual values are honored, and are negotiated

among individuals"), and methodological ("use of an inductive method of emergent ideas (through consensus) obtained through methods such as interviewing, observing, and analysis of texts") terms (p. 36). As I discussed in my explication of Guba and Lincoln, each of these philosophical orientations toward social constructivism is consistent with the research being conducted in my qualitative case study.

Greene (2009) placed constructivism within a broader interpretivist paradigm, which she describes as being grounded in "storytelling" (p. 63). In other words, as an interpretivist framework views the nature and accumulation of knowledge in a particular way—through the lens of storytelling. Knowledge in an interpretivist framework "comprises the reconstruction of intersubjective meanings, the interpretive understanding of the meanings humans construct in a given context and how these meanings interrelate to form a whole" (p. 68). The qualitative case study research here fits well within the interpretivist framework as defined by Greene, as the knowledge gained from the study will consist of the relational realities experienced by the study's participants. By conducting this case study, a sense of how the student participants' own knowledge and their awareness of self-efficacy and self-identity as college students emerged. Further, the relationship between how these facets of students' self-knowledge are related to the particular instructional approaches in their own class was explored. Greene (2009) also noted how interpretivist knowledge is both time and place bound—given the nature of this particular study, this point is also relevant. As this study explored the particulars of four classes within a single case, the study was tied to the particular time and space in which it was conducted—only four classes of many at a large urban community college. Greene also described the importance of the concept of transferability as essential in an

interpretivist paradigm (Greene, 2009; Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Greene emphasized that within this framework, the researcher's goal is not generalizability, but rather to "provide sufficient description of the particular context studied so that others may adequately judge the applicability or fit of the inquiry findings to their own context" (p. 69). This is an important distinction to be made, as the goal of this qualitative case study research was not to generalize to all community college basic writing classes, instructors, or students. Rather, a broad goal of this study is to create a clear description of the context of the specific case in order to understand how the phenomenon in question operated in the case.

Theoretical Framework

The framework for this study involved the instructional approach of the basic writing instructor, studenthood self-identity, and self-efficacy regarding academic writing. The study aimed to understand how these theoretical elements related to students in a basic writing class at a large urban community college. The preliminary conceptualization of this study was to understand the ways in which the following concepts were experienced by students enrolled in a developmental writing course at a large urban community college: self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), student self-identity (Weidman et al, 2014; Hanson, et. al, 2014; Field & Morgan-Klein, 2010; Markle, 2015), and the pedagogical approach of the basic writing instructor. In addition, I was interested in the interaction of these three elements with one another—e.g., how positive development of self-efficacy might be fostered by different instructional approaches or how student self-identity related to the development of self-efficacy regarding academic writing.

The constructivist nature of this study lent itself to this particular theoretical framework, as the study sought to understand the conceptualizations of studenthood self-identity and self-efficacy as academic writers through the students' perceptions and experiences in their basic writing classes. Further, the study sought to understand the ways in which direct instructional and self-directed, collaborative approaches related to the development of both student self-identity and self-efficacy toward academic writing over the course of a single academic term. In terms of the interpretive stance taken in this study, the focus of the interpretation was on the ways in which student participants created their realities in response to the pedagogical strategies observed in the course.

Data Collection Process

Sampling (Case & Participant Selection)

Case Selection. In a qualitative case study, the selection of the case is of great importance. Stake (2000) outlined some criteria by which cases are identified; put simply, "the case is a specific one" (p. 436)—in other words, a case can be *one* specific instance of a particular phenomenon or *one* particular individual or *one* particular group. He further described a case as a "functioning specific" (p. 436). Further still, Stake articulated that the case has working parts, is purposive, is an integrated system, and has a self—in other words, a case is defined as an individual entity of some kind. Classes selected as cases were not assumed to be representative of all basic writing classes—either at the institution serving as the research site or elsewhere. Stake (1995) elucidated this concept further, "It may be useful to try to select cases which are typical or representative of other cases, but a sample of one or a sample of just a few is unlikely to be a strong representation of others. Case study research is not sampling research. We do

not study a case primarily to understand other cases. Our first obligation is to understand this one case" (p. 4). Given that the goal of this study was to understand how student self-identity and self-efficacy are fostered by the pedagogical approach of the instructor, any basic writing class within this institution would have been appropriate if selected. Four basic writing classes at Great Lakes Community College were selected as part the case study—two different offerings each of Basic Language I and Basic Language II. The classes that made up the case for this study were taught by four different instructors, each of them with varying levels of experience teaching basic writing and different instructional approaches to teaching the course. Each of the four classes selected as part of the case utilized a range of instructional strategies, including direct instruction and more self-directed, collaborative instruction. Creswell (2013) indicated that selection of a case could be purposeful, i.e., done in an intentional way to show different perspectives on a problem. The selection of cases for this study was purposeful in that only Basic Writing I and II classes were considered.

As I illustrated in my earlier discussion, for the purposes of this study, the four classes that made up this case study were basic writing classes. To clarify, for the purposes of this study, I defined all four of the classes as a single case, as the goal of the overall study was to examine the use of various instructional strategies within the case. While each class had its own boundaries—temporally (dates and times that it meets), spatially (classrooms/spaces where its meetings take place), and pedagogically (instructor approach, textual choices, classroom structure), the classes in the study were conceptualized as a single unit. The four basic writing classes for this study were selected from those offered at Great Lakes Community College, a large urban community college

in the Midwestern United States. I used the public-facing course schedule on the college's website to compile a list of basic writing courses being offered during the particular semester when data was collected. Using email addresses obtained from the college website, I contacted those instructors who were scheduled to teach either Basic Language I or Basic Language II prior to the start of the term when the study was conducted. I asked each of these instructors by email (see Appendix A) to consider participating in the case study, and provided them with the parameters and expectations of the study. This email was distributed to five instructors teaching Basic Language I and ten instructors teaching Basic Language II. According to the course listings, two of the instructors were teaching more than one of those courses. So, I contacted a total of thirteen instructors, and received responses from four who were willing and able to participate in the study. I selected these classes as the case for this study. Hays and Singh (2012) described this process as "opportunistic sampling," as "it seeks to capitalize on the appearance of new potential samples as the research process evolves" (p. 170). Classroom observations were a key component of the data collected, so after obtaining permission from these instructors, I asked the instructor to provide me with the times that would be best to conduct classroom observations. I selected observation times for all four classes based on the options provided by the instructor. At that point, I asked the four instructors to share their course syllabuses and other relevant documents used in the class.

Participant Selection. Ultimately, I interviewed one student from the Basic Language I classes and five students from the Basic Language II classes for a total of six student participants. In addition, for each of the four classes, I interviewed the course instructors once at the beginning of the semester (see Appendix B).

Once the classes were selected, I made arrangements to recruit student participants from within each class to participate in semi-structured qualitative interviews. While the student participants were recruited at the beginning of the semester, the interviews occurred at the end of the semester. This recruitment was done at a time designed by the instructor in a classroom visit. At that point, I also explained the purpose of the research study and what my role would be as a classroom observer throughout the semester. These student participants were members of the classes who expressed willingness to participate in the research study. I visited the classes at the beginning of the semester and ask for student volunteers to participate in the study. The recruitment of student participants, like the instructor participants, can be viewed as opportunistic sampling (Hays & Singh, 2012). Since the primary sample within this study can be seen as the case itself, this is an apt description of the process by which I selected students within the classes to be interviewed. Because one of the dimensions of the study's research questions focuses on how the structure of the class impacts students' identity development and self-efficacy, preference was given to student participants who actively participate in the classroom by attending class regularly. My goal was to recruit several students from each class to participate in the interview process who were interested and willing to talk about their experiences in the class and their identities. During my classroom visits, I recruited a total of seven students from the two Basic Language I classes and nine students from the Basic Language II classes. I contacted each of these sixteen students several times to arrange to interview them. Many of the sixteen students did not respond to my attempts to contact them, despite repeated attempts. As Hancock and Algozzine (2011) suggested, preference was given to participants who had the best information and ability to answer the study's

research questions. For this study, I used criterion sampling in order to study learners that met pre-determined criteria of importance (Patton, 2002). Specifically, student participants were selected who met the following criterion:

1) They were currently enrolled in a basic writing class in an urban community college setting.
2) They met at least one of seven characteristics of "adult learner as defined by the National Center for Education Statistics (2016). These criteria include: delays enrollment—does not enter postsecondary education in the same calendar year that he or she finished high school; Attends part time for at least part of the academic year; works full time—35 hours or more per week while enrolled; Is considered financially independent for purposes of determining eligibility for financial aid; has dependents other than a spouse—usually children, but sometimes others; is a single parent—either not married or married but separated and has dependents; does not have a high school diploma—completed high school with a GED or other high school completion certificate or did not finish high school.

In order to assess whether or not the student participants met these criteria, members of the four classes in the case study completed a short questionnaire when I visited the class at the beginning of the semester (see Appendix C).

Method of Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews. Braun & Clarke (2013) defined a semi-structured interview protocol as one where "the researcher has a list of questions but there is scope for the participants to raise issues that the researcher has not anticipated" (p. 78). The

nature of the semi-structured interview protocol is flexible, which allows for researchers and participants to deviate from the set of questions originally developed by the researcher when the situation warrants such deviation. Since the philosophical nature of the study was constructivist, a data collection method that allowed for the researcher and participants to follow a path in their discussion that led them away from the interview question but toward greater understanding of the experience of basic writing students was essential. However, the interview protocol in the semi-structured interview was still constructed with a great deal of careful attention—these interviews were not a formless conversation. As Galletta (2013) explained, "each interview question should be clearly connected to the purpose of the research, and its placement within the protocol should reflect the researcher's deliberate progression toward a fully in-depth exploration of the phenomenon under study" (p. 45). The construction of the interview protocols used in this study took into account both the constructivist approach to case study and the theoretical framework that guided the creation of the research questions—i.e., the psychological concepts of self-efficacy and identity development as well as the conventions of basic writing pedagogy influenced the creation of the interview protocols. Attention to how these concepts are discussed in the literature was tantamount to the creation of an interview protocol that was intended to be effective in collecting data that was relevant to gaining an understanding of the research questions. Patton (2002) suggested six types of interview questions that are conducive to qualitative research. These include experience and behavior questions, opinions and values questions, feelings questions, knowledge questions, sensory questions, and background/demographic questions. Each of these question types was incorporated in the interview protocols for

this study, as each of these question types helped to access a particular aspect of the experiences of the study's participants.

Student participation in the interview process was entirely voluntary. I spoke to the classes and provided a description of the study and the rationale for participation. Following this presentation, I asked interested students to provide their contact information on a separate form. I used a semi-structured interview format with a focus on eliciting narrative responses from participants (see Appendices B & D for interview protocols). Each student participant was interviewed once at the end of the semester; interviews were 25-45 minutes in duration and were electronically recorded using a recording device. Both instructors and selected students in the selected classes were interviewed using a semi-structured interview protocol; the interviews were conducted in a private location at the institution that was acceptable to the participant. A total of four instructor and six student participants were interviewed.

To further clarify, there were four classes in the case study—each of these classes is a component in a single case. Each of the student and instructor participants was interviewed once during the study. The purpose of the student interviews was to allow students to assess how they have changed and developed over the course of the semester. I interviewed the four course instructors once. So, the study included a total of ten participants. In addition to asking the questions using a semi-structured interview protocol, I used follow-up "probes" throughout the interview process—this aspect of the semi-structured interview helped me to explore areas of the participant experience that were raised during the interview, but were not anticipated initially (Merriam, 2009). Further, I acknowledge that in the context of a case study, each participant offered a

unique set of responses, necessitating that the follow-up probes be developed organically throughout the process of the interview (Stake, 1995).

Classroom Observations. Because a key dimension of this case study was to explore how particular classroom pedagogies impact students' self-efficacy in regards to academic writing and identity as college students, it was essential to collect data in the form of field notes. These field notes were collected through direct observation of classroom sessions over the course of the semester. Yin (2009) spoke to the importance of collecting data in natural settings as a way to gain an understanding about a phenomenon at work. Classroom observations in this study allowed me to better understand the pedagogy occurring within each of the classes in the case study as well as an understanding of student and instructor behavior within the classroom situation.

Stake (1995) aptly articulated the role of the researcher in direct observation in a case study, "during observation, the case study researcher keeps a good record of events to provide a relatively *incontestable description* (emphasis original) for further analysis and ultimate reporting" (p. 62). He went on to stress the importance of letting the case tell its own story, which meant that the researcher-observer pays careful attention to all of the active elements at play during the observation. Finally, he noted that it is critically important for the researcher to immediately write up the observation while it is still fresh. Merriam (2009) also noted that this is an important practice—field notes should be written up in narrative form immediately or as soon as possible following the observation.

Merriam (2009) also provided additional information on the taking of field notes. She indicates the importance of field notes being "highly descriptive" (p. 130). She

qualified highly descriptive as giving enough detail to allow for a reader of the field notes to fully experience the situation where the observation took place. They should contain specific descriptions of the settings, actions of the participants, and the context of the observation. Date and time information precedes each set of notes for clarity. In addition, Merriam (2009) described the importance of a reflective element inherent to complete field notes.

Hancock and Algozzine (2011) argued that one reason why observation is so important in case study research is that information collected from researchers' observations could be more "objective" than that collected from participants in other forms. While I acknowledge that observational data could potentially differ from interview data, I did not give weight to observational data as more or less desirable in terms of objectivity. Because of my own subjectivity as the person who collected the field notes, giving weight to this data stream would have unfairly prioritized my view over that of the participants, which conflicted with the constructivist nature of this study.

I observed class sessions periodically throughout the semester, between two and three times for each of the four classes. Because this was a summer academic term, the classes were twice as long as they typically would be in a full semester. In order to maximize the effectiveness of these sessions, I consulted with the course instructors in advance of the term to determine which sessions to observe. In this way, the instructor provided direction as to which session would have a focus on a particular instructional strategy that is representative of their approach to teaching basic writing. Given the importance of recording notes as close as possible to the time of the observation, I reserved an hour following any field observation to formally record any notes taken

during the observation. In addition to capturing descriptive data during observations, I also recorded reflective commentary in the notes. This is one of the initial components of the data analysis process that followed the data collection phase of the study. In the taking of field notes and the subsequent write-up of these notes, I was careful to differentiate between descriptive and interpretive field notes.

An observational protocol was used in order to ensure that I uniformly looked for the same things in each of four different classes. This observational protocol consisted of a document (see Appendix F) where I recorded information about the site of the observation, the participants present, the date, the time, the week of the term, the planned activities/topics for that date (observed from a course syllabus). I recorded the majority of that information in advance of the observation session. During the classroom observation, I focused primarily on recording a description of the learning activities taking place during the lesson. In addition, I paid close attention to the instructor-student interactions during the class session.

Document Study. The third type of data that was collected in this study was documents for analysis. Merriam (2009) categorized various document types that are useful in qualitative research. Some of the documents used in this study could be classified as personal documents, public records, and physical material according to Merriam's taxonomy. Though, while they emanate from various sources, it is essential to note that none of the documents are actually generated for the purposes of the study itself, so their usefulness and applicability to the study had to be discovered through careful content analysis (Merriam, 2009). Yin (2009) supported the assumption that documents often have less relevance than other forms of data collected in a qualitative case study;

however, he argued that a document study can also provide a researcher with a much broader perspective than can be observed within a limited time in which field observations take place. In other words, document study can help to bridge the gaps that might exist as a result of solely interviewing and collecting field notes.

On the other hand, Stake (1995) underscored the similarity that should exist in the case study researcher's mind when collecting data through documents versus either interviewing or observing the case. He stated, "One needs to have one's mind organized, yet be open for unexpected clues." Hancock and Algozzine (2011) supported Stake's assertion that a case study researcher needs to have a very clear sense of purpose when approaching documents for analysis in a study. Like Merriam and Yin, Stake also acknowledged the way that documents can often substitute for data the researcher could not capture through more direct means.

Documents included from each class were official course outlines, course syllabuses, writing assignments given to students, in-class assignments and activities, and rubrics used to grade and evaluate writing assignments. These materials helped me to understand the structure of the class and pedagogical approach of the instructor more fully. In addition, these materials were a form of communication that existed between the instructor and the students—these messages were very relevant to gaining an understanding of both how the class proceeded and how the student participants' self-perceptions manifested in their writing. As I have previously stated, I asked the instructor participant to provide me with these documents at the beginning of the course, or whenever they became available.

I created additional documents that were analyzed alongside the other data streams. For example, I create a series of reflexive memos intended to capture an initial analysis of interview and observation data as it was collected. Documents collected were used both to situate and contextualize each of the classes in the case study. Merriam (2009) suggested that a researcher should interrogate the authenticity of documents being used in qualitative research. A partial list of these questions served as the initial interrogation of the documents used in the study prior to coding (See Appendix G). I coded each document for emergent themes during the data analysis process, along with interview transcripts and observational field notes. In addition, I recognized that I needed to employ memoing to write about my own subjectivity—a series of reflexive memos to capture the complexity of my positionality and relationship to the institution where I collected the data. These reflexive memos became part of the study data, and they helped me to triangulate the data. Further, I recognized that trustworthiness needed to be addressed in an ongoing manner; as such, I used member checks of interviews, as well as additional field observations to augment data collected in interviews.

Trustworthiness, Credibility, Rigor

For the purposes of this discussion, I use the term credibility, while acknowledging that the literature also uses both trustworthiness and validity to discuss the same concept. Credibility within social science research is strongly associated with methodological rigor. Several qualities are consistent among credible qualitative research: prolonged engagement by the researcher at the site of inquiry, persistent observation, peer debriefing with a neutral peer, negative case analysis (revision of working hypotheses), progressive subjectivity (monitoring the researcher's own

construction of the accumulated knowledge in the study), and member checks (verification of interpretive analysis by study participants) (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 237-239). Qualitative research can be assessed for quality in a number of comprehensive ways. Braun and Clarke (2013) enumerate fifteen points upon which to assess the quality of thematic analysis in qualitative research that encompass how data is transcribed, coded, analyzed, and written (p. 287). Quality standards, such as those that provided guidance as to how strong thematic analysis in research is conducted, lent themselves to the overall credibility of the study.

Morrow (2005) made a clear argument that the quality of a given qualitative study is directly related to the interpretive paradigm under which the study is undertaken. In other words, the criteria that one uses to evaluate the credibility of qualitative research are dependent upon the philosophical assumptions and interpretive paradigm of the study itself. In the case of this study, a constructivist paradigm is employed, so the criteria used to assess the rigor and credibility of the research must align with that paradigm. Within that framework, subjectivity—the value of an individual's personal truth—is central. As Morrow (2005) indicated, subjectivity is embraced in a constructivist paradigm. She underscores the following ideas being central to credibility of research within a constructivist paradigm: "the extent to which participant meanings are understood deeply and the extent to which there is a mutual construction of meaning (and that construction is explicated) between and among researcher and participants, or co-researchers" (p.253). As such, it was tantamount that the data were collected and analyzed in a way that deeply honored the experiences of the participants in the study. As the research questions in the study were such that they aimed to understand more fully the particular experience of

basic writing student identities, the constructivist interpretive paradigm was an appropriate choice.

Patton (2002) identified dependability as "a systematic process systematically followed," (p. 546). This was a key dimension of the credibility and rigor of this study, as the process that is articulated for data collection and analysis was clearly established in this chapter and followed systematically throughout the process. Of significance to the qualitative case study method is Patton's discussion of particularity, "doing justice to the integrity of unique cases" (p. 546), as a criterion for assessing qualitative research. In this study, I made an effort to honor the nature of the case itself as well as the four components of the case within the study. Finally, Patton (2002) discussed researcher reflexivity as the mechanism by which the researcher understands how her own perspective affects and integrates with the research study.

Another construct that ensured credibility in this study was the triangulation of data. According to Creswell (2013), triangulation is when researchers make use of multiple data sources to provide "corroborating evidence" (p. 251). The triangulation occurs "when qualitative researchers locate evidence to document a code in different sources of data, they are triangulating information and providing validity to their findings" (p. 251). By coding interview transcripts, reflexive memos, and field notes using the same data analysis process, I was able to align the data and accordingly validate it. Stake (1995) explicitly discussed the use of triangulation in qualitative case studies as a means to ensure credibility. Specifically, he discussed data source triangulation as "an effort to see if what we are observing and reporting carries the same meaning when found under different circumstances" (p. 113).

Each of these elements as explicated by Guba and Lincoln (1989) were addressed as the study progressed—I was engaged throughout the entire academic term when the study was undertaken, I persistently observed the classes taking detailed descriptive notes at each observation, I debriefed with peers both inside and outside of the study's context, I revised study hypothesis as appropriate during emergent data analysis, I monitored my own subjectivity through the process of memoing, and member checks were conducted with study participants following all interviews. For this study, I assessed whether data collected from various sources (interviews, observations, documents) had consistent codes and themes among them. This was congruent with Merriam's (2009) definition of triangulation, "comparing and cross-checking information collected through observations at different times or in different places" (p. 216). Further, I used thick descriptions in my taking of field notes, as this was a way to further ensure transferability of the data—in addition, I utilized thick description in my own reflexive memoing process in an attempt to be consistent in all of my data collection methods. "Today, when rich, thick description is used as strategy to enable transferability, it refers to a description of the setting and participants of the study, as well as a detailed description of the findings with adequate evidence presented in the form of quotes from participant interviews, field notes, and documents" (Merriam, 2009, p. 227). In this study, I utilized thick description as articulated by Merriam here—this meant that in both my observation notes and my memos, I strove to provide the most detailed description of the situation at hand. My own reflexivity was assessed through the process of memoing as the data collection and analysis were in progress. I used the memos that I created through these phases of the

research to monitor my own subjectivity in the research process. The memos themselves were utilized in the data analysis process to some extent. .

Protection of Human Subjects

I maintained the participants' information confidentially and used pseudonyms in the written case study to protect the identity of the research participants. In addition, interviews were conducted in a private location at Great Lakes Community College that was acceptable to the participant. Risks to participants in the study were no greater than that of daily living. Interviews were given a code and transcribed using a pseudonym. Audiotapes, transcriptions, and consent forms are maintained in a secure location. Transcriptions are maintained on a secured computer. Participant privacy is password-protected in computer storage because the transcripts are accessible only by password and do not contain participants' names. I am the only person able to access these data and transcripts in electronic form. Any data in printed form is kept in a locked cabinet in the office of Dr. Catherine Hansman in Julka Hall 264 at Cleveland State University; all data will be destroyed three years after the end of the study in January 2020. In terms of participant participation in the study, the consent form and verbal statements prior to the interview underscored that participation is voluntary. Further, participants were informed that they could elect to stop the interview at any point, were they to experience emotional discomfort (Alderson & Morrow, 2011).

Participants were fully informed as to the focus of the interview and the voluntary nature of their participation in advance of participating. All participants were given both verbal and written notification about their option to terminate their participation at any time.

Participant names and any personally identifying details were removed from the data during transcription. Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant.

Data Analysis

Transcription

The interviews were transcribed as soon as possible after they were conducted using an orthographic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2013). I made every attempt to represent the audio data verbatim in my transcription and provided only the punctuation that I felt was necessary for readability. I tried to adhere to the standards for high-quality transcription that Braun and Clarke (2013) set forth by avoiding common errors of over-punctuation, quotation marks, omission, and mistaken word or phrase errors (pp. 163-164). Orthographic transcription provided a clear record with minimal subjective interference from the researcher. While I acknowledge that subjectivity was integral to the study, the transcription of the recorded interviews was done in the most objective way possible in order to ensure that coding and theme development were emanating from the words and ideas as expressed by the actual participants, as opposed to a version that was already exposed to a layer of analysis by the researcher. In order to capture my own subjective interpretations as they emerged, I wrote reflexive memos closely following the recording of each interview that included my emergent analysis of the data along with other interpretations and notes that I saw relevant to the analysis and interpretation of the interview data. This was the most practical way to preserve an original record of the participant's language alongside an approximated record of my analogous interpretation as it occurred at the time of the interview.

Field Notes

As previously indicated, I wrote a narrative account based on the field notes that were derived from each classroom observation, following each observation. The narrative account that I produced following each instance of classroom observation included an initial analysis of the events as I observed them. These narratives, which are similar in nature to the reflexive memos that I described in association with the interview data, became part of the data.

Coding/Theme Development

Data collected in the forms described above were reviewed and analyzed to understand emergent themes. As commonalities among the data were uncovered, they were noted in a simple database created by me in Microsoft Excel. Data were analyzed using an iterative coding process (Saldaña, 2013). Data were analyzed through the creation of descriptive codes (Saldaña, 2013), which served to identify the broad categories that individual datum could be situated. This part of the coding process was consistent with the first cycle coding as described by Saldaña (2013), as they are the first iteration of codes. Two more iterations of coding were also necessary. Once these iterations or cycles of coding were applied to the data, themes were developed. However, as was my expectation, once data collection was complete and subsequent coding cycles completed, those themes emerged as a result. Once the first cycle coding process had been concluded, second cycle coding was conducted in order to further distill the themes and codes produced during first cycle coding (Saldaña, 2013).

Researcher Bias

Price (1996) spoke to many of the ethical dilemmas that can arise in the course of qualitative research, namely power differentials that exist between the researcher and the

participants that are difficult to mitigate. Regardless of how I presented myself to the participants in this case study; I had to acknowledge that in addition to being a doctoral student from another institution, I am also an instructor at the institution where the research was conducted. It was difficult to overcome the power differential here, but every effort was made during the interviews and in the analysis of the data to maintain a cognizance about its existence. Price also mentioned that issues of power could arise when the researcher does not share the same racial and socio-economic background as the participants—this is likely to also be the case in my study given my previous experiences teaching basic writing at this institution. I maintained a critical awareness about how these facts might inform my interpretations of the data as they were collected. Fine, Weiss, Weissen, and Wong (2003) suggested the importance of this type of critical awareness by saying, “we must interrogate in our writings who we are as we co-produce the narratives we presume to "collect," and we anticipate how the public and policy makers will receive, distort, and misread our data” (p. 195). In essence, the onus of correctly and fairly representing data derived from the experience of participants belongs to the researcher, who needs to bear this tremendous responsibility in mind throughout the research process. It is a great responsibility to share the storied experience of another human being, a privilege not to be taken out of context.

In terms of my own biases as a researcher, several issues emerged during preliminary reflection. The most salient of these biases is my relationship to the institution where the data were collected. Since I am on the faculty at this institution, my own experiential understanding of the curriculum, institutional practices, policies, student demographics, and other relevant politics were with me as I collected and analyzed data

from the classes. Wherever possible, I tried to note instances where my understanding of the institution was an assumption. Further, I have existing relationships with the instructors participating in the case study. I provided a detailed description of these relationship contexts within the frame of the study. As it is not possible to alter or mitigate the context of my relationship with the institution and the people within it who are the study participants, I strove to provide clear descriptions of the biases as I noted them in my own reflections. In addition, I was careful to articulate my position as an independent graduate student within the context of the study. Because of my relationship to the institution, it would have been easy for participants to draw the conclusion that I was acting as a representative of the institution where the data was being collected. I included a statement about my role as researcher in my informed consent form that was signed by all participants.

Further, as an instructor of basic writing in a community college, I have my own preconceptions about the efficacy of certain approaches to the teaching of basic writing. I have my own preferences and pedagogical stance, which I will need to provide clear descriptions of within the context of the study. While it is not the goal of the study to compare other teaching approaches to my own, it is the goal to understand how particular approaches to teaching relate to the development of students' perceptions of their self-efficacy as academic writers and their self-identity as college students.

Finally, I must note my own position of privilege—I entered the study with a considerable amount of privilege—race, class, and educational being the most salient of these. As a white, middle-class woman pursuing a doctorate level education, I was working with participants participating in a basic writing classes a community college in

an urban region where poverty is both prevalent and closely tied to racial factors. Agbenyega (2013) posed many questions as to how positionality—both the physical and socio-cultural relationship that the researcher has to the data. In other words, where one is positioned as a researcher both during the data collection process and more theoretically in social class, race, and gender identities impacts the type of data that one actually collects. Essentially, she concluded that a rigorous system of memoing, as I have previously discussed in other areas of this chapter, are essential in mitigating the positionality of the researcher. Stake (1995) spoke to the necessity of identifying clearly the case researcher's role in the research process and the case itself. He discussed the difference between participant-observers and passive observers in term of case study research. Each choice of role has its own strengths and limitations that were discussed within the analysis of the data collected. I leaned more toward Stake's definition of passive observer in my collection of field notes, but I understand that my previously discussed relationship to the institution muddied the passivity of my role to some degree.

Limitations of the Study

One key limitation of this study was the fact that the researcher was the primary study instrument. As I previously discussed, I have a deep and continuing relationship with the institution where the study was being conducted. While I took steps to mitigate this fact, it is still a central limitation in this study. Another issue concerns the qualitative research methodology itself—there are certain limitations inherent to qualitative case study research in general. Merriam (2009) articulated that qualitative case studies could provide too much detail in the way of thick description that they can become cumbersome and unmanageable to readers and other interested parties. While a good case

study provides ample description of the case in question, there is the potential for the researcher to lose focus on the relevance of descriptions and over-describe the case. Another issue was that the researcher had never conducted a qualitative case study previously—both Merriam (2009) and Stake (1995) underscored the importance of an experienced case study researcher in a good case study. While I cannot control my level of experience in this situation, I was working closely with several experienced qualitative researchers who were able to contribute to my decision making as a qualitative researcher. Lastly, another limitation that relates directly to the choice of case study methodology is the fact that case study is not inherently generalizable. As it is my goal to understand the classes that make up this case study, I am not able to make any generalizations about all or most basic writing students or basic writing instructors in my findings. My findings provide thick, rich descriptions that allow the reader to make a relevant determination about transferability to similar situations. This fact illuminates some meaningful dimensions about self-identity and self-efficacy in basic writing instruction that could lead to further study about the phenomenon.

Summary

The goal of this study was to gain a better understanding of how pedagogical approaches to basic writing instruction influence the development of students' self-identity as college students and self-efficacy as academic writers. The study includes four classes that comprise a single case at a large urban community college. I collected data in the form of participant interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis to provide a detailed description of components of developmental writing classes in this particular community college context.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Study Purpose & Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how instructional approaches to teaching basic (i.e., developmental or remedial) writing courses at a large urban community college foster the development of college students' self-efficacy regarding academic writing and self-identity as college students.

The following research questions were addressed by the study:

1. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience the development of self-efficacy related to their academic writing at the college level in basic writing classrooms?
2. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience their self-identity as college students in basic writing classrooms?
3. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of self-efficacy as writers?
4. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of student self-identity?

Introduction

This chapter will present findings of the study that explored the experiences of both students and instructors involved in basic writing classes during a particular semester in a community college setting. In the collection of data for this qualitative case study, I observed students and instructors within the classrooms of four different basic writing classes at an urban community college. I gained insight into the experiences of both students and instructors, as well as how they made meaning out of these experiences. This study adds to the literature concerning basic writing courses in higher education by focusing on the experiences of those in the classroom; however, this study did not consider quantitative data such as test scores, nor did it evaluate the writing of the student participants. Instead, I focused my inquiry on the participants' development of two specific affective factors—self-efficacy and self-identity.

In this study, the data I present were collected from Great Lakes Community College (GLCC), a large urban community college in the Midwestern United States. In this chapter, I provide some background information on GLCC and its history, as well as some description about the specific developmental English courses that were included in the case study. Next, I provide a descriptive overview of the participants, both students and instructors, within these courses that agreed to participate in this study. Finally, I present the themes that emerged as I considered each of the four research questions I posed for this study. Each theme will be defined and then illustrated and supported with specific examples from the data itself.

Background

Institution

As this case study focuses on basic writing courses in a community college, the institution selected for this study offers basic writing courses to a majority of its students. A full 60 percent of students who attend the institution in this study participate in basic writing courses of some kind. It should be noted, however, that developmental education courses in higher education have been under tremendous political scrutiny in the past several years. Institutions, like the one in this study, have been in the process of developing new curricular approaches to developmental education with the goal of increasing rates of degree attainment among their student populations.

Great Lakes Community College. This case study was conducted at a large urban community college, Great Lakes Community College (GLCC). This large community college has four campuses throughout the county where it is located in a midsized urban area in the Midwestern United States. The institution has served county residents seeking educational opportunities for over 50 years. GLCC is a two-year public postsecondary institution with an open-access admissions policy; it enrolls approximately 50,000 students each academic year. GLCC offers over 1,000 courses in both credit and non-credit capacities in over 190 career, technical, and liberal arts programs. While GLCC primarily serves the county where it is located, it also serves students from the surrounding communities. The average age of students at GLCC is 27, while students range in age from 13 to over 75. The student population is 61% female, and 38% are from minority groups. The majority of students at GLCC (90% or greater) is seeking an associate degree and/or is planning to transfer to a four-year institution. The majority of transfers are to local institutions in the region or state where GLCC is located. While

students at GLCC pursue a variety of educational paths, a full 25% are focused on programs related to health careers, while 16% are enrolled in business programs. Upon completion of their degree programs, most graduates (85%) remain in the region where GLCC is located. A full 68% of GLCC students attend the institution part-time (taking fewer than 12 credit hours per semester) while 11% of all students only take evening and weekend courses.

Programming. GLCC requires incoming students to take a standard placement test. In 2015, GLCC adopted the WritePlacer, an essay-based assessment produced by Accuplacer, as its placement tool. Prior to this time, GLCC used Compass to assess and place admitted students. Approximately sixty percent of students place into some type of developmental writing course at GLCC through placement exams. What follows is a brief description of the two developmental English courses that are relevant to this study, as well as a brief description of the college-level course that follows the developmental sequence. Several other options are also available to students needing remediation that will not be included in this discussion, as these courses were not included in this case study. However, a brief description is provided in order to illustrate the full context of how students place into the available course offerings.

WritePlacer Assessment. GLCC uses the WritePlacer test to assess incoming students for placement into English courses. The test is a computer scored essay test. According to Accuplacer, the WritePlacer assessment measures students' "ability to write effectively, which is critical to academic success. [The] writing sample [is] scored on the basis of how effectively it communicates a whole message to the readers for the stated purpose. [The] score is based on [students'] ability to express, organize and support

[their] opinions and ideas, not the position [they] take on the essay topic" (College Board). The assessment evaluates a student's essay on the basis of the characteristics of focus, organization, development and support, sentence structure, and mechanical conventions. Writeplacer scores range from one to eight in whole number increments. A score of one on this assessment indicates that the response "demonstrates no mastery of on-demand essay writing; the response is severely flawed" in the five key areas listed above. On the other end of the spectrum, a response of eight indicates that the response "demonstrates clear and consistent mastery of on-demand essay writing with a few minor errors." Scores falling between two and seven indicate a varying degree of mastery in the categories provided (College Board).

Basic Language I. Students with a score of two on WritePlacer are placed in this course. This score "demonstrates very little mastery of on-demand essay writing." The student's written response is flawed in the following ways: "presents a vague or limited point of view on the issue, demonstrates little awareness of audience, presents an unclear main idea, demonstrates weak critical thinking with little complexity of thought or with flawed reasoning, organizes ideas ineffectively, demonstrating a problematic progression of ideas, displays numerous errors in word choice, usage and sentence structure, contains significant spelling, grammar, punctuation and mechanical errors" (College Board). As such, a student entering Basic Language I has demonstrated a very low level of competency in the area of written composition. One significant outcome for this course is to "write single paragraph compositions which contain topic sentences, supporting sentences and details, and conclusions; provide transitional words and phrases within paragraphs; follow proper paragraph format; and have been proofread and revised"

(Basic Language I Course Outline). In addition, students are expected to develop basic competency with multi-paragraph essays while employing grammatical and syntactical structures of American Standard English.

Basic Language II. Students with a score of three on WritePlacer are placed in this course. A score of three indicates that the student-writing sample "demonstrates little mastery of on-demand essay writing" (College Board). The flaws present with a score at this level are identical as those previously enumerated for a score of two. What distinguishes a score of two and three is the number of those flaws that are present in the writing sample. Samples with many or most of the flaws listed receive a two, while samples with "one or more" of the flaws receive a score of three. Outcomes for Basic Language II include "identifying rhetorical situations, recognizing audience and purpose, developing an organizational strategy for a writing assignment, writing essays that contain an introductory paragraph, several body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph, all of which effectively support a thesis statement, and employing standard conventions of grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and spelling" (Basic Language II Course Outline).

College Writing I. Students with a score of five are placed in this course, while students with a WritePlacer score of four are offered one of two other remediation options—either a two-week "bridge" course or a co-requisite developmental course that is offered along with college composition. These options are an alternative to the developmental sequence of Basic Language I and Basic Language II that are part of this study. A score of five on WritePlacer indicates "adequate mastery of on-demand essay writing although it will have lapses in quality"; a score of four on WritePlacer, "demonstrates developing mastery of on-demand essay writing" (College Board).

Neither score is indicative of clear and consistent mastery, but both indicate that students have some meaningful writing skills and understanding of fundamentals of writing conventions in American Standard English. As I indicated earlier, neither College Writing I nor the alternative developmental courses are included in this case study. This description is provided to illustrate how the developmental sequence of Basic Language I and Basic Language II fit with the college-level course offering. College Writing I is a required course in most two-year degree programs at GLCC, as well as a course that transfers as an English requirement to four-year schools.

Instructional Approaches. Several instructional approaches were considered in the context of this study. Collaborative instructional approaches were seen throughout the data in the case study; these were utilized by instructor participants and experienced by student participants. Collaborative instruction is characterized by active participation by learners who are working together to meet course objectives. An example of collaborative learning in a basic writing classroom could be an essay written by a group, or a small group discussion of a reading assignment. The instructor's role in collaborative learning contexts is to plan the activities outside the classroom, in advance of the class meeting. During the actual classroom activity, instructors monitor and observe student learning, while students actively engage with the material. Direct instruction, on the other hand, occurs when the instructor takes a more active role in the classroom context. In direct instruction, students are more passive—instead of having active engagement with the course material, they listen and take notes while the instructor lectures and demonstrates the learning objectives. Examples of both approaches are evident in each class represented in the case study. In Henry's class, I observed a collaborative activity

designed to teach the rhetorical mode of comparison and contrast. Students were provided with a detailed list of characters. They worked as a group to determine which of the characters on the list would be suited for a variety of situations (e.g., a person to play basketball with, an employee at a retail fashion store, etc.). Students collaboratively made decisions according to criteria derived in their discussion. Sylvia, at one point, used a direct instructional approach to explain the grammatical concept of apostrophe use to the class. She thoroughly explained each of the contexts where the punctuation would be appropriate to the students while writing examples on the board.

Participants

This case study explores two different developmental English courses offered at Great Lakes Community College—two class sections each of Basic Language I and Basic Language II were part of the study, so there were a total of four classes in the study. From the four classes offered at GLCC during the semester, I recruited six student participants and four instructor participants who were willing to be interviewed for the study (see Table II). The interview protocol used for this study did not include the collection for demographic information, such as race, ethnicity, age, and sex or gender. I observed two class sections of Basic Language I, where I initially recruited a total of nine individuals for participation. However, despite extensive attempts to contact those who had agreed to participate, I was only able to interview two instructors and one student. I also observed the two class sections of Basic Language II, where I recruited a total of eleven participants. From these classes, I was able to interview a total of five students and two instructors. In total for the study, I observed twenty participants in classroom contexts, while 10 of these were individually interviewed (see Table I.)

Table I Participant Information by Course.

Category	Basic Language I Observed	Basic Language I Interviewed	Basic Language II Observed	Basic Language II Interviewed
Students	7	1	9	5
Instructors	2	2	2	2
Total	9	3	11	7

Table II Participant Information Detail.

Pseudonym	**Course**	**Role**	**Years at GLCC**	**Semesters at GLCC**
Alice	Basic Language II	Student	NA	1
Grace	Basic Language II	Instructor	>9	NA
Henry	Basic Language I	Instructor	>15	NA
Jack	Basic Language I	Student	NA	1
Leo	Basic Language II	Student	NA	2
Lucy	Basic Language II	Student	NA	1
Lydia	Basic Language II	Instructor	>10	NA
Stella	Basic Language II	Student	NA	1
Sylvia	Basic Language I	Instructor	>35	NA
Zoe	Basic Language II	Student	NA	2

Basic Language I Participants. From Basic Language I, three total participants (one student and two instructors) were interviewed and six additional students were observed in classroom contexts. Henry was a full-time, tenured faculty member at GLCC. He thinks carefully before speaking and often reiterates his points, presumably to assure the understanding of the person to whom he is talking. According to Henry, he has been teaching at the institution for more than 15 years. In addition to teaching Basic Language I, he has experience teaching Basic Language II, College Writing I, College Writing II, and Creative Writing. In my observations of him in the classroom, he utilized a mixture of self-directed, collaborative, and direct instructional approaches. As was described earlier, Henry provided a collaborative activity to the class to teach the concept of comparison and contrast. Later in the same class, Henry used a direct instructional method to explain the concept of run-on sentences to the class. Enrollment in the class I observed was only three students; this is a very low number of students. I observed all three students in my classroom observations. According to Henry, this class size made it difficult for him to employ as much collaborative learning as he typically would with a larger class.

Sylvia, was a part-time faculty member who retired from GLCC after a faculty career of more than 35 years. She has experience teaching Basic Language I, Basic Language II, College Writing I, and College Writing II, as well as many other courses that were offered at GLCC during her career. She has a very clear and direct style of communication—she makes strong eye contact and has a decisive tone. Her academic training is heavily focused in reading instruction. Her teaching style includes both collaborative and direct instructional approaches. Similar to the situation described in

Henry's class, enrollment for this class was very low. Only seven students were enrolled in the beginning of the term. Additionally, the class had significant attrition over the course of the semester. For example, in one observation of Sylvia's class, there were only three students present, and one of those arrived nearly an hour after the start of the period. Sylvia notes that she was not able to plan as much collaboration and peer interaction in this class as she had done in previous iterations of the same course. In her interview, Sylvia describes the use of a syllabus jigsaw activity where students work collaboratively to learn the class objectives and policies. As I described earlier, in my observation of Sylvia, she used direct instruction to teach correct apostrophe use to the class.

Jack was a student enrolled in Basic Language I; he placed into this course upon enrolling at GLCC. He had attended another higher educational institution prior to enrolling at GLCC. Jack had a very confident and warm tone of voice—his interactions with classmates were very jovial and friendly. He made jokes and laughed when working with other students. In my observations of Jack in the classroom setting, he was an active and engaged participant. I observed his participation in both a collaborative activity designed to foster understanding of comparison/ contrast rhetorical mode and a review of a grammatical concept. He appeared comfortable with his instructor and his classmates in the context. He regularly responded to questions and participated in the dialogue.

Basic Language II Participants. From Basic Language II, a total of seven participants were interviewed and four additional students were observed in classroom contexts. Grace was a full-time faculty member at GLCC, and she had taught at the institution since 2008. Her tone in the classroom was conversational, yet very professional. She shared details from her own personal experiences, yet presented

instructions for classroom activities in a firm, clear manner. In this study, she was observed in her capacity as an instructor in Basic Language II. However, she also was experienced in teaching Basic Language I, College Writing I, College Writing II, and Creative Writing. She has taught equivalent courses at several other institutions in the region surrounding GLCC. In my observations of her classroom teaching, I observed a variety of instructional approaches, including collaborative, self-directed and direct instructional approaches. Her class was by far the most robustly attended class of the four included in this study, but it still had fewer than ten students officially enrolled. My classroom observations ranged from six to seven students. Again, such conditions are unusual for this institution and created a context where most instructors had to adopt atypical approaches to accommodate a smaller than normal class section. In my observations of Grace, I saw an activity where students read an article about tobacco policy and then worked in pairs to prepare for a class discussion on the reading material. In the same class period, Grace used direct instruction to explain the concept of capitalization in formal written English. She walked students through several example exercises in the text, explaining each one as she went along.

Lydia was also observed in her capacity as an instructor of Basic Language II; she has been teaching at GLCC as a part-time faculty member since 2003. She spoke somewhat quietly, but the tone of voice was very clear. She responded to student questions and comments in a very thoughtful manner, generally taking a moment to think before speaking a response. She has experience teaching Basic Language I, College Writing I, and College Writing II. She has also taught equivalent courses at other institutions regionally. Lydia trained as a secondary teacher in her graduate work and like

Sylvia has a strong background in reading instruction. She has completed coursework toward a doctorate in Rhetoric and Composition. In my observations of Lydia, I noted that she employed primarily direct instructional approaches. Like the other class sections, her class was small. While there were ten students enrolled in the course, I observed only a total of six students in my classroom observations. In my observations of Lydia, she facilitated a discussion about a nonfiction book that the class was reading; I interpreted this activity as direct instruction, as it was an instructor-facilitated activity that students participated in. In her interview, she mentioned that she used a lot of small group discussions in a larger class in order to create a richer discussion with the whole class.

Lucy was a student enrolled in Basic Language II; she placed in the course based on her placement test and the outcome of a two-week "bridge" course offered by GLCC for students with scores close to the level of college composition. She had previously taken courses at another institution. Throughout the inquiry, I noted that Lucy was a somewhat shy student. She did not offer to participate in class discussions. Prior to the start of the class, she did not converse with classmates as many other students did. However, she did engage with the class activities in the session—specifically, she did converse with a partner when she was paired with that student. She was not excessively vocal, but did respond when being called on by her instructor.

Alice was another student who took Basic Language II during the semester when this case study was conducted. In my interactions with her, I noted that Alice was very friendly and outspoken—she exuded confidence in her responses. In class, she actively participated by raising her hand when her instructor posed a question for the class to consider. She had previously obtained a degree in Culinary Arts from a technical college.

I observed Alice to be outgoing and alert during class sessions. She was consistently on task and gave accurate answers during class discussions. Alice placed directly into Basic Language II based on her test score.

Stella was a student who was enrolled in Basic Language II during the case study. She had a lengthy gap between her previous education and her enrollment at GLCC. Stella had participated in higher education when she was much younger, but had to withdraw from classes due to familial circumstance. She never returned until recently. She was very prompt to respond when her instructor posed a question. Stella had high spirits during all my interactions with her—she laughed and smiled often during all these sessions. She participated consistently in the observations I conducted and seemed to genuinely enjoy herself in the classroom—she smiled and laughed during the observed lessons. Like Alice, Stella placed directly into Basic Language II.

Unlike Alice and Stella, Leo did not place directly into Basic Language II. He successfully completed Basic Language I the previous semester. In my observations of him, he paid close attention to the class discussion. He was not very talkative overall—he answered interview questions in short sentences. His posture and participation convey his clear interest in his studies, as he took notes and responded to questions posed by his instructor. He is not quick to offer his own words during the session, but is clearly engaged as evidenced by his posture and note taking. In all of my class observations of his class, Leo was the first student to arrive in the classroom.

Zoe was the final student participant who was enrolled in Basic Language II. Like Leo, she placed into Basic Language I and completed it the previous semester. Zoe demonstrated that she was engaged and interested in the class by participating in class

discussions. It is clear to me that she comes to class having prepared assigned readings, as she spoke about the material in some detail. She was present during all my observations of this class. She remained quiet during much of the discussion, but does occasionally offer something to the discussion. It is worth noting that both Leo and Zoe indicated that they intentionally chose the same instructor for Basic Language II as they had for Basic Language I because they had such a positive experience with that particular instructor.

Themes

Ten themes emerged in the analysis of the data collected in this case study. These ten themes are skill identification, task confidence, reaction to placement, identifying as an adult, goals, scaffolding, context, feedback, peer interaction, and institutional supports (See Table III). Next, I will examine each of my four research questions individually, along with the themes that best address that question. Along with the discussion of the theme, I will provide some defining terms to explain how the theme applied within the experience of the participants. Following the definition and explanation of the theme, I will provide quotes from participant interviews that either provide support to the question or illustrate some of the participants' counter perspectives.

Table III. Theme Definitions

Theme Position	Theme Name	Theme Definition	Research Question
Theme 1	Skill Identification	Students recognize skills associated with academic writing	RQ1
Theme 2	Task Confidence	Competence in completion of writing tasks	
Theme 3	Reaction to Placement	Students react to placement in developmental writing	RQ 2
Theme 4	Identifying as an adult	College students are characterized by maturity and adult behavior	
Theme 5	Goals	College students are characterized by their direction toward academic goals	
Theme 6	Scaffolding	Instructors provide appropriate support for writing tasks that enables students to successfully complete the tasks.	RQ3
Theme 7	Context	Instructors contextualize writing instruction in a way that relates to student experiences—both past and future	
Theme 8	Feedback	Instruction includes feedback that connects to students, actively encourages revision	
Theme 9	Peer Interaction	Instruction includes collaboration among peers	RQ4
Theme 10	Institutional supports	Instruction makes connections with institution	

Research Question 1

The first research question posed in this study is as follows:

In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience the development of self-efficacy related to academic writing at the college level in basic writing classrooms? I identified the two themes of "skill identification" and "task confidence" in relation to this question about the development of self-efficacy.

Skill Identification. This theme emerged in each of the six student participants that were interviewed. The theme is defined through the student participants' recognition of what skills comprise effective academic writing. Instructor participants manifest this theme in their discussion of the skills they seek to develop in their students and also as they discussed their operating definitions of effective academic writing. Jack, a Basic Language I student, spoke to this theme as he discussed some of the differences in skills he sees between secondary and post-secondary writing:

> The only difference is, writing in high school doesn't kind of fixate you into passing, and where in college the main theme to pass is writing essays. You know, every class you take will have an essay in it. Because high school is like, maybe one out of ten classes you have to write an essay. So it's like, okay, one out of ten classes, essay, do it. Every class you got to take has an essay so that's like 30% of your grade to pass. You know what I'm saying, so it's really different between the two. And writing essays in college is way different because it's a different style. Now you got MLA and then I don't know how to say it right, the other style stuff. High school, you just write what you want to write. In college, more grammar is involved, more commas, spaces, more, apostrophes. Gotta be adding these to high schools.

What is most salient about Jack's comment is his identification of writing as an essential college-level skill beyond English class. He points to an understanding that college-level writing is an expectation across academic disciplines and is essential for success in

college as a whole. He goes on to identify some of the aspects of style, as he identifies Modern Language Association (MLA) style guide along with grammar and punctuation skills as being essential. Jack also indicates that in high school, you "just write what you want to write." This comment is important as it expresses recognition that at the college-level, writing is often a response to a particular body of knowledge or topic.

Henry, a Basic Language I instructor, spoke to the theme of skill identification by validating the basic functional knowledge of language his students already have prior to taking this course. He states:

> People get around in their lives, they understand when other people talk to them they communicate, they have jobs, they have all these skills and they aren't necessarily good at properly applying them in context, when needed, etc. But one of the things I've always tried to do is draw upon, you know, 90% of what they need to know they already know. You just kind of have to point out to them that they do know it and how to apply it.

Here, Henry reinforces how the skills students already possess are relevant to their work in the developmental writing class. He focuses on mobilizing that existing knowledge.

Zoe, a student in Basic Language II, spoke to feeling underprepared for college in general coming out of high school. She said:

> High school, it doesn't get you prepared in the way that you need. High school was very pointless if you ask me because it did not really involve anything that I'm learning now. They beat you in the head to learn stuff then you gotta learn even more stuff in college.

> It didn't go towards my college degree. It was very pointless. But, I mean, I got my diploma, so I guess it wasn't that pointless.

She explains that her high school experience did not effectively prepare her to write at the college-level:

> I mean, the English class I had in high school, we didn't really do anything but we'd read a book, write down a little paragraph on a summary of the book. And then we'll have a just, like, it was very pointless. I guess in a way you could say it was helpful, but I had to learn other stuff in college. I learned in high school I always knew how to type fast; I always knew how to make a paragraph, always knew how to structure a paragraph. All that. Only thing I didn't know how is like, okay, a thesis statement. I learned how to do that in college.

Here, Zoe articulates one aspect of what is a central expectation of writing at the college level—the ability to create a thesis statement. Her identification of this key skill is an essential component of her self-efficacy as a writer, as she indicates that she has learned this skill in her coursework.

Stella, another Basic Language II student, expresses her view of college writing skills as follows:

> I think it would be to express yourself clearly, concisely. So that whoever is reading your work understands your point of view, understands what you're saying to get to the point, you know? That it's written in such a way that it's, that it's a higher level of writing, that it's masterfully done,

so to speak, you know. And it stands out. It stands out. It stands apart from the rest.

The skill that Stella articulates as defining is the clarity of the writing, the way the writing "stands out" from other kinds of writing. Stella was not fully convinced that her writing was to the level that she described. However, she was able to identify this as a key skill related to good academic writing. Further, Stella indicated that her work in this class has given her the chance, an "opportunity to be on that path." This comment helps to underscore how Stella sees herself moving toward the skill of clarity in writing that she has identified as essential to college-level writing.

Leo, a student in Basic Language II, spoke to the theme of skill identification by stating, "They want you to have all the ins and outs." He goes on to explain that he had not been careful about comma placement when he first began writing in college. In Leo's comment, he speaks to a general expectation—that in college-level writing, students are expected to follow all the rules, i.e., the "ins and outs." He goes on to specify with the example of correct comma placement. Like Leo, Lucy also identifies correct comma placement as a specific skill that college-level writers have mastery of, "for instance, say commas and things like that, you can't just place them anywhere and just keep going. Because with me, I love commas, so I just constantly just put them everywhere. And I've learned you can't do that because that's not right, especially if you are doing it and not doing it the right way." Finally, Alice identifies still different skills that characterize a college writer. She describes it as "writing details and getting to the point." In other words, college-level writing is both specific and concise.

Lydia, an instructor teaching Basic Language II, indicates the theme of skill identification by helping foster the identification with her students in personal conferences. She states:

> For you I've noticed that you really have an issue with possessives. Or you're a real thinker; I can tell you like philosophy, but sometimes you let your thoughts almost get away from you, and you need to have a more structured, concise way of putting things. And for you, we've got to get you to conquer those run-ons because by the time you get to [College Writing I], your teachers are going to have that expectation.

Here Lydia provides several examples of the types of comments she makes to students in conferences to help them more clearly identify the skills they need to develop in order to become better academic writers.

Task Confidence. This theme was present in some form in all six of the student participants' responses. Essentially, each of them spoke to the ways in which the methods used by their instructors helped them to feel confident in their ability to complete writing tasks as they were assigned in the context of their basic writing class. Further, they felt confident in their ability to move on to the next level of English and write in other contexts in their college education.

Jack, a Basic Language I student, saw himself progressing toward greater writing ability. He felt confident about his improvement, but not that he has achieved his ultimate goals. He stated, "I'm getting there, but I'm not there yet," He goes on to say, "the more I practice the more I get better at it." Jack saw himself as someone who continued to

improve with practice, which exemplifies task confidence—having a belief that improvement will follow with continued engagement in the craft of writing.

Sylvia, a Basic Language I instructor, explained her use of a "literacy inventory" in her class. She had students assess their reading and writing ability at the beginning of the semester and again at the end. They write a reflective essay on how they have changed. This assignment allows students to understand their own progress as writers and readers as a result of the course. Being able to actually articulate one's own learning achievements allows one to more fully understand what one is actually capable to doing.

Lucy, a Basic Language II student, speaks to how the class helped her by encouraging her to develop her answers to questions more fully into paragraph form. She differentiates that from other experiences of writing in school:

> I say a little bit more advanced because it with this one, we're writing a paper almost, we were writing paragraphs all the time, like no matter if we were just doing a paper, each one of our answers had to be at least a paragraph long. As to where in my other ones, my other English classes, I didn't say, they just had to be like say whatever you wanted to say no matter how long it was.

In addition, Lucy indicates how the class "It helped me with, helped me with, basically learning how to actually be more confident with my writing." As such, Lucy is underscoring how her self-efficacy as an academic writer was directly reinforced by the experience of this basic writing class. She connects this directly to the experience of working with her instructor. She states, "she has that confidence in her students that once she tells them how to do something, that they, she has the confidence that they can do it

on their own after she showed them." Here Lucy connects her self-efficacy as a writer to the confidence that her instructor has in her ability to complete the tasks provided once she has been instructed how to do so.

Alice, another Basic Language II student, spoke to how the class also gave her increased confidence in herself as a writer:

> You know one of the things that changed me, one of the things that opened up my eyes in that class was that how good of a writer I am. And I didn't, I didn't you know, I never paid that any attention too much. And then, being honest with you, there wasn't really too much writing that you did in high school nor the college I went to, because I went to a culinary school.

Alice's comment also speaks to the theme of "task confidence," although in a different way from Lucy. Alice points to the fact that the class helped her to understand herself as someone with talent and ability to write. She did not realize prior to taking the class that she was already skilled as a writer, so the class helped her to see the ability in herself.

Leo articulated a slightly different dimension of task confidence. He states:

> Yeah, I think I'm getting better. You know, just slower, slowly.

Here, Leo understood that his ability to complete a writing task is improving at a slow rate. He did not comment about whether he understood this rate of progress to be adequate for his progression to the next level of college writing. However, here there was a recognition of progression, which alludes to greater confidence. What Leo does understand, which is of great significance, was that he would continue to need support to complete the next levels:

> So like, I'm thinking I'm more ready than I was when I first started [the] class. Now, I still think I'm going to need like, being at tutoring a lot, you know. Getting a lot of opportunities, I'm thinking I'm going to need a lot of help.

As such, Leo recognized his progress toward readiness to write well at the college level and also how to achieve that with support. Both his identification of progression and his recognition of his need for continued support were evidence of his task confidence—he knows how to be successful, by seeking help, and he knows that the work he has done thus far has helped him to move forward.

Zoe expressed task confidence in the following way, “I always knew how to write at the level of a college, I just have lower errors in my writing.” Here Zoe indicates that she has an overall confidence in her ability to write at the college-level. She recognizes that she still has errors but knows how to approach the task and feels that she can ultimately accomplish it. Stella, the oldest of the student participants, displays the antithesis of this theme. She says, “I was good in everything else, but when it came to the computer, I was left in the dust by everyone else.” Here Stella expresses both a confidence and a lack of it. She is confident about her ability to write, i.e. “everything else,” but was not as confident about her ability to use a computer to execute writing tasks.

Grace explained the theme of task confidence when she explains the following class context:

> And I made the assignments where they had the ability to write about or discuss something that was very personal to them. I made [the

assignments] in a way that they were free to share as much as they wanted to like [for example] a reflection paper.

Grace's assignment description spoke to providing students with an assignment that they would be able to complete because the source of information was personal. She was giving students a measure of control over their own learning process here.

The emergent themes of skill identification and task confidence illustrated how students in this study began to develop an understanding of what college-level writing meant and the specific skills that were needed to successful as a college level writer. In the developmental writing courses in this study, students began to develop an understanding of what college-level writing meant and skills that were needed to successful as a college level writer. Students in these courses began to identify specific skills associated with college level writing. In addition, students were able to define and understand college level writing on their own terms. As students were able to successfully complete writing tasks within the context of their coursework, their self-efficacy toward academic writing was enhanced. In other words, they began to believe more fully in their own abilities as student writers the more they successfully completed those tasks in their class.

Research Question 2

The second research question I posed for this case study is as follows:

In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience their self-identity as college students in basic writing classrooms?

I identified the themes of "reaction to placement," "identifying as an adult" and "goals" in relation to this question about self-identity.

Reaction to Placement. The theme of reaction to placement relates to student reactions to being placed in a basic or developmental course. Each student participant spoke to this reaction in some manner, although his or her reactions varied. The participants' reactions to placement in basic writing course reflect their understandings of their relationship to the college itself, as well as their understanding of their own college readiness. In many ways, this theme helps to illustrate how students identify themselves within the context of the institution.

Jack, a student in Basic Language I, articulated his lack of understanding about the placement test score or how the level of developmental English relates to the other English courses that are required for his program. He states:

> I don't think I even know the level of English. I just take the class that is for you if don't know how to do essays, you know. When I took my test I really didn't understand the score, I just said okay.

Jack's comment indicated that he did not fully understand his placement and did, and did not question it upon receiving his placement score. Ultimately, as he clearly states, he does not fully understand the implications of his placement. This indicates that at this point, he is unsure about how to construct his identity as a college student and is relying on the institution to help him.

In Sylvia's experience, students do not see their placement in developmental writing as a negative identity. She stated, "They don't even understand that they're two courses below English 1010." In other words, students don't understand their placement in relation to the other possible placements.

Alice, a student in Basic Language II, indicated that she questioned her placement because she had already taken a similar course at another institution:

> I already took English in college at the college that I graduated from. But unfortunately, because of them going out of business next year, they their classes were not accredited. So it was kind of a yes and no. Not saying it from a work standpoint, it was like why do I have to take this again?

She qualifies her statement by pointing out that it was not about the work itself, "Not saying it from a work standpoint." Instead, Alice's frustration with her placement was related to her feeling that she was repeating a course that she had already taken. She goes on to say that she "It's just, I didn't feel like I needed to be in there." This last comment reiterates her sense of a self-identity that does not match the college assessment and placement.

Leo reacted to his placement in developmental English with acceptance. He says, "I didn't really have any response to it. I just, I didn't really care." On one hand, Leo's reaction could be interpreted as fully apathetic. However, in the context of the Jack's comments, Leo's response can be seen as similar. His lack of caring about his placement into developmental English is also a tacit acceptance of said placement—he did not question it.

Zoe also vocalized an acceptance of her placement; however, she introduces more resistance in her comments. In my interview with Zoe, her tone of voice and posture conveyed a level of defensiveness, although she maintained receptiveness to answering the questions despite her tone. She stated:

> I was just guessing on the questions or I probably would have been in a higher class. However, I didn't have a reaction I really didn't care as long as I was in class.

Like Jack and Leo, apathy toward her placement was evident in Zoe's remarks. However, Zoe's indication that she did give her best effort in testing is notable, as it provided evidence of apathy to the testing process as a whole. Another interesting point raised by Zoe is that use of the word, "higher" to describe a placement in a level other than what she was actually placed in. This choice of words indicates an acknowledgement that her placement in developmental English is below the college level or at least in her understanding that there is some hierarchy of courses. Zoe's lack of caring is mitigated by her expression of "as long as I was in class." In other words, Zoe simply wanted to be enrolled in college—her actual placement in a particular English class did not concern her. This indicates her beginning self-identity as a college student. Enrollment was important to that self-identity.

Lucy's response to her placement in Basic Language II was less apathetic. She said, "My reaction, I didn't have no [reaction]. I knew I needed to start over, like remember some of some of the English things because I haven't really taken an English class in some years." So, Lucy sees taking a developmental course as an opportunity to improve her skills in English. Stella's reaction to her placement shows the opposite of apathy. She says, "I felt good about it because I felt that English was one of my strong points." Stella was happy to be placed in Basic Language II because she felt confident about English as a subject area.

Grace saw student self-perceptions differently than Sylvia and most of the student participants. She explains her view in the following way:

> I believe that they feel like they are less than. And, I heard students say to me, this class doesn't really count because it doesn't really start counting until you get to [College Writing I] in terms of your credits towards a degree. Being in a remedial course, although they feel that way, I never say that, but being in a course like [Basic Language I or Basic Language II], they feel like they're not good enough. And it's hard to break that perception that somehow you're less than because you're in these courses.

In her experiences, students who are placed in a remedial course do experience a negative self-identity.

Identifying as an adult. The second theme of "identifying as an adult" that all the student participants identified relates to how they understood what it meant to be a college student. In many ways, college student identity was differentiated from other forms of student identity previously experienced by the students, namely adolescent or high school student identity. Student participants defined being a college student as being synonymous with being an adult. Students used the word "adult" in their descriptions of what it meant to be a college student. Jack, a student in Basic Language I, commented that he saw college students as being more adult than high school students. Jack spoke to the higher stakes that he saw in a college environment:

> I mean, I think when being a college student is like, overrated what we expected it to be when we was in high school. I feel like once

> we got to college, our whole mindset changes, like, we're no longer in high school where we can fall and keep going. But now, we're at the point where if you fall you've got to get back up and got to stay on top of our game and we've got to stay more, to really learn that in the next four years it's going to be the next four years to figure out the rest of our life.

This comment indicated that Jack saw high school as a place where one can make mistakes, where college requires a level of maturity. In high school, one "can fall and keep going." In other words, one can make mistakes in high school that are not afforded to college students. College students have to "get back up" and "stay on top of our game." Jack's comments are complex because they speak to the theme of maturity, but also to persistence. He seems to understand that in order to be a college student, one must persist to succeed. On the other hand, he still viewed college as a place of liminality where one figures out the rest of life. Jack further recognized a transformation that takes place when one crosses over from secondary to postsecondary spheres of education:

> So when you go to college and you learn yourself differently, you have the mentality of being different, and you get to meet new people, and learn how to be on your own, and learning how to break things down differently, you just get mature in a different way, and you look like your friends in high school are not the friends you will have in your future. It changes your personality. It changes your attitude.

Clearly, Jack saw a change in himself as he has transitioned from secondary education. In this last comment, he used the word “mature” to characterize his understanding of the change in his identity.

In my interview with Sylvia, she recalled an experience of teaching Basic Language I where students had strong feelings about being in a developmental course. She explained:

> And one day, one student said out loud ‘why the hell am I sitting here in this class, learning about this stuff that I should have learned in elementary school? I was ripped off by the [Midwestern Public] School system.’ And they all started talking about it. And they were all really upset that this is what they had to learn when they went back to college.

Here, the students Sylvia described seemed to display the antithesis of the “identifying as an adult” theme, as they articulate being both infantilized by the curriculum in their course and critical toward their previous educational experiences.

Alice, a student in Basic Language II, also used the word maturity to articulate her definition of college student identity. She says:

> Maturity, you know. When you get to college it's a certain level of maturity and it's the certain things that you have to have like higher standards to uphold to. You know, in high school, it's kind of like I want to be the cool kid or I want to be follower. And, and in college you need to be the leader.

Alice's comment also included two other ideas that she defines along with maturity as part of her identity. The first was having higher standards, the implication being that standards for both behavior and academic work are higher in a college setting. The second was being a leader, which she distinguished from less mature follower behavior that she associates with being in a secondary educational environment.

Leo used the word "adult" to characterize what it means to identify as a college student. He states, "I guess it is just more freedom… actually yeah, behavior. yeah. I guess a little more adult, I guess." While Leo uses the word adult, he seems more tentative than the other student participants in his definition of college student identity. His use of the word freedom is notable, as he seems to associate that with being adult. His definition of college student identity compares it with his most recent educational experience in secondary education.

Zoe articulated college student identity in a different way from the other participants who identified adulthood was part of college student identity. She made the following comment about how she perceived what it meant to be a college student:

> I guess a college student to me is what it means to me is to go to school, I guess. I mean it doesn't really mean anything to me.

So, Zoe's understanding of college student identity was related purely to one's enrollment status and not to anything more complex. This comment reflects a very narrow view of Zoe's identity as a college student.

Two student participants, Lucy and Stella, did not explicitly identify the theme of adulthood with relationship to college student identity. Both participants focused more on

identity as it related to the next theme—that of goals. It is worth noting that Stella is distinct from the other participants in terms of age, which could relate to why she saw identity in slightly different terms.

In Lydia's interview, she did not make explicit reference to the theme of "identifying as an adult." Lydia saw student identity at the college level as it related to their self-perception of their spoken and written language skills. At one point, Lydia described being in a developmental course as "an ego blow" to some students. She went on to say, "And you can tell it's really messing with their sense of self." Here Lydia identified the ways in which she sees self-identity articulated in developmental students as a negative concept.

Goals. The third theme that emerged in my analysis of the data that related to research question two is "goals." Essentially, the "goals" theme is defined as another aspect of college student identity. Student participants expressed that working toward a specific academic or career goal was an aspect of being a college student, i.e. part of college student identity.

Jack, a student in Basic Language I, explained the theme of "goals" when he said, "this four years is going to change the rest of your life, forever." He was referring to obtaining a four-year degree as a process by which a person develops and identifies clear career and life goals. So, Jack understood a college student to be one who is working toward that end. He also said "[we have the] next four years to figure out the rest of our life" in reference to this theme. He placed a lot of importance on this development. He did not view a college student as one who already has clearly articulated career plans, but rather is working toward developing them.

Lucy, a Basic Language II student, expressed the theme of goals through the idea of self-improvement. She indicated that being a college student is related to social mobility, as it is the path toward getting a better job or even a better career. She stated:

> In my words, being a college student is somebody that's trying, I say, trying to better themselves. Trying to go forth, trying to get a better job, a better career. And I feel the only way to get that is if you go to; if you go to school, go to college.

Lucy's comment indicated that she sees college student identity tied to the pursuit of improved social and economic circumstances; she saw being in college as being linked to that goal.

Stella also connected identity as a college student to goals. Her comment was very similar to Lucy's comment in this regard, as both participants see college student identity as related to having identified life goals toward economic and social mobility. She stated:

> It means that you have desires and aspirations, and um, you're on the road and you're taking the first step when you're a freshman, and then therefore after. Um, with trying to reach your goal. Because I have a goal and I want to get there. And, I'm going to do it this time.

Stella's final sentence underscored her personal connection to her goals. She felt driven to achieve her educational goals at this point in her life. As was mentioned earlier, Stella began to pursue a college education when she was much younger but never completed because of familial obligations.

Alice seemed to differentiate college student identity from the pursuit of a particular educational credential. She indicated in her comment that she was split between two identities. She commented, “At one point of time, I kind of considered myself a college student, but at another time, I've considered myself an adult who just needs this certification so I can, you know, progress in life.” Alice’s comment points to her pursuit of a particular goal, i.e. “this certification.” Additionally, she acknowledged that her goal of completing this certification will allow her to progress in life—so in this way, her remark aligned with both Stella and Lucy. However, Alice placed this goal-driven identity at odds with college student identity and indicated that she has viewed herself in both capacities at different points in her educational experience.

Zoe spoke to the theme of goals in terms of her education beyond GLCC. She intended to transfer her credits and obtain a bachelor’s degree. She stated, “I wanted to get all my Englishes and Math out of the way so I wouldn't have to do it my three or four year of college, when I go to university.” Leo did not identify differently as a result of taking this class. He stated that he does not see himself differently as a student as a result of taking this class. Jack did not speak to the theme of goals in his interview.

Lydia, a Basic Language II instructor, identified the theme of goals by illustrating in very clear terms what types of writing tasks are expected in a college context. She stated:

> Here in the college one of your writing goals is going to be, writing papers or writing short answer essay responses. And, ultimately, what you're trying to do is process information, think about information, write about information, and sure, yes, get good

grades and pass your class. You know, and meet your ultimate goal of graduating.

Here Lydia identified what she understands the basic goals of many of her students actually are—to satisfactorily complete her class and ultimately graduate.

Students in this study associated college student identity with adulthood as well as possible future identities. They began to identify as college students and saw college as a clear and important step toward their futures. The students in this study generally did not see their placement in developmental writing courses as a way that distinguished them from their peers who placed directly into college-level writing courses. They characterized and conceptualized a college student as being more adult than a high school student, and as having higher expectations placed upon them as students. Further, college student identity was future-focused and goal related. Students saw their identity as a point that connected them to a future career or life goal.

Research Question 3

The third research question I posed for this case study was as follows: *In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of self-efficacy as writers?* I identified the themes of "scaffolding," "life experience," and "feedback" in relation to this question.

Scaffolding. The first theme that emerged in relation to the third research question was "scaffolding." This theme is defined as a strategy in which instructors provide appropriate support for writing tasks that enables students to successfully complete the tasks. This theme is critical in the development of student self-efficacy toward academic writing. As students develop more confidence when they experience

success. they begin to better understand their own interior processes. Three of the instructor participants identified this theme in some capacity, as well as two of the student participants.

Henry, an experienced developmental writing instructor who taught Basic Language I during the semester when this case study was conducted, spoke to "scaffolding" in terms of how he hoped to facilitate students' awareness of their thinking processes. He conducted exercises that were designed to help students become more conscious of how they made particular decisions. He described one such activity in the following comment:

> And to have them reflect, after this, we had the discussion like "How did you make that decision as a group?" In other words, when somebody disagreed with you, or when somebody was saying something like "this statement is true," how do you make that decision? In terms of making themselves aware about how they make decisions, and what kinds of things they do. And by the way, all twenty statements are actually true. John Adams really did, for instance, go skinny-dipping in the Potomac regularly, which would be hard for a president to do now.

The activity that Henry referred to is one where students considered a list of twenty statements made about former United States presidents. He emphasized how he wanted the students in their collaborative work groups to fully discuss the decision-making process, i.e. develop consciousness about their thinking. The development of this type of awareness is one manifestation of the scaffolding theme, as it is an exercise that helps

students to deepen their understanding of the thinking process, which is often what is needed in academic writing, a detailed explanation of decisions and rationales. Here, Henry provided support in the form of a discussion that helped students consider how decision making factors into the writing process.

Sylvia, another Basic Language II instructor, also spoke to the theme of "scaffolding"; her comment points to the view of writing itself as a process, which she believes students have a difficult time conceptualizing. Looking at writing as a series of tasks or process is a clear representation of scaffolding. Sylvia noted that often students' self-perceptions of their writing abilities are static; they have an expectation that writing skills cannot be fundamentally changed. She stated:

> So you know, they know they have mistakes and they've sort of accepted they have these mistakes and they can't change it. So, it's like we're sitting in this class, but at the end I'm still going to be the same person. Like they don't understand that these are rules that you can learn. And, your paper can be different. It's like if you burnt the turkey this time, what are you going to do differently so you don't burn the turkey? It's like we have to constantly translate the experience of learning to write or to read into experiences that they have in life. Like you can't expect yourself to go out and run a 10k. You have to build up and say "well, my legs hurt so much" so maybe next time you'll stretch. That's what they don't know. They don't understand that it's a process. We keep saying it's a process, but they don't get that part.

In her comment, Sylvia pointed to her use of metaphor as a tool for helping students understand writing as a process. She used the metaphor of burning a turkey and training for a race to illustrate how writing skills are a process that must be engaged with in order to achieve improvement. In this way, Sylvia's comment related a view of writing development as a process, which illustrated to students that their own improvement is part of a larger process that involves meeting smaller goals and making decisions about how to work differently in future efforts. Further, Sylvia spoke to helping to foster this view through the use of relatable metaphor—those that connect to life experiences students have had. Sylvia contextualized the process of growth and development for students in her comment.

Jack, a student participant in Henry's Basic Language I class, articulated how he came to be able to frame writing tasks differently as a result of his work in the class. The simple scaffolding of having a longer writing assignment broken into smaller tasks seems to have increased his self-efficacy toward academic writing. He stated:

> [Henry] had us break things down, like he made us do 250 words or like 500 words or 1000 words. And I was saying, like if you add that up, that still totals like 1000 words. And he showed us that you write small, look over it, learn what he says was messed up, and rewrite the messed up paragraphs. We constantly be like okay, 250 words ain't nothing, 250 words more ain't nothing. Then you have 700 words, 1,000, 10,000. You know, so he broke it down. I really liked that.

By having the writing task assigned in smaller, more manageable portions, Jack began to feel like he was capable of success with a longer writing assignment. He was clear about how this was a framework that his instructor presented to him as a tool for approaching a writing task that was effective for him.

Grace, who taught Basic Language II, also spoke to the theme of "scaffolding." Specifically, she explained how she would create smaller assignments in order to help alleviate student stress about these tasks. She stated:

> What I did was, because that class needed so much hand holding, I made the assignments smaller, like little writing and reading assignments, smaller. I kept them in small groups a lot because they thrived in small group settings. And I made the assignments where they had the ability to write about or discuss something that was very personal to them.

Grace's reference to making assignments smaller was one manifestation of scaffolding, as she was able to provide tasks that students perceived as manageable, which contributed to their self-efficacy toward the writing task. Like Henry, Grace also indicated these tasks were completed in small group settings—so collaborative learning environments emerged as another important element.

Alice also spoke to the theme of scaffolding in her discussion. She indicated that her instructor was very effective in helping to shape her thinking in terms of providing specific details and documentation in her written work. She stated:

> She said that when you citing something or when you saying that this company said that you should do this, you always said "what

company?" Who was a part of the company? Who in the company told you that you should do that?

Alice pointed out that this instruction “stuck in her head” and that she referred to it when she was in the process of composing her assignments. Alice’s comments indicated that the presentation of this aspect of the writing process was framed in a way that allowed her to have success with it on her own terms. She actually internalized her instructor’s questions and recalled them in the process of composing.

Context. All the instructor participants and two of the student participants indicated a theme of “context” in their discussions. This theme was shown in the data as instructors placed instruction in a context that related to both a student’s familiar life experiences and expected professional experiences.

Sylvia, a Basic Language I instructor, made a comment that also related to the “context” theme, “We have to constantly translate the experience of learning to write or to read into experiences that they have in life.” Here she directly related the processes of learning to write to other familiar processes. Sylvia indicated that by translating the processes of learning to read and write into familiar ones, students had a clearer understanding of them. A clearer understanding of how a process works could lead to a greater level of self-efficacy.

Henry, a Basic Language I instructor, used a similar method of instruction in his approach. Like Sylvia, he also utilized metaphor to connect familiar student experiences with the experience of writing. He stated:

First of all, and I have this metaphor that writing is like driving that I abuse in all sorts of different ways. But one of the first things I

> say is you get in your car and you drive around your block. You don't run into anybody. You don't blow any traffic signs. Then, you go around the block and you pull back into your driveway. Have you accomplished something?' Then we have this conversation: you don't drive so that you don't break laws, not so that you don't cause accidents. You drive because you want to go somewhere. So, when you write, one of the things you want to do is to go somewhere. Being correct in your writing and writing in circles or not having anything to say is not the point. First of all, you actually do need to have something that you're trying to get across.

Here, Henry used the driving metaphor, which he admits that he used all the time to help students to understand how both the message communicated and the effectiveness of the communication are important to writing. In other words, both the content and the grammar of a piece of writing are essential. He wants students to understand these as a unified whole.

Additionally, Henry framed academic writing in a way that made it relatable to students, as he acknowledged his belief about how students experience writing in academic contexts

> So I will openly tell people that it's not my, there's no requirement that you have to love this. This is a skill that you're going to need. I'm going to teach you how to do it effectively. I'll also make it clear that things like texts and email and conversations with your friends that are a different context than this. I'm not critiquing what

> you do in your ordinary everyday life. This is a context where you are expected to be able to use a common professional formal language. When you're out working, when you are in other academic situations, this is what's going to be expected.

Henry's commented about using "a common professional language" are important ones, as they point to the necessity for students to begin to understand and differentiate between different rhetorical situations. This is a necessary skill for writing competently in both academic and professional contexts. Again, developing a greater understanding of specific rhetorical contexts and how those apply to various situations a student encounters could lead to greater self-efficacy as students gain insight toward making appropriate decisions about the audience for whom they are writing.

The theme of "context" emerges when instructors were able to frame the processes of reading and writing as skills that are useful beyond the developmental writing classroom—in both degree attainment and career development. In this manifestation of the "context" theme, the instruction was framed as useful to students' larger life aspirations. Lydia exemplified this type of framing in the following comment:

> And that's what I really, really want them to walk away with, and I tell them this all the time. There's a method to what I'm showing you here and I feel that if you just give it a try, when you enter any other class and you get a writing assignment, you won't have that "uhhh" like what do I do, where do I start? You know. You'll have this strategy for writing and it really won't be as bad as you currently think it is.

Lydia identified the purpose for teaching students a particular approach to the writing process was so that they will have this process to draw upon in later writing situations—namely in future college courses. Lydia's comment illustrated to some extent how she sees students' views about writing when they enter her classroom when she said, "it really won't be as bad as you currently think it is." In other words, her experience is that students do not approach writing tasks with particular delight. Her acknowledgement about her students' attitudes toward writing tasks indicated that she recognized that successful completion of the tasks will be better than expected. She indicated from experience that if her approach to writing is applied, students will have an attitudinal shift and view the task with more self-efficacy.

Grace also spoke to this type of instructional framing, as she explained one of the key goals she has in teaching developmental writing:

> I want them to be able to express themselves in the best way possible because you have to do the same thing when you are on your job. These are transferable skills, so anything I'm teaching in class is going to affect how you live your life. In your job or at home, you have to be an effective communicator. You just have to be.

Here, Grace put her instructional goals into a context for students—in other words, she explained the underlying motivation for teaching and emphasizing specific skills in her classroom. She used the words "transferable skills" to explain this concept. Grace articulated how effective written communication has a greater purpose, as well as its importance. Students could develop more motivation toward a task, and as a result

greater self-efficacy, when they fully understand the purpose for the task. In this way, Grace developed motivation toward successful development of academic writing skills. Alice, a student participant, explained in detail how the theme of life experience worked in her classroom. She explained that her instructor always provided the context and purpose for the work they were assigned, which positively affected her experience as a student. Alice stated:

> But, I would say this English class is a lot more detailed, a lot more structured, and everything makes sense, made sense as to why she was doing it. So even though she may have had you doing crossword puzzles, she did that to keep your brain exercised, to keep you focused in on what it is you got to do next. If you understand what I'm saying, everything had a purpose and had a point as to why she did it versus, previous English classes that I had, it's like why are we doing this again?

Here, Alice stated the importance of having instruction put into a context that made sense to her as a student. Her learning was enhanced by understanding instruction in a contextual way. In her words, “everything had a purpose.”

Alice further illustrated the theme of “context,” as she pointed out how each writing task was framed in a way that helped students understand how it could be applicable in actual professional settings. This manifestation of the life experience theme could be described as future-focused or future-oriented. She stated this idea in the following comment:

> It was just like what I said with the argumentative essay, with the personal narrative, and with the information, you know, we had to write out or, you know, I mean, everything made sense because no matter what field you go into, regardless if it's HR department, personal administration, I mean, um, assistant administration, or like, I'm going into dietetics, we're going to end up using one of the three of those, uh, skill writings, like. We're going to use one of the three of those in our field. It's just like I said, I need to learn how to do argumentative better because I'm always going to be arguing with somebody about why I think you should do this.

In this quote, Alice showed how she related the instruction to future career contexts. The way her instructor framed assignments and activities helped Alice to understand the purpose of the work she was being asked to do.

Stella also referenced the theme of "context." In doing so, she articulated how context influences writing and responses to classroom assignments. She said, "We had to look at a particular picture and make a story about it. And everybody had a different point of view of why the girl was crying, and I think a lot of it has to do with your life's influence, how you write." Here Stella understood how her responses as a writer differ from those of her classmates because of differences in their life experiences. This comment showed how she began to understand herself more fully as a writer and her own point of view; she had confidence in this perspective. Here, Stella understood the task from a personal context and felt confident in her own perspective.

Feedback. Instructor responses to student work both in oral and written forms contributed to the students' self-efficacy. This theme is defined as a form of communication that encourages revision and improvement in writing tasks. Instructor participants all indicated to some extent how they viewed feedback in relation to writing instruction. Several student participants also spoke to this theme. Sylvia, a Basic Language I instructor, explained a system of feedback that she utilized to encourage students to revise work more effectively. She explained:

> Well one of the things, this, I think for me, is primary. And that is the belief system that I have about revision. That because our students aren't serious about writing, they don't put a lot of effort into it, or they don't even understand the effort that it takes to put into it, so their final paper, that what they consider a final paper, is still generally a rough draft for a variety reasons. And, so, in [Basic Language I or II], I do not give their papers a letter grade, A-B-C-D, because, and I tell them from day one, what good does it do you or me to put a C or a D on your paper? You think you're a C student? Do you think you've always been a C student? And, you're not going, you don't have expectations for yourselves. So my goal is that your papers are what we would consider an A or a B paper, but you're either going to get a pass, it's going to say pass, and I'm going to write comments on it, or no grade yet. And, so, that system works very well for me for a number of reasons that

they get the opportunity to revise and really with no penalty. I don't believe they should be penalized for revising.

Sylvia explained that she does not provide a letter grade on student writing until the writing meets the criteria that would earn a student a letter grade of A or B. Instead, she provideds feedback on the written work and allows students to revise written work until they have achieved a passing grade. In this way, Sylvia believes she is really preparing students to be successful in college level English courses once they successfully complete her developmental English class. She indicated this in a later comment, “So, that's I think my grading philosophy really is significant in making sure they have success.” Sylvia’s approach to feedback points to an emphasis she places on the task of revision. By creating a context where students continue to revise writing until they reach a certain competency, Sylvia is placing a high value on the revision phase of composition writing, as she tries to raise student self-efficacy in the process.

Henry discussed the theme of feedback by talking about his general philosophy toward guiding students’ in the writing process. He stated:

> When you're working with a student one-on-one and the student just says, "tell me what to do." I mean, that's almost an impossible conversation. I can't tell you what to do. I can help you decide. I can help you shape that. I can help you hone your skills. But, I can't tell you what you want to say and I can't tell you the way that you want to say it. I can tell you the way that I might say it, but that's not the goal here. The point is not that I’m holding you up

while you swim. When I get out of the pool, I don't want you drowning.

Henry engaged a metaphor of swimming here to help illustrate how he challenged students to make clear decisions as writers when he provides them feedback. So, his approach to feedback involved helping students clarify their thinking on a particular topic. Again, clear feedback could help students' development of self-efficacy as it allows students to fully understand their performance on a given task, their relative strengths as well as areas that need improvement.

Jack also illustrated the growth in his self-efficacy as he experienced it as a result of feedback given to him by his instructor. Jack stated:

> And I got my first C with him and it kind of like, just really broke it down that I can do this and he where he wrote on the side, kind of like about, my words flow, he just breaking them down to shorter sentences and making them more shorter than longer. It's like, he really teach me that so it's really different that writing in my, then and where I am now.

Jack's reference to the comments his instructor "wrote on the side" showed how constructive and accessible feedback was essential in the development of his writing skills. Jack understood that he had grown as a writer from his previous experience writing college essays when he said "then" and "now."

Lydia, a Basic Language II instructor, spoke in great detail about her use of feedback. She sees it operate in her one-on-one student conferences in very positive ways. She said in reference to the experience of one-on-one conferences, "Because there's

nothing like discussing somebody's own individual style of writing with them. And watching them come to an understanding, asking them questions, and letting them ask you questions." Lydia's comment refers to the use of a writing conference to provide feedback. She uses both oral and written feedback to respond to student writing. She tries to incorporate positivity with criticism. She stated:

> I give a lot of feedback, I really do. And I do make sure that I'm pointing out what's working, obviously, not just what's not working. Also, a lot of 'I love that's.' That's one of the things I love about the [one-on-one] conference is that you can convey your own tone or your own enthusiasm for their writing, right to them, right to their face. Then also, if something's not going so well, you can, I don't know, say it in a in a way that's just encouraging. You know, 'all you need here is just a little bit more, explanation.' Or 'I know this is hard to do but if you can imagine it not from your perspective but from a reader's perspective, and that's really hard. What would a reader who's not so familiar with what you're writing about. What would they need to understand? Um, what kind of further explanation, we talk a lot about context, what kind of context would you need to provide? And so, even though it's a criticism or suggestion for revision or improvement, we discuss it, and I'm like, 'there, you just said it. But what you just said didn't make it in on the paper, so all you have to do is add it in.' so it feels very positive. Now when it's typed feedback, I recognize that

> often adding in a smiling face emoji, like when it's typed feedback, it can come off as less friendly and encouraging and sometimes overwhelming, because, I give a lot of feedback, so when I hand the papers back to them, I always remind them to hear my voice. Don't read it like this and then like I read a comment in like a really like negative voice, and like, read it like this. So the idea is to kind of combat some of the idea of that self-consciousness or some of that negative self-talk about being an awful writer.

Lydia's tone in presenting her feedback with students was one of the key elements that tied feedback to student self-efficacy, as she indicated, "I always remind them to hear my voice." In addition to providing written feedback, she also frequently conferences with students in order to make sure they are prepared to act on the feedback she provides. She pointed out that she wants students to understand both how they have succeeded as writers, but also where they need to improve in future drafts. What is evident in Lydia's discussion of how she presents "typed" feedback to the class was spoken in the interview in a very calm voice to show me how she actually interacts with students. In my observations of her in the classroom setting, she was typically very calm and had a positive and encouraging tone as she presented material to the class. By the time she gives students feedback on their writing, she has already built a trusting relationship with them.

Grace discussed feedback from a more holistic perspective. She looks holistically of how she engages with the class and the way she communicates with them collectively. She stated, "I want to hear what you all have to say. This teaching thing is going back and

forth, you know, it goes back and forth. It's a conversation." The idea of feedback from an instructor being part of a conversation that takes place between students and instructors exemplifies Grace's disposition toward power in the classroom. Allowing students to experience greater power in the learning environment though more egalitarian participation could allow them to experience greater self-efficacy toward their own writing, as they are participating more fully in the learning context.

Lucy, one of the student participants, spoke to the relationship between quality feedback and self-efficacy, as she indicated how being given feedback on her writing helped to build her confidence on writing tasks. She stated:

> I like how she helps us. She tells us what we're doing wrong and stuff, it's like she don't baby her students. She held their hand for a little bit, but then she let it go once she tell you what to do. She has that confidence in her students.

Lucy's comment helped to illustrate that students' perceptions of the instructor feedback and interaction can let the students know that the instructor believes in them.

When students perceive feedback as both recognition of error patterns and their instructor's confidence in their ability to complete the writing task, their self-efficacy toward the writing task might be developed more fully. Instructors in this study used scaffolding to provide students with assignments that increased their writing skills, and in-turn, their self-efficacy potentially increased as well. When instructors scaffold assignments, they provide a means by which students are able to be more successful in both comprehending the writing assignment and completing assignments. ~~Successful completion of writing tasks could lead to increased self-efficacy.~~ In addition, instruction

and course goals are placed in a context that makes both more relatable to students and purposeful to them, which leads to greater understanding and increased motivation. Both deeper understanding and motivation increase task completion, which could lead to improved self-efficacy toward academic writing.

Research Question 4

The final research question I posed for this case study was as follows: *In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of student self-identity?* I identified the themes of "peer interaction" and "institutional supports" in relation to this question.

Peer Interaction. All instructor and student participants spoke to the theme of peer interaction in their interviews. For the purposes of this analysis, I am defining peer interaction as collaboration among students in the classroom setting. It is a strategy that instructors use to help build relationships among students in the classroom, which leads to a stronger sense of student self-identity. I acknowledge the peer interaction can also occur outside the classroom setting, but those interactions are outside the scope of this study.

Henry also spoke to how he encouraged peer interaction in his classroom. He indicated that this mechanism allows student learning to take place in a more interactive format. He stated:

> I think one of the things is that I do a lot of group work. When you have people who are willing to work together, who don't use it as an excuse to goof off, and certainly over the years I've developed group exercises that are more engaging and more fun, that give

> people some interest in working through them. I think ideally, there are so many ways in which students can teach each other. Or, learn things that particularly, in ways where "I'm going to tell you something and you're going to learn it." And if they learn something another way, they might not even recognize what they are picking up. They just pick it up. And you're not droning it into them. So, one of my strengths as a professor over the years has been that I do well at designing exercises to [help students] engage with each other.

Here, Henry pointed out that by designing exercises that encourage peer interaction, he allowed them to teach each other and share knowledge. The type of peer interaction that Henry described helps students to take greater responsibility over their learning process—they participate in teaching each other. This greater level of responsibility toward the learning process could foster greater development of college student self-identity.

Sylvia also stressed the importance of creating situations where peer interaction takes place in her class. Here, she described a very specific activity where she utilized peer interaction in the form of a collaborative lesson on the syllabus at the beginning of the course. She stated:

> It is my favorite thing to do. So, for example, just even in the very beginning, um, I have used instead of reading the syllabus to them, I have done a collaborative syllabus activity where they do a jigsaw, a syllabus jigsaw. So, they form home groups and then they

each have a responsibility for part of the syllabus to learn it but they go to an expert group to make sure they learn it, but then they go back to the home group.

Sylvia indicated how committed she is to collaborative approaches as she stated that it is her favorite thing to do; in addition, she introduces this type of peer interaction very early in the course. Sylvia used the word responsibility in her description of this activity, which seems relevant to the development of college student self-identity. The activity itself develops interdependence among students; in other words, they form a responsibility to each other in this type of interaction that situates them more clearly in the classroom community.

Jack illustrated how the theme of peer interaction impacted him as a student in a classroom where such practices were utilized. He stated:

> There was only three of us, we were a small class, but, we had each other's backs. If somebody fell, we cheered them up. You know what I'm saying, when we had a group activity, of course, there can be only one group because we're the group. We made it seem like it was a competition to get everybody to make it feel like they didn't let themselves down.

The type of relationship that Jack describes in his comment is one of a connected community. Jack felt connected to the other students in the class, possibly because they were able to engage effectively with each other through interactive classroom activities.

Grace articulated the theme of peer interaction, as she pointed to the use of collaboration among peers in her class to help students more fully own their educational process. She stated:

> And, I tell my students, that I'm not everybody's cup of tea in that um, I believe in having dialogue and discussion. And I'm interested in their views of the material that's being taught. I'm trying to empower them to be stakeholders in their own education. Right? I'm there to facilitate, you know? Clearly, I've the credentials to be their teacher. I get that. But, I have to get them engaged in their own journey. They have to own it. Right? Their degree isn't going to have my name on it. It's going to have theirs. So, and, I believe if you own the process. And by that I mean we do a lot of collaboration in my class and I tell them that. I believe in, um, collaborative learning. Cooperative learning. I went through that training for a reason. I use those skills. And I believe in them owning through the process.

Grace's comment illustrated how she connects peer interaction through dialogue and discussion to foster a better sense of student identity. The process of peer interaction in her class serves as mechanism of student identity development, as she is encouraging students to more fully commit to their own learning.

Lydia also utilized peer interaction in her teaching. She indicated that because the class being studied is already a small group she did not break the class into smaller groups as often as she would in a larger class. She stated:

> In larger classes often I do have people in twos or threes and I use that strategy where they are given something to read either the night before or in class or something to watch in class. They have the opportunity to discuss it together to take some of the pressure off, and then we come together as a whole group and discuss it. I feel like that's probably successful for any level, but I think especially for their level because, not all students are really confident about offering, some are, but not all students are like really confident about offering their ideas until they can kind of test it out with each other first.

Here, Lydia pointed out that the use of peer interaction can improve students' confidence to share in a larger group discussion. This greater level of participation and willingness to share in a larger class discussion could deepen the development of student self-identity as students are taking on bigger and more important roles within their classes. They are contributing their views in the class and are more actively engaged in the experience. Active engagement in a classroom situation is likely to lead to self-identity development in a way that passive attendance alone would not.

Leo referenced the theme of peer interaction in his interview. In a discussion of the types of class activities that he found most useful, he said, "maybe, doing group work. We don't do that a lot but when we do it, it's good." Leo went on to say that since the class only had "about three people in it" it was not really possible to do group work. Clearly, though, Leo found these situations to interact with his peers notable, as this was the only type of activity that he specifically mentioned in his discussion. In a sense, the

small classes sizes that were seen across this case study were an impediment to the construction of these types of peer interactions.

Institutional Support. The second theme that related to this research question is that of "institutional support." This theme is defined as instruction that helped connect students to supportive student services within the institution. This theme relates to services like tutoring, but also to participation in other institutional events, like guest speakers. It also relates to other practices that help foster students' ability to develop the types of "soft" skills that are necessary for success in college.

Sylvia, a Basic Language I instructor, discussed how the teaching of study skills, as well as the use of texts in developmental writing courses that were from college-level textbooks, helped to better situate students in the college experience. She stated:

> They welcomed the whole opportunity with the study skills. And we used to read from college level textbooks, and learning how to read college level textbooks. And practice studying them and taking tests on them. So, I would say for the most part, they do not see themselves as outside the college. I think they start to identify with GLCC right away.

Sylvia emphasized reading texts at the college-level as a means of helping students to prepare for future coursework. The development of reading skills with those particular texts could help develop students' self-identity as college student if they felt confident in their basic literacy with those texts. Further, the development of college-level study skills could help students to better identity as students in the college context.

Grace explained this theme as, “getting them involved in campus activities.” She articulated that she tries to make connections between her students and the institution as a whole to bring them a fuller experience of being a college student, which can enhance the development of self-identity. Grace stated her strategy more fully as follows:

> That involvement outside of class and doing things like that, it really gives the whole college experience because it's more than just, it's more than sitting in our classrooms. So, I try when I can, I try to. I'll bring a speaker in sometimes. I did that last year, last year I think. Depending upon the topic we're talking about, we'll do a little “ field trips” around campus. And we'll just sit and do some observational writing. You know, anything like that that shows them that you're not just coming to campus, coming you know, class and leaving. As a GLCC student, all of this stuff is available to you all, so as much as you can, get into it.

Grace spoke to the value of creating a relationship between students and the institution in order to allow them to have a fuller college experience. She was trying to create an experience where her students are able to both access resources and feel as though they are part of the institution as a whole.

One student participant, Stella, explained how attending an institutional event, a student speaker from another college, had a great impact on her as a writer and a student. She stated:

> I have front row seats, I recorded her, yet I didn't use my recording I used my notes. I still feel that was my best paper. And that was

> really, truly an incentive to keep going because I almost felt like a newspaper reporter and I got it. And I got it good.

The experience of seeing the speaker helped her to produce a piece of writing that she was truly proud of and evoked a sense of being a professional writer for her. Connecting students to institutional resources could help to foster the development of their self-identity as college students.

Leo also spoke to the necessity of accessing institutional support. He indicated that he believes his writing skills are improving, but that he still has work to do. He stated:

> The next class, which she tells us about the class after this is going to be a lot harder. So I'm thinking I'm more ready than I was when I first started her class. Now, I still think I'm going to need to be at tutoring a lot. I'm thinking I'm going to need a lot of help.

Leo acknowledged that he is forming an expectation about the college-level English class he will take next based on what his instructor shares about that course. Further, he acknowledged that he believes he can be successful in that course with the appropriate institutional supports, in this case, tutoring.

Within this study, instructional approaches designed to make connections to the institution and their peers can help students to better understand the institution and provides opportunities to establish bonds within the institutional community, ~~,~~ which in turn can increase students' self-identity as college students. Students who ~~have~~ had meaningful interactions with peers during their classes ~~could~~ developed a stronger sense of community within the institution. They could begin to experience a sense of greater

integration within the classroom and the institution; this sense of being a part of the community because relationships with peers are more meaningful could lead to deeper experience of self-identity as a college student. In addition, students who were exposed to student services and activities could develop a greater sense of identity, as they more fully understand the scope of the institution in which they are situated.

Chapter Summary

What follows is a short summary of how the themes that emerged in the data collected in this case study provided answers to the research questions posed in this study.

1. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience the development of self-efficacy related to academic writing at the college level in basic writing classrooms?

In the developmental writing courses in this study, students began to develop an understanding of what college-level writing meant and skills that were needed to be successful as a college-level writer. Students in these courses began to identify specific skills associated with college-level writing. In addition, students were able to define and understand college level writing on their own terms. As students were able to successfully complete writing tasks within the context of their coursework, their self-efficacy toward academic writing was enhanced. In other words, they began to believe more fully in their own ability as student writers the more they successfully completed those tasks in their class.

2. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience their self-identity as college students in basic writing classrooms?

The students in this study associated college student identity with adulthood as well as possible future identities. They began to identify as college students and saw college as a clear and important step to their future. The students in this study generally did not see their placement in developmental writing courses as a way that distinguished them from their peers who placed directly into college-level writing courses. They characterized and conceptualized a college student as being more adult than a high school student, and as having higher expectations placed upon them as students. Further, college student identity was future-focused and goal related. Students saw their identity as a point that connected them to a future career or life goal.

3. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of self-efficacy as writers?

Instructors used scaffolding to provide students with assignments that increase their writing skills and their self-efficacy potentially increased as well. When instructors scaffolded assignments, they provided a means by which students are able to be more successful in both comprehending them and completing them. Successful completion of writing tasks could lead to increased self-efficacy. In addition, instruction and course goals were placed in a context that makes both more relatable to students' purpose in them, which led to greater understanding and increased motivation—both deeper understanding and motivation increased task completion, which could lead to improved self-efficacy toward academic writing.

4. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of student self-identity?

Instructional approaches are designed to make connections to the institution and their peers, which in turn can increase students' self-identity as college students. Students who have meaningful interactions with peers in the course of their classes could develop a stronger sense of community within the institution. They could begin to experience a sense of greater integration within the classroom and the institution; this sense of being a part of the community because relationships with peers are more meaningful could lead to deeper experience of self-identity as a college student. In addition, students who were exposed to student services and activities could develop a greater sense of identity, as they more fully understand the scope of the institution in which they are situated.

Overall, the study provided a clear description as to some of the specific ways students enrolled in developmental writing courses experienced the development of self-efficacy and self-identity within the context of their coursework. Further, the study illuminated some of the practices that instructors use to facilitate both self-efficacy and self-identity in their approaches to teaching. With regard to students, what emerged in the analysis of this data was a sense that they felt both more empowered toward writing in an academic context and more self-identified as college students.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a summary of the research study and a discussion of my findings as they relate to the research questions posed and the theoretical framework underpinning my study. Following the summary of the study, I provide conclusions framed using the major themes of this study along with relevant literature on possible selves, scaffolding theory, contextual learning, and collaborative learning. I will conclude by explicating the limitations of this research, recommendations for future research and implications, and my final thoughts on this study.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how instructional approaches to teaching basic (i.e., developmental or remedial) writing courses at a large urban community college foster the development of college students' self-efficacy regarding academic writing and self-identity as college students.

The following research questions were addressed by the study:

1. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience the development of self-efficacy related to academic writing at the college level in basic writing classrooms?

2. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience their self-identity as college students in basic writing classrooms?
3. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of self-efficacy as writers?
4. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of student self-identity?

The problem statement posed in Chapter I, is addressed by the answers to the research questions above—specifically, how differing instructional approaches to the teaching of developmental writing in community college contexts influence the development of the affective factors, student self-identity and self-efficacy toward academic writing. I concluded in the literature review that there are few qualitative analyses that provide a description of the experience of students enrolled in developmental education, and they are seriously outnumbered by the preponderance of research that looks at developmental education quantitatively, computing enrollment and graduation rates. I argued that it was important to approach the subject of developmental education through a qualitative lens—the lived experiences of students and educators needed to be explored to fully understand some of the complex issues arising when students are underprepared for participation in higher education. 'Increased student confidence', 'improved communication skills,' 'development of problem-solving skills,' and 'acquisition of practical experience in their discipline' were among the emergent themes in Yap's (2012) data—these emergent themes serve as a focus for my research questions. As O'Donnell and Tobbell (2007) studied the effect of a community of practice (CoP) on mature adult

students who were enrolled in a course for adults entering academia without having completed high school—their results underscore the potential benefits of using a CoP framework, specifically a learner-centered pedagogical approach that is both self-directed and collaborative, in developmental education for the purpose of identity development and self-efficacy, specifically with respect to literacy skills. Through the use of a qualitative case study, I was able to investigate the experiences of a group of six students and four instructors in developmental writing courses in a community college context for the purposes of understanding their experiences of learner-centered instruction and the development of both student self-identity and self-efficacy toward academic writing. Great Lakes Community College (GLCC) is a large urban community college situation in a city in the Midwestern United States. The college serves a wide range of student in the county where it is located and offers a wide range of programming to its community. Like other community colleges in the United States, many of the students who enroll at GLCC require some type of remediation at the time of their enrollment—almost 60% of students place into developmental English at the time of their enrollment. To serve this need, GLCC offers a variety of developmental education classes at four different campuses across the county where it is situated. For the purposes of this study, I focused on participants at this institution enrolled in two different courses—Basic Language I and Basic Language II. There were a total of four classes included in the case study. For this study, I collected data through the observation of these four classes, interviews with students enrolled in these classes, interviews with instructors, and a review of course materials provided by the instructors. In my analysis of this data, I found the following ten themes that related to my research questions. The themes of skill identification and

task confidence were related to question one. Question two themes were reaction to placement, identifying as an adult, and goals. Question three themes were scaffolding and context, while the themes for question four were feedback, peer interaction, and institutional supports. Through these ten themes I was able to answer my four research questions and as a result generate these three conclusions, which I will discuss next.

The themes of “skill identification” and “task confidence” show the ways in which students begin to develop an understanding of what college-level writing means and what skills are needed to be successful. Through the themes of “reaction to placement,” “identifying as an adult,” and “goals,” the ways in which students identify as college students and see college as a clear and important step to their future can be understood. The themes of “scaffolding” and “context” show how instructors provide students with purposeful and manageable assignments, which can develop writing ability and potentially self-efficacy toward writing tasks. The theme of “feedback” also contributes to the development of self-efficacy as instructors help facilitate students’ understanding of their own abilities, as well as their specific goals for improvement. Instructional approaches that incorporate “peer interaction” and “institutional support” are designed to make connections to the institution and their peers, which in turn can increase students' self-identity as college students.

Conversations with Literature

My review of literature was grounded in an expectation that particular aspects of self-directed, collaborative learning common to a community of practice framework would be prominent in my findings about how students experience self-efficacy and self-identity in developmental writing courses. However, after analyzing the data from the

observations of developmental education classes, interviews with students enrolled in these classes, interviews with instructors who teach these courses, and a review of course materials provided by the instructors, different themes emerged more prominently in response to the research questions posed. The following ten themes emerged answering the above four research questions: skill identification, task confidence, reaction to placement, identifying as an adult, goals, scaffolding, context, feedback, peer interaction, and institutional supports. Having provided examples of these ten themes in my findings chapter, I next discuss my three overall conclusions to this study and its findings connecting the major themes to the literature on possible selves, scaffolding theory, contextual learning, and collaborative learning. The overall conclusions to this study are:

1. There can be a contradiction between student's perceptions of themselves as college students and the institutional view of students in developmental courses. While many students in development courses identify themselves as college students, the institution views them as emerging toward college student identity.
2. A developmental writing course can impact students' self-identities through encouraging peer and institutional interactions. Students with this placement might have identities that fluctuate between a realization that they are underprepared for college-level work and feeling affirmed in their capacity to gain those needed skills.
3. A developmental writing course can increase student's self-efficacy by using context and scaffolding to increase students' skill levels and confidence.

Non-places and Possible Selves. A first conclusion of this study relates to Augé's theory of non-place, which I explicated in the literature review. In summary,

Augé defined a non-place as a transitional space "which cannot be defined as relational, historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place" (pp. 77-78). As I stated earlier, non-places, according to Augé, are places of transit from one place to another—they are not actual destinations, but spaces one occupies temporarily in order to move to the next place. I have framed developmental education, particularly in a community college context, as a non-place within higher education. Students in developmental education courses must transition successfully from one place to another in order to reach their academic goals, presumably degree attainment at the associate's degree level or transfer to a four-year institution for pursuit of a bachelor's degree. The findings of the study conducted at GLCC provide some interesting support to my construction of developmental education in a community college context as a non-place. The findings from the data collected from each of the six student participants shows various attitudinal perspectives to placement in developmental English. Although some questioned their placement to some degree, all of them generally accepted the placement with little resistance. I interpret these reactions in two ways. First, students were not altogether aware of the implications of the placement in developmental education. Jack stated that he "when I took my test I really didn't understand the score, I just said OK." Only one student, Zoe, even acknowledged any hierarchy in the course structure when she states, "I was just guessing on the questions or I probably would have been in a higher class." Still, Zoe also indicated that she does not care about the placement. She simply wanted to be in a class. The expression of these responses illustrates the disconnection between how students see themselves – as college students- and how the institution, including the instructors, sees them as not yet ready for college. The institution might see that these

expressions might show a lack of full understanding about how placement in developmental education could impact the entire trajectory of students' education, as just another data point about how students are not prepared for college. Students' attitudes also negate the notion that students placed in these courses feel stigmatized in some way. It is in the theme placement that I see the connection to Augé's non-place—students were startled by the realization that they were underprepared for college-level coursework and as a result understood their placement in developmental education as a transitional place—a place that is not exactly college, but one that could lead to it.

My second, and more salient, interpretation of these comments is that students' perceptions of their placements have to do with their orientation toward their goals and their future. The institution and instructors may view developmental students as in a transitional space (non-place) moving toward acceptance as a "real" college student. However, students in this study already saw themselves as college students. This leads me to the model of possible selves. This theory situates learners as future-oriented—their self-conceptions are focused on who they will be in the future rather than who they are now (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Possible selves are a component of one's overall self-concept that focuses on an imagined future. This theory is an important one in understanding how students conceptualize their placement and perceive the context of developmental education. Essentially, their attitudes toward placement remain oriented toward future goals. Instead of focusing on their present self, a self whom is situated in developmental course, they are focused on future goals and motivated toward those goals. Several participants defined a college student as one with clear goals for the future. Even Zoe's comment regarding placement spoke to this idea, "I really didn't care as long as I

was in class." Zoe simply wanted to be in class, meaning that while this class is not ideal, she still perceived it as a pathway to her goals. Stella also connected her participation in the developmental class to being a college student, "It means that you have desires and aspirations, you're on the road, and you're taking the first step when you're a freshman, and then therefore after." Her use of the language points to a concept of participation as destination based—she says, "you're on the road." These views are well situated with Auge's model, as his theory of non-place relates to the metaphor of travel through urban spaces. To extent the metaphor, students saw the situation of developmental education as simply another stop in a longer journey toward a goal, not as a delay or detainment from those goals.

Communities of Practice. The second and third conclusions relate to the framework of communities of practice. The instructional strategies used by the instructors in the developmental writing classes at GLCC clearly emphasized collaborative approaches with a particular situated context. Students were encouraged to develop both independence and interdependence in their classroom environments. The model of communities of practices is defined as learning that is situated a particular context. The developmental education classes I observed at GLCC were situated in the particular context of higher education, which in some ways deviates from the traditional theoretical definition of CoP, as these types of learning groups are typically seen as being situated in a practical context rather than a decontextualized one (Lave & Wegner, 1991). However, I would argue that providing students with the space to acculturate to higher education is essential in the development of both their self-identity as college students and self-efficacy toward academic writing. The framework established by the theory of

communities of practice illustrated by Wegner (1999) does not replace other theories of learning, but rather helps to illuminate how learning takes place in a social context. In the four classes at GLCC that participated in this study, collaboration among students was utilized. Each of the four instructors discussed the use of collaboration as a key pedagogical strategy in their teaching of developmental writing. When Wegner's view is applied to the developmental writing classes in this study, the classes themselves can be seen as a social context in which learning is taking place. Further, when students enter higher education through the pathway of developmental education, their standing as members of the higher education is highly tenuous from the institution's point of view. Students' participation in developmental education is predicated on their need to acquire stronger academic abilities, i.e., stronger reading and writing skills. However, in order to successfully move through developmental education and ultimately to degree attainment, students need to become more strongly identified as college students. Further, students need to believe strongly in their own potential to be successful as academic writers. The collaborative aspects of the learning environments bolstered these conceptualizations of self and self as writer. This is exemplified by Jack as he described the effect of the collaboration in his class, "the students, there was only three of us, we was a small class, but, we um, but, we had each other's backs. If somebody fell, we cheered them up." The collaboration among the students allowed for the development of interdependent relationships with one another. Such interdependence, it can be inferred, leads to stronger peer relationships within the institution and ultimately a stronger relationship to the institution itself. For another student, collaboration also increased her self-efficacy as writer. Alice said, "You know one of the things that changed me, one of the things that

opened up my eyes in that class was that how good of a writer I am. And I didn't, I didn't you know, I never paid that any attention too much." Here, she indicated that participating in collaborative learning activities in the situation of her developmental writing class changed her view of herself as a writer. In the case of the developmental writing classes in this study, a CoP framework helps to illustrate how social learning facilitates identity development and increased self-efficacy—two essential tools for student success in higher education.

Discourse Analysis. Another conclusion of this study also relates to discourse analysis. Foucault (1972) stated:

> Education may well be, as of right, the instrument whereby every individual, in a society like our own, can gain access to any kind of discourse. But we well know that in its distribution, in what it permits and in what it prevents, it follows the well-trodden battle-lines of social conflict. Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it (p. 227).

A clear aim of developmental education is to facilitate a greater understanding of academic discourse among its students, as such, an understanding and fluency can lead to greater success. However, students enter developmental education with greater disparities in educational privilege than those who do not require remediation prior to enrolling in college-level coursework—students who lack economic, racial, and ethnic privilege are more likely to be placed in developmental education. Simply introducing students to academic discourse may serve to underscore disparities rather than mitigate them. Bartholamae (1985) strongly argued in favor of helping students to "invent the

university" by helping them to navigate the multiple discipline-specific discourse that abounds in higher education. For students with far more educational privilege, this approach is likely quite valid. In this study, what emerged were acknowledgements of the ways in which instructional strategies could help move students toward increased confidence in their own voices, which ultimately might allow them to engage more fully with academic discourse later in their educational journey. Henry stated, "I mean Dev Ed students bring a lot of knowledge into the classroom that they're not necessarily willing to apply, and let's face it, you probably can't even get into [Basic Writing I] and certainly not into [Basic Writing II] without, you know, some efficiency with the language." He continued, "People get around in their lives, they understand when other people talk to them they communicate, they have jobs, they have all these skills and they aren't necessarily good at properly applying them in context, when needed, etc. But one of the things I've always tried to do is draw upon, you know, 90% of what they need to know they already know." Henry pointed to a philosophy that validates the voices of the students without effectively trying to move them away from it. He is encouraging them to inhabit their own discourse and apply it to the academic contexts accordingly. This is the best practice that the study data makes clear—that it is far more effective to facilitate students' confidence to inhabit their own voice and to understand their own voice as a discursive mechanism than to encourage them to adopt and appropriate standard academic discourse—the former is a necessary step on the path to the latter.

Scaffolding. The third conclusion also relates to scaffolding theory, which is derived from a model of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky (1986) conceptualized the ZPD as a level of competence that is just beyond a learner's current

skill level. Learners with appropriate support can achieve tasks situated in the ZPD but not necessarily independently. As such, tasks in Vygotsky's ZPD need to be given with support, so that the learner can achieve them. The theory follows that once learners achieve with supported instruction, they gain confidence, which leads to autonomous performance of the task. The supportive framework in Vygotsky's ZPD was originally conceptualized by Bruner (1950) as scaffolding or supportive instruction that facilitates a learner's development toward autonomous practice and knowledge. Scaffolding itself emerges as a theme within the data in this study, as instructors in the study practiced the use of supportive instruction in their approaches to teaching developmental writing. Grace indicated, "I made the assignments smaller, like little writing and reading assignments, smaller." By making the reading and writing tasks smaller, she allowed students to access them. Jack spoke to the impact of this type of approach in his experience, "[Henry] had us break things down, like he made us do 250 words or like 500 words or 1000 words. And I was saying, like if you add that up, that still totals like 1000 words. And he showed us that you write small, look over it, learn what he says was messed up, and rewrite the messed up paragraphs." It seems that this approach was effective in building Jack's confidence toward completing a longer and more complex piece of writing. Within a developmental writing course, the use of scaffolding-based instructional strategies could lead to the development of self-efficacy in writers.

Limitations of study

Choosing a qualitative case study as the methodology for this study allowed me to deeply explore the student and instructor experience of development writing courses in a complex way. It allowed me to explore how students and instructor relationships in these

courses related to the affective factors of self-efficacy and self-identity. However, qualitative case study, a method of research that is not generalizable to the whole population of developmental writing students or instructors, which is a limitation that it inherent to this particular method. Instead, this study was undertaken to develop insight into how students and instructors make meaning of their experiences in developmental education classrooms in community colleges. In addition, the small number of participants limits this case study in this case. Originally, I planned to include data from only two classes, with the expectation that the classes would have larger enrollments and thus allow me to interview more student participants. My initial plan was to do a comparative analysis of two classes, but due to extremely low enrollments, I was unable to complete the study in the manner I initially planned. Because enrollments in the semester when the study was conducted ranged from only 3-8 students, it was difficult to recruit a larger sample of students for interviews. Another related limitation is that the study design did not as fully capture the experiences of the students who did not volunteer to be interviewed, who by their lack of participation may be revealing more ambivalence in terms of their self-efficacy and self-identity. Although these students were observed in classroom observation contexts, it would have been preferable to include their full experience in the study data through interviews

A final limitation of this study was my relationship to the institution where the study was conducted. As I have been an instructor of developmental writing at this institution for close to seven years, I have a very close relationship to the institution. The instructors who participated in the study are all colleagues with whom I have had some level of professional contact in the course of my tenure at the institution. In chapter three,

I discussed the steps I took as a researcher to mitigate my biases in the process of my collection of data. While I maintained an awareness of my bias, it is clear that my relationship to GLCC many have had an impact on the study.

Further Research

While this study was developed from a constructivist paradigm, further research might study the constructs of both self-identity and self-efficacy in developmental writers through the lens of critical theory. I would suggest that the power dynamics that exist as a result of privilege disparities have a clear impact on the educational context in an urban community college such as GLCC. Because students who are underprepared often emerged from less privileged identity categories (e.g., race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status) than the instructors who teach them, it would be interesting to modify the study protocols with a deeper connection to those assumptions. Along with this, a deep exploration of power and privilege as it relates to the development of affective factors would be helpful. Such an exploration was beyond the scope of this study, but evidence of the presence of power and privilege in developmental education is clear, as students in developmental education are often members of marginalized populations.

Further, an exploration of how retention from an institutional perspective relates to student goals—how much of the curriculum of developmental writing is structured to prepare students to succeed in college-level composition, which largely assumes students need preparation for advanced study in academia (Powell, 2013). Future research that focuses on the myriad ways that developmental writing students become disengaged in coursework would also be of interest. While the students in this study that participated were not part of this population—all the students that participated in the interviews had

finished the course, many other students do not complete this coursework and never continue on within the realm of higher education.

Another way that this study model could be adapted for future research would be to separately analyze the student and instructor perspectives. This study combined the data for both groups as it was relevant to each research question, as each group did provide evidence in their interview that supported the questions posed about the behavior of the other group. Because students and instructors behave in ways that is in response to the other's behavior, this study integrated their experience. However, future research could explore self-identity and self-efficacy in ways that more specifically separated their experience.

In addition, I would suggest further research should explore how students with higher levels of self-efficacy toward academic writing and more developed self-identities as college students perform beyond the developmental education classroom. Perhaps a longitudinal study of performance throughout the trajectory of their community college experience would provide a clearer sense of how important these affective factors are in the long term and how they contribute to student success as a whole.

Future studies might explore the ways in which the teaching of grammar within writing courses relates to the experiences of students and instructors in developmental writing courses. There is little consensus among composition teachers about the benefits of teaching grammar directly. As such, a study that looks as this particular feature of instruction in more depth could provide valuable insight.

Finally, another study that explores the use of a community of practice model in developmental writing would be useful. Since this framework provided a useful tool for

analyzing how self-directed and collaborative approaches operated, it would be beneficial to study the use of an actual community of practice as an intentional instructional strategy in a classroom context. What seems to be missing in the available literature is a discussion of CoP use in more general education coursework at the undergraduate level; introductory and survey type courses are largely absent from the discussion. Further research might consider how CoP structures could enhance learning in these types of courses, as these courses are often determinative of students' overall success in obtaining a degree.

Implications

Based on this study, developmental writing instructors might consider how the use of scaffolding in the construction of assignments could foster the development of self-efficacy in their students. Scaffolding can include a wide range of instructional activities, from guiding students through stages of an essay writing assignment, to modeling effective thesis statement writing, to providing time for students to process their understanding of an assignment collaborative. Scaffolding can also include helping students to make connections to prior knowledge and experiences. Henry demonstrated scaffolding in this way when he engaged students in the driving analogy—he provided a context by which students could begin to develop an understanding of the course concept by accessing their existing understanding of driving. Self-efficacy toward academic writing is an essential affective dimension that can help students as they progress beyond developmental education courses.

Further, instructors should consider how their view of developmental writing might differ from that of their students. Completion of developmental writing courses is

required by GLCC for students to even enroll in college level courses. Within GLCC, both Basic Language I and Basic Language II must be completed in order for a student to enroll in College Composition. Additionally, many other courses outside the discipline of English (specifically those courses with rigorous reading and writing requirements) have prerequisites in place that prevent students from enrollment until they have completed the developmental writing courses. However, many students see this requirement, not as a detriment but as a single step on their educational path. Instead of seeing this course as an indication of a skill deficiency, they see it as part of their own process in higher education. For example, while instructors might recognize that developmental or remedial writing courses mean a student is beginning college with skill deficiencies in writing, students in this study expressed that developmental courses were part of their larger goals. As such, these students situated developmental writing holistically within the context of their larger educational and career goals. It could be powerful to bear in mind how student identities might be more future-focused and goal oriented. Tailoring instruction and choosing materials toward this end could help to strengthen student identities and lead to greater levels of success.

Based on this study, institutions should consider ways to make deeper and more meaningful connections with students in classrooms. Providing quality co-curricular programming that is accessible to this population of students could lead to a stronger connection between students and the institution itself. Co-curricular programming can include a variety of different kinds of programming; it is often used interchangeably with the term extracurricular. For the purposes of this study, co-curricular activities are those that aim to enhance the existing curriculum. In this study, students attended a lecture

given by a guest speaker during class time. While the speaker did not address specific learning objectives of the Basic Language II course that attended it, the instructor aligned the guest lecture with the curriculum by assigning a written reflection in response to the experience. In this way, the instructor was engaging students in the larger experience of the institution, while fulfilling a learning objective of her course.

Further, institutions should consider ways to support greater opportunities for the development of peer interactions in the classroom. Peer interactions include all of the way in which students collaborate with one another to meet the learning objectives of the course. In a developmental writing classroom, peer interaction can be accomplished through collaborative learning experiences like small group presentations or even written assignments. However, it should be noted that such activities must be developed carefully, in order to ensure that peer interactions are both productive and positive. One way institutions could ensure that peer interactions are both productive and positive is providing developmental instructors with quality professional development opportunities that foster the use of collaborative learning strategies.

Final Thoughts

In undertaking this study, I wanted to examine dimensions of developmental writing courses in order to gain a better understanding of some of the relationships between students and teachers. Specifically, I wondered how a teacher's choice of instructional strategy might facilitate the development of students' affective factors, such as self-identity as college students and self-efficacy as academic writers. I gained insight into one particular community college that provides developmental education to many students in a specific urban community in the Midwestern United States. I concluded that a community of practice framework is a useful tool in understanding how to facilitate

collaborative and self-directed instruction, that while developmental education exists as a transitional within higher education, its transitional status still allows students to envision their future identities, and that while a goal of developmental writing is to expose students to academic discourse, an intermediary step is needed toward that end.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Email to Prospective Instructor Participants

Subject Line: Dissertation Research on Dev Ed Writing

Hello,

I am writing to see if you would be willing to help me with my dissertation research, which I will be conducting during the summer semester. My research focuses on the experiences of students and instructors in developmental writing courses at community colleges. Specifically, I am interested in how developmental writing pedagogy relates to students' self-efficacy (their belief in their own abilities as a writers) and identities as college students.

I will be using a qualitative case study methodology, which will include a combination of interview and observational data. I am looking for several developmental English instructors to participate in my research. My study has been approved by Tri-C's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and is currently being reviewed for approval by the IRB at Cleveland State University, where I am working on my degree.

Here is a summary of what participating in the study would include:

- An interview with me about your experiences as an instructor of developmental writing (45-60 minutes)
- 3-4 observations of your class meetings (you choose these sessions) over the course of the semester
- A review of some of your printed course materials (syllabus, writing assignments, rubrics, etc…)
-

In addition, I would also recruit 3-4 students from your class to interview about their experiences. I would conduct these interviews outside of class time, but would need to visit your class in the first few weeks to explain my research and invite the students to participate. This class visit would take only about 15 minutes.

Please let me know if you interested or if I can provide you with any additional information about my study.

APPENDIX B

Instructor Participant Interview Protocol

Research Questions

1. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience the development of self-efficacy related to their academic writing at the college level in basic writing classrooms?
2. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience their self-identity as college students in basic writing classrooms?
3. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of self-efficacy as writers?
4. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of student self-identity?

Semi-structured Interview Questions with Probes

1. How long have you been at instructor of this course? [Background]

2. How long have you been teaching at this institution? [Background]

3. What educational and/or other experiences prepared you to teach basic writing at this institution? [Background]

4. Could you describe a class in which you very pleased at what was happening—or a particular semester you felt most reflected your approach in teaching writing —and one in which it fell short. [RQ 3, RQ 4]

[PROBES: What distinguishes basic writing instruction from college-level writing Instruction? How do you experience teaching this group of learners?]

5. Describe your primary goals as an instructor of basic writing. [RQ 3, RQ 4]

[PROBES: Aside from the content of the course, which is prescribed by the institution, what skills/qualities do you hope your students will develop in your class?]

6. How would you characterize your pedagogical approach to the teaching of basic writing? [RQ 3, RQ 4]

[PROBES: How would you characterize your philosophy as a teacher of basic writing? How is this philosophy articulated in your teaching? In what ways do students control their own learning process in your classroom? In what ways do you engage students engage in collaborative learning activities in your classroom? In what ways do students in your class engage in reflection about their learning process? In what ways do students in your classroom have choices about the types of assignments they will complete or the method by which they will complete them?]

7. In your experience as a basic writing instructor, how do your students view themselves in the college setting? [RQ 1]

[PROBES: Do students in your basic writing classrooms view themselves as college full -fledged college students despite their placement in basic writing? How does placement in basic writing impact students' self-perceptions?]

8. In what ways does your approach to teaching this course influence students' perceptions of their own writing abilities? [RQ 3, RQ 4]

[PROBES: Tell me about a strategy you might use in your instruction that you believe improves students' perceptions of themselves as academic writers]

9. Explain what it means to write at the college-level. [RQ 1]

[PROBES: What are the characteristics of college-level writing and how is it distinguished from other types of writing/ writing at other levels?]

10. In what ways do you/ do you not see your students writing at the college-level? [RQ 1]

[PROBES: Explain the skills or skill deficiencies that you perceive in your students in general?]

11. In what ways do you prepare your students to participate in other college-level courses? [RQ 3, RQ 4]

[PROBES: What skills and characteristics do you hope your students will leave your class having developed? Can you think of an example when this happened?]

12. In your experience of teaching basic writing at a community college, how do your students understand their self-identity as college students? [RQ 3, RQ 4]

[PROBES: Do students see themselves as college students? Do they identify more fully as a student in a K-12 paradigm?]

APPENDIX C

Student Questionnaire

1. Are you currently enrolled in _____(name of class) at _____(institution)? Y N
2. Did you graduate from high school or earn a GED? HS GED
3. What year did you complete HS or GED?
4. Do you attend (institution) part time or full time?
5. Do you work full time—35 hours or more per week while enrolled at (institution)?
6. Do you have to use your parents' financial information on your FAFSA form? Y N
7. Do you have children or other dependents? Y N
8. Are you a single parent? Y N
9. Are you interested in being interviewed for this study? Y N

If you answered yes to question 9, please provide your contact information below:

Name:

Phone:

Email:

APPENDIX D

Student Participant Interview Protocol

Research Questions

1. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience the development of self-efficacy related to their academic writing at the college level in basic writing classrooms?
2. In what ways do community college students enrolled in developmental English courses experience their self-identity as college students in basic writing classrooms?
3. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of self-efficacy as writers?
4. In what ways do developmental writing instructors use instructional approaches that foster community college students' development of student self-identity?

Semi-structured Interview Questions with Probes

1. How long have you been a student at this institution? [Background]
2. What other courses have you completed? [Background]
3. At what other institutions have you been a student prior to enrolling here? [Background]
4. What was your reaction to being placed in this particular class? [RQ 2]

   [PROBES: Did you have reaction to being placed in this class? How did your placement in this class fit your expectation of what class you might be placed in?

Do you think your placement is appropriate given your skills and previous educational experiences?]

5. Describe what it means to be a college student. [RQ 2]

   [PROBES: What makes a college student different from a student at another level like High School or Elementary school? What kinds of skills do college students have?]

6. In what ways do you/ do you not see yourself fitting the description you provided of what a college student is? [RQ 2]

   [PROBES: You described a college student in the previous question—describe how well you fit that description?]

7. Explain how you viewed yourself as a college student at the beginning of this course versus how you view yourself as a college student now [RQ 3, RQ 4]

   [PROBES: Did any of the class activities help you to feel you well better prepared to be a student in college? Did any aspect of the class change your view of yourself as a student]

8. Explain what it means to write at the college-level. [RQ 1]

   [PROBES: What kinds of things do writers at the college-level do that writers at other levels do/don't do? What skills does a college-level writer possess?]

9. In what ways do you/ do you not see yourself writing at the college-level? [RQ 1]

[PROBES: Given the description that you gave in the previous question, explain how you fit with it—how do you compare yourself with a writer at the college level?]

10. Explain how you viewed yourself as a writer now versus at the beginning of this course. [RQ 1]

    [PROBES: Think about how you view yourself as a writer before you started the course. How prepared do you feel to write college-level essays? Describe skills and weaknesses as a writer.]

11. Describe your previous experiences of being in a writing (English) class.

    [PROBES: How is this class the same or different from other English classes?]

12. In what ways do you expect this class prepare you to participate in other college-level courses? [RQ 3, RQ 4]

    [PROBES: After completing this class, will you be better prepared to take other classes that involve writing? Explain how this class prepared you to move on with your college career.]

13. Describe your overall experience of being a student in this class. [RQ 3, RQ 4]

    [PROBES: What kinds of activities do you do in the class? How challenging are the activities you are asked to complete? How well do you perform in this class?]

14. How would you describe this teacher's approach to teaching writing? [RQ 3, RQ 4]

[PROBES: What kinds of class activities did you do—group work, independent work, lecture, other things? Describe a typical class day—how does it go?]

15. What effect does/did this teacher's way of teaching writing have on you as a writer? [RQ 3, RQ 4]

    [PROBES: Do you feel different as a writer as a result of working this particular teacher—explain how you have changed in this capacity.]

APPENDIX E

Observation Protocol

DATE:

TIME:

WEEK IN ACADEMIC TERM:

SITE:

PLANNED ACTIVITES/TOPICS:

PARTICIPANTS PRESENT:

TIME	DESCRIBE ACTIVITY/INTERACTION	PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED	RESEARCHER COMMENT

APPENDIX F

Document Study Protocol

Document title: Method Obtained: Date Obtained:	
What is the history of the document?	
Who created it?	
What is the purpose of the document?	
How does this document inform the story of the case it is related to?	